

**Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee (AF&T)**  
**December 1, 2017**  
**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:** Public Engagement in Promotion and Tenure Review; Committee on Committees Review; Pre-Tenure Departures; Personnel Plans; Announcements]

**PRESENT:** Phil Buhlmann (chair), Ben Intoy, Jessica Larson, Holley Locher, Karen Miksch, Gopalan Nadathur, Yuichiro Onishi, Gary Peter, Karin Quick, Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, Nathan Shippee, Kristin Swenson, George Trachte

**REGRETS:** Anne Barnes, Jerry Cohen, Joe Gaugler, Rachna Shah

**GUESTS:** Andy Furco, associate vice president, Public Engagement; Steve Pearthree and Sanoa Hagen, members, Committee on Committees; Ole Gram, assistant vice provost, Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs

**1. Public Engagement in Promotion and Tenure Review**

Chair Phil Buhlmann called the meeting to order and introduced, Andy Furco, associate vice president, Public Engagement. Rebecca Ropers-Huilman stated that she and Furco were seeking feedback from the committee on the idea of instituting an “Engaged Scholar Review.” They shared a draft of a document entitled “Supporting the Promotion, Tenure, and Advancement of Engaged Scholars,” which explained the purpose and framework of this idea. That handout is abridged below:

**PROPOSAL:** Implement a two-part initiative focused on supporting the promotion, tenure, and advancement of engaged scholars

Part I: Establish an *Engaged Scholarship Review Committee* that has the dual role of reviewing and developing (educating).

Reviewing:

- a peer review body to assist promotion and review committees and engaged scholars in evaluating the quality, rigor, and impact of engaged scholarship in the P&T process
- composed of University of Minnesota tenured engaged scholars from different disciplines, professional fields, and intellectual traditions
- assesses the quality of engaged scholarship as it relates to departmental 7.12 expectations

- conducts a supplemental review of the candidate's portfolio, evaluating the quality, rigor, and impact of the candidate's scholarly work based on a set of universal quality standards for engaged scholarship
- submits a review letter to the candidate, which she/he includes with the submission of his/her dossier to the P&T committee.
- committee members are available upon request to attend P&T committee meetings to answer questions about a particular candidate's engaged scholarship

Developing:

- works with and supports early tenure-track faculty members in their efforts to conduct engaged scholarship (beginning at appointment, continuing through third-year review and throughout the probationary period)
- mentors the faculty members in helping them find the best ways to articulate and present their engaged scholarship within their dossiers
- offers consultations, one-on-one coaching, workshops, and other support that engage faculty members in developing dossiers that align with the faculty members' respective departmental 7.12 standards and expectations
- provides examples of successful cases including sample letters of support for engaged scholars.

In addition:

- review is initiated by faculty candidate
- the committee's review letter serves as a supplemental letter that P&T committee(s) consider in their review of the candidate's portfolio
- the process for evaluating this work is informed by the National Review Board (NRB) for the Scholarship of Engagement, which developed its assessment criteria from the pioneering sourcebook, *Scholarship Assessed: A Special Report on Faculty Evaluation* (Glassick, Huber & Maeroff, 1997)
- evaluations are informed by disciplinary and field specific guidelines for engaged scholarship

Part II: Informational Sessions on Standards of Engaged Scholarship

- focus on informing and educating promotion and tenure committees on the standards of engaged scholarship and the purpose (and review process) of the Engaged Scholarship Review Committee
- engage department chairs and collegiate deans in the process of educating faculty about the Review Committee goals and processes
- are developed by members of the Engaged Scholarship Review Committee
- are designed to help promotion and tenure committees familiarize themselves with the standards of engaged scholarship so that they can apply those standards directly to the dossiers of P&T candidates who conduct community-engaged work.

Furco and Ropers-Huilman also provided handouts [defining community-engaged scholarship](#), [describing the continuum of community-based research](#), and [detailing assessment criteria of](#)

[traditional versus community-engaged scholarship](#). They then asked for the committee's thoughts on the proposal.

Many members felt that the issue required greater culture change. Gopalan Nadathur commented that the issue could perhaps be addressed in the 7.12s rather than implementing an additional procedure. Ropers-Huilman agreed that culture change is necessary, but said that changing 7.12s is a long process and specific content is generally not mandated. Karin Quick suggested that this idea could aid in encouraging culture change. Ole Gram said that when the 7.12s are up for review, community-engaged scholarship is being considered; the culture change is slow, he said, but it is happening.

