Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes for March 2, 2023

Hybrid Meeting (SU 109 and Zoom Conferencing Software), 3:15 pm

Members in Attendance: S. Alexander, K. Ankem, R. Brice, J. Elliot, K. Fuegen, R. Gall, P. Hare, J. Herman, Y. Kim, A. Miller, M. Nakamura, M. Providenti, H. Riffe, H. Schellhas, M. Scola, J. Washburn-Moses, M. Washington, M. Zacate

Guests in Attendance: J. Bloch, M. Cecil, G. Hiles, S. Kim, J. Vest

Members Not in Attendance: W. Darnell, B. Green, W. Herzog, K. Katkin, L. Manchise, I. Saad

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1. Call to Order
   - The meeting was called to order at 3:17pm.

2. Approval of the agenda
   - The agenda was approved as distributed.

3. Approval of the minutes from the February 16.
   - The minutes from the February 16, 2023 meeting were approved as distributed.

4. Chair's Report and Announcements
   - Chair:
     - The Faculty Senate met on Monday.
       - President Brown gave a report on what is happening in Kentucky. Discussions of performance funding are occurring in Frankfort. Should the model be adjusted to improve outcomes for low-performing schools? How should the metrics be weighted? How much money should be base funding? How much money should be performance-based? CPE may allow tuition increases of up to 5% (though our Board ultimately decides tuition increases).
       - Legislature:
         - There is a bill to mandate that all high schoolers complete a FAFSA.
         - Another bill would create a KY cybersecurity center at University of Louisville.
         - University is watching SJR 98, a Senate joint resolution. The bill would "Direct the Council on Postsecondary Education to study placing a new regional, residential, four-year university in southeastern Kentucky ..."

- Provost Cecil stated that the university is reestablishing the transfer office. Deans have been finalizing instructional budget reductions. Twenty-four faculty members have received details of separation offers. Fifteen NTTR faculty will not be renewed. It is possible that some NTTR faculty will be able to move into staff positions. It is not known how many NTTT faculty will not be returning. Concern was expressed about how staffing will affect course offerings in fall.
- Faculty Senate President John Farrar provided a mission statement for the Academic Commons.
    - What is it? Academic Commons is a "coordinated group of student-focused learning resources designed to give students convenient access to academic support services…" It will include three clusters: peer academic support, professional academic support, and extended academic experiences.
    - Why do we need it? Currently, academic support services are dispersed across campus. Centralizing these services would make resources convenient and accessible for all learners, normalize the act of seeking help and support, improve communication between units, and encourage cross-disciplinary dialogue.
    - Details are forthcoming.
- I shared our proposed changes to the sections 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 of the Handbook (Procedures for Decisions on Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure).
    - Should 3.2.4 state that "faculty external to department/school or the University and of suitable rank and tenure may serve as an additional member on the committee"? We added "department/school" to this section to clarify that faculty in combined departments may have a committee member outside their department. Nonetheless, this change could also be interpreted to imply that any candidate may request a faculty member external to their department or school, not just candidates in combined departments. Is the addition of "department/school" necessary?
- Lastly, John has been working with legal counsel to revise new proposed policies on intellectual property. Last year, this committee reviewed drafts of these new policies and provided feedback. The university legal counsel at that time did not like some of the changes that PCC had requested. With changes in that office, we may now have draft policies that sufficiently address PCC concerns. I will share these drafts at an upcoming

meeting. John and I both think it is important that the PCC review the proposals before they go through the formal policy review process.

