

Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes for January 15, 2026

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

Members in Attendance: Deborah Amend, Ali Balapour, Eric Barker, Ada Cenkci, Whittney Darnell, Jaesook Gilbert, Allyson Graf, Patrick Hare, Shelli Janning, Jang-Chul Kim, Julie Mader-Meersman, Jered Moses, Makoto Nakamura, Joe Nolan, Michael Providenti, Tamara O'Callaghan, Kathleen Quinn, Holly Riffe (Chair), David Tataw, Jessica Taylor, Monica Wakefield, Maggie Whitson, Matt Zacate

Guests in Attendance: Provost Diana McGill, Janel Bloch, Faculty Senate President Jacqueline Emerine, Grace Hiles, Suk-hee Kim, Alar Lipping, Danielle McDonald, Steve Slone

Members Not in Attendance: Gina Fieler, Erin Kelley, Dee Mornah, Ihab Saad, Kurt Sander

1. Call to Order, Adoption of the Agenda
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:16pm.
 - The agenda item regarding the Free Expression Policy was moved to the 2/5/26 PCC meeting.
 - The Provost would like to add an agenda item regarding the date for notification of non-renewal of appointment in Faculty Handbook section 1.3.
 - The agenda was adopted as modified.
2. Adoption of the minutes from the November 20, 2026 meeting.
 - The adoption of the minutes was skipped.
3. Chair's Report and Announcements
 - Welcome back!
 - Posthumous emeritus designation passed Senate and will go the the BoR in March.
 - Looking for faculty to serve on the search for associate registrar. Let Angela Calhoun know if you are willing to serve on the committee.
 - Rachele Janning updated the PCC about the subcommittee looking at the accessibility of physical accommodations in the classroom (e.g., being able to get on the stage, use a Podium, get in and out of the classroom safely). The subcommittee met with Kathy Theobald and Mary Paula Schuh. There is no budget for this. However, simple modifications can be made if there is justification, and the changes are not cost prohibitive. The subcommittee members have an accessibility checklist and list of assigned buildings and classrooms with a deadline of spring break. Report to follow. The subcommittee is reaching out to the Office of Accessibility for a potential focus group.

- Please take this back to your units to seek feedback and ask for additional volunteers who may wish to participate. Contact Rachelle Janning to participate.
- There was a question about departments discussing the Handbook. Departments and schools have representation in making Handbook policies. Departments make the rules needed by a department to comply with a specific policy in the Handbook. Department policies cannot supersede the Handbook.
- Question: Can faculty still buy their old laptops when they are surplus? If the policy has changed, there was not an announcement. A: The Provost indicated that there is a reason why faculty cannot buy their old surplus PCs and that reason will be provided in a future update.

4. Old Business

- Discussion: Free Expression policy (discussion delayed until the 2/5/26 PCC meeting or after)
- Discussion: Update 2.11 Emeritus Faculty Appointments (to include Emerita option)
 - There was a request to change “appointment” to “designation” in the title (deceased faculty cannot hold an appointment).
 - The title was changed to “EMERITI” for concision.
 - The last sentence was changed “The default title will be “emeritus” while “emerita” may also be requested by the faculty member.”
 - Suggestion: remove the word “also” from the added sentence and end of first paragraph.
 - The first sentence “...may nominate a retiring or retired faculty member...” will be updated with the revision for posthumous emeritus designation that passed Senate in 2025 and is going to the Board for approval. The most up-to-date version is not yet published in the Handbook. The change that passed Senate was “retiring, retired, or deceased.”
 - Suggestion to revise “...may nominate a retiring or retired faculty member...” to “...may nominate a retiring or retired faculty members...”
 - In the first sentence of 2.11, “appointment to” will be “designation as.”
 - Suggested revisions to 2.11:
 - 2.11. EMERITUS FACULTY APPOINTMENTS DESIGNATION
Revised: Fac. Sen., 1.16.2020/BoR, 3.18.2020: Clarified the process and removed requirement of tenure.
 A department, school, or program faculty may nominate a retiring, or retired, or deceased faculty members for appointment to designation as an emeritus status. In order to be nominated, the retiring or retired person must hold (or have held) academic rank. Normally, a person will have served the University for a long period in order to be appointed. Such a nomination will be given to the dean by the chair or director, forwarded to the provost, and then to the president. The chair or director, dean, and the provost may make their own recommendations

about the appointment of the faculty member when forwarding the nomination. The default title will be “emeritus” while “emerita” may also be requested by the faculty member.

Emeritus status may be conferred only by the Board of Regents, and then only upon recommendation by the president (see Section 1.7.1 “Emeritus Faculty”).

- There is a need to update Handbook 1.7.1: “emeritus faculty” needs to be updated to “emeriti faculty.”

- Suggested revisions to 1.7.1:

- 1.7.1. Emeritus Faculty

Revised: Fac. Sen., 1.16.2020/BoR, 3.18.2020: Clarified the process and removed requirement of tenure.

The An “emeritus” designation is a way of honoring retired or deceased faculty or administrators who held faculty rank.

