

Spring 2022 Committee of Committees Report.
May 6, 2022 (3:30–5:00 pm)

Present: FEC members Jason Ohlberg (Chair), Xiaoshuo Hou (scribe), Oscar Perez Hernandez (scribe), and Casey Schofield (scribe) along with representatives from ATC, PC, IPPC, CEPP, CAFR, CC, FDC, AC, and CIGU. The meeting was hosted via Zoom.

The FEC chair welcomed everyone and thanked committee members for their work this semester. The FEC chair reviewed the purpose of the meeting; the Committee of Committees meeting is an opportunity to share the important work that committees have been doing over the past semester. Further, committees are invited to report on the quality of intra-committee and inter-committee interactions, as well as the working relationship with college administrators. Finally, committees were asked to identify their incoming chairs for AY 22–23.

Appointment and Tenure Committee (ATC)

- Incoming chair: Winston Grady-Willis
- ATC worked with CEPP, FEC, Dean of Faculty, President, and Dean Fehling
- Completed evaluation of 10 tenure cases
- Provided recommendations to the president regarding faculty membership on the V.P. of Communications & Marketing and DOF/VPAA searches, guided by the results of faculty votes conducted by FEC.
- Participated in the V.P. of Communications & Marketing candidate interviews
- Held 2 information sessions
 - One for new TT faculty and their chairs and program directors, one for faculty who passed the third-year review and their chairs and program directors
- With guidance by external audit, ATC revised guidelines for submitting materials for tenure and requesting external letters
- Consulted with CEPP regarding FHB language surrounding teaching
- Consulted with FEC regarding faculty whose scholarship diverges from home department/program
- Consulted with FEC and President about populating search committees
- Discussions with FEC and the President about faculty service demand

Promotions Committee (PC)

- Incoming chair: Andrew Lindner
- Evaluated the single promotion case
- Evaluated endowed chair nominees and announced recipients
- Engaged ongoing conversations about climate and procedures surrounding promotion
 - Had a workshop with chairs and program directors in April
 - Reported to the faculty on the white paper that was released in Spring 2021
 - Will be continuing to pursue to these policies moving forward

- Provided feedback to CEPP on motions related to inclusive teaching during Fall 2021
- Internal functioning has been good
- Work with Dean Orr and Dean Fehling has been good - both have been very responsive and helpful

Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC)

- Incoming chair: Kurt Smemo
- Dealt with a variety of issues, including flexible work benefit, campus parking, and restructuring of Human Resources
- COVID policies, campus master planning, and budget have been central to IPPC's work
 - Compensation study, 5-year 10% staff reduction, hiring advisory group, and most recently the NTT unionization announcement
- The announced Community Meeting on May 24th will discuss college finances from a broader perspective (given the complex background of: Compensation study, 5-year 10% staff reduction, Hiring Advisory Group, and most recently the NTT-faculty unionization initiative)

Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP)

- Incoming chair: Leigh Wilton
- Unlike previous years, CEPP had a more typical year and so returned to agenda items that were underway prior to the pandemic
- Have approved the academic calendars for upcoming 2 academic years; there has been discussion about making 3 years of calendar available for planning
- Have worked with FYE office on training FYE students on how to complete student evaluation forms (e.g., the purpose of doing course evaluation, examples of good feedback, best practices, bias in teaching evaluation, etc.). CEPP has developed training material for trial in FYE in fall 2022
- Worked on issues related to new general education curriculum (e.g., can Bridge be fulfilled outside Skidmore?) and clarification on the elimination of maturity requirement
- Looking forward, new curriculum includes a provision to review in 2024-2025
- Has worked closely with assessment and institutional effectiveness. The Faculty Director of Assessment, Peter Von Allman, also sits on CEPP. He presented the QR assessment report and the FYE program assessment report to CEPP. He recommended that a QR review be conducted after the pandemic to see if the pandemic has any impact. Assessment is working on surveying students who have taken Bridge Experience courses
- Course rating forms and department long forms were administered in-person this year, with the exception of a few courses that were still taught online, and a bias statement was included for the first time. CEPP received one letter expressing concerns about the inclusion of the bias statement. CEPP reviewed the decision to include this statement that was made in 2019–2020 and decided to include the statement, but will review it again next year

- Conducted review of 2 proposals – one regarding retention of BIPOC faculty and the other on the increasing reliance on NTT faculty; both have been requested for revising to fit CEPP’s scope of work
- Challenges with establishing policy surrounding DEI issues, and encourages collaborative inter-committee work to grapple with this important work
- Working on 2 motions:
 - Proposal that would make significant changes to the FHB to redefine what it means to achieve teaching excellence (i.e., a more holistic model for how to evaluate teaching effectiveness). Motion was shared with ATC, PC, and the HHMI group, and is still in the works as CEPP has received some concerns.
 - Proposal concerned with incorporating inclusive teaching as part of teaching excellence; CEPP shared this draft with ATC and PC and the HHMI group. A subcommittee of HHMI raised serious concerns (especially the clarity of definition and assessment of inclusive teaching and the potential for unintentional harm.) This work continues
 - The constant turnover of membership on CEPP has affected CEPP’s ability to engage in long-term planning and implement changes

Curriculum Committee (CC)

- Incoming chair: Chris Vecsey
- Has 1 student representative (not 2, which is the requirement). Hoping to have another, especially since students have a voting role on curricular issues
- Have 85 Bridge Experience courses, and 2 additional that are under revision to include a practice component
- Ideally need 95 Bridge Experience Courses, and 20–23 courses each semester. Options for Bridge are limited for sophomores because of prerequisites
- Have discussed committee construction (i.e., how many faculty members are needed). Sense that 3 faculty members would be satisfactory and 4 would be fine
- Relationship with administration (Associate Dean Michael Arnush) and the Registrar’s Office has been excellent

Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR)

- Incoming chair: Siobhan Hart
- Reviewed the legislation that resulted in the creation of the role of teaching professor. Reported results to the DOF/VPAA who plans to revise FHB by way of a broadly consultative process
- Inquiry regarding the recording of meetings: there are questions as to whether policies against recording meetings with the administration have been enforced consistently. Began an inquiry this year into this issue and will follow up next year
- A late piece of business this year has been to work with the President to add an extra step in the formal investigation process. CAFR has proposed to add an additional consultation step that occurs after CAFR submits its letter and *before* the President responds in writing. The President has agreed to pilot this step with CAFR next year

Faculty Development Committee (FDC)

- Incoming chair: Flagg Taylor
- Has completed their regular work for the Spring semester (1-semester sabbaticals, awards, grants, etc.)
- FDC has proposed that the college award sabbatical enhancement awards to one third of all eligible faculty at 75% of the salary. This proposal was rejected. Currently FDC was able to award 4 people for sabbatical enhancement awards at 60% of salary, despite approximately 20 applications

Athletic Council (AC)

- Incoming chair: Jason Breves (continuing)
- This spring, the work was concerned with hiring and updates in the Athletics Divisions
- Worked with SGA and SAAC (Student Athletic Advisory Committee in light of concerns related to the discoordination and limited communication between these 2 communities. Proposal to identify dual appointments across these two groups
- Reviewed academic performance and use of academic support service by student athletes versus non-athletes (thanks to Jamin Totino and Ryan Homsey). Across metrics, there was no evidence of a difference between groups
- Work with administration has been good

Committee on Intercultural Global Understanding (CIGU)

- Incoming co-chair: Lia Ball
- Completed: consultation on campus safety external review, NACCC student survey analysis and staff survey implementation, review of funding requests for Racial Justice Initiatives as needed, and bias response process
- In process: Considering a campus-wide approach to anti-racism training procedures (e.g., whether it should be handled at department level, whether it should be one mandated training for everyone, or whether there should be a menu of things to choose from); continuing to address transphobia concerns raised by students in fall 2021
- Ongoing: CIGU will continue consulting with a campus-wide working group that is collaborating on indigenization and decolonization strategies. This group started as a way to bring together disparate land acknowledgment efforts at Skidmore. Outgoing CIGU co-chair Marta Brunner and Center Director Anita Jack-Davies are points of contact for this working group.

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)

- FEC has maintained an exceptionally positive internal working environment as well as positive intra-committee working relationships
- FEC has maintained consistently positive working relationships with the administration

- Used time early in the semester to update the FEC operating code—an overdue process due to prioritizing COVID logistics over the past two years. 2 key updates:
 - Solidifying the process of forming working groups/search committees and identifying candidates with the most votes: Once polling is completed, FEC will report to the larger faculty the list of the names of the nominees who polled the highest (in alphabetical order). The number of names to be reported will be determined by either twice the number that are needed for the committee, or half the number of people on the ballot—whichever is larger
 - Formalized the practice of asking candidates to provide brief 3–5 sentence bios
 - Additionally, FEC updated the faculty governance primer for committee accuracy and to help clarify the process of cohorts and preference sheets
- Appointed replacements for vacancies on several committees
 - 2 on ATC and 1 on CEPP, CC, FAB, CAS, SDM, & SRC
 - Still have 1 outstanding consultative appointment with CIGU, which is in process
- FEC hosted a Committee of the Whole during the March 4 faculty meeting regarding faculty having the option to teach remotely when in-person classes are cancelled due to inclement weather. FEC followed up this discussion with a brief faculty survey, which showed faculty support for the measure to be evenly divided
 - Concern was voiced to FEC that there would have been less support if NTT faculty had been more involved in the discussion and survey
- FEC Chair met with IT regarding potential governance software updates
 - Specifically, the development of an automated alert for faculty who have already submitted preference sheets when they resubmit them in response to FEC’s annual cohort call. Cited issues of faculty entering the pool early, then thinking they must also submit with their cohort call, creating administrative and logistical issues for elections
- Met with President Conner and the Chair of ATC regarding the formation of the DOF/VPAA search committee
 - Facilitated a call for nominations and held a vote to represent faculty voice in the process of selecting the four faculty representatives
- FEC met with the Chairs of both CAFR and ATC to discuss a proposal FEC received regarding potential tenure process modification for faculty members whose scholarly work is interdisciplinary in nature and thus whose scholarly work may be more appropriately evaluated by an ad hoc committee across departments/programs rather than exclusively within their home departments.
 - Recent public letters from faculty who left the institution prior to tenure over such concerns were cited
 - Issues of faculty at disciplinary intersections had been discussed in ATC, and ATC proposed that current practices of evaluation for tenure (i.e., internal letters) may be utilized for faculty in this position until further changes are implemented

- Resolved that FEC, ATC, and CAFR should meet again for further discussion in AY 22–23
- Faculty Governance System will be coming up for review in AY 23–24
 - Will be contemplating processes for assessment and ways to engage faculty in conversation about the governance system and envisioning ways in which we might more wholistically consider service in the future

Additional Discussions:

- Committees working on DEI issues were invited to consult with CIGU
- Discussed the history of faculty-administration relationships
- Raised possible issues to consider as FEC starts to plan for the review of the governance structure in AY 23–24. One consideration would be a more holistic approach to service, as only certain service roles “count”. It was also discussed how tenure-track assistant professors are the only group that has clear service expectations but other groups (associate professors, NTT faculty, etc.) are less clearly defined