



Committee on Oversight of Administrative Action (COAA) Meeting Minutes

April 21 2022 via Zoom
Approved: 10/21/2022

Present: Tom Braun (Chair), Hani Bawardi, Naomi Binnie, Adam Burak, Caitlin Finlayson (SACUA Liaison), Gabriela Hristova, Donald Likosky, John Pasquale, Karen Staller, Chuanwu Xi

Absent: Fiorella Luisa Adan (undergraduate student), Massy Mutumba, Arlo Clark-Foos, Christopher Schemanske (graduate student)

2:33 Chair Braun called the meeting to order.

Chair Braun mentioned that Mary Jo Banasik, Director of Faculty Senate office, left, last day was Friday. Elizabeth Devlin also leaving next Friday.

Changes to composition of COAA next year:

- Donald's last meeting, completed his years of service.
- Caitlin going on sabbatical next year, Durga Singer coming in as SACUA Vice-Chair, taking Caitlin's spot
- Tom is joining SACUA so will be leaving this committee.
- Will need a member to step up and lead the group.

Topics considered for future meetings (?):

- AEC survey
- Formalized evaluation of chairs and deans
- Work connections and its approach to requests and work restrictions
 - Two committees on campus already working on this, Tom on one. This committee will present summary to Provost soon.
- U-M Ann Arbor Faculty Grievance Procedure
- FOIA process at U-M
 - After release of Schlissel's emails, interest and curiosity around FOIA.
- [ECRT](#)
 - Ethical use of information
- Academic freedom and re-evaluation of the tenure process that we are seeing nationally, and on the Flint campus, important to make a priority

Wu: If we look back at the charge of the committee, will that further inform our next moves?

Tom: There are guiding ideas, but we are free to veer off into areas we think are important.

Caitlin: still need to consider provost related issues

- <https://www.provost.umich.edu/programs/Process%20for%20Dean%20Review-October%2020%202021.pdf>



- Concerns that the university is choosing to “move on” from major issues rather than address them
- A committee task might be to encourage admin to continue addressing these

Wu: concern around tenure system in FL, every 5 years a tenured professor must be reevaluated. As a committee we should think about how we can protect tenured professors.

National politics affecting tenure

- In Flint this was happening, called the “workload policy” or “post-tenure review policy”: <https://facultysenate.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2-14-22-SA-Resolution-on-Flint-Post-Tenure-Review-Policy-2.pdf>
- A formal committee is exploring ways to create the post-tenure review policy, seems likely that this will be pushed on faculty in one way or another

3:00 – 3:30pm:

AEC survey

Discussion with members of AEC over proposed changes from COAA

- Semyon M. Meerkov, co-chair
- A Galip Ulsoy, co-chair
- Keith Riles, long-term member, former chair
 - One of our goals in this committee could be to look at the results of the survey, instead worked towards looking at the survey itself rather than analyzing the data
 - Concern is that the comments disappear, student evaluations are kept over time and used in evaluation of faculty, but AEC does not save comments for the administration.
 - Concern around saved comments being subject to FOIA, Keith clarified the past of AEC survey
 - Semyon: 6,400 respondents so far for this year’s survey
 - Galip: unclear on why faculty would like an open record of comments to admin
 - Responses
 - Faculty do not feel like there is a point to sending comments, they are discouraged and disheartened that the comments don’t go anywhere. Questions around why faculty comments and evaluations are saved but admin evals are not.
 - Keith: there was some response (from SACUA?) that there was a distinction between student responses to courses and admin responses, again bringing in FOIA
 - Qualitative comments are needed for collection, may be a way to spotlight minority voices that may be lost otherwise.
 - Keith: comments were sent to Schlissel about Philbert, these comments were never read/they were ignored.
 - Caitlin: if comments are kept, admin can be held accountable
 - Tom: asked deans if they review survey comments, deans mostly replied that they do not use survey.
 - Galip: how can we address the FOIA issue?



- Keith: key distinction between evaluations is that confidential comments are protected by FERPA bc they are entered by a student.
- Hani: student evaluations are very different from admin evals (as far as identifying information, power differentials, minority voices, etc.). Without confidence in the process, safety for the faculty, responses will not improve.
- AEC folks: Concern that disgruntled faculty could then publicly share comments
- John: let's bring in FOIA experts, general counsel - Tim Lynch
- Multiple: seems unlikely that faculty would use this system to falsely accuse or share disgruntled feelings against admin
- Karen: what we're after is patterns of bad behavior.
- Common admin response is that they use this survey, so the work of collecting responses is done.
- Ratemyprofessors.com already exists, we have to be mindful of biases around race and gender
- Need to address FOIA first, then move to next steps

3:30 – 4:00pm:

- Tom will develop a formal document providing COAA requests directly to AEC, with input from committee
- Tom will write up final report for the year
 - Would appreciate help with completing the doc before June

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Braun, COAA Chair, and Naomi Binnie, COAA Member