

Faculty Handbook Ad Hoc Committee Report

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March 23, 2023

During the October 25th, 2022, meeting, the Faculty Senate approved a motion to form an ad hoc committee to review specific topics and feedback from standing committees pertaining to the Faculty Handbook. The committee has worked diligently to meet the deadline of March 23rd, 2023, by providing recommendations for revision of various sections of the Faculty Handbook to address the questions and issues in the order received.

In consideration of overall issues identified with the Faculty Handbook and in response to the 11th charge, the ad hoc committee does want to emphasize their recommendation that the Faculty Handbook be rewritten to address inconsistencies, missing sections, and to convey a consistent voice. This suggestion aligns with recommendations from the Promotions and Faculty Welfare Committees.

A listing of each charge and the ad hoc committee's recommendations are respectfully submitted as provided below.

1. Chapter 2, "Provisions Related to Appointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Permanent Status"

Section 1. This should be clearer regarding who is the one making decisions about the appointee (status review, formal review, etc.). Anyone denied tenure or permanent status should be given the justification of the decision in writing.

Charge: Provide a draft of proposed revisions, if any.

The committee recommends revision of Section 1 by adding the following to the end:

"Status review and formal review for tenure shall include reviews by the Tenure Review Committee, the department chair/school director, Dean of the appointee's school/college, Provost, and President as outlined in Procedures and Policies for Granting of Tenure to Faculty in this document. Status review and formal review for permanent status shall include reviews by the Library Faculty Promotion Review Committee, Dean of Libraries & Instructional Resources, Provost, and President as outlined under Faculty Engaged in Exclusively or Primarily in Library Services in this document. An appointee who is denied tenure or permanent status must receive justification of the decision in writing from the President."

Sections 2-4. An appointee who is denied tenure should be given the justification of the decision in writing. This should be included in each section.

Charge: Provide a draft of proposed revisions, if any.

The committee recommends revision of Section 2 by adding the following to the end:

“Formal review for tenure shall include reviews by the Tenure Review Committee, the department chair/school director, Dean of the appointee's school/college, Provost, and President as outlined in Procedures and Policies for Granting of Tenure to Faculty in this document. An appointee who is denied tenure must receive justification in writing from the President.”

Sections 3 and 4, at the end of each section add, “An appointee who is denied tenure must receive justification in writing from the President.”

Additional recommendations for this section:

In the second paragraph of section 2, it states “paragraphs in 3 below”. It would be clearer if worded as “section 3 below”.

2. Chapter 2, “Faculty Ranks and Criteria”

Regarding Section B1, last line: Should the relative weight of the criteria be listed here or at least have a link to a different section of the handbook where it is located?

Charge: Investigate whether a clear statement of the relative weight of the criteria exists. If such a statement exists, provide a draft of how to incorporate that into this section (a textual statement and/or a link) if deemed desirable. If no such statement exists, make a recommendation on whether such a statement should be formulated.

The committee found a clear statement of faculty “workload” in Chapter 4 section IV. However, no formal statement was identified in the handbook that directly correlates “relative workload” to weighting of categories used to determine promotion and tenure for faculty.

The committee recommends that a clear statement regarding the relative weight of the categories for promotion and tenure for the faculty ranks should be formulated. We further recommend that the statement be updated to reflect the USM Bylaws, Policies and Procedures referenced in Chapter 4 (provided below) which is different than Chapter 4, Section IV Standard Workload Expectations (provided below) table for relative weights.

