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Amend Faculty Handbook on Faculty Evaluations

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Approved by the Faculty Senate: 10/24/2002

Not Approved by the Senate:

Approved by the President:

Not Approved by the President:

Amend Faculty Handbook on Faculty Evaluations

Submitted by: Clara Krug

10/24/2002

Motion:

That the Faculty Welfare Committee add to the 2002-2003 Handbook the following statement: "Departmental criteria (as opposed to University criteria) under which one is hired will remain in effect, at least until the first personnel action (tenure or promotion)."

Rationale:

Rationale 1. There is precedent for allowing individuals at Georgia Southern University to adhere to a specific set of requirements even when new requirements are approved, printed in various media, and displayed on the internet. The individuals are Georgia Southern University students. The precedent is the option to adhere to requirements in effect when they enter our University, regardless of changes.

Rationale 2. If the current draft of promotion and tenure policies and procedures at the University level is a necessary clarification, that is acknowledgment that, in the past, those procedures and policies were not clear. Faculty members have had departmental policies and procedures to guide them. If these policies and procedures were not clear faculty should not be held accountable. In following departmental guidelines they were acting in good faith and therefore should have no professional harm inflicted upon them.

Rationale 3. The concept stated in this motion has received support – orally, if not in writing -- from the Senate at the following meetings: October 25, 2001; November 2001; and September 2002. This concept guided approval of the current policies and

procedures in this body. However, we have learned that since it is not recorded in an approved, written document, it does not constitute policy.

Rationale 4. Georgia Southern University's requirements and procedures evolve. Therefore, adding this statement should remove a potential penalty inherent to such evolution. We need to recognize the fact that not all faculty enter our institution at the same point in our particular evolutionary process.

Response:

Krug (CLASS) moved that the Faculty Welfare Committee add to the 2002-2003 Handbook the following statement: "Departmental criteria (as opposed to University criteria) under which one is hired will remain in effect, at least until the first personnel action (tenure or promotion)." She supported the motion with four rationales:

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Rationale 2. If the current draft of promotion and tenure policies and procedures at the University level is a necessary clarification, that is acknowledgment that, in the past, those procedures and policies were not clear. Faculty members have had departmental policies and procedures to guide them. If these policies and procedures were not clear faculty should not be held accountable. In following departmental guidelines they were acting in good faith and therefore should have no professional harm inflicted upon them.

Rationale 3. The concept stated in this motion has received support – orally, if not in writing -- from the Senate at the following meetings: October 25, 2001; November 2001; and September 2002. This concept guided approval of the current policies and procedures in this body. However, we have learned that since it is not recorded in an approved, written document, it does not constitute policy.

Rationale 4. Georgia Southern University's requirements and procedures evolve. Therefore, adding this statement should remove a potential penalty inherent to such evolution. We need to recognize the fact that not all faculty enter our institution at the same point in our particular evolutionary process.

Jerry Wilson (COBA) noted that the wording of her motion was problematic, that it could actually work against a faculty member. Krug replied that she was just trying to get discussion started on the principle and wording of the motion. Cyr said that he found Krug's rationales #2 and #3 particularly compelling, and that unless the departmental guidelines that were a faculty member's sole guide were in conflict with a hard and fast Regents' rule, the departmental guidelines should prevail. He suggested the motion be referred to the Faculty Welfare Committee to work on the wording (a reference Allen had wanted to make before the motion actually came to the Senate floor). Cyr also noted that Krug's motion and rationales point out the need for departmental handbooks that are clear, that are in line with college handbooks that are clear, that are in line with the now pretty clear University policies, so that everybody knows what's going on. Mark Edwards (COST) and Ann Pratt (COST) pointed out that department guidelines often referred (and still refer) faculty to the University Faculty Handbook regarding some issues and criteria, and that there are conflicts between the current Handbook and past editions. Mary Marwitz (CLASS) clarified later that this creates a compound issue: conflicts between departmental and University guidelines at time of hiring, and between guidelines at time of hiring and time of personnel action.

Much discussion ensued, with President Grube noting that the necessary procedure is for the Faculty Welfare Committee to bring suggested policy re-wording to the Senate, for the Senate to recommend (or not) that policy re-wording to the President, and for the President to approve (or not) that policy re-wording. Krug pointed out that she was more than willing that revisions to her motion be made. Much more discussion ensued, composed largely of learned disputation regarding parliamentary procedures and of multifarious suggestions for amending the motion so that the proper procedure outlined by President Grube (see above) could be followed.

Parliamentarian Jeff McLellan narrowly led the Senate out of the path of what Jim Stephens (COE) characterized as a potential "Rules of Order train wreck" and up to the amended motion, presented by Krug: "The Faculty Senate requests the Faculty Welfare Committee [to] review the Faculty Evaluation Guidelines submitted to the Georgia Southern University Faculty Senate in October and November 2001, specifically to look into clarifying promotion and tenure guidelines for the purpose of including a 'grandfather clause.'"

The amended motion was passed by a substantial majority.