- Provost:
    - A Board of Regents member commented that the plan to reduce the budget shortfall is "priced to perfection." That is, it gets us to where we need to be *if all* of our current assumptions hold over the next 2 years. The variables are external to NKU (what will the legislature do with tuition rates? The Joint Senate Resolution to possibly create another university in the state with no new money? What is the possibility performance-based spending rates will stay the same or go up? Last time NKU received $11.3M in performance-based funding.)
    - Restructuring: you don't just restructure to save money, you do it to create something that functions better. Thinking about schools in CAS, maybe there is $200K to save in a reorg. It's not worth the disruption. Better to have a campus-wide discussion about "what can we do differently?" We cannot cut the instructional part of campus any further. The cuts have been as far and as fast as possible (maybe to far). If there is another financial issue, we will have to look at it together. Any solution imposed by administration without input is not likely to go well (this sort of approach generally fails). A solution may need to be crafted quickly but it will result from conversations with staff and shared governance.
    - There are rumors that the legislature could allow a 5% tuition increase, implemented as 3% and 2% if the BoR allows it (some BoR members are opposed).
    - We are making good progress on the budget plan; found significant savings; and limited the number of faculty colleagues who won't be here in the fall to the minimum possible.
    - We continue to retain and graduate students.
    - We may need to look at restructuring but we will do that together.
    - Q: What kind of support will students get in large lecture classes in the fall? A: We will try to roll out professional development support for faculty. It is significant for a 100 level class to possibly go from 40 student classes to 75 but we won't have 400 student classes. Things will be different, it's a heavy lift in a short time. The changes we are making will change the jobs of every person at NKU. We don't have the ability to roll out a lot of new support. We will have some discretionally money due to the faculty separation. There is confidence in the dedication and talent of the faculty and staff.
    - $3.9M was cut in FY23 (the required salary savings item in the budget added "by someone."); reduced for FY24 $5.95M; $2M reinvested in College of Health and Human Services; the net cuts so far = $7.8M; Academic Affairs budget about $130M right now.

- Still meeting with departments, people can email questions directly to the Provost.
- Trying to be transparent. There is hope that people are noticing the change in the approach of leadership.
- Q: What was the biggest factor in this problem? A: "the horrendous failure to attend to the enrollment strategy." The university touts an increased headcount but we've shed high-margin on-campus students and replaced them with online students from whom we receive half the revenue. We've lowered the net tuition rate for on-campus students. Positive note: regarding the demographics of NKy, we are still in a growing area. The "demographic cliff" is 10-12 years out for this region. The top 20 schools from which we recruit are still growing. Getting back to 2019 level recruitment from those schools would mean 200+ first year students. We've failed to attend to our backyard. Our retention is growing, graduation rates are growing, and we are serving our mission. The plan will fix this problem and we will return to investing in people and contributing to cash reserves unless something happens in Frankfort.
- Q: If we are increasing the proportion of students we ask to pay less tuition at the same time retention numbers grow, there is concern raising tuition could lower retention numbers. A: Shared concern. There is concern we've been massively over discounting for students who would come here anyway. The average tuition at NKU, not the net, is $7400. Murray is $10100. MN State Mankato is $15K with a 50% Pell eligibility rate. The concern is that we are taking people out of the system. It's the people, the faculty, who give students a good experience. Small classes help students – that's the concern. We need to find a way to get more people back in to prevent long-term damage. If we weather the current mess, we should be fine in 2-3 years.

5. Discussion Item: Workload Policy

   BACKGROUND:
   The current workload policy sets the maximum workload at 12 credit hours. This policy does not address scholarship, creative activity, or service. Matt Zacate, while Faculty Senate President, prepared a summary of workload policy of our benchmarks. He documented how other universities' measure time commitments of different types of courses (e.g. lab vs lecture). He described the role of advising in setting workload. He described how workload policies determine the number of hours a faculty member would be expected to work at these benchmark institutions. This data is 5 years old but useful to consider. Some benchmarks have no university wide workload policy. Most benchmarks stipulate 12 credit hours of teaching is the workload. Some policies allow a reduction in teaching load for faculty who supervise students in fieldwork, thesis, practica, research projects, etc. There are provisions for reassigned time for active scholars or faculty with substantial service work. They also differentiate teaching loads

for tenure line and non-tenure lines.

Q: Which aspects of workload should be addressed in a university wide workload policy? Which should be addressed in school or department policies? Currently we have little at the university level, more at the college, school, or department level. Boise State's policy is offered as an example policy without suggesting NKU's policy should be modeled after it.

