

Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes for November 16, 2023

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

Members in Attendance: S. Alexander, K. Ankem, R. Brice, W. Darnell, K. Fuegen, R. Gall, J. Gilbert, P. Hare, K. Katkin, J. Mader-Meersman, A. Miller, M. Nakamura, J. Nolan, T. O'Callaghan, M. Providenti, H. Riffe, I. Saad, J. Wasburn-Moses, M. Whitson, M. Zacate

Guests in Attendance: J. Bloch, M. Cecil, J. Farrar, G. Hiles, S. Kim, A. Lipping, R. McDade, J. Vest

Members Not in Attendance: T. Anderson, L. Manchise, B. Russ, J. Sanburg, K. Sander, M. Washington

1. Call to Order, Adoption of the Agenda
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:16pm.
 - The agenda was approved as distributed.
2. Approval of the minutes from the November 2 meeting
 - The minutes from the November 2 meeting were approved as distributed.
3. Chair's Report and Announcements
 - There will be an open forum for faculty regent candidates tomorrow (11/17) at 2:00 in the UC Ballroom. A Zoom option is also available (see email from Grace Hiles). The forum will be recorded. Profiles of the four candidates are on the Faculty Senate website.
 - The search for a new Assistant Vice-President for Administration and Finance and CFO is underway. Jeremy Alltop will depart in January. The hope is to have a replacement by February or March. So far, there are about 15 applicants for this position.
 - Chris Curran and Jackie Emerine are leading a Faculty Senate workgroup that is tasked with looking at how Senators are elected from the newly formed schools. For example, where the College of Informatics used to have three departments, it now has two schools. Switching from departments to schools means that the College loses one Senator (not counting at-large seats). The focus of the workgroup has been on Senate representation. However, questions have arisen regarding representation on committees as well. Members of the working group are soliciting feedback from their respective units on the question of committee representation. Chris indicated that the overall goal is to make sure diverse faculty voices are heard and to make sure the size of the committee is appropriate for the committee's workload.
 - Jeff Chesnut, Director of CITE, is retiring next month. Jeff has assumed responsibility for making RPT dossiers available to committee members, chairs,

directors, deans, and the provost. With his impending retirement, questions have arisen regarding whether this is a good time to transition away from using Canvas for RPT. Watermark is a software program that can import information from student evaluations of instruction and publication databases. Watermark can also be customized by departments and schools. How do faculty seeking reappointment, tenure, or promotion feel about moving RPT out of Canvas?

- I will be seeking self-nominations from persons willing to serve on a subcommittee next spring. The subcommittee will make recommendations for revisions to the Grievances policy (Handbook section 14). The goal of these recommendations will be to provide greater clarity for the grievant and members of peer review committees.
- This will be our final meeting of the semester. The PCC will not meet in December.
- This will be my final year serving as chair. It has been an honor to serve.
- DISCUSSION:
 - There is not a specified transition time for a move from Canvas to Watermark – this is only a discussion right now.
 - Cost? J. Vest: No new net cost – the additional cost is balanced with salary savings from Jeff’s position.
 - Does there need to be a new administrator? The new system is automated and straight forward. The Provost’s Office already creates the data in spreadsheets that can be uploaded directly into Watermark.
 - Watermark is only going to replace Canvas for RPT. Otherwise, Canvas is not going away.
 - Candidates would need to reupload their documents.
 - Provost: there can be a demonstration for PCC. J. Vest can demonstrate the beta which has been customized for NKU.
 - A PCC member using Watermark for digital measures in APR reports being frustrated, system does not reflect our work and is time consuming. Canvas does not have a learning curve. The system needs to be user friendly.
 - Provost: There is a discussion of letting people already in Canvas continue and starting new people on Watermark.
 - J. Vest – the RPT system should be more user friendly than the APR system. There are also people who are regularly confused with RPT in Canvas.
 - Please keep faculty in the pipeline regarding these decisions.

4. Discussion item: Board of Regents approves six new varsity athletics programs to aid in enrollment efforts.

BACKGROUND:

The BoR voted 7-3 in favor of expanding athletics programs. Voting against: Faculty

Regent, Staff Regent, and Regent Zapp. Grant funding will be used to help with start-up costs. FY27-28 will be the first year without grant funding. The annual budget for the additional sports will be \$966K. The annual budget for the program expansion of 4 sports will be \$433K. Together, about \$1.4M increase to athletics annual budget starting in FY27-28. Argument in favor: addition of 250 students to campus, that tuition will offset the budget expansion, and more students on campus.

