

Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes for November 21, 2024

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

Members in Attendance: Deborah Amend, Amanda Brockman, Kathleen Fuegen, Shannon Fredrick, Roxanne Gall, Rich Gilson, Patrick Hare, Rachelle Janning, Alexis Miller, Jered Moses, Makoto Nakamura, Joe Nolan, Tamara O’Callaghan, Michael Providenti, Kathleen Quinn, Holly Riffe (Chair), Ihab Saad, Amal Said, Gang Sun, Emily Taylor, Jessica Taylor, Maggie Whitson

Guests in Attendance: Janel Bloch, Grace Hiles, Suk-hee Kim, Alar Lipping, Provost Diana McGill, Jason Vest

Members Not in Attendance: Whitney Darnell, Gina Fieler, Jaesook Gilbert, Kurt Sander, Jamie Strawn

1. Call to Order, Adoption of the Agenda
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:15pm.
 - The agenda was adopted as distributed.
2. Adoption of the minutes from the November 17, 2024 meeting
 - The November 7 minutes were adopted, despite typos, as distributed.
3. Chair’s Report and Announcements
 - Update on SGA request to use computers and phones. This would only be for note taking, not auto transcription.
DISCUSSION:
 - Can’t students already use their computers for note taking? RESPONSE: Use of computers may be restricted in some courses depending on how some faculty feel about the learning process. Automatic note taking alone does not aid learning.
 - PCC Chair will report back to SGA that there may still be some faculty in some classes with concerns.
 - SGA also wants access to syllabi from previous years.
DISCUSSION:
 - Students already have access to a syllabus bank.
 - SGA wants syllabi uploaded earlier to the bank.
 - The Provost’s office, Research Grants and Contracts, manage the syllabus bank. There have been delays getting the syllabus bank updated.
 - The syllabus bank is not updated to this fall but it is updated to last spring. The request for this semester’s syllabi just went out – maybe that request could be made sooner.

- Students need to learn about the syllabus bank in UNV 101 or orientation. It could also be added to the student resources page.

4. Vote/Discuss Research Misconduct

BACKGROUND: The motion introducing these revisions to the policy has been withdrawn. However, the discussion of text recycling will continue. The statute of limitations discussion is off the table.

- Some departments are fine not addressing this at the moment and are comfortable waiting until AI is being addressed in this policy.
- It is still unclear what text recycling is precisely. (Refer to the Text Recycling Research Project at Duke University: <https://textrecycling.org/>)
- “Self plagiarism” is not the current terminology. Plagiarism means “theft” and one cannot steal from one’s self. But there were concerns about text being reused in grant writing. The NSF and Duke have worked on improving the language.
- Changes: the word “self-plagiarize” has been removed and replaced with “text recycling in the form of duplicate publication.” Added: “common disciplinary practices and or guidelines may differ between academic units.” Added: “therefore may be followed as deemed appropriate by the individual units.” Major reworking of bullet point 4: “text recycling in the form of duplicate publication is the recycling of the entirety, or core content, of a published work for the same audience and or genre.”
- The changes do not include developmental recycling (materials from unpublished documents from the research and writing process), generative recycling (using a limited amount of published work in new work that offers a substantive and original intellectual contribution), or adaptive recycling (recycling the core content for a new readership or audience).
- Wouldn’t all of this be a non-issue if people cited themselves? RESPONSE: Look at the Duke University website. Details are determined by the practice of the discipline.
- Question about “translation of ones’ work would be included under context.” Would that be true of readership? The term context is broad and needs to be defined. RESPONSE: “Context” will be removed from the draft.
- Motion to accept the recommendation as amended with the removal of the term “context.” Seconded.

- VOTE: the motion carried by show of hands.

5. New Business

- Discuss potential agenda/needs for next AY
 - PCC should take up Grievances (Faculty Handbook 14). The first section defining grievances was recently approved. The next section to be addressed looks at the composition of the peer-review committee. There is a recommendation to form a subcommittee.
 - PCC should look at Handbook 3.2.14 (reconsideration at the level of initial negative recommendation, etc.). This section is confusing. RESPONSE:

This could be a matter of editing the text for clarity. In addition, there is a suggestion to create a flow chart.

- Handbook 3.2.5 (regarding supplemental materials) could also use some minor editing for clarity. Discussion about where and when supplemental materials could be added. Should adding supplemental materials be limited to the RPT committee? If materials are added at the dean's level, would the RPT committee be aware of that?
 - From 3.2.5: *"If material not submitted by the applicant is considered, the applicant must be notified immediately of this material in writing. Any supplemental material considered by the RPT committee becomes a part of the dossier going forward and should be clearly marked as supplemental material added by the committee."*
 - There had been a discussion to add similar language to the chair and dean levels, but, as of yet, no change has been made. There is no mention of the consideration of supplemental material in 3.2.7 and 3.2.8.
 - Suggestion to read through entire section for consistency. This can be referred to Exec Committee and J. Bloch has experience with this.
 - If the candidate is informed, can the candidate object? RESPONSE: Yes, in a reconsideration at that level.
- Faculty don't know where to go for support if, for example, students object to course materials. Faculty in other states have received death threats. Should faculty get professional liability insurance? Is there an office faculty can go to?
 - University Counsel has assured faculty that they are indemnified.
 - The student code of conduct could address some of this.
 - There is concern about efforts to ban books that may be taught on campus.
 - J. Vest: Faculty training will be handled by HR. Student complaints are considered by the dean and chair. The concerns are forwarded to the faculty member and the dean of students meets with the student. The content of a course is up to a faculty member. If there is a curriculum issue, that is discussed between the chair and the faculty member. If there are issues in the classroom, a report can be submitted through "help a Norse."
 - Faculty would like to see training or workshops on dealing with these issues. Staff from the Office of Student Accessibility and Student Conduct and Wellness have talked to departments – faculty would like more of that.
- There are concerns about how Professor of Practice is defined in the Handbook as compared with Teaching Professor.

- Some faculty don't understand the different ranks and how faculty get appointed to them. RESPONSE: Academic units need to create their own guidelines for this.
 - PCC needs to be more informed about AI.
 - The Academic Integrity Policy addresses AI and that will be introduced by TEEC in Senate on 11/25/24. This policy could be voted in December. There was a request for more time before the vote. Suggestion to vote in January 2025.
 - Morale issues?
 - There haven't been cost of living increases or raises in a long time. Raises would increase morale temporarily.
 - Workload needs to be addressed for long-term morale. There has been inequality in workload for a long time. RESPONSE: Deans Council and Counsel of Chairs have a draft proposal that will soon come to PCC.
 - Communication and Parking. Landrum lot cut in half for construction until 2027. This was not announced until the day before the lot was blocked off. Parking rates have increased but pay has not. This is also an inconvenience to students who have to walk further to get around the construction.
 - Can the Provost's Office look at timely information distribution?
 - There was concern about responses from admins regarding discussions concerning raises. The response "what would you like for us to cut to pay for it" sews division and discord.
 - PCC will cancel the December 5, 2024 meeting
6. Adjournment (4:27)

Submitted,
M. Providenti, Secretary