DISCUSSION:
- The benchmark list is flawed – it includes several R2s. R2s have high research activity. It includes professional and M1 institutions. Consider professional institutions: Western KY U, Eastern KY U, Missouri State U, Kean, U TN Chattanooga, U Wisconsin Oshkosh.
- Provost: the current benchmark list is flawed and needs to be updated. The Provost will share a list of institutions to consider as better comparisons. Those identified in the previous comment are good.
- Universities similar to NKU have 12 credit hour workloads but also provide workload reductions for some activities – do we want to see something similar? Or should it be left up to colleges and schools?
- There should be a way to reward or reduce the load of active scholars.
- We already reward scholarship – it's the only way to become a full professor. There is no reward for administrative work. There is no recognition, for example, for someone who does 3 independent studies.
- M. Zacate: 5 years ago, similar issues. Faculty asked to do more to cover shortfalls. Every department had different concerns which is why nothing happened then. How do peer institutions classify academic advising? Here it is part of teaching duties but we already have a 4/4 load – so now the teaching load is higher. At a department level the feeling is we are discouraged from offering courses because we can't afford to pay instructors. But other departments have 3/3 loads. Why are we saving money by not hiring instructors when there are other ways to save money. There needs to a university-wide policy to create equity across departments.
- Lack of equity across campus is the reason we are having this discussion. Teaching load could be set at the university level. Those who demonstrate they are active scholars could teach 3/3, those who want to focus on teaching, 4/4.
- Law and business only have a one course release for research.
- We would need to define what an active scholar is. Business looks at the previous 5 years and faculty need to maintain 3 peer reviewed articles and 2 conference proceedings. However, this output is for accreditation purposes and it would not be fair to apply this to other departments. 1-2 peer reviewed articles could be enough in other departments.
- J. Vest, in chat: "I will provide a counterpoint that there are Arts and Sciences faculty on this meeting who are teaching 4/4, mentoring dozens of students in

research, and publishing extensively. Because of budget in CAS, those teaching loads will not be reduced. These faculty are getting paid less, frankly, than faculty teaching 3/3 in other colleges. All CAS faculty must publish to be promoted even when teaching 4/4. Their course reassignments include service as well. COB and Chase faculty do not receive extra reassigned time for service. It is linked because we are evaluated in APR and RPT based upon assigned workload."

- Suggestion to only look at workload without APR and RPT at this stage of discussion. The criteria for active scholarship should be lower in other departments unlike Business' high output required for accreditation. Not aware of course release in academia for service or admin activities (for faculty who are not chairs, etc.).
- Look at Boise State workload policy: professional expectations of all faculty members include teaching, scholarship, and service. The distribution of effort amongst teaching, scholarship, and service may vary among faculty members and semesters. Departments must have a statement in dean or provost approved workload policy. The workload value of teaching (section 4.2) are spelled out in university policy, the value of scholarship and service are defined in college or department documents. With lecture courses, there are adjustments based on large enrollment or service learning components, online delivery, help from graduate assistants, etc. Not every 3 credit hour course is the same. This policy takes into account when there are more contact hours than credit hours. Effort expended on graduate culminating activities, theses, dissertations, etc. are part of the annual teaching assignment. This policy has more nuance about teaching load than the current NKU policy.
- Capstone projects don't count as workload – it's an add on. Maybe 4 capstones equal a course? How can this be part of workload or compensated?
- Provost: C of Ed. offers $300 per independent study student or you can bank a bunch for later course release. Later course release can be problematic. Revenue generating work needs to be compensated. This conversation has only just started with deans.
- Which is better: pay, banking hours, build it into teaching load?
- Build it into teaching load. Extra compensation also means higher work load and more stress.
- Bank hours. Agreement that this can be problematic but $300 isn't going to provide the time to do the extra work.
- Provost: Just want to make sure banked hours can be withdrawn. With changes on campus it may not be possible.
- Also likes banking hours. $300 not necessarily worth it. Provide options for faculty?
- Prefer not to bank hours. We need the time now, when the work is happening, not later. Build it into the workload.
- We need to know how different colleges address workloads.

- The document should allow flexibility so people, after tenure, are primarily evaluated in the area in which they have specialized, e.g. more teaching, less scholarship. APR should be sufficiently flexible to allow people to specialize at different points in their career.

- ACTION:
  Please share any college workload documents with K. Fuegen.

6. Adjournment (4:32pm)

Submitted,
M. Providenti, Secretary

13. FACULTY WORKLOAD POLICY

13.1. GENERAL

The credit hour is the recognized standard by which faculty teaching load is measured. The traditional twelve (12) semester credit hours is the maximum required undergraduate teaching load for all full-time tenure-track faculty. Individual departments/schools may propose their own credit hour equivalencies and reassigned-time policies. Such policies must be in writing and must be approved by a majority of the tenure-track departmental/school faculty, the chair/school director, the appropriate dean, and the provost. In colleges where there is no department or school, the dean will function as department chair in these processes and approval must be given by a majority of the tenure-track faculty in the college. Regardless of external funding for research or other grant activities, faculty will normally teach a minimum of 50% time in a given academic year. The provost may grant exceptions to this policy on a semester-by-semester basis.