- Chapter 4, Faculty Workload and Responsibilities Section I provides a link to [USM Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities](#) (last update June 21, 2019):

USM Bylaws, Policies and Procedures of the Board of Regents			
INSTITUTION TYPE	TEACHING	RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP/ CREATIVE ACTIVITY	SERVICE
COMPREHENSIVE % of Total Effort	60-75	15-30	5-20
RESEARCH % of Total Effort	45-55	35-45	5-20
DEGREE-GRANTING RESEARCH CENTER % of Total Effort	5-15	75-85	15-25

- Chapter 4: Faculty Compensation, Workload, Benefits, Awards and Personnel and Other Policies, Section IV:

IV. Standard Workload Expectations

A. The standard workload and responsibilities expectations for tenured and tenure track faculty at Salisbury University are as follows:

	Teaching	Research/ Scholarship	Service
Percent of Effort	65-77 (7-8 three-credit Course Units/Years)	15-25	5-15

And the standard workload and responsibilities expectations for full-time non-tenure track faculty at Salisbury University are:

	Teaching	Research/ Scholarship	Service
Percent of Effort	77 (8 three-credit Course Units/Years)	5-20	3-20

Percent of effort in a given term for part-time non-tenure track faculty at Salisbury University is 100 times the number of three-credit course units taught in that term divided by 5.

Additional information reviewed regarding relative weight(s) included:

- Chapter 4: Section IV E. further states:
 - “The balance among teaching, research/scholarship and service for a faculty member may change over the faculty member’s career. This balance may be adjusted annually when faculty and department chairs set workload and responsibilities expectations for the year. In all cases, the addition of the percentage of effort in each area equals 100% of the faculty member’s effort.”

- Chapter 2, Faculty Engaged Exclusively or Primarily in Clinical Teaching, “Criteria for Clinical Faculty Promotion”, no relative weight provided.
 - “Although no equations are offered to measure relative importance of the criteria for evaluation, it is clear that excellence in teaching, the primary consideration for promotion, derives from a dedication to clinical expertise, professional development and a concern for the integrity of the profession and the institution. Therefore, attention will be given to effective teaching and clinical expertise. The various departments, programs, schools, and colleges should provide guidance.”
- Chapter 4, Faculty Workload and Responsibilities, Section II
 - “This policy does not apply to individuals.....nor does it apply to library faculty, e.g., Librarians I, II, III, IV.”

3. Chapter 2, “Procedures and Policies for Granting of Tenure to Faculty”

Table 1, (Timeline for Faculty Seeking Tenure), step “Faculty responds to Tenure Review Committee Evaluation” and Table 2, step “Faculty responds to Tenure and Promotions Committee(s) Evaluation”: Why not just keep the 5-day deadline in Faculty Success? This seems like it adds extra confusion and may dissuade faculty from taking full advantage of their five days.

Charge: Make a recommendation to Senate as to whether the process in Faculty Success should be changed.

The committee concurs that although most faculty do not use the full five days; they should not be dissuaded or discouraged from doing so as it is provided by the Faculty Handbook. The handbook is also ambiguous regarding how to obtain the full five days to respond after each step or if the five days is applicable only for response to the Tenure Review Committee Evaluation. If only for one step, it would be inconsistent with the “Procedures for Promotion of Faculty” section that allows for five (business) days to provide a response to “any step” of that process.

The committee recommends the handbook should clearly state that five business days are allowed for faculty to provide a response at each level of the tenure process, as this aspect is alluded to in the handbook but is never explicitly stated. In addition, the workflow in Watermark Faculty Success should then be changed to match the revision of the Faculty Handbook.

Also, the current wording for providing an appointee the right to submit a rebuttal in the Procedures for Promotion of Faculty section is outdated and does not match the workflow of Watermark Faculty Success. The committee recommends replacing paragraph 5.e.6 in Procedures and Policies for Granting Tenure to Faculty and the second half of paragraph 1.c under Procedures for Promotion of Faculty starting with “At any step of this process the...” with the following text:

“At any step of this process before the provost's recommendation, the candidate may, within five (5) working days of a recommendation being posted to the relevant Watermark Faculty Success workflow, submit a written rebuttal in any professionally reasonable manner to the relevant Watermark Faculty Success workflow.”

Additional recommendations for this section:

Five (5) days is used as a period of time for response in a number of situations in Chapter 2. The five days are referred to in a variety of way as follows:

- five (5) business days
- five business days
- five (5) working days
- five working days

The committee suggests changing the wording to “five (5) working days” for consistency. For transparency, the committee further recommends the addition of wording that provides justification to the applicant and prior level whenever a person or committee in the process makes a recommendation which is in opposition to the prior level. Also, if the departmental/school level committee decides not to recommend tenure, then they must provide a justification to the applicant.

