

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

FA-006-234

Review of Policy 1391

Faculty Affairs Committee

Date: 09/06/2023

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 02/28/2024

Academic Senate

Date: 03/13/2024
First Reading

Referral

FA-006-234 Review of Policy 1391

Background

The process for emeritus appeals is poorly defined. The processes and function of various agencies with the institution need to be included in the appeals process so as to better serve our retiring faculty. Some items that need to be updated include what qualifies as an appeal versus missed deadlines, the role and function of the FAC as an independent body (investigative vs. perfunctory/ceremonial), etc. This referral concerns section 4.0 specifically.

Resources Consulted:

Policy 1207, Misconduct in Research
Policy 1391, Policy on Granting Emeritus Status to Faculty
Dr. Jill Hargis, Interim AVP Faculty Affairs
Senate Chair Rita Kumar
Senate Past Chair Nick Von Glahn

Resources Not Consulted:

President's Office

Discussion

The FAC discussed several aspects of section 4.0 in the original referral. Due to some confusion in past years regarding what constitutes an "appeal" of Emeritus status compared with just a "Late or Off-Cycle Emeritus request" and decided to split the two definitions and also better define the two processes. Section 4.0 was renamed "Late or Off-Cycle Emeritus Request Process" and defines the process if a department misses the senate-defined deadlines after passing an emeritus request. The FAC will consider the requests on a case-by-case basis for exceptions to the deadline or if the requested Emeritus resolution be moved to the following academic year.

Section 5.0 was created and is titled the "Appeals" process. In the previous policy, what constituted an appeal was poorly defined and then directed the FAC to investigate and make a recommendation. However, the FAC is poorly equipped to handle appeals, especially if they contain sensitive information because the membership of the FAC is broad and there may be competing political or personal interests. The FAC referred to Policy 1207 which defines how investigative processes work for academic misconduct and, after consultation with the executive committee, ultimately placed all investigative authority on the EC:

When a department motion for emeritus does not pass by a simple majority, the faculty member may appeal directly to the Academic Senate Executive Committee. The appeal shall be submitted within two calendar years of the faculty member's effective date of retirement the Executive Committee shall review the request and, if necessary, convene a subcommittee to evaluate the claim. The Executive Committee or their designees shall, at a minimum, meet with the eligible retiree and with the tenure-track faculty of the department/unit and report to the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee does not recommend awarding the emeritus status, the retiree may appeal in writing to the University President who makes the final decision.

Additionally, there is presently no language detailing on revocation of Emeritus status since there may be situations a retired faculty should no longer be affiliated with the university and added the following to section 5.0:

Emeritus status may be revoked upon request of the granting department or by the University for egregious conduct violations discovered during their tenure as a faculty or during retirement. The request for revocation shall be made in writing to the University President. The President (or their designees) shall determine the veracity of the claims and, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate, uphold or revoke Emeritus status. If the University President and the Executive Committee disagree, the Executive Committee may issue a dissenting opinion.

The FAC was concerned about weaponization of the process but also agreed that there may be cases where the faculty or University find just cause for revoking the association of the retired faculty member. The consultative process between the President's office and the Executive Committee will help limit the weaponization by providing a system of checks and balances, although we recognize this may be idealistic and imperfect. The FAC looks forward to reviewing and improving the process as needed.

Recommendation

The FAC unanimously support the changes to the policy and recommend adoption.