

Penn State Berks Faculty Senate
Monday, November 30, 2020
12:15 – 1:15pm
Zoom (Meeting ID: 997 7025 2360; Passcode: 458469)
Agenda

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the October 2020 Meeting (Appendix A)**
- 3. Announcements and Reports by the Chair**
 - Formation of Ad-hoc Committee on Berks Faculty Senate Policies and Procedures (Appendix B)
- 4. Reports of the Officers and University Senators**
 - Vice Chair Ryan
 - Secretary English
 - University Senator Bartolacci
 - University Senator Synder
 - University Senator Zambanini
 - University Senator Mahoney
 - SGA President Michael Shott
 - Student Senator
- 5. Comments/Announcements by Administrators**
 - Chancellor Hillkirk
 - Associate Dean Larson
- 6. Unfinished Business**
- 7. Forensic Business**
- 8. Motions from Committees**
- 9. Informational Reports**
 - Clarification of the Formation of Ad-Hoc Committees in the Penn State Berks Faculty Senate Constitution, Executive Committee (Appendix C)
 - FAR Process and Assessment, Faculty Affairs Committee (Appendix D)
 - Minutes of Standing Committee Meetings (Appendix E)
- 10. New Legislative Business**
- 11. Comments for the Good of the Order**

12. Adjournment

Appendix A

Penn State Berks Senate

October 26, 2020

12:15-1:15 PM, via Zoom

Attendees: Khaled Abdou, Ali Alikhani, Jennifer Arnold, Deniz Aydemir-Doke, Mike Bartolacci, Tara Beecham, Mike Briggs, Flavio Cabrera, Donna Chambers, Alex Chisholm, Valerie Cholet, Tricia Clark, Ebonie Cunningham-Stringer, Jennifer Dareneau, Justin De Senso, Justin DiAngelo, Colleen English, Azar Eslam Panah, Maria Fellie, Andrew Friesen, Nathan Greenhauer, Sarah Hartman-Caverly, Ryan Hassler, Kathleen Hauser, Jinyoung Im, Ben Infantolino, Samantha Kavky, Mahsa Kazempour, Shahid Khan, Jim Laurie, Ada Leung, Joe Mahoney, Michelle Mart, Lauren Martin, Cesar Martinez-Garza, Catherine Mello, Pauline Milwood, Kesha Morant-Williams, Jennifer Murphy, Tami Mysliwicz, Shannon Nowotarski, Meghan Owenz, Dawn Pfeifer Reitz, Jiabing Qi, Matt Rhudy, Malika Richards, Jeanne Rose, Brenda Russell, Holly Ryan, David Sanford, Marietta Scanlon, Jessica Schocker, Jeane Serran, Allison Singles, Stephen Snyder, Terry Speicher, Francisco Torres, Rosario Torres, Hartono Tjoe, Lorena Tribe, Praveen Verrabhadrapa, Bryan Wang, John Weber, Bob Zambanini, (faculty); Kristin Hawley, Marie Smith (staff); Pradip Bandyopadhyay, Kim Berry, Lisa Glass, Keith Hillkirk, Elyce Kaplan, Janelle Larson, Lolita Paff, Belén Rodríguez-Mourelo, John Shank (administration).

1. Call to Order

2. **Approval of the Minutes of September 2020 Meeting (Appendix A)** –The Chair called for any additional additions, corrections to the minutes; hearing none, a motion was called to approve the minutes, second; *the minutes were approved.*

3. **Announcements and Reports by the Chair – No report.**

4. Reports of Officers and University Senators -

- **Vice Chair Ryan** – The EBC fixed-term election is completed and Tricia Clark was chosen to serve as the member of the college committee for fixed-term promotion, congratulations Tricia. A small change was made by the fixed term committee to the fixed term promotion statement for Berks. This change was made because previously we were not doing things via digital measures and were asked to create a CV as part of the dossier. The change resulted with the removal of the statement which indicated the need for a curriculum vitae and has been replaced with *the fixed term promotion dossier from Digital Measure for the past five years.*
- **Secretary English** – An updated agenda was provided yesterday and the only change was the location of two items on the agenda.
- **University Senator Bartolacci** – At a recent meeting of faculty affairs committee, the following items were discussed. Regarding SRTE's, a change will be implemented slightly from where they were previously. Instead of the question, how did you like this course, it will be rephrased to something like, how did this course increase your understanding of the topics and learning objectives. The area where it had how did you like the instructor, to paraphrase how it will now show up, how well did the instructor promote a learning environment in the course. I have been assigned to a sub-committee to review looking at graduate faculty status for faculty at campuses without a graduate program. Some of the substance of the current policy is if you do not have immediate access to graduate students at your unit, you cannot get graduate status. It would have to be provisional. A follow up meeting will be held, more details to follow. A question was raised if this would apply to faculty who supervise and work with graduate students at other universities. The response, it does not, it only applies to the graduate school with Penn State graduate students.
- **University Senator Snyder** – There will be another special Senate meeting taking place on Thursday to discuss the special grading policy that was implemented last spring semester. In order to enact that it must be done term by term. If any faculty have any thoughts on this whether in favor or in opposition please let me know.
- **University Senator Zambanini** – The intra-relations committee is in the process of forming sub-committees. I am serving on the fixed term promotion sub-committee; we will be meeting in the near future to do our work.