Related question:

Library faculty are only allowed to provide a rebuttal if the recommendation is negative. This process is different than the one for other faculty; therefore, the committee asks if the inconsistency is intentional?

4. Chapter 2, “Procedures for Promotion of Faculty”

Section (e): If a faculty member is denied a recommendation for promotion by the promotions committee, the committee should provide written justification for their decision.

Section (h): If a faculty member is denied promotion from the president, the president should provide written justification for the decision.

Charge: Provide a draft of proposed revisions, if any.

The committee proposes an addition to the end of Section (e): “The committee must provide justification for the promotion recommendation in writing to the candidate and the Provost.”

The committee proposes an addition to the end of Section (h): “If the President denies a candidate promotion or makes a decision that differs from the recommendation of the Promotions Committee, then the President must provide justification for the decision in writing to the candidate and Promotions Committee.”

Additional recommendations for this section:

- Regarding Section (c). For transparency, the committee further recommends addition of wording that provides justification to the applicant and prior level whenever a person or committee in the process makes a recommendation which is the opposite of the prior level. Also, if the departmental level committee decides to not recommend promotion, then they must provide a justification to the applicant.
- Proposed addition to the end of Section (g): “If the Provost does not recommend a candidate for promotion or makes a recommendation that differs from the Promotions Committee, then the provost must provide justification for the decision in writing to the candidate, Promotions Committee, and the President.”
- The committee was unable to locate the portion of the Faculty Handbook referenced in section 1, subsection c as **D 1C**. This reference is removed by a recommendation that resulted from charge 3 above.

5. Chapter 2, “Comprehensive Review of Tenured Faculty”

“Departmental Role, Peer Review and Criteria for Evaluation” section: The handbook states “The faculty member under review will be the principal provider of the information for the comprehensive review. This need not exceed the submission of the annual self-evaluations of the previous five years. They will provide the reviewer(s) with the necessary information by February 1 of the year in which the review is to take place, and the reviewer(s) shall provide a report to the faculty member by the same deadline as the annual review. As in the annual reviews, the five-year comprehensive review must be based on multiple sources of information.” This sounds like the person under review needs only to provide self-evaluations for the last five years, although the committee needs multiple sources of information. If the committee asked for chair evaluations for the last five years, could the person under review refuse based on the wording here? Could the sentence stating that the person under review need only provide self-evaluations be removed?

Charge: Provide a draft of proposed revisions, if any.

Upon review, the committee found that the Faculty Handbook is mostly consistent in stating the faculty member undergoing review cannot be asked to supply any more documentation than requested during the previous five (5) annual reviews. However, the handbook also states, “This need not exceed the submission of the annual self-evaluations of the previous five years.” which seems to contradict the following:

“They must provide adequate information but cannot be required to supply information above and beyond that which was required to satisfy evaluation criteria applied in previous years.”

“As in the annual reviews, the five-year comprehensive review must be based on multiple sources of information.”

These two identified statements draw a parallel between the comprehensive review and annual reviews; but the annual review is not documented in the Faculty Handbook except for pre-tenured faculty which cannot be directly applied to tenured faculty, because tenured faculty do not have a tenure committee.

Currently, annual evaluations of faculty require submission of a self-evaluation, student course evaluations, and a chair/director evaluation. Depending upon interpretation, you could decide the faculty member needs to provide their self-evaluations, student course evaluations, as well as the chair/director's evaluations.

The committee proposes the most reasonable interpretation is that a faculty member is not required to provide more information during the comprehensive review than provided during annual reviews; therefore, faculty could be required to provide self-evaluations, student course evaluations, and chair/director evaluations. In our attempt to not change the spirit of the document in its entirety, we propose to change the following statement:

“This need not exceed the submission of the annual self-evaluations- of the previous five years.” to read as below:

“This information need not exceed the documents required to be submitted for the previous five annual reviews.”

