

Meeting Minutes
Executive Committee of the AFSE
October 6, 2023

Present: Xiao Wang (chair), Dianne Hansford (secretary),
Brian Atkinson, Treavor Boyer, Nancy Cooke, Xiangyang Dong, Heather Emady,
Shenghan Guo, Vikram Kodibagkar, Anthony Lamanna, Christopher Muhich, Pitu
Mirchandan, Guoliang Xue, Yanchao Zhang, Yong-Hang Zhang

Guest: Kyle Squires, Kelli Haren

1. Approval of minutes

Motion: Approve minutes from September 8, 2023. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Teaching professor promotion criteria

Kyle: Good feedback came in. We will review feedback and suggest changes to the criteria.
Faculty from each school summarized the input they received.

Heather and Christopher (SEMTE):

Most faculty do not have strong opinions, except aerospace faculty. We provided a poll to faculty. About 75% responded that they would like to discuss this topic in the AFSE townhall. Using heavily weighted teaching evaluations caused concern due to biases in evaluations. Adequate service should be well defined. Peer evaluation was suggested as an enhancement to teaching evaluations.

Kyle: teaching evaluations have been a problem for a long time, and we have yet to find a solution.

Xiao and Vikram (SBHSE):

We held a meeting with our teaching faculty. They expressed concern with the weighting of teaching evaluations and provided peer-reviewed articles supporting this view. They suggested including peer evaluation as supplemental assessment. They noted that teaching faculty do not have a lot of control over teaching materials since the syllabus is created at school level. Therefore, there is not a good opportunity to innovate, so innovation should be carefully considered as an item in the criteria. Adequate service needs to be better defined. Does prior experience count or must one have eight years at ASU to be eligible for full professor?

Kyle: We might be able to use some of the feedback to identify support/mentoring topics.
(Some of the ideas in the feedback do not belong in the criteria, but they are valuable input.)

Yanchao and Yong-Hang (SECEE):

We have just one teaching faculty. They would like a clearer definition of the weighting of

service to teaching effectiveness and innovation. Research with undergraduates, separate from mentoring, would be a good addition. This faculty would like to supervise undergraduate students. The also recommended defining the weighting of evaluation criteria with percentages. Director Phillips thought that the revision should address the use of the term inclusion.

Kyle: the document will be in alignment with the charter.

Brian and Nancy (TPS)

Some expressed a problem with the requirement of terminal degrees because they do not hold a terminal degree. Teaching evaluations for online versus in person courses can be very different. A big part of a successful course is its organization. Tough instructors, who do a good job, can get poor evaluations. Why are multiyear contracts not offered to the associate position to be on par with tenured faculty? The criteria could consider how many years someone has taught rather than just teaching at ASU.

Kyle: The multiyear contract point is a good one. To evaluate an instructor, we ask, "How are you engaging the students?" Wanting students to like you is not your goal. You are responsible for getting them engaged. Regarding years teaching at ASU: we want to be sure you can teach in our environment.

Treavor/Tony (SSEBE):

People are looking for clear descriptions on research and service. Mentorship should be clarified. Time teaching instead of time at ASU was brought up again. Improving yourself and collaborating as a mentee could be considered as a positive interaction. On the terminal degree point, it could be established that if one is hired before this new rule, then it should not be required. Sabbatical for teaching faculty to get experience, for example in industry has been suggested.

Kyle: Sabbatical will not be part of the promotion criteria. We could consider giving faculty some time for growth once at the full level, to make the position less monotonous. Workshops should exist to provide guidance on the quantitative aspects; we do not want to add numbers to the criteria.

Pitu and Guoliang (SCAI):

Evaluation is done by the personnel committee. How should this committee decide on weighting of service and teaching? Teaching faculty should create a teaching portfolio. Peer evaluation of teaching should be added. For example, a full teaching professor would evaluate an associate or assistant teaching professor. We received eight or nine thoughtful responses. Teaching faculty should have criteria as well defined as we have for T/TT faculty. Teaching evaluations have the problem that the course can be watered-down to get better evaluations. We need more information to evaluate faculty teaching, whether it be T/TT or teaching professor. A service and teaching statement should be necessary.

Kyle: teaching evaluations and peer evaluations have come up frequently. Peer evaluations

could be a topic for the EC. We need to define the process, materials, and preparation process. To improve teaching effectiveness, we should apply same criteria to T/TT and teaching professors.

Shenghan and Xiangyang (MSN):

No inputs from MSN faculty.

Pitu: A new draft document could be sent out. Personnel committees should receive guidance as they are completing evaluations now. For example: weighting of service, teaching, mentoring, and advising students, would be helpful.

Kyle: Dean's office could provide examples of excellent promotion cases to personnel committees.

Treavor: What is the timeline for this document?

Kyle: We plan to get this document into the provost office by the end of the semester.

In order to do this, I would like to form a subgroup to work on this more closely with me.

Volunteers: Brian, Treavor, and Dianne will assist. First version: look at feedback (process, ingredients). Then we will have a conversation about how to make changes. (We can keep all involved at this stage.) Christopher: someone who has served on a personnel committee might have good insights into how these things should be stated. (Kyle has this knowledge.)

3. Preparation for the next meeting

Next meeting please have your Dean's Dissertation Award evaluations ready.

4. Next Meeting

Friday, October 20, 2023

12:00 - 1:00pm in Zoom