- **University Senator Mahoney** – I have included a link to the draft resolution that we will be voting on Thursday in the chat for those who would like to see it. In addition, I have also set up on the Microsoft Teams channel a senate discussion section as well so feel free to add your comments there. I am on the curricular affairs committee and was added to the sub-committee for the VA degree. We are looking at streamlining the process for VA designations which will look at including more course that will be eligible as electives within the VA. We are also looking at changing or thinking about changing the terms used for freshmen, sophomore, junior, etc. to something a bit more inclusive and descriptive, like first-year, second-year, etc. This will include taking a look at the logistics involved in order to enact this change.
- **SGA President Michael Shott** – Not present.
- **Student Senator** – Not present.

5. Comments/Announcements by Administrators

- **Chancellor Hillkirk** –
 - We have about four weeks remaining until we go to remote teaching. So far, we have been very fortunate here with very few cases of COVID.
 - We are all anticipating the upcoming election. Penn State Berks is one of two Penn State campuses who has a polling station on campus. We do not anticipate issues but preparations are underway in the event it is necessary. A few instances recently took place on campus where we had to deal with the issue of partisanship all resulting without issue.
 - The University is providing voluntary testing for students November 16-18 and we along with other campuses are preparing for that through the Health Services offices. Students are being encouraged to be tested prior to their departure from campus in order to protect their family and others upon their arrival back home. We will have a few students who will remain on campus during the remote period and it is important that we all understand that the campus is not closing, that we will continue to have folks on campus. It is important for any faculty who wish to remain teaching from campus that you complete the Return to Work request as approval is needed prior to returning to campus. If you have already completed this process and have received approval, there is nothing additional that you need to do. A record is needed for everyone who is on campus as a measure for contract tracing should it be required. The logistics for being removed from the Return to Work request are currently being addressed and we hope to have more information to share on that soon.
- **Interim Associate Dean Larson** –
 - I just sent out an SRTE email in-regard to what was previously reported by Senator Bartolacci for reference. This clarifies the two summary measures shortening them and instead of using means their going to use modes and medians.
 - There was recent communication received pertaining to the upcoming election and excusing students from class for voting. This is something that the Senate changed and ACUE had an acceleration approval process to make sure that we consider voting as an excused absence for students. Faculty are being asked to consider this as an excused reason to miss class.
 - Kathy Bieschke has developed a committee to look at how COVID has affected faculty with the focus on equity concerns surrounding COVID. Not exclusively gender but we know that COVID has affected the workloads of women substantially, especially those with young children. We are looking at it both in terms of how it affects faculty on going through tenure, post tenure and teaching line or non-tenure line track faculty members and their promotion potential. If you have things you would like to share forward them to me.
 - There is now a process if you are doing research with undergraduate students and you want or need them to be on campus. If they are getting paid, they need to go through the Return to Work process; if they are not getting paid, then they would need to go through an internal Berks process which was previously shared by division heads.
 - Our next faculty meeting will take place on Monday, November 2.

6. Unfinished Business - None

7. Forensic Business – None

8. **Motions from Committees - None**
9. **Information Reports** – An overview as well as recommendations for the following reports were shared by representatives from each committee.
 - **Student Identification, Student Life Committee (Appendix B)**
 - **Making Campus More Sustainable, Physical Facilities and Safety Committee (Appendix C)**
 - **Technology and Classroom Layout, Physical Facilities and Safety Committee (Appendix D)**
 - **Faculty Perceptions and Practices Regarding Summer Teaching, Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (Appendix E)**
 - **Minutes of Standing Committee Meetings (Appendix F)**
10. **New Legislative Business - None**
11. **Comments for the Good of the Order – None**
12. **Adjournment**

Appendix B

Ad-Hoc Committee on Policy and Procedures.

The Executive Committee will form and charge a committee on compiling policies and procedures previously passed by the Penn State Berks Faculty Senate.

Specifically, the committee will be tasked with the following: “The ad-hoc committee should be assigned to determine what procedures and policies have been passed by the faculty senate since we became our own college (via digging through all senate binders from the year we became a college until the last official binder) and then organize those policies and procedures in either a website or a PDF document that clearly points faculty members to those policies and procedures.”

Appendix C

Clarification of the Formation of Ad-Hoc Committees in the Penn State Berks Constitution Executive Committee

Introduction

Currently, there is no content in the Penn State Berks Senate Constitution which indicates how ad-hoc committees can be formed. However, ad-hoc committees are mentioned three times across Sections 6-8 of Article V Committees. This content has been copied from the constitution and pasted below for reference, with sentences including “ad-hoc committees” highlighted.

SECTION 6 MEETINGS

- (a) All standing committees of the Penn State Berks Senate shall meet at least three (3) times each year. **Ad-hoc committees shall meet on an as-needed basis.**
- (b) All committees or committee chairs may invite resource members to their meetings with the agreement of the majority of committee members prior to the meeting.
- (c) All meetings shall be open to observers who are students or employees of the campus. A majority vote of the members present may restrict attendance and/or speaking privileges.

