

Faculty Executive Committee Annual Report 2020-2021

The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) would not be able to function this year without the assistance of some key people: Michael Orr, Debbie Peterson, Sue Blair, and Brooke Toma from the Office of the Dean of the Faculty; Adam Reagan from IT; and Idalia Sepulveda from the Office of Communications and Marketing. We are so grateful to these folks for their energy and support of FEC's work throughout this difficult year.

Additionally, FEC would like to express its sincere appreciation to all committee chairs and members for their service commitments this past year. In light of the tremendous challenges of this year in particular (including but not limited to increased workload, remote context, and – for many – extraordinary summer service obligations), governance committees upheld their service commitments with grace. We are enormously grateful for that work and commitment to the institution.

In advance of a detailed cataloguing of FEC's work during this academic year, we note that FEC was involved in a significant amount of non-routine work during Summer 2020. This included committee meetings and an extraordinary amount of work over email in order to support the college in planning for an unusual academic year (in light of both a Presidential transition and the COVID-19 pandemic). More specifically, during Summer 2020: FEC co-hosted a forum with the new President, including soliciting and curating questions from the faculty to the President (July 7). In light of proposed changes to academic policy (i.e., grading and attendance) due to COVID-19, FEC lobbied for (and enacted) a process whereby faculty were discussed motions via message board and voted online. In addition, FEC hosted a faculty-only meeting prior to the beginning of the academic year in order to provide space for faculty members to connect and plan for the unusual academic year ahead (August 14). Lastly, the FEC Chair served during Summer 2020 on the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC), the subcommittee concerned with addressing changes related to Title IX, and the Academic Affairs Advisory Group.

Consistent with past years, FEC's work during the academic year included responding to faculty and committee inquiries about various governance-related topics. Other routine work for FEC included reviewing the Faculty Handbook for adoption in fall 2020 and convening the Committee of Committees after the spring and fall semesters (as well as writing and distributing this report). In addition, FEC oversaw elections and appointments to governance committees for service beginning in 2021-2022. Although this work is a single entry in this report, overseeing the elections occupied the bulk of FEC's time during the fall semester. Concerns about the governance process that continue to plague FEC's work are detailed below.

Meetings

All of FEC's meetings during the Summer and AY 2020-2021 happened remotely. FEC met 4 times over the summer of 2020 and 25 times during the 2020-2021 academic year. Minutes for these regular, weekly meetings held by the committee are posted on FEC's website.

The chair of FEC is a member of the Institutional Planning and Policy Committee (IPPC). Throughout the academic year, the chair of FEC met with the Dean of the Faculty monthly to discuss the faculty meeting agenda and other FEC-related business. In addition, the FEC chair participated in numerous ad hoc meetings with members of the faculty, and FEC participated in additional meetings with the Dean of the Faculty, the President, and other committees.

Governance Committee Elections

FEC held elections to fill 15 membership positions on 10 governance committees. The following members of the faculty were elected to serve three-year terms (unless noted otherwise), beginning Fall 2020:

Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC): Kate Greenspan, Rachel Roe-Dale, Sonia Silva*

Promotions Committee (PC): Andrew Lindner, Bernie Possidente

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC): Oscar Perez-Hernandez

Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC): Smriti Tiwari

Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP): Bradley Onishi, Wendy Lee

Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR): Kelly Melekis

Curriculum Committee (CC): Chris Vecsey, Minita Sanghvi

Faculty Development Committee (FDC): Flagg Taylor

Tenure Review Board (TRB) (*now disbanded*): Michael Eckmann (1yr term)

Periclean Honors Forum Council (HFC): Aarathi Prasad

*see Replacements

The Dean of Faculty/Vice President of Academic Affairs (DOF/VPAA) consulted with FEC to review requests from faculty for exemption from governance service.

