

Appendix F: Five Year Review

Faculty Grievance Committee

Interviewed: Guillermo Giannico, Chair, Faculty Grievance Committee
Interviewer: Robin DeSantis, Member, Committee on Committees
Date of Interview: February 13, 2012

This review of the Faculty Grievance Committee is submitted in accordance with the duties of the OSU Faculty Senate Committee on Committees to review each Faculty Senate committee at five-year intervals using the following criteria established by the Faculty Senate:

1. Do the Standing Rules clearly reflect the function and composition of this committee?
2. Have the committee's actions/function, as reported in the annual reports and based on consultation with the current chair and committee, been consistent with their Standing Rules?
3. Do the annual reports provide a memory of the issues this committee addressed, their activities and any outcomes?
4. What has been the role/benefit of the student members?
5. What connection is there to the University's strategic plan?
6. To what extent does the committee add value to the university and/or faculty governance?
7. If the chair believes the committee does not add value, please explain and address the question as to whether the committee should continue to exist.
8. Does this committee's work enhance OSU's commitment to diversity? If so, how?

Guillermo was sent these questions prior to our interview.

The Faculty Grievance Committee reports that:

- 1) The Standing Rules clearly reflect the function and composition of this committee. It is mostly outlined by OARs, so it is very concise and encompassing.
- 2) Yes, while there was not an annual report from last year, the function of the committee has been consistent with the Standing Rules and actions have been based on prior annual reports, consultation, and knowledge built among returning members.
- 3) All of the annual reports currently available online provide a memory of the issues the committee has addressed and the outcomes. The report from last

year was not submitted, but the report summarizing this year will be a bi-annual report and include information from the past two years.

- 4) There is not a student member on the Faculty Grievance Committee. A student member would not be useful because they are not invested in the process nor have the knowledge base to contribute to addressing grievances. Unfortunately, there would also be little or no draw for students because they do not gain much from being on such a committee, nor does it relate to any type of work or degree experience.
- 5) This committee does a number of things that align with the University's strategic plan:
 - Ensures the fair treatment of faculty, providing equal opportunity without discrimination, and a great resource for underrepresented populations because they can be referred to/from the Equity and Inclusion Office when addressing concerns.
 - Helps campus climate and faculty retention by providing an outlet for faculty grievances. The committee itself, and being available to address these issues, has really become part of the OSU atmosphere and tradition where faculty can rely on being heard and are aware of the medium available to address concerns.
- 6) The Faculty Grievance Committee provides a safe/neutral space where every voice and issue can be heard and addressed. The committee members themselves are professional and open minded, making a concerted effort to be fair and consistent in their actions and finding resolve for grievances.
- 7) The added value of the committee to the university and faculty governance is not only evaluated through the committee, but through the process the committee is part of. During the interview a concern regarding a potential for bias during the grievance process was brought up, specifically when the committee's decision is appealed. While it has not been a major concern, it has the potential to be.

The idea of an appellant processes is to involve a third party, or higher authority, to review the case and determine whether an error occurred in the determination of the original case. The original reviewers of the case should not be involved as it is their decision being appealed. There could be unintentional bias if they reviewed their own decision again.

The current process at OSU is, the Faculty Grievance Committee does not make a final decision, but makes recommendations to the President, who reviews the recommendations and sends the formal notice to the appellee notifying them of the decision. If the appellee wants to appeal the decision of the President, they will need to make the appeal directly to him/her. The President is, therefore, the decision maker and the appeals authority, giving room for the potential for bias when reviewing his/her own decision again.

There is no perfect solution to this concern, but it does warrant the process to be re-evaluated and discussed. Another option is to do a comparison with other OUS institutions grievance processes. There are options under the

OARs allowing the grievant to appeal to the Chancellor of the Oregon University System, which may be another option to consider.

- 8) This committee absolutely enhances OSU's commitment to diversity by providing a safe space on campus where a voice can be heard and faculty know the committee will advocate for a fair and just outcome, or at least hear their voice and direct them to where their problem can be better addressed.