DISCUSSION:

- The amount of money the BoR will spend on anything that is not academics is stunning. The Regents said during the summer meeting that this is an action against the faculty in response to the faculty criticizing the job done by the BoR. They want to spend money just so that additional faculty will need to be let go. It is reported that when asked about this, NKU's President responded she wouldn't have made these decisions but they had already been made before she came to NKU.
- How do these numbers work? Is there a spreadsheet where these numbers work? How do we hold the BoR to account? Has athletics ever shared any of their revenues with academics?
- We are also struggling with the \$400K savings line in the Academic Commons that is not materializing.
 - Provost: We didn't want to and chose not to cut student facing lines – vacancies in other areas will help with that.
- Provost: The Faculty Senate President made a strong statement, and I agree, there are no instructional costs in the athletics plan. It costs money to educate 250 students.
- Senate President: The Senate President, Faculty, and Staff Regents, need to continue to ask these questions. We need the BoR to give an account. The BoR materials are worse than the presidential recommendation. The numbers presented were \$1.4M for expanded teams (150 students). If we were to hypothetically give 150 students a full ride (in-state), that's \$1.6M. There are 25 departmental senators – that would be 6 full ride scholarships per senator. Think about the difference if we had chosen instead to provide scholarships. We can track the university's subsidy to athletics and we will see it increase. We have the last 10 years of NCAA data including the number of students and the costs. We need to question the BoR about the results of this decision.
- Provost: They chose sports that don't have NCAA scholarship requirements for the most part.
- J. Vest: Some of these new students might have presidential scholarships; many are high achieving who will get merit scholarships. Provost: The contribution margin given by the BoR will decrease when these students get merit scholarships which are paid out of institutional funds.
- The costs for coaches and equipment will go up.

- Provost: The worrying thing is the instructional costs. For example, some Regents don't like YSA. YSA is about 250 students, 30 credit hours each, at \$93 per credit hour, total of \$697K. For YSA, all of their tuition goes toward instructional costs (it doesn't completely cover them, hence talking with KY legislators). In the athletics plan instructional costs are not included. Estimate \$200 per credit, 250 students, at 30 credits is about \$1.5M in instructional costs. There is no slack in the budget. There will need to be cuts to account for these new costs.
- The NCAA has changed the rules about student athlete compensation. At some institutions student athletes can be paid more than faculty are paid here. Do we need to look into this? Make a statement of our position now?
 - This isn't happening here yet and it won't be coming soon.
 - The lawsuit about this, if successful, would require athletes to be considered employees -- could we afford to have student athletes as employees?
- Is there a discussion about the costs of leaving D1? Provost: Haven't heard any discussion about that.
- We have to pay athletics out of instructional costs. We still haven't balanced the budget. When we cut instructional costs further, we reduce the number of students we can instruct which reduces tuition. This will spiral out of control. If there is another 3% budget cut, how much longer will we be around?
- Provost: We need to be very careful. These are new costs and we'll need to figure out what to cut. Easy decisions were made last year in November. Now we are down to impossible decisions.
- In the meeting Regent Perry told the Senate President that Academic Affairs needs to come up with its own plan.
- Provost: We're working on a marching band plan. It would include a lot of students, it's a student success community, costs are not very significant.
- Look at Knight-Newhouse NCAA data (<https://knightnewhousedata.org/nfs/northern-kentucky-university>) NKU pays \$13.53M or 82% of intercollegiate athletics. The Horizon league has institutions with student fees, NKU does not have student fees. This money can be used for instruction but we chose to pay \$13.53M to support intercollegiate athletics. The feasibility data for D1 in 2010 was based on having 22,520 students by 2020. D2 was \$4.5M, D1 would have been an additional \$3.2M with a student fee. The football proposal in 1997 was supposed to be paid through a \$25 student fee. In 2010, people believed we'd have 22,520 students by 2020.
 - The enrollment lines were going up in 2010.
 - But not the birth rate projections.
- Couldn't athletics and faculty discuss this? Certainly, athletics wants the faculty to serve their students well.
- Provost: The proposal was driven by the BoR, not athletics. Don't blame VP Roybal. The Provost made the point to the BoR that this plan is a \$1.5M cut to Academic Affairs. The BoR was not concerned. This will come out of the rainy-

day fund which is now down to \$90M. 45 days after the end of this year it will be about \$70M. Below \$60M is dangerous territory. We had a clear plan toward financial health but this does not help.

