

Summary Update Number 9, December 20, 2004

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The purpose of this and previous Summary Updates is to keep all Faculty informed of recent events that have occurred and of initiatives currently in progress. All Summary Updates may be found on the webpage for the Faculty Council.

Non-tenure Clinical Faculty Track Approved by Council

At the December 14 meeting, the Faculty Council approved a recommendation to President Schmidly to establish non-tenure track appointments for clinical faculty in the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences and OSU Center for Health Sciences. A brief description of the responsibilities of and the restrictions on these faculty follows:

1. The ranks for clinical faculty carry the titles Clinical Instructor, Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, and Clinical Professor. Each unit appointing such faculty shall have policies and procedures in place for recruitment, evaluation, and promotion.
2. Clinical appointments must be approved by the unit administrator, Dean, Provost, President, and the Board of Regents. The appointments are renewable appointments not subject to the seven-year probationary period applicable to tenure-track faculty. Tenure cannot be awarded to faculty in these position, but appointees may apply for a tenure-track position should one become available. The length of appointment for clinical faculty will be determined by the academic unit administrator, following appropriate faculty counsel and based on the availability of funds. Appointments automatically expire at the time specified in the original appointment letter.
3. The number of such faculty shall be limited to no more than 50% of the total tenured and tenure-track faculty expressed in FTE of the OSU Center for Health Sciences and 25% of the total tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences.
4. Initial salary offers will not exceed those of their disciplinary peers at Oklahoma State University. Clinical faculty will participate in the annual A&D process. Performance criteria will be similar to those for tenure-track faculty except that clinical teaching and patient care will be the primary performance indicators.
5. Salary increases and promotion may be awarded. Continuation of employment during the term of appointment will depend upon satisfactory performance and availability of funding. Reappointments are judged in the same manner. At least three-months notice of non-reappointment will be given for clinical faculty on one-year appointments and twelve months for faculty on more than one-year appointments.
6. Clinical faculty shall not be eligible to participate in sabbatical leaves, serve on the Faculty Council, Graduate Faculty Council, and on those committees that confer voting privileges on

matters of reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Other General Faculty voting privileges shall be as described in Appendix A, Charter and Bylaws of the General Faculty, Article I, Section 1.

A more detailed description of these appointments may be found in the minutes of the Faculty Council for December 14th.

General Faculty Votes on Proposed Changes to Appendices A and B

(ATTENTION - IMPORTANT NOTICE)

On January 10th, all eligible general faculty should receive ballots on which to vote for the proposed changes to Appendix A, the Charter and Bylaws of the General Faculty, and Appendix B, the Bylaws of the Faculty Council. These changes were approved by the Faculty Council at the November 9 meeting and discussed by the General Faculty at their November 23 meeting. The complete text of the proposals can be found by clicking on the link provided at the top-center of the Faculty Council's webpage. A summary of these changes can be found in Summary Update Number 7 that is posted on the Faculty Council's webpage.

All votes must be received by Diane Lafollette's office by January 18th. Therefore, you need to be prepared to vote and return your ballots expeditiously after they are received on January 10.

General Faculty Votes on Proposed Changes to Appendix D

(ATTENTION - IMPORTANT NOTICE)

A committee of faculty and administration has been working for almost a year revising the policy document dealing with matters of Appointments, Tenure, and Promotion that was called Appendix D of the Faculty Handbook. The new document will be called the Faculty Policy Statement.

The initial draft of the revisions has been discussed in several college meetings chaired by the Provost. The resulting input from faculty and administration has been received by the original committee and a second draft prepared. This draft has been examined by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council after hearing comments from Professor Kay Bull, who examined the document from the point of view of AAUP standards, and from Professor Linda Austin, who is a member of the Appendix D Committee. The basic thrust of the revisions is to separate the implementation procedures from the Faculty Policy Statement and move the procedures to a different part of the Faculty Handbook. The revisions also include statements describing the new Research Professorships that were approved earlier this year and the Clinical Professorships that have just been approved by the Council.

At present, the document has been referred to the Faculty Committee of the Council chaired by Professor Linda Austin, English. This committee has been charged to report its recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Council at our meeting on February 1. I anticipate that the Faculty Council will consider the proposal and vote on February 8. Immediately following the Council's vote, the matter will be presented to the General Faculty for mail-in vote. You will have one week to return your ballot so you need to be prepared in advance. The Regents will consider the proposal at their March 4 meeting.

