

Rollins College

## Rollins Scholarship Online

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Faculty Affairs Committee Minutes

College of Liberal Arts Minutes and Reports

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1-21-2020

### **Minutes, Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 21, 2020**

Faculty Affairs Committee

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**Faculty Affairs Committee**  
**January 21, 2020**  
**CSS 167**  
**12:30 – 1:45**  
**Approved**

Don Davidson, Chairperson 2019-2021  
Ben Hudson, 2018 – 2020, Humanities Rep 2018-2020  
Ashley Cannaday, At-Large Rep 2019-2021  
Don Davidson, At-Large Rep, 2019-2021  
Leslie Poole, At-Large Rep, 2019-2021  
David Caban, Business Rep, 2019-2021  
John Grau, Expressive Arts Rep, 2018-2020  
Leigh DeLorenzi, Social Sciences-Applied Rep, 2019-2020  
Samuel Sanabria, At-Large Rep, 2019-2021  
Rachelle Yankelevitz, Science Division Rep, 2019-2021

Secretary: Leigh DeLorenzi, Social Sciences-Applied Rep, 2019-2020

Guests: Faculty Evaluation Committee members (Joan Davison, James McLaughlin, Mario D’Amato, Dana Hargrove, Amy Armenia, John Houston, Tom Cook) and former FEC member Bill Boles

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of minutes from December 3, 2019 (attached)
  - a. Approved without revisions.
- III. Announcements
  - a. The meeting today will start with New Business to make time for FEC input and feedback on bylaw changes regarding FEC membership. All other agenda items will be moved to a future meeting.
- IV. New Business
  1. Discussion with FEC regarding bylaw revisions. (See CLA Bylaws, Article VIII; and Tenure and Promotion Review Working Group, Final Report).
    - a. Background: FAC has been charged with revising a number of bylaws related to FEC membership. The caseload of FEC is large and time consuming for its members. There is also a concern that members of FEC are not able to attend regular faculty meetings, and as a result, cannot voice their opinions or participate in important faculty conversations because the faculty meeting falls at the same time that FEC meets each week. FAC is seeking the feedback of FEC in order to gather a robust set of viewpoints prior to drafting bylaw changes. Special areas of focus for today’s meeting will be on the size and membership of FEC. Some guiding questions for consideration are:
      - i. Should the size of the FEC committee be increased to accommodate the caseload, and if so, how?

- ii. Should the membership of FEC be opened to include members serving at the rank of Associate Professor? If so, what would be an ideal ratio of Associate to Full Professors?
- b. Don recaps previously discussed solutions for assisting FEC with the challenge, as discussed at previous EC and FAC meetings. The priority of FAC in considering this bylaw revision would be to stay sensitive to the importance of continuity of decision making and applying standards equally across candidates. Don poses the following questions to FEC for feedback:
  - i. Should an algorithm be in place to expand the size of FEC if it passes a certain threshold of cases?
  - ii. If FEC is allowed to expand to help meet the demand of the workload, should a cap be placed on the size of FEC?

**c. Summary of FEC feedback on increasing committee size:**

- i. Most FEC members think that the FEC committee should remain at 7 members, and some were open to possibly expanding the size to 8 if needed. One member said he preferred even less than 7 members.
- ii. Expanding the committee to 10 members would result in having two different FEC bodies without an overlap of cases, which would likely interfere the committee's ability to uphold continuity of the review process.
- iii. FEC members described their process for managing their workload:
  1. Each FEC member reviews 10 cases a semester, which takes a full day to review a file a file. Each member is in charge of 2-3 of the 10 each semester.
  2. Every member has to review 5/7<sup>th</sup> of all cases. In a committee of 7, 2 members rotate "off."
  3. There is already a system in place where there is one member elected to serve as an alternate, in order to assist with workload issues.
  4. Five members talk in depth about each case. If a particular case becomes problematic, the five members bring in the two "off" members for assistance and deliberation.
  5. Keeping the committee at 7 members sustains the comradery and commonality of purpose they enjoy, where all members have overlap of each individual case.
- iv. FEC says they are managing the workload well, and don't feel size adjustments are necessary, and would create other complications. "We are currently at maximum capacity, but it feels doable." "It doesn't feel like we are in crisis mode. If cases significantly increase, maybe we could expand to 8 members."
- v. Members discussed possible scenarios where there might be a need for additional members in the future (i.e., if they had to review 49 cases, rather than the current 30 cases).

- vi. Is the workload too burdensome?
  1. “Your responsibility as member of FEC is to do the work.”
  2. “Common hours are going to be busy; you must read thoroughly and exercise time management. The more people you increase, the more likely you are to have inconsistencies. That’s why we try to talk about these as a group if we are unsure.”
- vii. Alternatives to increasing size of FEC:
  1. **Offer course releases:** Members of FEC get a course release, maybe instead of adding a member would be adding a course release. In principle, for continuity issues being raised, a better solution would be to offer more course releases.
  2. **Change (de-link) the sequence of evaluation:** Bottlenecks have occurred that lead to delay because of the sequential nature of the review (waiting on letters from the Dean, etc).
    - a. **Pros:**
      - i. If we changed the sequence of the review, (delinked), it might provide more slack on the committee’s timeline.
      - ii. Benefits of a delinked sequence is that candidates have two separate and concurrent reviews by the Dean and CEC, which could potentially reduce bias and contribute to integrity of the evaluation system.
    - b. **Cons:**
      - i. A possible downside is taking authority away from the faculty. When the review is sequenced, the faculty get to comment and respond to the Dean’s letter before sending it back to the Provost.
      - ii. Some prefer to see administration’s viewpoints. “If we miss out on the Dean’s letter, we miss out on important information.”
      - iii. Seeing the Dean’s letter has allowed FEC to catch factual errors and fix them before it goes up through administration.