Workload For Tenured And Tenure-Track Faculty (Policy 4560)

University Policy 4560

Effective Date

September 2006

Last Revision Date

January 2020

Responsible Party

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, (208) 426-1202

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Given the unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, a **Faculty Evaluation Procedural Appendix** was approved in December, 2020, to provide procedural guidance for individuals and committees regarding performance evaluation during any period of time that has been designated an "affected term." Accordingly, "[a]ll forms of Faculty performance evaluation that include an Affected

Term within the review period shall be subject to the procedural adjustments described" in the Procedural Appendix. These adjustments include post-hoc workload adjustments. This Appendix has the force of policy.

To date, the following semesters have been declared affected terms:

- Spring/Summer/Fall 2020

- Spring/Summer/Fall 2021

- Spring 2022

Supervisors and faculty reviewers must apply the principles for evaluation outlined in the Appendix for all faculty during those periods, no subsequent reviewer may change them.

1. Policy Purpose

To establish University-wide policies and procedures governing the assignment of workload for members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty who occupy full-time positions in academic departments, have academic rank, and are eligible for tenure.

2. Policy Statement

Professional expectations of all faculty members include teaching, scholarship, and service. While advising is generally integrated into all of these activities, any workload assigned for specific advising duties, such as undergraduate advising coordinator, shall be placed in the category of service.

The distribution of effort amongst teaching, scholarship, and service may vary amongst faculty members and semesters. However, the distribution of effort should always balance the scholarly and service interests of individual faculty members with their responsibility to deliver academic programs of high quality. This variation in the distribution of faculty effort is desirable because it allows optimization of faculty contributions to deliver high-quality academic programs.

3. Definitions

3.1 Clinical Course

A course taught in a clinic, K-12 classroom, office, courtroom, field camp, or similar setting, with an emphasis on the practice of professional skills under the supervision of a University-authorized preceptor.

3.2 'Faculty' or 'Faculty Members'

Members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty (as defined in University Policy 7000 – Position Definitions) who occupy full-time positions in academic departments, have academic rank, and are eligible for tenure.

3.3 Lecture Course

An established on-campus course consisting entirely of class meetings devoted to the presentation and discussion of course content and student assignments.

3.4 Scholarship

All forms of research and creative activity carried out by a faculty member.

3.5 Peer Review

Designates any discipline-specific factors used in determining whether the scholarly value of a particular scholarly product is academically or professionally noteworthy.

4. Responsibilities and Procedures

4.1 General Distribution Requirements

a. Baseline professional expectations for all faculty members include teaching, service, and peer-reviewed scholarly activities. Unless otherwise defined in college or department-specific workload policies, the standard teaching assignment is three, 3-credit courses per semester (3-3 load), which is generally equivalent to 60% of the total faculty workload. The remaining workload is generally allotted to scholarship and service.

b. Departments must have a statement in their dean and provost-approved department or college workload policies (*see* Section 4.3.a.) regarding expected annual scholarly activity for faculty. That policy must contain guidelines for any variance from the standard teaching assignment outlined above. Any year-to-year variances in the workload of an individual faculty member may be justified through a variety of activities including, but not limited to, work with graduate students and administrative assignments, provided they are consistent with the department policy and are approved by the chair and dean.

4.2 Workload Value of Teaching, Scholarship, and Service Activities

4.2.1 Total Workload

The course load for an individual full-time faculty member may vary from the fall to spring semester of an academic year based on scholarly activity, service, and other needs of the department. The department chair and college dean must approve the annual distribution of course loads for faculty who deviate from the departmental standard teaching responsibility.

Below are guidelines for assigning workload to teaching activity. Workload value associated with scholarship and service activity shall be defined in the college and/or department workload documents. The percentage of workload assigned to teaching, service, and scholarship must sum to 100%.

4.2.2 Lecture Courses

A three-credit undergraduate lecture course is normally identical to one of the three courses assigned each semester. An adjustment (increase or decrease in units) may be used by a department to take into account additional factors that significantly impact effort, such as large enrollment, service learning requirements, hybrid or online delivery, or help from graduate assistants, provided such adjustments are outlined in college or department-specific workload policies.

