Minutes (Approved)

College of Liberal and Applied Arts College Council

March 18, 2013; 2:30 p.m.; Ferguson 478

Attending: Dr. Ray Darville, Chair; Dr. Ron Tumelson, Dr. Sarah Savoy, Dr. Dana Cooper, Dr. Al Greule, Dr. Linda Bond, Dr. Lee Payne, Ms. Wilma Cordova, Dr. Ben Dixon, Dr. Alan Baily, Dr. Gabriela Miranda-Recinos, Dr. Karol Chandler-Ezell, Dr. Steve Taaffe, Mrs. Elizabeth Spradley. Ex Officio: Dr. Marc Guidry (Associate Dean).

1. Session called to order by Dr. Darville at 2:30 p.m.

2. Minutes from December 10th reviewed.
   - A motion was made and seconded, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. The motion carried unanimously, pending one correction regarding the RAPP Program. The minutes read that the College will provide $500 for the RAPP Program; the correct amount is $1000.

3. Comments from the Chairs’ Council Meeting of March 4, 2013.
   - Unit assessment is on the Chairs’ Council’s horizon.
   - The Freshman Convocation is now an annual event. More details are forthcoming. The Chairs welcome recommendations from faculty as to how to improve the Convocation.
   - The 2013 Honors banquet is May 2.
   - The College plans to replace the carpeting in Liberal Arts North by end of FY 2013.

4. Policy matters arising from Chairs’ Council
   - The Dean has observed that there are no clear promotion standards in place at the College level. In particular, it is not clear how to proceed if an applicant requests (or is granted?) tenure without promotion. Also, it is not clear which standards apply if an applicant is granted tenure but applies for promotion at a later date.
     - Regarding which standards to apply, there are two generic alternatives: a) apply the promotion standards in place at the time of the applicant’s appointment; or b) allow the applicant to select any set of standards in place during the five years prior to the application for promotion.
     - These are generic alternatives. A number of modifications or combinations between the two are possible. For example, the five-year range given in option “b,” above, is arbitrary; other ranges may be preferable. Also, applicants might be given a choice between options “a” and “b”. In other
words, one might choose to apply the standards in place at the time of appointment or any set of standards applicable within a certain number of years prior to applying for promotion.
- The Council voiced concern that to assign any standards other than those in place at the time of appointment sets up a “moving target” which has the potential to be abused. On the other hand, having the option to choose standards adopted later would allow faculty appointed earlier to be judged by revised standards that presumably reflect changed expectations of their respective duties (teaching, research and service). The foregoing considerations converge on allowing the applicant to choose whether to be evaluated by the standards in place at appointment, or another set of standards in place in the years immediately prior to application for promotion.
- It was moved and seconded that the Council adopt the following recommendation: “The individual applicant shall have the option of applying the original promotion standards or any set of standards applicable within the six years prior to and including the date of application.” The motion carried, unanimously.

- There is no rule regarding whether, or how, to count publications prior to one’s appointment at SFA towards tenure and promotion.
- The Council understands the desirability of a uniform policy on this matter, there being no College-wide policy at present. However, it proved difficult for the Council to coalesce on a specific policy. Three alternative views surfaced in the discussion: a) prior publications should not be counted since they are not attributed to SFA; b) prior publications should be counted, but their weight should be discounted since the publication is attributed to the faculty member but not to SFA; c) all publications should be counted from the completion of one’s PhD until the application for tenure since publication during one’s initial years of full-time teaching is quite challenging (for this reason many graduate programs encourage students to publish before taking one’s first appointment).
- Discussion of these alternatives generated more questions than answers. For example, it seems difficult to conclude that prior publications should not be counted at all, but it is also difficult to say how, or how much, prior publications should count. Shall we count prior publications but also require a minimum number of publications while at SFA? Or count prior publications on the condition that the appointee has a shortened tenure clock?
Individualized arrangements would defeat the purpose of a uniform policy, but any policy accommodating prior publications will encounter the administrative obstacle of defining a “prior” publication. Are articles submitted before one’s appointment, but published afterwards “prior” publications? What about dissertation chapters written much earlier but published later as articles?

- One point of agreement was that it would be valuable for the Council to know what sorts of policies are in place at peer and mentor institutions, as well as in other Colleges within the university. A relevant concern here is that policies we adopt may affect our ability to recruit and maintain faculty. Another relevant concern is that the College of Liberal and Applied Arts comprises a variety of programs, each of which treats research and publications differently on account of their different methods and emphases. Can a single policy accommodate disciplines as different as English and Social Work?

- To this end, Dr. Guidry suggested that the Council investigate peer institutions in Texas to collect information that might assist this Council in arriving at an agreeable policy recommendation. Dr. Sarah Savoy, Ms. Elizabeth Spradley and Ms. Wilma Cordova agreed to serve on a committee to investigate such policies. The committee will report its findings at the April 15th meeting of the College Council.

- Emeritus status: No discussion on this point. Dr. Darville relayed information regarding the new emeritus policy:
  - One may apply for emeritus status anytime, outside of the regular tenure and promotion cycle.
  - There is no time of service requirement to qualify for emeritus status.

5. New Business
- There was no new business on the agenda
- Dr. Darville informed the Council of a wider discussion about transitioning tenure and promotion portfolios to an entirely electronic format.

6. Motion made and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried, unanimously. Adjournment was at 3:26 p.m.