SECTION 7 REPORTING OF PROCEEDINGS

All standing and ad-hoc committees of the Penn State Berks Senate shall keep minutes of their meetings and provide a copy to the Secretary for the official records.

SECTION 8 QUORUM

At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the membership constitutes a quorum for standing committee and ad-hoc committees, provided that a majority of those present are faculty members. Proxy voting is disallowed but the Executive Committee shall establish policies for secure absentee balloting consistent with the Standing Rules.

Since these three sentences are the only mention of ad-hoc committees in the constitution and standing rules, it is necessary to clearly define how these committees are formed.

Discussion and Rationale

Article IV, Section 1 of the Penn State Berks Senate Constitution details the duties of the executive committee. This list of duties is copied below for convenience:

Article IV EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION 1 DUTIES

- (a) Consult with standing committee chairs to develop and prioritize agenda items;
- (b) Charge each standing committee for the upcoming year (and revise that charge as necessary);
- (c) Call Senate meetings;
- (d) Set agenda for Penn State Berks Senate meetings;
- (e) Call meetings of a Campus Faculty Assembly;
- (f) Act for the Senate in all matters, except changes to the Constitution, and Standing Rules,

- (1) when a Penn State Berks Senate meeting has been appropriately called and a quorum has not been obtained;
- (2) in the case of a special concern or an extraordinary emergency circumstance.
- (g) Appoint standing committee members based upon expressed interests of faculty, and a diversity of disciplines and functions in the campus.
- (h) In consultation with the Senate Chair, the Executive Committee shall appoint the leadership (Chair and Vice-Chair) of all Standing Committees of the Berks Senate.
- (i) Nominate faculty to administrative committees and joint Senate/administrative committees on which faculty are asked to serve.
- (j) Serve as nominations and elections committee for elections of officers, University Senators, ombudsman, advisory board members, and any other campus or campus wide offices under the auspices of the Senate.
- (k) Serve as liaison between the Penn State Berks Senate and Administration.

Items (b) and (g) indicate that the Executive Committee is responsible for charging standing committees and appointing standing committee members, respectively. Since the Executive Committee is responsible for forming and charging the standing committees, it is reasonable to conclude that the Executive Committee should also be responsible for forming and charging any ad-hoc committees.

Recommendations

Motion to add the following item to Article IV Section 1 of the Penn State Berks Senate Constitution:

- (l) Form and charge ad-hoc committees as needed to perform specific tasks not covered under current charges of the standing committees

Effective Date

November 30, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Executive Committee 2020-2021

Mike Bartolacci
Colleen English
Keith Hillkirk
Janelle Larson
Joseph Mahoney
Michelle Mart
Matthew Rhudy

Holly Ryan
Jessica Schocker (Chair)
Steve Snyder
Bob Zambanini

Appendix D

Faculty Affairs Committee Informational Report FAR Process and Assessment November 2020

Charge:

Evaluate the process and assessment criteria for the FAR. Prepare an informational or advisory and consultative report with recommended best practices and campus policies.

Introduction and Background:

In accordance with Penn State's policy AC-40, faculty are evaluated annually by their department/division heads. AC-40 indicates the following rationale for these evaluations:

Performance reviews are not only necessary for the process of determining merit salary increases; they also provide occasions for self-evaluation and reassessment of the role a faculty member is playing, which may evolve significantly during the course of a career. Reviews offer an opportunity to acknowledge and recognize good work, point out areas for improvement, and, in a few cases, identify productive new uses of a faculty member's talents. They are a means of ensuring that the diverse talents of the entire faculty are productively applied to the many responsibilities of the University. In addition, performance reviews can help identify resource targets -- places where additional resources could re-energize a faculty member whose energy or morale has run low or could lift an already productive member to new levels of achievement.

In order to perform these reviews, the university currently uses two methods for assessment: the Faculty Activity Report (FAR) that includes evidence of teaching effectiveness and one-on-one meetings with department/division heads to discuss a faculty member's performance.

Evaluation criteria are established by AC-21 (Definitions of Academic Ranks) and AC-23 (Promotion and Tenure Procedures and Regulations). According to the policy, "Each faculty member's evaluation is related to his or her area of assignment and responsibility, with the maximum weight given to the area of major emphasis in the individual's assignment."

The Faculty Affairs Committee has been charged with evaluating the process and assessment criteria for the FAR at the Berks campus to determine if faculty have concerns about its implementation on our campus. Since the charge was broad, the committee focused on two aspects of the FAR: did faculty believe the FAR accurately and adequately measured their yearly performance in research, teaching, and service; and did faculty feel as though they understood the FAR process and had influence into the final FAR numerical score. To that end, the committee created a survey, asking faculty to share their insights into their experiences. This report summarizes the committee's findings and makes recommendations regarding some of the concerns raised by faculty.