Therefore, this revision clarifies that the annual chair's reviews would be included with the documents required and reinforces that multiple sources of information can be used. In addition, the relevant USM document does not identify information that the faculty member needs to provide and mirrors what is found in our Faculty Handbook.

<https://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionII/III19.html>,

Additional recommendations related to this section:

- Under the heading “Policies and Procedures for the Five-Year Comprehensive Reviews of Tenured Faculty Members”, it refers to “Section IV” which we recommend should be “Chapter 4, Workload and Responsibilities, Section IV”. Also, adding a hyperlink would save readers' time.
- “desires” should be “desire” in this section.
- Annual reviews and their requirements should be explicitly defined in the Faculty Handbook.

6. Chapter 2, “Faculty Grievance Policy”

Part-Time faculty are not considered “Faculty” (with a capital F) if they do not teach a full credit load according to the current definition [with the possible exception of tenured and tenure-track part-time faculty, depending on the Bylaws referendum vote]. These people cannot be part of the Faculty Senate or on its committees. Which committees would be responsible to look at a faculty grievance for a part-time faculty?

Charge: The Faculty Senate President has reached out to the Adjunct Caucus for their opinion on this matter and will pass the feedback along to the ad hoc committee. Based on their feedback, make a recommendation either for or against changing the procedures for part-time faculty who aren't constituents of Faculty Senate. If recommending a change, include the specific language for the proposed change.

The committee received input from the Adjunct Caucus which expressed support of part-time faculty submitting grievances to the Faculty Senate. As such, the committee proposes the following change to the first paragraph of the Faculty Grievance Policy:

“Salisbury University has established the Faculty Grievance Policy to give faculty members, **both full-time and part-time**, of the University community a forum in which to address concerns related to matters involving the interpretation or application of University policies including disciplinary action. This policy provides a method for aggrieved faculty to express substantive complaints about denials of tenure, academic policy concerns, or other faculty issues and have them resolved by the appropriate University officials in a timely fashion. The following matters are not covered by these grievance procedures...”

7. Chapter 4, “Tuition Remission”

We do not believe that faculty/staff should have to pay the same amount of fees as students, as faculty/staff have access to as many of the items that student fees go towards (access to Maggs, entrance into athletic events, etc.).

Charge: Make a recommendation on whether Faculty Senate should ask the administration to waive such fees for faculty and staff taking courses at SU.

Although USM Section VII 4.10 Policy on Tuition Remission and Reimbursement (Link: <https://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionVII/VII410.pdf>) states “Tuition remission does not include mandatory fees, which remain the responsibility of the eligible employee or retiree.”, the committee recommends that the Faculty Senate should request that the administration waive fees that cover items already included in the benefits related to employment so faculty/staff do not have to pay twice.

8. Glossary

The entry for “Integrity” was removed as the “definition” provided was not, in fact, a definition. An actual definition is needed.

Charge: Draft a definition of “integrity” that aligns with other entries in the glossary.

The committee will provide a definition to the Faculty Senate in conjunction with work by the APC on academic integrity which is ongoing at the time of this report. Initial review for consideration of a definition includes:

In USM Policy (III-1.00), “Academic Integrity” is defined as “A commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage.”*

In Chapter 6, Teaching and Learning at Salisbury University, academic integrity is discussed stating:

- “The spirit of academic integrity denotes adherence to the precept that one’s work is one’s own.”
- “The Student Academic Misconduct Policy is intended to foster student academic integrity and address cases of student academic misconduct which includes, but is not limited to, lying/fabrication, cheating, plagiarism, and misappropriation of intellectual property....”

Integrity: Following and upholding the principles of the university and those of the relevant professional organizations.

9. Chapter 2 Reorganization

Chapter 2 should be reorganized to make the topics clearer. In addition, the discussions of all positions should have a somewhat parallel structure within the handbook. A single example of how it could be organized is provided on pages 5-7.

In Section C. “Faculty Ranks”, both clinical faculty and library faculty are not listed; they are found later in the document in a section called fulltime non-tenure track faculty. It seems that separating the clinical and library faculty ranks separately suggests a lack of equity. There has got to be a better way to lay out this section, so it doesn’t look like clinical faculty and library faculty are different and almost an afterthought.

