

DASNR FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING – Nov. 20, 2012.

Participant list

Brian Whitacre (Chair)
Chanjin Chung
Craig Davis
Jeff Edwards
Sam Fuhlendorf
Carla Garzon (Secretary)
David Hillock
Michael Holmes
Haobo Jiang
Gopal Kakani
Raluca Mateescu
Ulrich Melcher
Gina Peek
Jon Ramsey
Gretchen Mafi
Mike Woods

Brian Whitacre called to order at 9:00 AM

U. Melcher was asked to summarize Carol Moder's presentation at the 19 November General Faculty Meeting about the proposed RPT policy change.

The first topic raised thereafter was echoed by many individuals (C. Davis, J. Edwards, J. Ramsey) was that we did not want one department's members sitting in judgment over the members of other departments.

U. Melcher asked about committee the current DASNR's RPT committee's role in RPT process, which was followed by a conversation about the current committee role.

Other issue that was brought up by one of the former members of the DASNR RPT committee was while he was a member was that they never met (C. Chung), therefore the current role is not very active.

Then we discussed what would be the purpose of committee in the future if the new recommendations were approved, concluding that mostly its role would be to determine if the procedures established by the corresponding program were properly followed.

Other concern that was raised was how much work will be involved in the package reviewing process. Would a check list be enough or a more detailed scrutiny would be necessary. According to the new recommendations, the DASNR RPT would review examine all the details of the procedures followed by each department in the evaluation of each candidate and the supporting documentation to determine whether the department conducted a fair assessment according to their own guidelines.

B. Whitacre invited Dean Woods to join our conversation.

M. Woods join the discussion, first by greeting the present faculty and acknowledging the attendance of some of the present to the November General Faculty Meeting about the proposed RPT policy change. Therefore no overview of the main issues addressed during the meeting was done.

M. Woods mentioned that he as other faculty members, is not in favor of a university wide RPT, due to diversity the of programs involved, however acknowledged that university authorities have been having conversations about the need to have one more level of assessment in RPT so colleges and departments can be accountable for the recommendations made, and to provide additional support to faculty and departments in case of grievances.

It was mentioned (U. Melcher) that DASNR has had in the past RPT committees but their activity has been periodic, and currently we don't have an active committee.

Dean Woods mentioned that he is in favor of having a committee review that the dept. procedures have been followed. Particularly, from the perspective of a Department Head it would be very helpful to keep department heads and departmental RPT committees accountable for the decisions and recommendations made.

Questions regarding the number of procedures per year were made, to which Dean Woods mentioned that 5-15 per year would be normal, with 5 this year in the low end. There was some concern that fully reviewing 15 RPT packages each year could be a significant time commitment for members of the review committee.

If procedures were followed, how will the deans proceed? Dean Woods: They won't check the process further; but they have noticed that on occasion the faculty assessment departmental procedure was poorly followed, and currently the Dept. Head certifies that procedures were followed.

How does the DASNR committee work? Do they meet every year?

According to the current DASNR RPT committee description its role is to review the RPT criteria established by each department and assess whether they are appropriate to ensure the productivity and high quality outcomes from each unit, and to help the division and the university in the process.

Regarding the letters, the departments have to make their case in favor or against tenure. It was discussed if there was any immediate action needed, and Dean Woods explained that there is no urgency to make a decision now, but by the Spring meeting the DASNR faculty council would have to decide whether to support or not the proposed RPT policy changes and we'll have to bring forward any concerns regarding the new policy.

Also, a question about when the DASNR committee should be involved, since tenure review is a very personal process. Should more eyes look at the package? The consensus was that not necessarily, but we need to know that the procedures were followed, not necessary the content of the letters.

Should only the packages that didn't get tenure be reviewed? Again, not necessarily, because we want to be aware if a department recommends tenure for a faculty that doesn't deserve it.

B. Whitacre proposed to summarize the issues that should be brought up regarding the new RPT policies, which follow:

- Will each college have freedom to make their own guidelines?
- Should the DASNR faculty committee make suggestions or highlight issues with the procedure, rather than making specific RPT recommendations?
- We are assuming that all deans are doing their job, and that may not be. The case may be different every time. Therefore it would be good to have a way to protect our good faculty (Dean Woods).

B. Whitacre asked for an update on the Dean search, and Dean Woods mentioned that it is in process, and J. Ramsey, who is part of the search committee, informed that the search is still in process, and a list of the applicants will be made by Dec 1.

Brian proceeded to prepare a list of items that will be presented to the committee.

- Do we need a committee? The immediate answer was yes.
- Will colleges receive suggestions on how should the committees proceed or will each college have the freedom to decide how they will operate?
- It would be useful to have a check list of what documents were submitted to verify the documents are in the package.
 - This will place the onus on the departments (as opposed to the review team)

J. Edwards commented on the way the new policy is written and he thought the content is appropriate and didn't need modifications.

C. Chung commented that the DASNR RPT committee may have an additional role in grievances for the benefit of the faculty and the departments.

C. Garzon agreed, and mentioned that argument would make a case for asking for the freedom of each college to determine their own procedures.

Details of RPT requirements will still be left to the departments.

B. Whitacre will distribute the list of issues to the DANSR Faculty Council within 2 weeks, and those will be forwarded to the RPT Task Force (after getting feedback from the Council).

Next meeting will be in Spring, and B. Whitacre will send out a reminder to solicit questions for the Dean from faculty members in their departments.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 10:10AM