Information:

A Qualtrics survey was sent to all full-time faculty at Penn State Berks. 74 (57%) faculty responded to the survey and self-identified their rank and division (Table 1). The most (33) participants were from the HASS division which is 67% of the HASS faculty; the least (20) from EBC, which is 51% of EBC faculty. 51% of the Science faculty responded to the survey. The survey has 31 (42%) participants who are teaching-track faculty and 41(55%) who are tenured or tenure-track faculty.

Table 1: Counts of self-identified categories of survey participants

Category	n
EBC	20
HASS	33
Science	21
Lecturer	11
Assistant Teaching Professor	10
Associate Teaching Professor	10
Assistant Professor	12
Associate Professor	16
Professor	13
Other	2

Participants were asked a series of questions and asked for a response to each on a 0-100 scale. The questions and the response scale are listed in the next section. Participants also had the option to write an explanation of their numerical choice.

Quantitative Data:

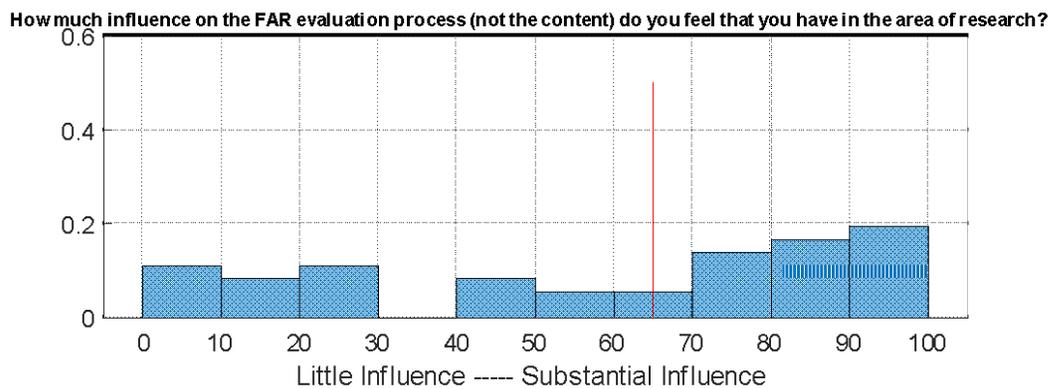
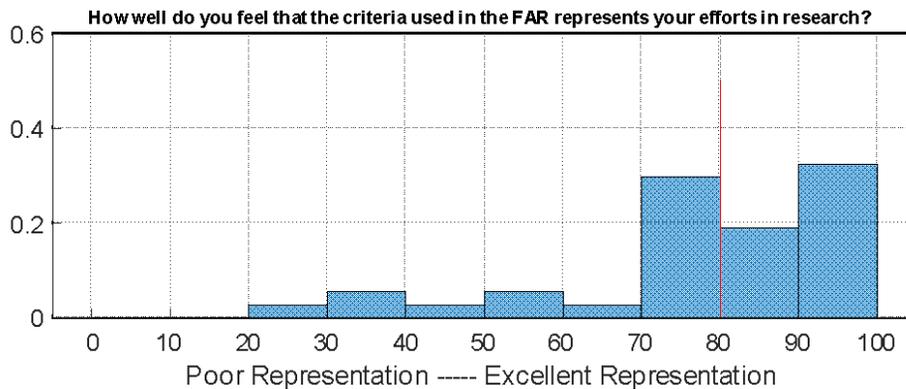
Histograms of the responses from all participants are shown below. The y-axis is the ratio of responses in a bin to the total number of responses to the question. The red line denotes the median value.

