
The University Senate

FACULTY • STUDENT • P&A • CIVIL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Term Faculty and Academic Professionals Subcommittee (TFAPS)
September 17, 2024
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Welcome and Introductions; Committee Orientation; Breakout Rooms to Review Working Documents; Committee Goals for 2024-2025]

PRESENT: Katherine Dowd, chair, Adolfo Carrillo Cabello, Elisia Cohen, Laura Larson, Emil Lou, Brian Mondy, Pawel Mroz, Angela Perkins, Mary Pogatshnik, Deena Wassenberg, Kevin Wendt

REGRETS: Courtney Matson

ABSENT: Athena Kildegaard, Jovin Lasway, Annika Muyres

OTHERS ATTENDING: Clifford Steer

1. Welcome and Introductions

Professor Katherine Dowd, chair, called the meeting to order and [reviewed the committee's charge and duties](#). She then invited attendees to introduce themselves. Following introductions, Dowd discussed the key terms and definitions related to “term” or “contract” faculty, noting that these terms are often used interchangeably. Term/contract faculty hold titles such as Assistant, Associate, or Professor, and their contracts are typically renewed annually or may be multi-year. These faculty members are classified as non-tenure track and may follow a promotion path similar to tenure-track faculty, depending on the department or college. Academic professionals, such as teaching specialists or lecturers, have policies governed by the P&A employee guidelines. However, while term or contract faculty have protections under the Tenure Code, academic professionals do not currently have academic freedom protections in their policies. Dowd also discussed the committee's work over the past year, including the division into two working groups to address specific needs for each employee group.

2. Committee Orientation

Laurie Cooper Stoll, director, University Senate Office and Honors & Awards Program, provided a [committee orientation](#) for new and returning members.

The purpose of the orientation was to provide an overview of the University Senate governance structure, focusing on how it works, particularly the role and functioning of its committees. Cooper Stoll highlighted how committees contribute to the broader university system and affect change within the institution. By emphasizing shared governance, which includes collaboration, inclusiveness, and advisory roles, the orientation illustrated how committees can influence university policies and decision-making processes, even though their recommendations are advisory to the administration.

3. Breakout Rooms to Review Working Documents

Dowd asked committee members to select one of two respective breakout rooms to review the following documents: (1) [Statement 1 \[Contract Faculty\]](#) or (2) [Statement 2 \[P&A Instructional Staff\]](#). Dowd shared that over the summer, drafts from both working groups were refined for consistency in style and format. Dowd asked the groups in each breakout room to focus on setting short-term goals, including finalizing their respective statements, and to begin thinking about long-term goals.

Following the work in each breakout room, the committee reconvened. Dowd discussed the Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF&T) committee task force report, focusing on academic freedom protections for non-tenure-track faculty, including P&A instructors. The report includes recommendations such as moving all P&A staff into faculty job codes to provide them with academic freedom and tenure protections. While the task force report is ambitious, the committee acknowledged that its proposals may not be achievable in the short term. This highlights the need for setting both short-term and long-term goals.

Elisia Cohen shared concerns about calling P&A instructional staff “faculty,” due to tenure code implications. She also mentioned that some colleges allow multi-year contracts for P&A and contract faculty, while others do not. She suggested developing a standardized approach across the university and aligning it with workforce development goals, particularly for faculty members who have been in their roles for many years.

4. Committee Goals for 2024-2025

Dowd noted that future meetings will focus on finalizing statements and discussing additional goals.

5. Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Dowd adjourned the meeting.

Laurie Cooper Stoll
University Senate Office