

Report of the Faculty Handbook Committee

Western Kentucky University

Chair, Margaret Crowder

Vice Chair, Les Pesterfield

Additional members: Dawn Bolton, Dana Bradley, Eve Main, Shura Pollatsek for Yvonne Petkus, Janet Tassell

Dates: March 23, 2016

Present: Crowder, Bolton, Main, Pollatsek, Tassell (guests – Marge Maxwell, Richard Miller)

Information Items

Discussion of proposal 02-2016 Academic Experience, which was approved on March 18th in Faculty Welfare and had previously been approved from Faculty Handbook Committee. Approval of this item to continue forward to SEC. Faculty Handbook Committee approves the substantive action item below.

Discussion of Senate and SEC consideration and votes on proposal 01-2016 Continuance Documentation Flow. In response to an earlier email by Faculty Handbook Committee Vice Chair, Les Pesterfield, to Tony Glisson (subsequently forwarded by Tony Glisson to Richard Miller for information on precedent) regarding the availability of the continuance committee's memorandum to the candidate upon request, Dr. Miller responded that the committee's memorandum would be open to request by the candidate upon appeal. Approval of changes to the timeline dates and slight reorganization of material going forward to the Dean. Originally approved in the meeting to go forward, a couple of additional discussion items/edit items were raised via email and an email vote subsequently kept this item in Faculty Handbook Committee for further comment in the next meeting.

Approval of wording to be added to the policies pages regarding the policy placeholder “v,” per discussion of below information provided to the committee by Amber Scott Belt (Provost's office):

Section II.A.1. of Policy 1.0003 outlines the policy numbering systems as follows:

All Academic Affairs policies are numbered according to a 1.xyzv convention. The first digit ('x') after the decimal point refers to the subcategory of the policy, according to the following scheme:

- 0 – general
- 1 – faculty
- 2 – fiscal matters
- 3 – student matters
- 4 – courses and similar academic matters
- 5 – academic administration

The last digit ('v') is the version number of the policy, starting at '0' for a new policy and advancing cyclically from 0-9 upon subsequent revisions. The middle two digits ('yz') are used to identify the policy in question.

The above is the proposed appropriate verbiage to add to the Academic Affairs policies webpage at: http://www.wku.edu/policies/academic_affairs.php . (Doug McElroy also suggesting changing the policy numbers on the menu screen to include 'V' in place of the last digit with a note at the end of the above suggested verbiage to include something like "for to view the most recent version, please click on the title of the appropriate policy below".)

Discussion of a change that was made to the Faculty Transitional Retirement program wording. A substantive change of the wording from section IX.H. of the 21st edition of the Faculty Handbook was approved by the Board of Regents on July 24, 2015, without going through Faculty Handbook Committee, SEC, or Senate. Consequently, no change was made to the actual wording of the Faculty Handbook, which means there currently exist at WKU two different documents pertaining to the guidelines for the Faculty Transitional Retirement Program (TRP). Dr. Miller provided the committee with some background on the item and said it was passed quickly last year through the Council of Academic Deans and the Administrative Council and sent to the BOR in order to update some wording and to provide the opportunity for faculty who are not enrolled in KTRS to be eligible for the TRP. This is problematic from the Committee's standpoint in a couple of major ways: 1) Which document is now the legally binding guideline for the program? Richard Miller answered that this would likely be the BOR approved version. 2) This sets up a dangerous precedent, in that a revision was made to an item from the Handbook without faculty consultation, and, as this item was subsequently approved at the BOR level, it provided an alteration of the Faculty Handbook that was now more legally binding than the Faculty Handbook (faculty-approved), version of the document. Dr. Miller agreed with the Faculty Handbook committee that this created a problem and stated it might be prudent to have the BOR retract its approval of the alteration pending discussion/approval through the faculty governance process. Dr. Miller also stated that he would seek information from the Deborah Wilkins regarding the legal implications of the situation. Faculty Handbook Committee made the decision to send the changes forward as a substantive change proposal for the Faculty Handbook section IX.H. Faculty Handbook Committee approves the substantive change, pending the development of a proposal form for change out of the office of Academic Affairs.

Following from the previous discussion, some discussion of a prior committee approval of a proposal to have the Faculty Handbook approved by the BOR was discussed briefly, and will be discussed in more detail in future Faculty Handbook Committee communications/meetings.

The Faculty Handbook Committee is still working on addition of language for a Pedagogical Faculty section of the Faculty Handbook.

A proposal from Kristin Wilson was tabled for next meeting, as Kristin was not able to be present at the meeting for discussion.

Action Items

The Faculty Handbook Committee submits for further approval the attached Substantive Change forms:

- 02-2016 Academic Experience
- 03-2016 Faculty Transitional Retirement Program

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Crowder