**d. Summary of FEC feedback on whether Associate-Rank members serve on FEC?**

- i. 5 out of 7 current members of FEC believe that FEC should be a committee of Full Professors.
  1. Associate Professors should not be evaluating those seeking promotion to Full professor – they do not know how to properly evaluate a candidate for Full if they have not gone through the process themselves.

2. An Associate-level member would have to delay their own scholarship for 3 years because they would not have time to be engaged, which could impact their own promotion.
  3. No Associate-level member could be evaluated for Full at the time they are serving on FEC.
  4. Associate-level members of FEC could face professional challenges regarding their own promotion, which might prevent them from speaking up and being vocal in controversial matters.
- ii. Two members voiced support for Associates to serve, stating:
    1. Associates already do a lot on campus, and it could increase the diversity of the FEC committee.
    2. Changing the policy to allow Associates to serve on FEC may actually empower the culture of Rollins faculty to speak their minds, regardless of rank, which would benefit the whole institution.
    3. It would be a valuable learning experience for Associates on the promotion process.
    4. Associates could be possibly allocated to provide more leadership in the midcourse and tenure reviews.
  - iii. If Associates are allowed to serve, most members agree that it should be clearly articulated when and how they would serve, as well as whom they should and should not evaluate.
  - iv. All FEC members agreed that Associate-level FEC members should not participate in the evaluation of Full professors.
  - v. Most FEC members said that no more than 1 or 2 FEC members should have the rank of Associate.
  - vi. FEC members agreed that the Chair of FEC should hold the rank of Full Professor.
- e. FEC thoughts on Rollins being the only institution (compared to benchmark institutions) that did not allow Associates to serve on FEC:
    - i. The pool of benchmark institutions used for that comparison is problematic because it places institutions in a category based on budget, not on the overall quality of the institution. We should be comparing our practices with aspirational institutions.
    - ii. Two members said they believe it to be a distinction of leadership and rigor at Rollins that we differ from the benchmark institutions.

**f. Optional annual review of untenured faculty**

- i. It could be harmful to candidates. We have had cases when each year's annual review provided critical and timely feedback that was crucial for promotion. If a department is not involved and candidate is not aware, it might prevent someone from being awarded tenure.
- ii. Some departments put less scrutiny in evaluations, so some faculty could be at a disadvantage with fewer reviews.

- iii. Timely feedback is important, knowing where you stand is critical to the transparency of the whole process. Those who opt out might be those that pay the highest price.
- iv. Questions about liability – if a department opts out of annual review and the candidate does not get tenure, could that open up the potential for liability?
- v. Recommendation: Require annual reviews for the first 3 years at least, but also require annual observations of teaching. Teaching can regress in quality, expectations, curriculum, and therefore, it is incumbent on the senior faculty to consistently observe untenured faculty.

**g. Call for final comments:**

- i. People wanting to come up for Full must have a CEC evaluation prior. There must be some mechanism in place where they can figure out with their department if they should be trying to go up for Full.
- ii. There should be a mandatory review 2 years prior to formally submitting Full professor application.
  - 1. This gives the candidate a good sense on the viability of their case
  - 2. It gives FEC a sense of how the candidate has progressed.
- iii. Sometimes the CEC is compromised if they have been working with someone for 10 years, they might be less likely to give recommendations.
- iv. It should be required that CECs record their vote, and no “abstain” votes should be allowed.
- v. Voting decisions should be binary: “Meet” or “Does not meet.” We should do away with the “Exceeds” rating. Size and membership of FEC

**2. CIE White Paper and recommendations**

- a) Refer to Sam’s revisions (attached)
  - a. Subcommittee to proofread and finalize paper, and will consist of Rachelle Yankelevitz and John Grau.

**3. Endowed Chair Policy—February 4 meeting**

- a. Objective is to move forward and reach an agreement on the principles of Endowed Chair policy. Don asked FAC to consider requiring criteria for Endowed Chairs.
  - i. There is an issue of transparency. Criteria are considered the rules of the game and are public and known to everybody. Then, outcomes are related to the rules (and therefore predictable).
  - ii. Criteria are explicit expectations for an Endowed Chair. The appropriate body should develop expectations regarding eligibility and reappointment for an Endowed Chair. Creating criteria may eliminate the need for a tiered system, while keeping it competitive over time.

- iii. There is a need for transparency of the Endowed Chair application process (i.e., when letters of recommendation need to be submitted, etc).

V. Adjourn