

Faculty Handbook Revision Committee
June 8, 2016

Members Present: Cynthia Holthaus, Marc Fried, Matt Arterburn, Laura Stephenson, Pat Munzer, Tracy Routsong, Jalen Lowry, Alan Bearman, Nancy Tate

Discussion:

We began discussing eligibility for academic sabbatical. Everyone was fine with tenured faculty being eligible and tenure track faculty not being eligible. We looked at our current list of categories of faculty and thought that perhaps we should change categories to distinguish between tenured and tenure track and make them separate categories. Nancy noted that Randy had some concerns with the rest of the agenda item that includes the preamble and missing definitions, so it has not gone to FAC. If needed, we can tweak the current definitions and include that in the agenda item. Deans are to be working on criteria for some of the new categories as well, like Senior Lecturer.

We decided that the current categories need to be edited because we were stumped as to how to assign categories to sabbatical eligibility. Right now, the category of lecturer/senior lecturer says that it is “continuing” employment, which is an issue as that really only applies to senior lecturer. Matt explained the original intent of the definitions and need for sub categories. Lecturer and research lecturer have no continuing component, but we need to be clear about expectations of renewal or multiyear contracts and determine how the positions will end for the senior level lecturer positions. Marc explained the issues with how we treat them, the expectation of renewal, and how those positions are terminated or ended.

We discussed whether there should be a maximum number of years in a multi-year contract (eg. Five) to be conscious of the rights of that position relative to a tenured faculty. Some felt there is a perception amongst people being hired for a term contract that they will not like it and will want to leave, or they will not accept an offer or apply at WU if other schools can offer lecturers multi years when we can't. We should think about how this looks on a job ad. We want to be competitive, but do we also want to grant them more rights if give multi-year contracts.

Right now, it is left to units to determine the benefits of senior lecturer and how they earn it. Intent of senior lecturer was to incentivize people and reward them with more pay and longevity. Pat briefly explained the history of use of lecturers in SAS; currently lecturers are hired for one year with possibility of renewal. The original idea with senior lecturer was not to hire for that position, rather it must be current employee who is rewarded for longevity and performance. There is a proposed category of distinguished lecturer which allows a hire directly to that position from outside, which offers more prestige or money than hiring certain individuals as a lecturer.

The consensus was not to have a maximum number of possible years in a multi-year contract. These contracts have to be approved by Dean and VPAA already, so there are controls in place and each hire is different depending on department needs, the hire, etc. We discussed splitting the lecturer categories into sub-categories; these edits will be made by Cynthia, Nancy, and Jalen, then submitted for approval.

With categories more clearly defined, we went back to discussing sabbatical eligibility. Some were surprised that lecturers were eligible; they assumed that since there were tenured faculty on the sabbatical committee, then only tenured faculty would be eligible. From the way it was written, it seems the intent was only for tenured faculty as an eligibility requirement was to be at WU at least six years and lecturers were not used at the time that was written.

Everyone agreed that tenured faculty are eligible. Some thought that senior level lecturers could be eligible as it would be a good perk and incentive to that promotion. Others wondered if it should only be for tenured faculty, so that tenure is special as those faculty are often asked to do more. Someone suggested that sweet sabbatical could be opened but those guidelines are clear it is only for full time faculty.

Someone suggested that if there was a minimum required years served in the position of a senior level lecturer at WU before being eligible for sabbatical, it would be another incentive or motivation for that faculty member. (Like must serve as Senior Lecturer for six years before able to take sabbatical, not simply at WU for six years.) Jalen predicted that in the law school, most likely only tenured faculty and librarians would be eligible because of the amount of money available and the culture of eligibility for certain benefits.

As for the other categories, there were several questions raised, but not fully fleshed out. Is it only for full time teachers? That would eliminate chairs and we don't want that. Would we prohibit student success/lecturers in dual roles from being eligible if promoted to senior lecturers/student success? Probably if not full time teaching. There are other positions where eligibility might be confusing, like someone who is director of mobile clinic and teaches, so we will have to be clear. There is also confusion about what 4% of faculty means for maximum number of sabbaticals granted each year. It is not clear what "faculty" means. We were reminded that the point of assigning categories is to eliminate any of this confusing wording, so we will see if that works.

Decisions:

- Edits are needed to our current list of definition categories.
- We will add sub-categories some to make them clearer.
- Tenured faculty and senior level lecturers should be eligible for sabbatical, with some minimum years at WU/in position requirements.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 22 at noon in Morgan 200-A