The Faculty Council has posted two versions of the proposed Faculty Policy Statement on its website. The first is a clean version of the final draft. The second tracks the additions, deletions, and relocations relative to the original Appendix D document via text highlighting and side boxes. I urge each of you to study these documents and convey any concerns or suggestions you have to Dr. Linda Austin, English. You may also convey your comments to me, Lionel Raff, Chemistry, and I will see that they are transmitted to the Faculty Committee.

Relocation of Journals Published Prior to 1980 to the Library Annex

This issue has been extensively discussed in Summary Updates Number 7 and 8. These are both posted on the Faculty Council's webpage and may be accessed by clicking on "Updates" on the left side of the front page of the site. At issue is whether or not the approximately 140,000 journal volumes that have been moved to the Annex should be returned to the main Library. In Summary Update Number 7, I asked all faculty to send me an email indicating whether you support the Library's decision to relocate these journals to the Annex or oppose it. The vote count at the moment is 139 responses oppose the relocation while 7 support it. These responses come from 43 different departments. Based on the sample of 146 responses, only one of these departments has a majority of faculty that support the relocation of the journals.

We currently have two meetings scheduled to discuss this issue and attempt to reach an acceptable compromise. The first will be a small meeting between Library and University Administration, Faculty, and some key staff. This will be held probably on January 6. Later in the month, on January 21, an open meeting will be held to address the issue. I shall keep you informed of developments.

Other Pending Initiatives and Actions

Academic Standards and Policies Committee:

The Academic Standards and Policies Committee, chaired by Professor Mark Rockley, is currently working on recommendations to address grade inflation, the use of student teaching evaluations, and academic grade appeals. Dr. Rockley has informed me that these recommendations will probably be forthcoming in February or March of 2005.

Grade inflation affects all colleges at OSU. The Committee has obtained statistics for both the average lower division and upper division grades given in each college. These now range from 2.8 to 3.3 for lower division courses and even higher for upper division. Recommendations being considered by the Committee to address this problem include (1) the reporting by faculty of rank-in-class for each course in addition to the usual A, B, C, D, or F grades, (2) a restriction on the permitted use of student teaching evaluations for purposes of raises, reappointment, tenure, and promotion, and (3) a revision of drop policies. In 1982, the Faculty Council passed a recommendation to the President for restrictions on the use of student teaching evaluations, but the Administration refused to approve it.

At present, decisions by the Academic Appeals Board are not subject to review or appeal. This practice has led to several miscarriages of justice in the past two years. The Academic Standards and Policies Committee is considering a recommendation to change the procedure for grade appeals. The form the final recommendation will take remains to be seen.

Retirement and Fringe Benefits Committee (RFBC)

There is some good news and some not-so-good news. The not-so-good news is that the request to the IRS to obtain permission to implement the provisions of House Bill 2226 that permit current employees to opt out of OTRS for the Alternate Retirement Program (ARP), which will be very similar to the current TIAA-CREF program, has not yet been submitted. Assistant Vice President Anne Matoy, Human Resources (HR), reported to the RFBC that the delay is primarily due to the legal counsel for OTRS requiring that the IRS request be very complete and detailed. Hopefully, this issue will be resolved in the near future.

There is good news on two initiatives. First, HR has sent out requests to all Big XII universities requesting information about their health care benefits plan for employees. This is in accord with the recommendation passed by Faculty Council earlier this fall. To date, two universities have responded. Second, the recommendation to provide additional access of employees to their vested TIAA-CREF accounts, which was passed at the October Faculty Council meeting, has been approved by the OSU Board of Regents and is near fruition. (The details of this recommendation may be found in Summary Update Number 6.) Ms. Matoy estimated that monies in employee 403B accounts will be available under this plan shortly after the first of the new year. Monies held in 401A newer accounts will take longer since IRS approval is required. The best news is that employee access is going to be enhanced over that suggested by the recommendation passed at the October meeting. The Administration's rationale in limiting withdrawals after an employee qualifies for retirement but continues to work to 1/20 of the account balance per year was to ensure that a lifetime income would be available to the employee. Since this can also be achieved if the employee opts to annuitize their TIAA-CREF account, Ms. Matoy indicated that the Administration plans to permit such annuitization even in cases where the employee continues to work.