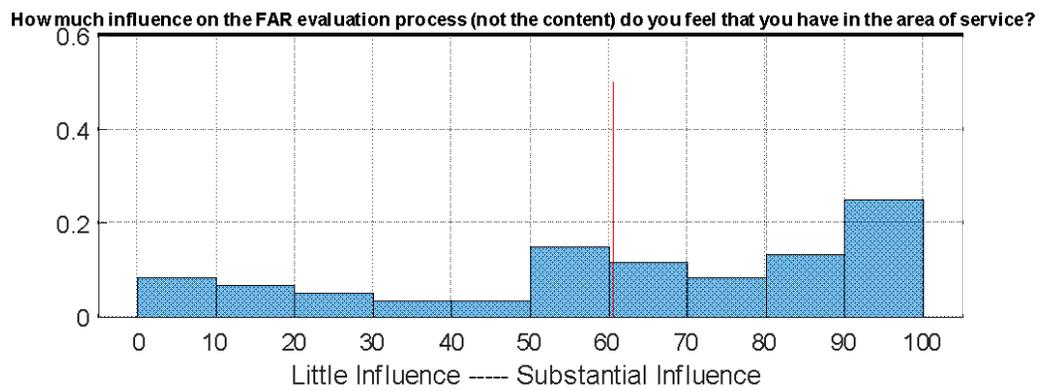
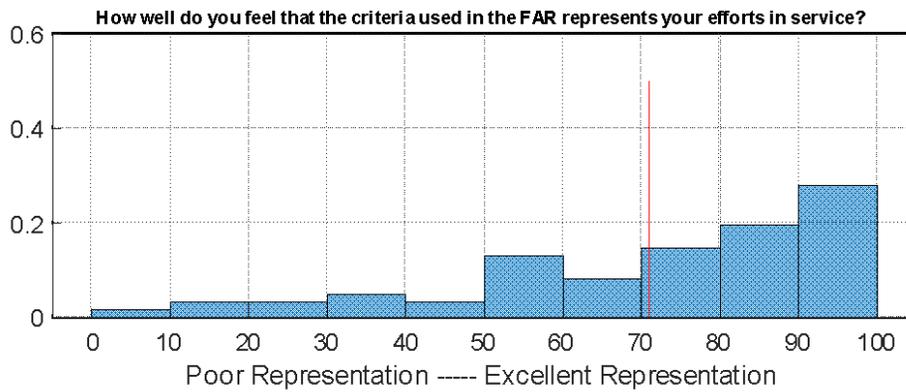
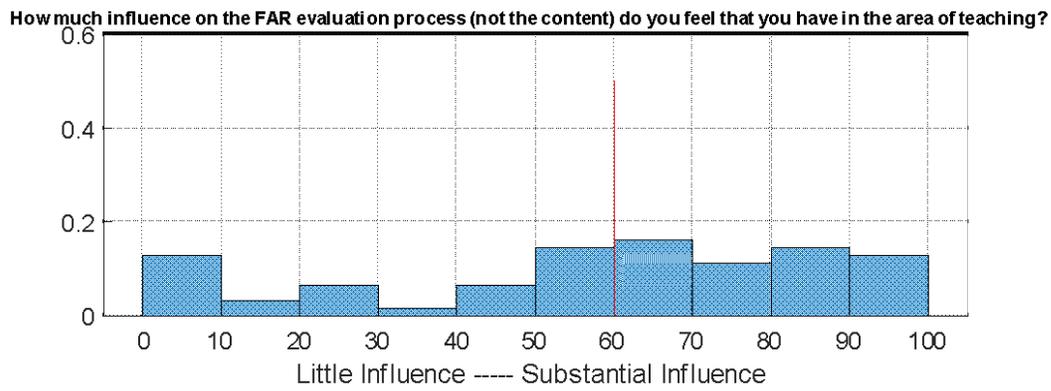
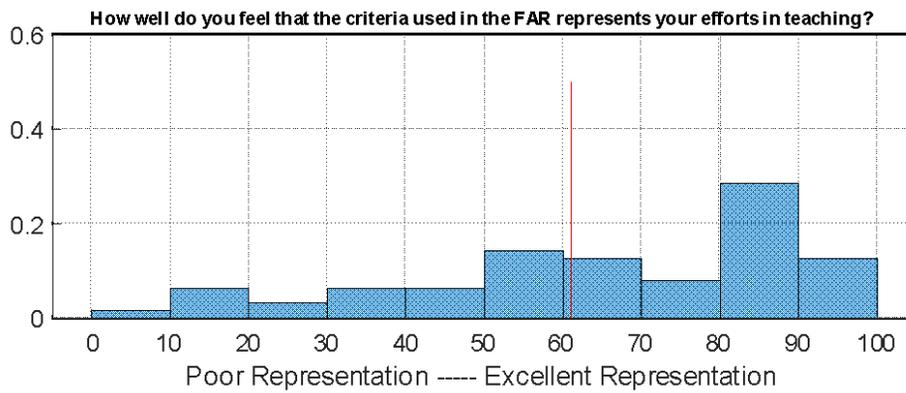
As is evident from the histograms below, there was a substantial amount of negative skew in the responses to each item (skewness ranged from -1.08 to -0.06). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the amount of variability in participants' responses relative to the (small) sample size meant that the survey was statistically underpowered in most cases. Nonetheless, the data were subjected to a logarithmic transformation to address violations of normality and quantitative analyses were conducted.

