Faculty Senate Forum
Contract Renewal & Tenure/Promotion Part II
Wednesday, October 21, 2015
Ohia 118
Notes by Susan Inouye, Faculty Senate Member-at-Large and Michelle Sturges, Faculty Senate
Secretary

Facilitated by Jeff Nathan, Evaluation Committee Chair, with the assistance of Committee members Leigh Dooley and Susan Dik.

The first Faculty Senate Forum on Contract Renewal & Tenure/Promotion (CR&TP) was held in Spring 2015. Discussion at the forum raised a number of faculty- and campus-specific issues, some falling under the purview of UHPA, some falling under the purview of the College or the UHCC System. The second Contract Renewal & Tenure/Promotion Forum was intended to provide an opportunity for UHPA representatives, the Evaluation Committee, and faculty in the audience to respond to some of the issues raised and propose recommendations.

Discussion of which issues have top priority
Facilitated by Leigh Dooley

The Evaluation Committee proposed a faculty survey to rank issues raised at the first CR&TP forum in order to determine which items to pursue. The issues included in the survey were action items taken from the notes of the first CR&TP forum. The Evaluation Committee proposed focusing on those issues that received majority support as being important.

Some of the possible issues to be included in the survey were:
- eCafe:
    - At the first CR&TP forum, there was discussion of ways to assist faculty with analyzing and presenting eCafe evaluation data. During that discussion, the then-head of CELTT offered to look into whether there were additional options within the eCafe system for compiling and presenting data. That investigation did not take place, and it is unclear whether CELTT has the resources to pursue such a project at this time.
    - Faculty who need to discuss evaluation data that pre-dates eCafe implementation in addition to their eCafe data face a special problem because eCafe uses a 5-point scale, but the paper evaluation system that preceded eCafe used a 4-point scale.
    - Some faculty feel that eCafe is a bad tool that has lots of problems statistically. It is the main tool faculty use for collecting data they are judged on, but the quality of the data is worrisome. Perhaps it is time to reassess eCafe or give it a closer look.

- Formally ask the Chancellor to respond to the Contract Renewal Guidelines revision proposed by Faculty Senate in 2010. (It was suggested that this item not be included in the survey because a formal request has already been made.)

- Work with the Chancellor to arrange for annually-implemented training for DPCs, CPCs, and TPRCs so that the effectiveness of these review committees is maximized. This idea has already been pursued. Administration said it was not under their purview. UHPA said the same thing. It might require a faculty initiative. Leigh Dooley once organized a TPRC training session that was presented at a number of campuses. The Office of the Vice President for Community Colleges (VPCC) paid for the trainers to travel to neighbor islands in addition to training on Oahu.

- UHPA-related issues:
  - <u>Tenure/Promotion</u>: Request UHPA's assistance in arranging for a revision – for the sake of clarity – of the tenure/promotion guidelines in rank expectations, perhaps in bullet form. UHPA director Sally Pestana said she was not sure such a revision would be under UHPA control, but they can provide assistance and advocacy. One suggestion was that the request go to management (the VPCC). Another suggestion was that the request go to both the VPCC and UHPA, and be worded that UHPA and the VPCC work in concert or collaborate – putting the onus on both parties.

  - <u>Contract Renewal</u>: Request UHPA consider for the next contract a restoration of the requirement for annual contract renewal requests for tenure-track faculty (non-tenure-track faculty already must do annual contract renewals). Questions raised: Are annual contract renewals already an option under the current contract? Why would annual contract renewals be preferable? Answer: To give the faculty member more feedback and make it easier to keep track of what they are doing. To give review committees more opportunity to provide feedback and work with the faculty member. But having two years between contract renewal requests gives a faculty member more time to respond to feedback. Sally Pestana recalled that the requirement was removed because it was considered too onerous to do contract renewals annually, both for the faculty member and the reviewing committees.

    It was asked if the increasing size of dossiers was part of the problem. If an annual contract renewal is encouraged, then the campus might want to be more stringent in enforcing the page limit. There is no systemwide page limit, each campus makes its own recommendation. Kapiʻolani's guidelines say the dossier should not exceed 6 double-spaced pages, but these days most contract renewal applications are much longer. Many feel that with all the areas faculty are expected to address as part of contract renewal, limiting to 6 double-spaced pages is not possible. When asked about long dossiers, VCAA Pagotto has stated the guidelines are just guidelines and a reviewing

committee is not allowed to stop reading at page 6. In preparation for the forum, Sally Pestana had reviewed DPC guidelines from a number of UH institutions posted at the UHPA website. She pointed out that the Cancer Center limits theirs to 8 pages (and they are curing cancer).