Gram expressed concern that this could set candidates up for failure if this review were something that happened late in the tenure and promotion review process. Ropers-Huilman drew members' attention to the developmental aspect of the idea, which would include mentoring very early on in the faculty's career.

Buhlmann said that he supported the idea, but wondered how great the need is. Furco said that currently he knew of about seven assistant professors who are doing community-engaged scholarship, but who question whether they should continue to do so. He said he was not sure how great the overall need would be, and added that the hope is to pilot the program with one college first.

Ropers-Huilman recognized that the following aspects of the option would need to be communicated very clearly:

- The process is optional
- Where in the dossier the review letter would be placed
- At what point in the tenure review the Engaged Scholarship review would take place
- The weight given to the letter would be up to the departments

Hearing no further discussion, Furco and Ropers-Huilman thanked the committee for their feedback.

## **2. Committee on Committees Review**

Next, Buhlmann introduced Committee on Committees members Steve Pearthree and Sanoa Hagen, who were present to conduct Committee on Committees' review of AF&T. Pearthree gave some background information about the reviews, stating that each committee is reviewed on a five-year cycle. He said that Buhlmann had already met with the chair of Committee on Committees, and then went over the results of the survey that had been sent out to members ahead of time, which received eight responses. Members' impressions of the committee, according to the results of the survey, were as follows:

- Average time of service on the committee was 3.1 years.
- The balance between presentations and discussion is good.
- There is some overlap between AF&T and some other committees, notably the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA), but also the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC), the Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD), and the Senate Research Committee (SRC).

- The committee works effectively with other committees.
- The distribution of membership is adequate.
- The committee is consulted on University policy with appropriate frequency.
- The committee's effectiveness at carrying out its charge is overall good, but its monitoring of the post-tenure review process could be improved.
- The committee's effectiveness could be improved by more fully engaging remote participants and holding more joint meetings with committees with similar charges (notably SCFA).

Members noted that it would be easier to hold joint meetings if the regular committee meetings were scheduled to overlap, but this presents other challenges, such as space and staffing. Members also commented that attending via phone is difficult. Attending via videoconference is better, members felt, but it is still difficult to fully engage via that medium.

Ropers-Huilman commented that she benefits greatly from AF&T's input, and that faculty governance in general greatly enhances the quality of administrative work at the University. Members said that they felt the committee works well and works hard, and those with experience on other committees commented that AF&T is one of the more effective bodies.

Hagen asked Ben Intoy, the postdoc representative on AF&T, about his experience on the committee. Intoy commented that he finds the information discussed in the committee useful and often passes on information to the Postdoc Association and his peers. Buhlmann added that he greatly appreciates the input of the postdoc and student representatives on the committee.

Hearing no further discussion, Pearthree and Hagen thanked members for their time and departed.

### **3. Pre-Tenure Departures**

Next, Buhlmann turned the floor over to Gram, whom he had asked to talk to the committee about the issue of tenure-track faculty who leave the University before attaining tenure. Gram said that currently, there is not much available data, but that the University is participating in the [Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education \(COACHE\) Exit and Retention survey](#), which will yield more data. The COACHE survey found, at peer institutions, that the factors contributing to faculty members going from the point of feeling dissatisfied to intending to leave are difficult to pinpoint. It also, not surprisingly perhaps, indicated that if a faculty member is explicitly asked to stay, they are much more likely not to leave. Feeling that their work and/or research is valued seems to be a major contributing factor in effective retentions, he said. Gram added that among faculty of color, poor campus climate tends to be a major factor contributing to the decision to leave. At the University of Minnesota, the survey will take place over a three-year period, and data will be received and analyzed after the end of the three-year period. Anecdotally, said Gram, the primary reasons that people leave the University prior to receiving tenure are that they get a better offer elsewhere, they are dissatisfied at the University, or other factors such as family obligations.

### **4. Personnel Plans**

Ropers-Huilman then gave a brief update on the status of the collegiate personnel plans. She said that as of this date, she and Provost Hanson had only three colleges left to meet with of the colleges that had submitted plans. This included the School of Dentistry and the Carlson School of Management plans, which the committee was just finishing reviewing. The next phase in the project will be to solicit plans from the system campuses that are unionized. She again expressed her thanks to the committee for their work on this project.

#### **5. Announcements**

Buhlmann informed members that in December 2017 or January 2018, Kevin Dostal Dauer, director, International Health, Safety, and Compliance, would initiate a survey about the [Travel Approval processes](#), as requested by the committee.

Hearing no further discussion, Buhlmann adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke  
University Senate Office