Charge: Make a recommendation on whether or not Chapter 2 should be reorganized. Take into consideration your recommendation on revising the full Faculty Handbook. If recommending reorganization, provide the recommended new organization. The committee agrees the proposed organization of Chapter 2 of the Faculty Handbook is reasonable but did not and could not address the equity and organization issues mentioned in the charge for this committee. We believe that reordering the content will not provide a sufficiently parallel structure and that rewriting large sections is required to accomplish this goal.

The committee agrees that listing all faculty ranks in one place is ideal, and listing the types of rank in alphabetical order would reduce the appearance of inequity. For example, Clinical Faculty and their associated ranks would be listed first, then Faculty, and then Library Faculty; though other organization methods could be more useful.

10. Language Consistency

Within Chapter 2 in particular and throughout the Handbook, there are multiple terms used to describe the same four things.

- **teaching, scholarship and creative activity, service**
- **teaching, scholarship or research, creative activity and community and professional service**
- **teaching effectiveness including student advising; (b) research, scholarship, professional development and, in appropriate areas, creative activities; and (c) relevant service to the community, profession, and institution.**
- **Instruction, Research and Service**
- **teaching, scholarship, and service**
- **teaching, professional development, and service**
- **teaching/advising, scholarship and creative activities, and service**
- **a) Excellence in Teaching... b) Professional Activity... c) Service**
- **effective teaching, scholarship, and service**
- **Teaching and Advising, Professional Development, Service to the University and Community**
- **service to the University, their profession, and the community**
- **teaching, service to the institution and community, and evidence of professional development**

This language should be consistent and uniform throughout.

Charge: Decide which language should be used. If the committee finds any other variations in the terms used, add them to the list.

Although the committee does not believe the list of terms provided always refer to the exact same thing, we did not read the entire document to verify this. However, where applicable, we propose the wording be changed to the following:

“Teaching, scholarship and creative activity, and service to the University and/or professional field.”

Since these terms are used frequently, the ad hoc committee recommends keeping the terminology short, clear, and not requiring review of the glossary for full understanding. In addition, because the University does not count service to the “community” in a significant way, the statement excludes that component and instead includes the two types of service (i.e., University professional field) that currently contribute significantly toward promotion and tenure.

Additional recommendation for this section:

It may be appropriate to review the types of service that contribute meaningfully to promotion and tenure as it is possible the current faculty may want to give more weight to service to the community.

11. Revising the full Faculty Handbook

The Promotions Committee would like to emphasize that making those improvements below is not sufficient for the creation of a workable Faculty Handbook. The version we were given is far from a final draft with numerous spelling mistakes, redundancies and other errors. Fixing these is not a task that can be completed by three committees in a short period of time. We suggest that the Faculty Handbook be edited by an expert editor and restructured to get rid of redundancies. After that it should be read by the various committees, the Faculty Senate and the General Counsel.

Statement from the Faculty Welfare Committee

We have found that the latest version of the faculty handbook is based on an older handbook that is neither clear nor concise. Both versions of the handbook have poor structure, are difficult to understand, and are at times redundant. There is little consistency with the layout of sections of the handbook, and we feel that the current version of the handbook needs major reworking with significant revisions. We understand that starting over with the handbook is a monumental task, with a tremendous amount of editorial work. However, we believe that a lack of clarity within the handbook hurts faculty, and we urge the faculty senate to take up the task of developing a better version of the faculty handbook.

There are many ways to go about this, but we would like to offer a suggestion. We encourage a small group of faculty senators or interested faculty to design the general layout of a new handbook. One resource for this work would be the AAUP Faculty Handbook Guide (<https://www.aaup.org/our-programs/legal-program/faculty-handbooks-guide>). After the general structure has been determined, we suggest giving a single person with experience in writing and editing the task of constructing the faculty handbook. Policies and wording can be gleaned from the current and past editions of the handbook. Having a single person write the handbook will give the document a single voice, as well as eliminate many of the redundancies currently found in the handbook. After the document is written, the faculty senate can send out sections to different faculty senate committees for review. The committees can then offer feedback, and the faculty senate can work with the writer to incorporate the feedback in a meaningful way.