- Is this coming from Regent Boehne?
 - Provost: It's "coming from one place" [the place was not specified].
 - What can be done? It doesn't appear the KRS would prevent the BoR running the institution onto the ground financially. No rules in the CPA or SACS.
 - Most of this spending is up-front. When we ask the BoR to look at the result of the plan, the money is already gone.
 - The biggest cost to academics is in faculty and staff ("brain-drain").
 - There is also the academic coaching that athletics gets that doesn't go to other students.
 - Most of their coaching goes though Learning PLUS.
 - J. Vest: We have constantly innovated.
 - Provost: Did not like the BoR's conversation about how Academic Affairs is not innovative. Innovation is happening all the time. The reality is that there are now new expenses to cover. This is not a win for Academic Affairs.
 - Moving forward, we could put the innovation occurring in Academic Affairs in front of the BoR. Force the BoR to say "no" to plans from Academic Affairs.
 - It's good that the faculty and Provost have been innovative and have found new ways to generate money. But it's also a trap to chase innovation and let the basic things atrophy. We need to think about being good stewards of what we are already doing. Tactical suggestion: we need to use our voice as the Faculty Senate to speak the truth which they don't want to hear. The BoR's response to Faculty Senate's criticism means they are listening. We need to be careful about who we elect as the next Faculty Regent. Opinion/concern expressed that Faculty Regent candidate R. Boyce thinks too much like the other Regents. While the Governor isn't going to remove Regents, the Governor can appoint different Regents when terms expire. We should start thinking about who should be getting these appointments and weigh in.
 - Provost: Agrees about innovation as a trap. Has told the BoR that what we are really good at is educating students. NKU has graduated 7500 students in the last 2 years.
 - ACTION: The conversation will continue in the spring.
5. Unfinished business: Discussion of proposed changes to Faculty Handbook policies 1.3 (Full-time non-tenure-track renewable faculty) and 1.4 (Full-time non-tenure-track temporary faculty).

BACKGROUND:

The impetus for this proposal is the loss of many NTTRs last spring. The proposal would provide more job security for NTTRs with 2-3 year contracts; more NTTR opportunities for promotion; and new titles for NTT positions. At some point, but not yet, PCC will

vote on these proposed changes. Feedback on the proposal has included: perception that extending contracts for NTTRs is a threat to tenure (it could make NKU more like institutions that have multi-year contracts and no tenure); concern that it will become more difficult to cut expenses in a budget shortfall; feelings that NTTT and NTTR titles are “hurtful” by defining people by what they are not and make these faculty feel like “second-class citizens”; and that some NTTRs have expressed that an occasional \$1K raise is insufficient.

DISCUSSION:

- Question about section on hiring -- that they shouldn't have to reapply if APRs are good.
 - NTTRs have to follow the same procedure as TTs which requires a search process. Ts would be required to apply for R positions.
- Question about retroactively upgrading contracts.
 - This has not yet been discussed by PCC. This is about NTTRs (not NTTTs) and would those people be eligible for upgraded positions according to the suggestions under consideration.
- Comment about rank review and should there be more reviews for NTTs than for TTs have when there is neither a raise nor increased security connected to rank change: no one is reviewed more than TTs.
- NTT names not seen as hurtful by all NTTs.
- NTTs restricted from some committees for no reason. E.g., why can't NTTs serve on Student Appeals Committee?
 - Art & Design representative agrees – titles less important than other issues, i.e., compensation vis-à-vis role expectations. Opposition to automatic T to R conversion – search needed.
 - The suggestion to automatically convert T to R was stricken from the proposal in the last PCC meeting.
- Under the proposal, Rs would be eligible for promotion after 5 years. Compensation is not specified in the proposal. If the proposal is accepted, titles would change immediately.
- In a different section of the Handbook, we could define when an NTTR line should be converted to a permanent TT line.
- “Instructor” is not a bad title. We need to protect tenure, not as job security but for academic freedom. Suggestion to call NTTs “Instructors” and to not have 2-3 contracts for NTTRs.
- Art & Design would prefer “Teaching” not be a part of the NTT title. This could de-emphasis and alter perception of the teaching role of TTs/tenured faculty. Suggestion to use “Lecturer” for NTTR and “Visiting Assistant Professor” for NTTT.
- A guest attendee currently uses the term “Lecturer.” Would like to use the “Assistant Teaching Professor” title which might have greater credibility.

- Before Assistant Professor of Practice and Clinical Assistant Professor titles, NTTRs would come in as Lecturer. Lecturer I would automatically go to Lecturer II after 5 years.
- Request from guest to please consider offering sabbaticals to NTTRs.
- The R part is that if a faculty member isn't told they are not being renewed by 3/31, they are renewed for another year. Without that, Rs could be let go at any time.

6. Future Business

- None at this time.

7. Adjournment (4:40pm)

Submitted,

M. Providenti, Secretary

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Regents approve establishment of six new varsity athletics programs: Women's Stunt, Men's Swimming, Women's Swimming, Men's Triathlon, Women's Triathlon and Men's Volleyball.