The current service mandate continues to have drawbacks that will be important to consider when the system is formally reviewed in 2023-24. These concerns are not distinct from those raised in FEC's last (2019-2020) annual report, though the impact was greater on this year's election cycle. In particular:

- Due to difficulties populating ballots in order to generate contested elections, FEC had to extend the timeline for submitting preference sheets and grovel to colleagues to submit preferences before they were mandated to do so (see 10/1/20 email from FEC chair)
- FEC was unable to populate a ballot for ATC that resulted in an uncontested election for one of the seats (i.e., there was only one faculty member in the pool who was eligible for one of the seats given constraints on the role)
 - Concerns with ballot population are most notable for those committees with constraints on membership, and exist even when these elections happen at the very beginning of the cycle (e.g., ATC and PC)
- There were no faculty eligible for the position on TRB, and thus FEC had to employ a 1yr replacement for that position from the ad-hoc pool

FEC anticipates that these concerns will continue to increase given that the need to solicit preference sheets from folks prior to their mandate for submitting preferences "borrows" eligible faculty from future governance pools

Governance Committee Appointments

FEC appointed five members of the faculty to serve on four standing governance Committees (one unfulfilled position is not yet completed). Appointments for terms beginning Fall 2021 are as follows:

Subcommittee on Student Affairs (SSA): TBD

Faculty Advisory Board (FAB): Deb Hall (3 years) and Ryan Overbey (3 years)

Committee on Academic Standing (CAS): David Cohen (3 years)

Self-Determined Majors Committee (SDM): Sheldon Solomon (3 years) and Michael Paulmeno (1 year)

Nominations Processes

In consultation with the Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC), FEC formalized the process by which FEC solicits nominations, collects polling information from the faculty about preferences for representation on working groups and search committees, and then communicates the results of the polling to the faculty and ATC.

Committees of the Whole

In the Fall 2020 semester FEC hosted a Committee of the Whole discussion to inform FEC's recommendation to the DOF/VPAA on faculty listserv policy. This discussion, in addition to consultation with a representative from IT, resulted in a draft recommendation. FEC circulated this draft recommendation to relevant committee chairs (i.e., those who were named in the policy) as well as the Dean of Faculty, for consideration and feedback. FEC provided the final recommendation to the DOF/VPAA in April. The recommendation has since been accepted and the process for instituting this process is expected to happen Summer 2021.

In the Spring 201 semester FEC hosted a Committee of the Whole discussion to inform institutional decision making regarding the format for the all-faculty meeting moving forward (in light of a year of conducting said meetings fully remotely and in anticipation of the possibility of being able to again host in-person meetings safely). Following this discussion FEC circulated a survey to faculty soliciting their preferences for faculty meeting format moving forward. This discussion and survey results will inform decision-making around the AY2021-22 faculty meeting format.

Committee of Committees

FEC convened two meetings of the Committee of Committees.

The first meeting was on November 30, 2020 and opportunity for a discussion of the report occurred during the February 5, 2021 faculty meeting.

The second Committee of Committees meeting was on May 5, 2021. FEC plans to provide an opportunity for the faculty to discuss the report on that meeting during the September 2021 faculty meeting.

Consultations and Other Business

During the Fall 2020 semester FEC initiated a process to convene a working group focused on strengthening collaboration between faculty and administration. After consideration and consultation, and in light of the challenges of this academic year (and including the various ad hoc needs for faculty service on committees and working groups) FEC opted to pause the process. That said, FEC continues to see value in such a potential working group in the future.

FEC partook in meetings and communications with multiple stakeholders (including individual faculty members, other relevant committee(s), and college administrators) on the topic of non-tenure track contracts and Faculty Handbook language pertaining to the rights of non-tenure track colleagues. FEC has advised the DOF/VPAA to convene a working group in the Fall of 2021 to address important concerns about the impact of current practices surrounding non-tenure track contracts; the DOF/VPAA has expressed willingness to do so.

2020-2021 FEC Members:

Katie Hauser (Art History)
Xiaoshuo Hou (Sociology and Asian Studies)
Jason Ohlberg (Dance)
Casey Schofield (Psychology, Chair)

2021-2022 FEC Members:

Jason Ohlberg (Dance, Chair)
Xiaoshuo Hou (Sociology and Asian Studies)
Oscar Perez-Hernandez (World Languages and Literature)
Casey Schofield (Psychology)

Incoming Chairs/Directors of Governance Committees for 2020-2021

Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC) Sara Lagalwar
Promotions Committee (PC) Mark Huibregste
Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) Jason Ohlberg
Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC) TBD
Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) Jina Mao
Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR) Dan Curley
Curriculum Committee (CC) Maria Lander
Faculty Development Committee (FDC) Silvia Carli
Tenure Review Board (TRB) Mao Chen
Periclean Honors Forum Council (PHFC) Flagg Taylor
Athletic Council (AC) Jason Breves
Faculty Advisory Board (FAB) Pending
Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) Hassan Lopez
Self-Determined Majors Committee (SDM) Kate Berheide
Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) Marta Brunner