Since this document defines and explains the rights of faculty members, we also suggest that the University legal counsel give it a thorough review before completion.

Charge: Make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate on what, if anything, should be done in terms of wholesale editing or re-writing of the Faculty Handbook. If recommending changes, the recommendation should include a specific recommended process to follow.

The ad hoc committee agrees with the Promotions Committee and the Faculty Welfare Committee that the Faculty Handbook needs to be rewritten. The ongoing work by the Faculty Senate and members of the provost's office has improved the handbook, but starting over would likely be less work and cause fewer pitfalls than continuing to revise it incrementally. Honestly, even within the ad hoc committee's small charge, it was sometimes overwhelming trying to keep track of inconsistencies and errors. Beyond what we were asked to investigate, the committee found at least seven typos, bad links, and omissions such as the annual review process or requirements for tenured faculty.

We believe that the process laid out by the Faculty Welfare Committee is reasonable but emphasize ensuring that a diverse group of faculty participates in the process, so the result reflects the full faculty body, including those who are part-time. We also suggest requesting standing committees review the current handbook and make suggestions for content changes, as appropriate, so the new handbook would include content changes as well as correcting other issues with the current handbook. Reorganization of Chapter 2 would then be included as part of the process and the minor changes suggested could improve the flow of content.

What follows is a suggestion regarding how the Faculty Handbook should be rewritten, borrowing heavily from the Faculty Welfare Committee's suggestion, and including our own thoughts:

We encourage a group of faculty senators or interested faculty from each division and varying ranks to design the general layout of a new handbook. Coinciding with this effort, we recommend that all Faculty Senate Committees and other interested parties review the sections of the Faculty Handbook most relevant to their charges for possible content changes or additions. If these suggestions are approved by the relevant committees and administration, then they can be included in the first draft of the new handbook. After the general structure has been determined and content changes have been agreed upon, we suggest giving a single person or small committee, with experience in writing and editing, the task of constructing the faculty handbook. Policies and wording can be gleaned from the current and past editions of the handbook as well as the changes approved by the Faculty Senate. New questions that arise should be brought to the Faculty Senate who could then delegate the question to an existing committee. Having a single person or small committee write the handbook will give the document a consistent voice, as well as eliminate many redundancies currently found in the handbook. After the document is written, the faculty senate can send out sections to different faculty senate committees for final review. The committees can then offer feedback, and the faculty senate can work with the writer(s) to incorporate the feedback in a meaningful way.

The person or committee writing the faculty handbook should complete this work as their full-time position. This assignment could require hiring a professional or providing significant course release for those involved with the writing. The required release time would depend upon the number of faculty involved, but we would anticipate writing the

handbook to take at least one full year with partial course release for two or three subsequent semesters to make changes according to the suggestions of campus committees.

For each section of the handbook, someone should ask the following questions:

- Who does this section impact?
- Is there a similar section for those not covered by this section? If not, should there be?

In addition, revision should ensure that all faculty processes are included in the handbook. For example, annual reviews that are currently omitted.

It may also be a good idea to make it easier to reference individual sections of the handbook. For example, currently we must reference faculty workload and responsibilities as, “Chapter 4, Faculty Workload and Responsibilities, Section IV” which is a bit cumbersome. A recommendation for revision is “Chapter 4, Section IV, Subsection 4” which could be abbreviated to C4.IV.4 or something similar.

The final committee recommendation is to ensure that “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)” are emphasized throughout the handbook.

Summary

The members of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee have worked diligently to execute their charge, providing recommendations to answer specific questions raised by Faculty Senate standing committees and identifying additional considerations for revision of the Faculty Handbook. The ad hoc committee members are grateful for the opportunity and recognize the tremendous amount of time and collaboration required to not only capture specifics related to faculty workload, evaluation (i.e., review, promotion), and benefits, but also provide this important information in an organized and accessible format.