4.2.3 Laboratory and Clinical Courses

A laboratory course generally has more contact hours than credit hours. The course load value assigned to laboratory and clinical courses shall be outlined in the dean and provost-approved department workload policies. Those values will vary with the number of contact hours and other factors. For example, the workload associated with laboratory courses vary with the nature and level of the course. The course load value assigned to laboratory and clinical courses should be consistent with that used to determine rates of pay for adjunct faculty, if applicable. If a specialized accrediting body places limits on the teaching of laboratory and clinical courses in a particular program, these limits must be respected by those college and department policies.

4.2.4 Other Courses

The University offers many undergraduate and graduate courses not easily classified as lecture, laboratory, or clinical courses. The course load value assigned to each of these types of courses is determined by each department, subject to constraints imposed by the policies of the department and college.

4.2.5 Graduate Culminating Activities

Effort expended by a faculty member on graduate culminating activities (e.g., thesis, project, dissertation) is included as part of the annual teaching assignment, but only to the extent the culminating activities are represented by registered academic credits. The course load value assigned to a graduate culminating activity shall be outlined in the department or college workload policy.

4.2.6 Departmental Administrative Assignments

Departmental administrative assignments (e.g., chair, director, coordinator) during the academic year are included in the service activities. The reduction of teaching assignments based on administrative assignments is determined by each department with the dean's approval and subject to constraints imposed by the policies of the department and college.

4.3 Development of Workload Policies and Procedures within the Colleges and Departments

a. Each college and department is responsible for developing and maintaining a written workload policy that defines annual professional expectations and outlines the process for any variance from the standard teaching assignment defined in Section 4.2. College and department-specific workload policies must be approved by the college dean and provost, as well as any changes to such policies over time. There must be consistency within the hierarchy of policies and procedures. The department policies and procedures must be consistent with (and in some cases identical to) the college policies and procedures, and the college policies and procedures must be consistent with University policy.

b. At minimum, the policies and procedures developed by a department must require the following: (1) uniform application to all faculty members of the department; (2) for each faculty member, joint development (by the faculty member and department chair) of an annual written professional expectation document that is approved by the department chair and subject to review by the college dean; (3) linkage of the annual workload description to the annual faculty evaluation; and (4) definition of a mechanism for implementing workload modifications during the academic year as the need arises.

c. If the annual professional activities of an individual faculty member and/or collective faculty within a department/unit are inconsistent with this policy, the appropriate chair, dean, or provost will re-examine the professional expectations and bring them into conformity with this policy. Following this review, if necessary, adjustments will be made in resources to the department, in faculty compensation and/or in workload balance.

d. The faculty workload for a given academic year must be documented according to the guidelines in Section 4.6 and filed with the office of the dean prior to the start of the fall semester.

4.4 Workload Assignment in the Case of a Salary Buyout

As described in University Policy 6100 (Allocation and Distribution of Recovered Facilities and Administrative Costs), a faculty member can be paid (in whole or in part) by a sponsored project during an academic year under an arrangement known as "salary buyout." In the case of a salary buyout, the professional expectations of the faculty member will remain in place for the academic year, but the workload distribution shall include a redistribution of professional activity based on the terms of sponsored project, and it may not be possible to meet the distribution requirements amongst teaching, scholarship, and service stated in Section 4.2. The total academic year salary of the faculty member paid by the sponsor must be consistent with the effort assigned to the sponsored project.

4.5 Exceptions

This policy does not apply to faculty members on sabbatical leave, military leave, family medical leave, or sick leave.

4.6 Guidelines for Documentation of Faculty Workload

a. Documentation of faculty workload assignments for the upcoming academic year must be submitted to the dean prior to the start of the fall semester. Such documentation shall include the following items:

a. The percent of total workload assigned to teaching, scholarship, and service.

b. An explanation for any teaching assignment that is lower than the standard assignment of three, 3-credit courses per semester.

c. The course designation and course load value assigned for each course taught, if available. If specific course assignments for the following year have not been made, this information should be submitted to the dean when it is available.

d. An indication if the course is team-taught with another member of the faculty.

Any subsequent adjustments to a faculty member's assigned workload are subject to approval by the department chair and dean.

Revision History

December 2012; January 2020