BACKGROUND:

The Athletics Department has identified opportunities to establish six new varsity athletics programs and expand a handful of existing varsity and spirit programs. Working with the Provost, Chief Financial Officer and other senior leaders, Athletics has concluded that these actions will enhance the University's ability to recruit and retain excellent students and will contribute to the institution's efforts to stabilize and grow its financial resources. If approved, these steps will be taken in phases over the next academic years, with full implementation by 2026-2027. Athletics anticipates that upon completion, this strategy will result in an additional approximately 150 students on campus and tuition revenue. The proposed new varsity programs, with expected roster size, are as follows:

- Women's Stunt (40)
- Men's Swimming (30)
- Women's Swimming (30)
- Men's Triathlon (15)
- Women's Triathlon (15)
- Men's Volleyball (20)

Grant funding will be used to help with startup costs for the additional sports as the sports are phased in. Fiscal year 2027-28 will be the first year without grant funding, and the annual budget for the additional sports will be \$966,760. In addition, Athletics already is working to expand the roster sizes of the following varsity athletics and supporting spirit programs. Those programs are indicated below, with the number of additional students expected to participate by 2026-2027:

- Men's and Women's Track & Field (50)
- Cheerleading (10)
- Dance (10)
- Pep Band (30)

The program expansions will be fully implemented by 2026-27 adding 100 students in enrollment and tuition revenue. The annual budget for program expansion is \$433,240.19

BOARD OF REGENTS RESOLUTION ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW VARSITY ATHLETICS PROGRAMS:

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents is vested with authority to establish new athletics programs at the University, pursuant to section II.23 of its Bylaws; and WHEREAS, the Board has determined that establishment of six new varsity athletics programs will enhance the University's ability to recruit and retain excellent students and will contribute to the institution's financial improvement strategies.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Regents hereby approves establishment of the following new varsity athletics programs:

- Women's Stunt
- Men's Swimming
- Women's Swimming
- Men's Triathlon
- Women's Triathlon
- Men's Volleyball

College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) recommendations regarding hiring and promotion of faculty not in tenure-line positions

Recommendation:

- This is a policy for new hires in CHHS
 - Decisions will need to be made for current clinical faculty lines moving into prof of practice lines based on new promotion policy
- Changing title from Clinical Professor to Professor of Practice
 - This is not to be a mandatory promotion process or title change- Faculty will be “permitted” to go up for promotion
 - If faculty chooses not to change title or go up for promotion it will not result in a loss of title/position, faculty will forfeit the raise in pay
- Suggested promotion after 5 years
- 5% salary increase
- Criteria for promotion examples:
 - Meet requirement for teaching load as required by your department/school
 - Excellence in teaching demonstrated by creativity, use of HIPs, submit syllabi, etc
 - Credit for participating as PI on Grant projects
 - Working on grant as investigator is accepted with evidence of level of commitment/contributions
 - Service outside of NKU
 - University service
 - Infusion of DEI initiatives within teaching/service/scholarship
 - Scholarly presentations
 - Publications will count toward promotion but not required
 - Research activity will count toward promotion but not required
- Promotion Process:
 - To be included in the APR process on a yearly basis and create a final product for submission for promotion (at completion of 5 years)
 - Director will recommend for promotion to the Dean
 - Dean will have final approval of promotion

Feedback from colleagues of PCC representatives regarding proposed changes to NTTR and NTTT policies

1. Performance review:

- Lecturer/NTT/NTTR contracts through HR - According to the group, contracts are not written as actual contracts with performance-based roles, rights, or responsibilities. They are appointment letters only. Individuals in these roles are referred to the handbook, which is also undefined. The idea that lecturers, etc..." know what they are getting into" is not necessarily true.
- Questions on Rank Review.
 - Is it optional to ask to go from one teaching rank to another, or is this something automatic at specified times?
 - Should there be more reviews than required for TT (Assistant to Associate, Associate to Full), especially if no pay raise or job security is associated with the rank change?
 - If someone goes up for a rank change and is denied, then what happens (are they given feedback to apply again, or does that mean that they should be ineligible for another contract?)

2. Hiring:

- As a whole, the members of this group rejected the idea that they should have to reapply for a job they are already doing if their annual reviews have been acceptable.

3. Title changes:

- I think the use of the word "professor" should be reserved for tenured faculty w/ a terminal degree in their specialized field
- Perhaps "Instructor of Practice" w/ the idea of progression through assistant and associate. I like the idea of evaluation and chance to progress.
- I do not think the term "Distinguished" is appropriate because tenured faculty are not awarded that title—perhaps "full instructor of practice"?

4. Pragmatics:

- In institutional history, has NKU ever defined an ideal ratio of Tenure/Non-tenure track positions? Would such a definition alleviate concerns of tenure track faculty losing lines to these other appointments?
- Have we discussed the issue of retroactively updating all contracts that have already met the criteria established? Persons who have already served multiple contracts (someone who might already be in their 10th, 15th, 20th year).