1.7.1.1 ~~Such persons hold the faculty title and rank held immediately prior to their retirement, followed by the title “emeritus.”~~ “Emeritus” status designations may be granted upon or after retirement and is conferred by the Board of Regents, following the process set forth in Section 2.11 “Emeritus Faculty Appointments Designation.” Those granted emeritus status shall hold the faculty title and rank held immediately prior to their retirement, followed by the title “emeritus” or “emerita”.

1.7.1.2 “Posthumous Emeritus” status may be granted upon or after death and is conferred by the Board of Regents, following the process set forth in Section 2.11 “Emeritus Faculty Appointments Designation.”

- Suggestion to revise 1.7.1 and what follows (1.7.1.1 and 1.7.1.2) to “Emeriti designation is a way of honoring retired or deceased faculty or administrators who held faculty rank. See section 2.11 for more details...” in order to eliminate redundancy with 2.11.

- This suggestion appears to have the most support regarding how to edit section 1.7.1.

- There is a committee looking at the Handbook to eliminate redundancies like this. That will take a while so edits like these should happen in the meantime.

- Suggestion for the term “Emerit” as a gender-neutral alternative.

- Suggestion to use an entirely new term.

- Section 2.11 will be amended and voted on in the next PCC meeting.

5. New Business

- The date for notification of non-renewal of appointment in Faculty Handbook section 1.3.

- From Section 1.3: “Notification of non-renewal of appointment must be made to the faculty member by March 31.”

- This sentence has created difficulty for simultaneously managing the budget and faculty morale.
- The discussion is to consider changing the date. Legislators do not finish their session until April 15 so there is no way to know the budget by March 31. There is a suggestion to consider May 1 as the date of notification.
- As an example, in 2018, due to the threat of catastrophic cuts to state appropriations, all non-tenure track (the terminology at the time) faculty were sent letters stating their positions may not be approved. However, no cuts to faculty due to the budget happened that year. The letters sent by the Provost, at that time a Dean, stated “WE ARE ONLY SENDING THESE LETTERS BECAUSE THE HANDBOOK HAS OUR HANDS TIED.”
- With a May 1 notification date, letters, if needed, would only be sent to faculty who might be affected.
- DISCUSSION
 - Does this change, at this time, suggest cuts coming this spring? Response: There is no indication from legislators at this point about what may happen with the state education budget. This is not about a potential cut, it is about not sending letters.
 - The problem with changing the date is that faculty have one less month to find another position. Some faculty would prefer that additional notice.
 - Suggestion for “as soon as March 31 but no later than May 1.” If “as soon as possible” language is developed, “as soon as possible” would need to be defined. Response: If a CTP faculty member is not being rehired for performance or enrollment reasons, they can be notified as early as January.
 - The letters sent in 2018 were devastating to morale. Some faculty would prefer to wait 4 weeks for a definitive answer rather than a maybe.
 - Are there HR rules that indicate employers need to give 30- or 60-day notice before layoffs? Response: That question can be referred to HR.
 - The suggestion is to change “by March 31” to “by May 1.”
- Have 2- and 3-year cycles for teaching faculty been implemented? (Handbook section 1.3 Full-Time Teaching Faculty, second paragraph)
 - The Provost responded that there are problems with how this section is written. The section refers to contracts (there are no contracts). Also, everything is contingent on support from “the department/program chair and dean/director/vice provost.”
 - If no one is currently getting a 2- or 3-year contract, and that is in the Handbook, that needs to be addressed.
 - Can we replace “contracts” with “appointments?”

- How can this section be operationalized? Who gets a 2- or 3-year appointment? What happens if there is a budget cut -- could no one on a 2- or 3-year contract be released?
- We will limit the current discussion to the March 31/May 1 date.
- This will be discussed again and potentially voted on in the next meeting with a draft language.
- Discuss this issue with your departments.

6. Announcements

- From the Provost: The Faculty Separation Program is moving forward and will have a positive budgetary impact but with all the negatives that are associated with loss of knowledge and experience.

7. Adjournment (4:32pm)

PCC Policy Charge as stated in the FS Constitution:

NKU Faculty Senate Constitution

The following duties shall be the specific responsibility of the Professional Concerns Committee:

- 1) It shall provide a forum for the faculty to propose policy and to discuss all matters relating to the wellbeing of the University.
- 2) It shall review, evaluate, and make recommendations concerning policies relating to the general academic and professional concerns of the faculty, both full and part-time.
- 3) It shall review, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding all policies procedures and practices related to governance of the university.

Submitted,
M. Providenti, Secretary

2.11. EMERITI FACULTY Designation

A department, school, or program faculty may nominate a retiring or retired faculty member for appointment to emeriti status. In order to be nominated, the retiring or retired person must hold academic rank. Normally, a person will have served the University for a long period in order to be appointed. Such a nomination will be given to the dean by the chair or director, forwarded to the provost, and then to the president. The chair or director, dean, and the provost may make their own recommendations about the appointment of the faculty member when forwarding the nomination. The default title will be “emeritus” while “emerita” may also be requested by the faculty member.

Emeriti status may be conferred only by the Board of Regents, and then only upon recommendation by the president (see Section 1.7.1 “Emeritus Faculty”).