



4 May 2022

TO: Washington State University (WSU) Faculty Senate
Dr. Kirk Schulz, President
Dr. Elizabeth Chilton, Provost

FROM: Dr. Tracy Klein, Co-chair, WSU Faculty Status Committee
Dr. Keri McCarthy, Co-chair, WSU Faculty Status Committee

Report of the Faculty Status Committee: Academic Year 2021-22

Charge and Purpose

Pursuant to Section II.E.4.a.5 of the Washington State University (WSU) Faculty Manual, we are reporting the activities of the WSU Faculty Status Committee (FSC) for the 2021-2022 academic year. The FSC is an independent investigative committee elected by the WSU faculty at large. The committee reports and makes recommendations directly to the WSU President. Under provisions of the WSU Faculty Manual, a faculty member may appeal non-reappointment, denial of tenure, or deferral of promotion to the FSC. Historically, tenure denials have been the most common type of FSC case. FSC can also be asked to investigate the non-renewal of a faculty member following the comprehensive third-year review, or a tenured faculty member's termination of employment following elimination of a program due to financial exigency or discontinuance of a program or department. FSC also nominates members of the Faculty Hearing Panel and arranges for investigations and hearings prior to disciplinary action. Finally, other types of decisions that a faculty member believes may violate the Faculty Manual may be appealed to the FSC. FSC members serve three-year terms that end on August 15th.

FSC's investigations are thorough, confidential, and open-ended. Reports of the findings of an FSC investigation are provided only to the appellant and to the President. Under provisions of the Faculty Manual, the FSC can make its own rules of procedure but must meet certain timelines for handling a case. The specific provisions in the Faculty Manual have been approved by the Faculty Senate, the university administration, and the WSU Board of Regents; they should be regarded as authoritative. Further information on FSC's composition, powers, and operations is available in the Faculty Manual, Section I.E.4.

Membership:

Current FSC members, the year they rotate off the committee, and their affiliation:

Tracy Klein (2023)

Co-Chair
College of Nursing
taklein@wsu.edu
360-546-9142

Keri McCarthy (2022)

Co-Chair
School of Music
kmccarthy@wsu.edu
509-335-7966

Sabine Davis (2022)

School of Languages, Cultures and Race
davissj@wsu.edu
335-2751

R. Dave Evans (2022)

School of Biological Sciences
rdevans@wsu.edu
509-335-7466

Mary Paine (2022)

Pharmaceutical Sciences
mary.paine@wsu.edu
509-335-7759

Robin Bond (2023)

Honors College
rsbond@wsu.edu

Yonas Demissie (2023)

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
y.demissie@wsu.edu
509-372-7344

Gabriella Reznowski (2023)

WSU Libraries

reznowski@wsu.edu

335-5596

Rebecca Cooney (2024)

College of Communication

Rebecca.cooney@wsu.edu

509-335-3911

Markus Flury (2024)

Crop and Soil Science

flury@wsu.edu

253-445-4522

Alla Kostyukova (2024)

Chemical Engineering and Biological Engineering

Alla.kostyukova@wsu.edu

509-335-1888

Xiuyu Wang (2024)

History

xiuyuwang@wsu.edu

360-546-9174

A ballot to replace members who are finishing their terms was released by the Provost's office on April 19, 2022. Elected new members and those who were not elected were notified on May 4, 2022, and all elected have accepted appointments. New members are: Career-track committee member Sergey Lapin and Tenure-track committee members AG Rud; Aaron Oforlea and Weimin Li.

Appeals:

The FSC did not receive any appeals during this academic year. However, a subcommittee of FSC members and tenured non-FSC members was appointed to a Faculty Hearing Committee chaired by Dr. Douglas Call with AAG Nathan Deen to review a faculty disciplinary case which was scheduled for April-May 2022. This case has subsequently been postponed for a future date yet to be determined.

Recommendations:

Some problems presented this year persist from previous years and require attention by the provost and/or the Faculty Senate:

1. We continue to emphasize that the process of annual review has been confusing to faculty and administrators, particularly considering multiple potential COVID extensions. In addition to the intensive annual review in the third year, a career progress report is to be provided to the faculty member in their third year (required by the faculty manual, section III.C.4.3.d), and an explicit meeting between the Chair/Director and the faculty member should take place where the Career Progress Report is discussed. The faculty member, in their third year, should receive a copy of their annual intensive evaluation as well as a copy of their Career Progress Report.
2. We continue to recommend that a mentoring committee (or at minimum a mentor) is necessary for a given faculty member (career and tenure track), whether seeking tenure and promotion (i.e., assistant professor) or promotion (i.e., associate professor) in addition to the support and guidance of relevant departmental guidelines. We continue to encourage each unit carefully review the roles and responsibilities of a mentoring committee in the development of a given faculty member, updating, and clarifying as needed. Mentoring responsibilities should be clearly delineated in writing, preferably in the unit manual. The role of the mentor in providing the Chair/Director input in the annual evaluation process should also be explicitly stated. There have been gaps also reported from individual colleges regarding guidance on progression from associate to full professor.
3. The Faculty Status Committee scope is changing to continue to incorporate career track promotion. We advise periodic review of bylaws to address inclusion in promotion guidance.