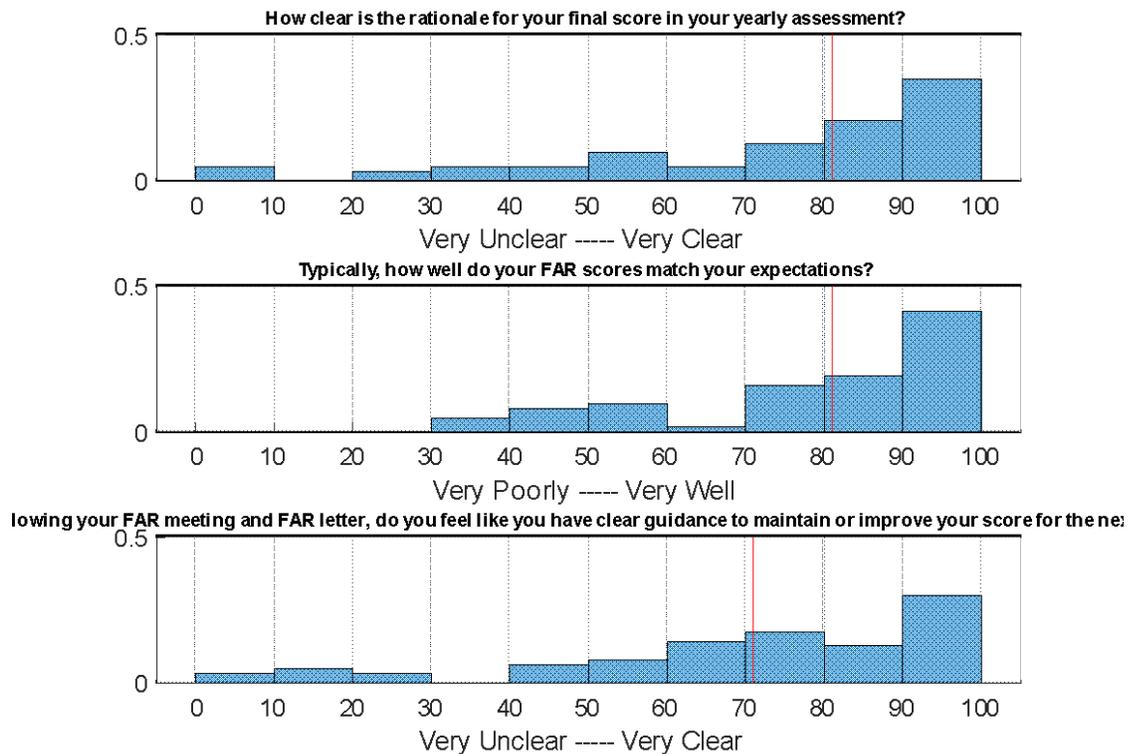
There was a significant, positive relationship between participants' perception of the evaluation criteria and the amount of influence they felt they had on the evaluation process (Research $r(45) = 0.58, p < 0.001$; Teaching $r(60) = 0.75, p < 0.001$; Service $r(59) = 0.78, p < 0.001$). These significant, positive, linear relationships were also observed when examining tenure- and nontenure-line faculty separately.

Separate one-way ANOVAs were conducted to evaluate whether participants in each division differed in their response to each item. Analyses indicated a significant difference between divisions only on the criteria for teaching item, $F(2, 62) = 3.57, p = 0.034$. Post-hoc analyses indicated that Science faculty ($M = 50.82, SD = 24.26$) provided significantly lower responses than EBC faculty ($M = 69.69, SD = 23.86$), but neither group significantly differed from HASS faculty ($M = 64.27, SD = 22.81$). This difference did not manifest when examining tenure- and nontenure-line faculty separately.

In general, there were no significant differences between divisions or between tenure and nontenure-line faculty in responses to the Rationale, Expectation, and Guidance items (the last three graphs). The only exception was that tenure-line faculty reported significantly higher scores for Expectation than nontenure-line faculty, $F(1, 61) = 5.15, p = 0.027$. Additionally, there was a significant division by rank interaction, $F(2, 57) = 3.75, p = 0.030$. After decomposing the interaction, the most parsimonious interpretation was that nontenure-line faculty in EBC reported being less clear about the rationale of their score than tenure-line faculty in that division, but no significant differences were observed in the other two divisions.







Qualitative Analysis:

When asked to explain how each participant arrived at their particular rating for how the FAR evaluates their research efforts, most participants indicated that the criteria for evaluation are relatively clear. Many participants felt that the Division Head (DH) had already assigned a rating before meeting with the participant. Some concerns were raised about how productivity is measured in a year where no publications were published and how a DH might be able to better assess efforts in research.

When asked to provide feedback on the FAR evaluation process regarding their teaching efforts, faculty indicated the criteria did not accurately reflect their teaching abilities. The majority of faculty expressed that their teaching assessment on the FAR is solely based on ‘Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness’ (SRTE) scores. The concern, however, is that SRTE scores are not a true measure of teaching effectiveness. The SRTE scores only consider the student's perception of the instructor and not the learning outcomes or teaching efforts of the instructor throughout the academic year. Faculty recommended there should be additional criteria for assessing teaching efforts such as considering unique challenges throughout the academic year like new course preparations and participation in professional development and workshops.

Discussion:

As noted previously, there was substantial variability and skew in the data collected. Because our analyses were underpowered, statistical differences, if they exist, were unlikely to be observed.

Additionally, several significant effects noted above were based on between-participant comparisons with small samples (*e.g.*, $n = 7$). Therefore, caution should be used when attempting to draw strong conclusions based on the data.

With that in mind, the faculty generally felt that the criteria used in the FAR to evaluate their research, teaching, and service represented their efforts reasonably well (medians of 80, 61, and 71 respectively). The observed skew in the data may, at least partially, be attributed to relatively high scores for those items, *i.e.*, ceiling effect. Additionally, the comparatively lower score for teaching appears to be driven by the perception among Science faculty that the FAR criteria do not reflect their efforts in teaching as well as faculty in the other divisions.

That being said, the variability in responses among faculty may itself indicate an underlying problem that warrants further explorations. Our analyses indicated a strong, positive linear relationship between faculty responses to the criteria and influence items which may partially explain this variability. Specifically, it is possible that the large variability observed across items may be attributable to a small portion of the faculty who are generally discontent with FARs. Responses to open-ended questions in our survey suggest several possible causes:

1. Faculty felt that the SRTEs are weighted too heavily on the teaching assessment and do not always provide a fair evaluation of teaching.
2. Faculty feel the efforts put into time-consuming roles like Program Chair are not reflected well in the FAR.
3. There is some confusion about the FAR meeting process itself.