Some faculty feel the quality of their teaching goes down in semesters when they are working on their dossiers. It was observed that doing contract renewals annually made it much easier to do subsequent tenure and promotion dossiers. Maybe annual contract renewals shouldn't be required, but optional. Maybe faculty at risk would want to do extra contract renewals. But who decides who those people are? It could be a decision made by a department chair and an individual faculty member in consultation.

With respect to long contract renewal dossiers, it was asked who has the authority to say, "Much too long. Take it back." The answer was, nobody has that authority. But such incidents have happened. In one instance, the faculty member didn't know he/she had the right to say, "No, you don't have the right to tell me that." It was the Dean who rejected the document and said to cut out 38 pages. An initiative needs to go forward to stop that sort of thing. It's like we need a CR &TP ombudsman for mediating such disputes in close consultation.

- o Tenure/Promotion: Request UHPA help orchestrate the development and open sharing of a consistent set of criteria to be used by TPRCs in reviewing T/P dossiers. Perhaps a consistent set of criteria should be developed for all levels of review.

- o New faculty: Encourage departments to form Tenure/First Promotion committees for every new full-time faculty member hired, to guide the faculty member to tenure or first promotion.

Discussion of the Tenure/Promotion (T/P) Process
Facilitated by Susan Dik

Jeff Nathan asked if anyone had any concerns about the process.

One person reported attending the Chancellor's T/P workshop. There was no mention that applicants have to get a signature from their Dean or equivalent certifying that they are eligible to apply. She found out about that requirement kind of accidentally. There is no clear guide on the required paperwork. Information seems to be piecemeal. The Ohana site has some of the information including a flowchart created by VCAA Pagotto that talks about the paperwork process – but if people don't know to look for things there, the items are of no help. The difficulty in knowing how to find information may be why the T/P C4ward is so huge. We need to gather all of the information in one place and make it available via multiple venues. We also need to market the information and explain what it all means.

If there were T/P committees, they could help faculty with learning about the process and where to find important information. Does the T/P C4ward play that role? Since the C4ward is optional and not everyone can attend, it can't be responsible for meeting the needs of everyone. But a T/P committee would be one more committee people would have to serve on. Why duplicate effort when there is a C4ward? If T/P committees were implemented, the C4ward would probably go away.

One problem with the T/P application process is there are no guidelines on things like pagination etc. As a result, people get information that is inconsistent. We either trust the faculty to include what they need or we don't trust them and have specific guidelines. Likewise, there is no clear information on peer evaluations so everyone does it differently. Some departments require 2 peer evaluations a year, others 1 peer evaluation a year. The idea was to let faculty express their expertise as they choose, so no guidelines. But we should have common agreement. The problem extends beyond this campus – different campuses have different standards.

Jim Kardash has stated that UHPA would not be in favor of establishing more specific criteria. VCAA Pagotto has said that the Administration would also not be in favor of establishing more specific criteria. Sally Pestana noted that stricter criteria can mean giving away academic freedom. She observed that the UH Cancer Center and the UH Law School DPC guidelines do include specific criteria, and departments at Kapiʻolani can include similar criteria in their departmental guidelines. But adopting more specific criteria probably isn't something that can be implemented systemwide.

Susan Dik proposed asking all departments to send their criteria to see if there is common ground. If there is common ground, those could be minimum criteria that all departments use. Departments can add criteria in addition to the minimum shared criteria. She asked if it would be worth the effort.

One of the things they've done in the PROMO C4ward groups is tell people to use the rank classifications and create a rubric at the front of their document about how they meet those classification criteria. Also it would be good if there were training for Chairs, DPCs, Deans to refer to the T/P guidelines when reviewing dossiers. Leigh Dooley has developed rubrics (more of a checklist, actually) based on rank guidelines. The Evaluation Committee might want to take a look at what she developed.

