

Academic Governance Oversight Committee
Minutes, 10/10/06

Mike McDaniel (chair), Julie Isaacson, Charles Harris, Bill Humphries, Mitch Holifield, Joanna Grymes (recorder)

Meeting was called to order approximately 3 pm.

Two issues had been forwarded to the committee.

1. Graduate School Recommendation for Policy Change on Graduate Faculty Status (See below)
The policy has been reviewed and the shared governance process has been followed with approval from the Graduate Council and the Faculty Senate. The AGOC forwards the recommended change in policy on Graduate Faculty Status to the VCRAA as a recommended change to the Faculty Handbook.
2. Honors Council
The constituency of the Honors Council, as currently described in the Shared Governance section of the Faculty Handbook is flawed; the Honors Dean is not identified as a member of the Council.

Based on the AGOC's interpretation of Section I.C.5, p.2 (change in membership addressed by this committee) the current Faculty Handbook should be amended to include the Dean of the Honors College (or designee) as a full voting member of the Honors Council. This recommendation is to be forwarded to the VCRAA. This change should be implemented immediately, pending Board of Trustees approval. An expedited review process should also be considered, to allow appropriate representation on the Honors Council as soon as possible.

Much of the meeting's discussion revolved around the role of the AGOC. The description of the committee's charge differs significantly between the approved version of the Faculty Handbook and the Senate's version. Another issue is the inconsistencies present in the approved Faculty Handbook concerning who has purview over Faculty Handbook changes – in some places the Faculty Senate's Handbook Committee seems to be responsible; in others the AGOC seems to be responsible.

One concern is that Faculty Handbook has already been amended concerning the PRT section, and yet that change did not go through either the Senate Handbook Committee or the AGOC. This change went straight to the Board of Trustees, with approval from the PRT Committee. Of special concern is that the posted Board minutes state that the process was followed (see below).

McDaniel will ask for clarification from the President and VCRAA on the AGOC's role in making Faculty Handbook changes given the current Trustee's approved version. If designated as the responsible body, then the AGOC will solicit comments from Chairs and Deans Councils, as well as other groups, for changes to be made in the Faculty Handbook. Some basic editing changes are already necessary; for example, the addition of the ASU-Jonesboro Chancellor position will necessitate changes throughout the document.

The Institutional Governance Oversight Committee has issues similar to the AGOC/Faculty Handbook with the Staff Handbook. It would be useful to provide tandem proposals about proposed changes in processes, should these be necessary. Holifield and McDaniel will work on finding a joint meeting time to clarify issues between the two committees.

Some issues that will need clarification should the AGOC become responsible for Faculty Handbook changes:

- Definition of Policy vs. procedure

- Definition of a “functioning committee”

Another issue raised was how the AGOC can meet its obligations to determine if the shared governance process (and the concomitant committees) is working without a clear knowledge of what committees are doing. Shared governance committees should provide minutes to the AGOC in a timely manner so that the AGOC can review the effectiveness of the governance process. The recommendation is that a Shared Governance page be created where all Shared Governance Committee minutes will be posted to be available to the university community as a whole.

AGOC does find potential issues with the proposed procedural changes with the Faculty Achievement Awards. Where those changes fit within the AGOC’s purview is not clear at this time.

Next Meeting: 10/17 @ 4:30: McDaniel will identify a place.
Meeting adjourned approximately 5:30 pm.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contact: Dr. Susan Allen (870-972-2030)

ACTION ITEM: Arkansas State University-Jonesboro (ASUJ) requests authorization to revise the 2006 Arkansas State University Faculty Handbook by deleting paragraph 5 on page 75 in Section IV.

ISSUE: The Board of Trustees must approve any changes to the Faculty Handbook. Since the most recent approval date by the ASU Board of Trustees on February 24, 2006, there has been a need to update its contents.

BACKGROUND:

The ASU Faculty Handbook continues to be the operational resource used for daily functions by faculty and administration; therefore, it is imperative that the handbook remain current and accurate in its presentation of material. The following proposed deletion was recommended by the University Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee (UPRTC), approved by the vice chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs, reviewed through the academic governance oversight process, and approved by the president. The statement below should be removed from Section IV, paragraph 5, on page 75:

“No faculty member will be recommended for promotion or tenure without a favorable recommendation from the department committee. Where the college committee makes the initial evaluation of the application, no faculty member will be recommended for promotion or tenure without a favorable recommendation from the college committee.”

Graduate Faculty

The graduate faculty consists of faculty members who have qualified for and been approved to serve in a particular graduate faculty status. Appointment to the Graduate Faculty may be made as a Regular Member or Temporary Member. Each category has associated qualification standards, appointment requirements and procedures, and privileges and responsibilities as defined below.

The qualification standards for each category reside with each department or program offering a graduate program. The graduate faculty of that program or department compile and enforce the qualification standards that a prospective member must meet in order to be recommended to membership on the Graduate Faculty. The qualification standards for each program are approved by the department/division chair, Graduate Council and the Dean of the Graduate School. All qualification standards are tailored to the department or program and are on record in the Graduate School.

A. Regular Member

1. Qualifications

A Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty must be a full-time faculty member with a terminal degree. In exceptional cases, unique experience, specialized training, and professional competence may substitute for a terminal degree. Regular Members must have documented evidence of an appropriate level of scholarly activity and continued participation in graduate education at the course, committee and program levels.

2. Appointment requirements and procedure

Application must include evidence of professional activity related to graduate education such as research, publication, exhibition or performance, membership in professional organizations, participation in regional and national meetings, excellence in teaching and the applicant must meet the qualification standards of the program or department.

An appointment is recommended by the department graduate faculty and chair and approved by the Graduate Council. Appointment is for up to a six year term at which time the faculty member may reapply; although individual programs, department, or colleges may choose to have shorter terms of appointment.

Upon hire as a pretenure or tenured faculty member possessing a terminal degree in an appropriate discipline, an initial graduate faculty appointment will be made for up to a six year term. Upon promotion to associate or full professor, a graduate faculty appointment will be made or an existing appointment will be reset to a new term of up to six years.

3. Privileges and responsibilities

A Regular Member may teach graduate courses at any level, serve on the Graduate Council; direct research; and serve on thesis and dissertation committees for students pursuing masters, specialist and doctoral degrees.

With the approval of the graduate program director and the Dean of the Graduate School, a Regular Member may chair thesis and dissertation committees for students pursuing masters, specialist and doctoral degrees. The Graduate School recommends that faculty who chair thesis and dissertation committees either have previous experience on such committees or work with a mentor, a faculty member who has successfully chaired thesis or dissertation committees in the past.

B. Temporary Member

1. Qualifications

An individual with a terminal degree or documented knowledge and equivalent experience shall be eligible for appointment to the graduate faculty as a Temporary Member to teach specific courses and/or serve on committees over a specified time period.

2. Appointment requirements and procedure

Application is through, or nomination is by the department graduate faculty or chair. Recommendations must include specific qualifications as related to the course(s) to be taught or committee membership. An appointment is approved by the Graduate Dean for a specified time period. At the end of the specified time period, a Temporary Member of the Graduate Faculty may reapply.

3. Privileges and responsibilities

A Temporary Member may teach graduate level courses at the masters, specialist and doctoral levels and serve on student committees. A Temporary Member appointment is only valid for the time frame specified and for the course(s) or activities approved on the application.