Since there were very few differences between divisions across key items, it should be assumed that faculty dissatisfaction is likely equally represented across the college. That being said, it is worth noting that nontenure-line faculty reported a greater disconnect between expected and actual FAR scores than did tenure-line faculty. To the extent that there is substantial overlap between FAR and P&T evaluations, and that tenure-line faculty have historically received substantial and frequent training (*e.g.*, P&T meetings while on the tenure track), dissatisfaction among nontenure-line faculty could be remedied with comparable training and discussion.

We suggest that the FAR should be a *discussion* (perhaps even negotiation) with the Division Head (DH) and not simply a review of bullet points from Digital Measures. The score should be understood by both the DH and the faculty member when the annual meeting is over. During this meeting, guidance on how the faculty can improve the score should take place. Ideally, this guidance should also be included in the summary letter.

Submitted by:

Holly Ryan, Chair
Azar Panah, Vice Chair
Marietta Scanlon
Nathan Greenauer
Ike Shibley

Michael Fidanza
Deb Dreisbach
Joe Mahoney

Appendix E.1

Penn State Berks

Faculty Affair Committee – Meeting 2

October 16, 2020

Attendees: Janelle Larson, Holly Ryan (chair), Azar Eslam Panah (vice-chair), Marietta Scanlon, Nathan Greenauer, Michael Bartolacci, Joe Mahoney

All our meetings this year will be on Zoom and the meeting dates and links are provided by email. We have some charges that we are going to complete this year. Here is the list of our charges:

Unfinished charges from last year:

1. Evaluate: the process and assessment criteria for the FAR. Prepare informational or advisory and consultative report with recommended best practices and campus policies.
2. Evaluate: assessment of teaching and advising, specifically SRTEs, in the promotion and tenure process. Prepare legislative report with recommended best practices and campus policies.

Annual charges for 2020-2021:

3. Investigate: how best to educate ALL faculty to practice anti-racism (e.g., as teachers, in interactions with students and colleagues). Consider consultation with Sharon Pitterson-Ogaldez, the Diversity Committee, The Social Justice Collaborative and the Expanding Antiracist Teaching at Berks group. Prepare an advisory and consultative report with recommendations.

Meeting Minutes:

Regarding the **first charge**: the committee discussed the survey results. The report does not have much interesting statistics but qualitatively can show that faculty think their work is well-received for teaching purposes. They do not think SRTE is a good metric. The committee thinks there are a few things that still need to be in this report before we can vote on it: 1) the division breakdowns for the criteria questions only and 2) the recommendations section needs to be completed. We will keep working on this report this month. We can vote on a completed draft at the November meeting.

FAR Subcommittee: Prepare a report for the November Senate meeting. They are going to review the comments, categorize them, and prepare an initial report. → **Nov 30**

Regarding the **second charge**: this charge is about both teaching and advising. Since there is lots of discussion around SRTEs and it is a large task, we would like to focus on the advising part of the charge. Senate received multiple emails asking for investigation of how advising factors into P&T process. We need to understand the process and how advising is counted toward teaching. The subcommittee reports that advising has been evaluated at Berks qualitatively not quantitatively. Also, it is assessed based on what faculty put in their Digital Measures but there is no clear guideline. Generally, level of detail and amount of advising determines weight. It is a matter of if you advise students and how many advisees we have. Moreover, there is a variety in advising model based on who advises. However, some faculty take it seriously and put lots of time into advising and they should be rewarded for their time and efforts. It was mentioned that the Schreyer College has a booklet on evaluating advising (<http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/srte>)

FAR Subcommittee: The subcommittee should meet and brainstorm how we would like to move forward with advising evaluation and assessment. Our campus should make recommendations on how to pay attention to advising and how it is weighted in our annual report. Discuss the content of the Schreyer College's site and whether our next step should be a survey. This can be done for the January meeting. → **Jan**

Regarding the **third charge**, since this charge is due March, we will pause the discussion until next meeting, but we should discuss it in Fall. The Associate Dean informed the committee that some trainings and workshops for handling contentious discussions during class time will be forthcoming. → **March**

Additionally, the committee discussed the changes in the requirements for teaching-track promotion. They do not need to submit a CV anymore. They can run a report on Digital Measure like a dossier report. Also, they do not need external reviewers anymore, since we have enough promoted faculty on our campus. The committee approved the changes.

Appendix E.2

Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday September 14, 2020

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm, Online

Attendance: Ebonie Cunningham-Stringer, Matthew Rhudy, Bryan Wang, Lisa Glass, Brett Spencer (vice-chair), Flavio Cabrera (chair)

1. Background information for Annual Charge

- Annual Charge: *Investigate how systematic anti-racism education could be incorporated into student coursework. Consider consultation with the Expanding Antiracist Teaching at Berks group and the Social Justice Collaborative. Prepare an advisory and consultative report with recommendations.* [February]
- As defined in the charge, there are different groups within the school that may be working on investigating systematic anti-racism education. Two committee members in attendance have contributed to two such groups and provided us with a brief introduction to their work: Ebonie Cunningham-Stringer introduced the “Anti-racist Teaching Across the Curriculum group at Berks”, and Brett Spencer did so for the “Social Justice Collaborative”.