The bottom line seems to be that the people making the decisions are not going to support making the criteria any clearer, so what are we working toward here? Since different departments have different criteria, you might include that information in your dossier so you show what the expectations are at your department level. But the TPRC has to go by the expectations set by the system guidelines.

Is there a way to compile on our own campus what we have, and maybe boil it down to the common core? Or better yet, gather the DPC guidelines, set up a table and determine the main categories: does apply, does not apply, etc. For TPRCs, we could distribute a training

document that shows a window into how the campuses operate. Give them a master chart. Create a master matrix of campus requirements. We might find some best practices.

Such a document might get rid of some confusion, but there is still confusion over the process. Maybe we need to review the process information and create a comprehensive document on how the process works. It would be just as important to communicate out the availability of these resources.

It is also important to educate the DPC and the faculty to look at the criteria of the rank you are applying for. UH Maui College's DPCs are really supportive of their faculty. It is similar to the Engaged in Education program where you brought people together, discussed career paths. Faculty don't have that sort of support anymore.

One more suggestion on bringing down the anxiety level of faculty would be to let them know that very few people do not get renewed; very few T/P applications get refused. Lori Sakiguchi and Eric Denton have requested data from UHPA showing the number of applicants, the number refused, the number approved. UHPA has been given a huge data dump. They are still processing the data, but they are saying our campus is on the good side of those numbers. It would be good if we could publish the numbers, say for the last five years, to reduce the anxiety faculty have about their chances.

There is a lot of uncertainty in the process. In some ways you have to embrace that uncertainty, not let it turn into anxiety. How do we do that?

Concerning the uncertainty, what is the process of getting feedback when the answer is "no"? What is the expectation on the Chancellor to provide an explanation when it's a "no"? After you hand in your dossier and the decision has been made, you can go to HR for copies of the letters from the reviewers. There is a process, but you only have a 10-day window. Faculty have done that, but the letters did not give clear reasons. Contractually, Administration is under no obligation to justify they're decision. They are under no mandate to give specifics. However, you can ask to meet with the Chancellor. Susan Dik said maybe in the educational materials we can include what to do if you get a "no".

The dossier itself doesn't feel like a useful product in the end. The philosophical part is useful, but the rest is just bragging and data collection. It would be good if the process were more beneficial to students, more positive. It doesn't end up doing any good for the teacher, the students, the campus. It also impacts the quality of teaching when you are working on it.

There is anxiety on the part of applicants and reviewers. Reviewers are making critical decisions that impact a person's future. What is the depth and the quality of what they did? Just checking off criteria can be a disservice. There is a need for simplicity, but there is also a need for expression of personal commitment and other intangibles. A rubric isn't adequate for that. Some other approach needs to be done not just to help applicants but also reviewers.

Can reviewers bring in outsider knowledge? There was disagreement on this point. Guidelines in the contract state that there cannot be additional information. At TPRC workshops, Sandra Uyeno said you cannot bring in personal knowledge for consideration; the document is supposed to stand on its own. Sally Pestana argued that as DPC and TPRC members you are supposed to bring in everything you know. Otherwise HR could do the review. We are expected to use critical judgment to evaluate if what we are reading is true, reasonable, possible. It's about depth and quality.

It places a burden on people making a decision if they have to approve a dossier containing things they know to be untrue. That's why reviewers have the opportunity to ask for additional information to make a better decision. The onus is on the applicant to provide evidence to back up their assertions—you can ask for additional information. But you are not obligated to give the applicant a chance to do things over. You can just say there is no evidence to support this assertion. This is a peer review process for a reason We are given a responsibility and a privilege. It's important, it's stressful and you need to take it seriously. It shouldn't be about support letters or peer evaluations, but the whole package.

What about setting page limits? Enforcing page limits would be stressful because of all the expectations and requirements. If we set page limits, we should cut what is required for inclusion. But you have to think of the reader. Some TPRC members fly in from neighbor islands and read the dossier on the day of the meeting. You don't have to write in depth about everything. Select the impactful things. It reflects on your judgment.

For non-tenure track faculty, the campus requires certain documents be submitted with signatures, but HR doesn't keep the documents. They return the signed originals to the faculty member. It is required by the campus, but does not end up in the faculty member's personnel file to show that he/she got renewed.

Jeff Nathan thanked the attendees for providing a number of actionable agenda items the Evaluation Committee can pursue.