



**Academic Assembly Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2023
11:30 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.
SINE 110 & Zoom Meeting**

MINUTES

Members Present: Carol Adams, Philip Barclift, Mark Cohan, Douglas Eriksen, Naomi Hume, Nalini Iyer, Shane P. Martin (Provost, *ex-officio*), Margit McGuire, Carrie Miller, Jodi O’Brien (Associate Provost, *ex-officio*), Kyle Peet, Russell Powell, Gayle Robinson, Bryan Ruppert, Patrick Schoettmer, Frank Shih, Gregory Silverman, Erin Vernon, Glenn Yasuda and Valentina Zamora.

I. Opening Remarks **11:30 a.m. – 11:34 a.m.**

- a. Meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m. by Academic Assembly President, Frank Shih.
- b. **MOTION** Moved by Frank Shih: “Move to approve the agenda for the May 11, 2023, meeting of the AcA.” Seconded. **Approved.**

II. Provost Update, Shane P. Martin **11:34 a.m. – 11:43 a.m.**

Seattle University is a professional learning community committed to the values of shared governance and continuous improvement.

The annual process to review and revise the Faculty Handbook is one important aspect of our shared governance system. Unfortunately, this Faculty Handbook revision cycle is behind schedule compared to the standard timeline set in the handbook. During the winter, the Academic Assembly (AcA) discussed and agreed to extend the deadline for submitting proposed amendments for this year. One of the challenges the University faced this year was the resignation of the chair of the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee (FHRC) mid-year, which caused delays in the revision process.

As a reminder this year’s Faculty Handbook revision process is part of the 5-year review cycle. Last year, due to an extensive number of proposed revisions, the Board of Trustees supported extending the 5-year review process into a two year effort. The goal is to have the Provost’s Office and AcA collaborate and reach a shared agreement during this cycle and present recommendations on proposed amendments to the President who will then make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

III. Faculty Handbook Revision Discussion **11:43 a.m. – 12:48 p.m.**

Shane P. Martin, David R. Lance, Jodi O’Brien and Sarah Cox

At the May 1 AcA meeting, the FHRC brought forth their proposed revisions to the Faculty Handbook. Due to ample faculty feedback, from the AcA and faculty at-large, this *ad hoc* meeting

was called to further discuss the proposed amendments to each of the categories below before the AcA votes on the proposals.

- a. *Jesuit and Catholic identity.* The Provost's Office proposed to table this topic to next year and include it as an aspect of the Mission Priority Examen (MPE). This will provide more opportunities for the Provost's Office, AcA and Mission Integration, to discuss and collaborate with faculty around how to articulate Seattle University's Jesuit and Catholic identity and character.
- b. *Tenure-Line Faculty Performance Expectation.* In relation to tenure-line faculty performance expectations, the Office of the Provost is collaborating with the Reigniting Our Strategic Directions Annual Performance Review (APR) Working Group, and has issued Performance Expectation Implementation Guidelines that outline next steps for the colleges and schools. The guidelines include four phases and are expected to be completed in November 2023. AcA members proposed moving the table of performance categories to an appendix instead of including it in the Handbook. There was discussion that the role of the Provost's Office approval in reviewing the list of school and college activities under the performance categories is to ensure consistency and principles of equity. There was also discussion that the revisions should explicitly emphasize that teaching excellence is the baseline expectation for all faculty.
- c. *Guideline for Promotion to Associate Professor.* In parallel to the discussion on faculty performance expectations, AcA members recommended clarity on language and teaching expectations in relation to faculty promotions. Associate Provost Jodi O'Brien explained that promotions for term-faculty were not addressed during this cycle of revisions since they were discussed and approved by the AcA last academic year.
- d. *Library Faculty.* Minor comments were made by the Library representative regarding copy edits.
- e. *Grievance Process.* The Provost supported the recommendation to extend the deadline of submitting a grievance to 60 days. A brief discussion regarding revisions to grievance committee ensued and there was an interest in engaging in further review of the grievance process during the next Faculty Handbook revision cycle.
- f. *Academic Freedom.* An AcA member recommended adding a footnote excluding student protests and unionization from this policy, and they requested more precise definitions "disruption" and "significant risks of operations."
- g. *Faculty Handbook Amendment Process.* Provost Martin explained that the aim in these proposed revisions is to simplify the process of proposing amendments while preserving the agency to do so. The Assembly briefly discussed the role faculty groups, not AcA committees or working groups, can play in the amendment process. AcA could amend its Bylaws to create a process for faculty or groups of faculty to present proposed amendments to the Faculty Handbook to AcA.
- h. *Miscellaneous copyedits, grammar, etc.* A discussion on financial exigency ensued. An AcA member referenced the American Association of University Professor's definition of financial exigency. AcA proposed tabling this item to the next revision cycle. Provost Martin supported this proposal.

MOTION Moved by Patrick Schoettmer: "I move to introduce a summary of amendments not included in the tabled summary provided by FHRC." **Approved.**

MOTION Moved by Patrick Schoettmer: "I move to go to recess." Seconded. **Approved.**

IV. Recess, Patrick L. Schoettmer

12:48 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was briefly adjourned to allow non-members to provide feedback to the Faculty Handbook discussion.

V. AcA Year-End Business, Frank J. Shih & Gregory Silverman

1:00 p.m. – 1:12p.m.

Based on feedback from the *ad hoc* meeting, a revised redline version of the Faculty Handbook will be provided promptly to AcA. The voting on the proposed revisions will be conducted offline and anonymously.

MOTION Moved by Frank J. Shih: “I move to approve the five candidates to the AcA Bylaws Committee.” **Approved.** Unanimously.

At the end of this academic year, there will be vacancies on AcA for the positions of VP of Committees, VP of Curriculum and VP of Policy. Members can volunteer or nominate someone for these positions in-session or offline. The current AcA President is considering amending the AcA Bylaws to allow term-faculty to hold officer positions, but this task might be passed on to the next president for further consideration.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.