

**Faculty Senate Ethics and Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**March 18, 2015**

**Members Present:** Teddy Warner, Martha Faulkner, Ann Murphy, Luis Campos  
Wayne Thorpe, and David Cavazos

**Members Absent:** Gail Houston

**Guests Present:** Faculty Senate President Pamela Pyle, and Associate Provost Virginia Scharff

**Staff Present:** Brianne Santos, Administrative Assistant 3.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

The agenda was approved by unanimous vote by the Committee.

The minutes of the February 9, 2015 were unanimously approved by the committee.

**Lines of Authority**

Faculty Senate President Pamela Pyle informed the Committee that requests that originate outside of the Faculty Senate should be sent to the Faculty Senate Operations Committee to delegate to the appropriate Faculty Senate Committee.

Faculty should be able to come to the Committee with ethical concerns to get advice on steps to take.

**Committee Charge Update**

Faculty Senate President Pamela Pyle attended this meeting to provide her goals and ideas for the Committee which will assist in drafting the charge.

Pamela Pyle informed the Committee that there is a Code of Conduct developed for the Health Sciences Center that the Board of Regents would like used as a model to draft for the main campus. The BOR tasked a team to begin the draft. The original draft of guiding principles was rejected by the BOR because they were looking for a more defined Code for the main campus of the University to adhere to. It has been on hold but Regent Hosmer would like the Preamble to the Code soon. Pamela Pyle felt that the FS Ethics and Advisory Committee could assist in the development. She will recommend to Policy Office Director Pamina Deutsch that members of the FS Ethics and Advisory Committee be represented/included in the Task Force.

Pamela Pyle suggested that Stuart Freedman, Chief HSC Compliance Officer, come to a meeting to give a presentation on the HSC Code of Conduct for the Committee. Each member of the Committee informed Pamela Pyle of their Ethics background.

Having the Faculty Senate Ethics and Advisory Committee is fulfilling an AAUP requirement.

The Committee discussed ideas that they would like to potentially include within their charge. It was suggested this Committee could potentially be an intermediating role between policy interpretation and the University. Possible review of proposed policies and policy revision. The committee discussed questions that should be considered while drafting the charge:

- What is the Committee responsible for?
- Who can direct people/tasks to the Committee?
- Does the Committee review policies? Do misinterpretations of policies come to the Committee?

Category summary for potential inclusion in the charge:

- Issue of can the committee act autonomously or does a body charge the Committee?
  - How much discretion does the Committee have when a charge is received?
- Activities
  - Blend of Review and Advisory
    - Proposed Policy and Policy Changes
  - Perhaps serving as an advisory role to faculty
- Conflicts of Interest

The Committee discussed possible boundaries for the charge. The Committee would like to retain that they are the non-nuclear option for the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee.

Some issues covered by peer institution ethics committees:

- Misconduct
- Conflict
- Misuse of Facilities

FS President Pamela Pyle suggested including in the charge a clarification to distinguish themselves from AF&T. To ensure that this Committee does not infringe on other committee roles/duties, Pamela Pyle will set up a meeting with University Secretary, Vivian Valencia.

The Faculty Senate passed a resolution that they were against no health benefits for post-65 retirees after July 1, 2015. The BOR is also looking at removing spousal benefits for those whose spouse have benefits elsewhere. FS President Pamela Pyle suggested that this could be an ethical issue that this Committee could review and possibly pass a resolution on.

Next steps for the draft of the charge will be to have Luis make an initial draft and send through the committee alphabetically for revisions. Once the Committee approves the charge, it will be sent to the Faculty Senate Operations Committee for review.

### **Spousal Campus Policies**

Associate Provost Virginia Scharff attended this portion of the meeting to better clarify her request to the Committee regarding Spousal Campus Policies. She stated it was not a “charge” to the Committee. She had multiple conflict of interest and ethical issues that brought to her attention. How do we as a University develop standards about professional behavior? Professionalism and conflicts of interest should be addressed. Virginia Scharff came to the committee because faculty should be involved in the conversation.

There is no hard evidence regarding the spousal accommodations, but currently in Arts and Sciences it is around 30%.

The University Statement of Professional Ethics, section 3, was brought up as a potential location to add spousal professional conduct. A question was asked if a policy should be written to address the issue. The Committee could investigate what other universities are doing and put forward recommendations to the Faculty Senate. Following Committee discussion the consensus was the issue is under their purview as an advisory role, however, the subject will be tabled until the Committee charge has been approved.

### **New Business**

To keep the momentum of the Committee work, the committee would like to be appointed for the 2015-2016 year.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.