2. Discussion of the charge

- The committee recognizes that work has been done at PSU Berks regarding social justice and anti-racist education: initiatives such as the Race 101 workshops, the social justice bibliography, and a mentoring program for faculty interested in anti-racist education are some examples of this.
- It is the position of the committee that this charge can be better investigated and discussed if we have a better understanding of the experiences, and ideas of those who have already worked on the subject.
- The Committee’s recommendations could serve a supporting role to their efforts.
- Other areas that are interesting to explore while investigating the charge:
 - To what extent anti-racism and social justice teaching is already taking place at PSU Berks, and how much fear to be associated with certain way of thinking has prevented faculty to explore/promote more this type of content?
 - Given the political climate in which we live nowadays, how teaching anti-racism elements may affect classroom dynamics.
 - What is the position of faculty towards including anti-racism education within the curriculum on the different programs offered at PSU-Berks?
 - What is the students’ perspective with regards to anti-racism education?
- **Action Item: Flavio Cabrera will contact people at the school who have worked on the subject of anti-racist education, and will invite them to the committee’s second meeting on October 12 to present their work, views, and suggestions on the charge.**

Appendix E.3

Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday October 12, 2020
12:15 pm – 1:15 pm, Online

Attendance: Matthew Rhudy, Dawn Pfeifer Reitz, Ebonie Cunningham-Stringer, Lorena Tribe, Bryan Wang, Joe Mahoney, Bob Zambanini, Elyce Kaplan, Lisa Glass, Brett Spencer (vice-chair), Flavio Cabrera (chair)

1. Background information for Annual Charge

- Annual Charge: *Investigate how systematic anti-racism education could be incorporated into student coursework. Consider consultation with the Expanding Antiracist Teaching at Berks group and the Social Justice Collaborative. Prepare an advisory and consultative report with recommendations.* [February]
- Three faculty members with experience in anti-racism education and social justice issues were invited to the meeting: Laurie Grobman, Jayne' Park-Martinez, and Justin De Senso. The goal was for the committee to get informed about their experiences implementing courses with anti-racism elements, the highlights and the issues they have encountered while doing so. Also, for the committee to get an informed voice in the terms of what is still needed for getting anti-racism education across the curriculum at PSU Berks.

2. Discussion of the charge

- Dr. Laurie Grobman, who is leading the “Anti-Racist Across the Curriculum” Group on campus discussed the following elements:
 - Her experience as Center for Academic Community Engagement (CACE) coordinator.
 - Attending monthly critical race dialogs that includes variety of faculty
 - The “Anti-Racist Across the Curriculum” group has worked with interested faculty in developing/modifying courses and reframing them with anti-racist topics.
 - The collaboration occurs in a one-to-one basis. It pairs new anti-racism faculty with mentors (experienced anti-racism faculty)
 - Dr. Grobman pointed out that the approach is two-pronged: (i) content of the course, and (ii) how the issues are presented to students.
 - The group is also interested in integrating community-based research and anti-racist elements into courses in disciplines different from social justice (such as engineering and the sciences).
 - There has been talk of integrating social justice into the engineering ethics course.
 - When asked about other ways to integrate social justice ideas within engineering, Dr. Grobman suggested that a discussion about the composition of engineering classes might be an effective approach.
 - Dr. Grobman introduced Dr. Park-Martinez’s experience building anti-racism into her course

- Dr. Jayne Park-Martinez discussed her experience implementing a course with social justice elements in it:
 - She noted she was insecure at first about revising her course because her focus is on science rather than social sciences.
 - She reported that the Anti-Racism Group was very gracious in supporting her.
 - She introduced social justice issues by showing videos (such as using a documentary about the Flint water crisis to talk about the Hydrosphere).
 - However, the approach felt like it was “tacked on” rather than fully integrated into the course. She introduced class to United Nations sustainable goal.
 - Students worked through “Anti-Racist Across the Curriculum” group helped her come up with the ideas of look at how the Anthroposphere synthesizes with the other spheres in each module rather than once a semester.
 - This approach has fostered a continual discussion about social justice in her course.
 - Dr. Park-Martinez said integrating social justice issues has made the class more interesting to students, especially since the students are non-science majors.
 - Students saw connections between science and society/current issues. They enjoy the class discussions.
- Dr. Justin De Senso shared the following with the committee:
 - He noted that his work at the university level was helping to provide support for curricular changes as discussed by Drs. Grobman or Park-Martinez, but that his work on the committee is confidential.
 - Talked about the Race 101 events: students have come out in large numbers; students are making high quality comments in the events; students have had very positive feedback about the events.
- Dr. De Senso provided the following suggestions about what can be done at the campus level:
 1. Develop anti-racist/social justice learning objectives and outcomes universal enough to use across the curriculum.
 2. Pilot a team of mentors to implement these objectives and outcomes across the college, much like what Dr. Grobman is doing, but do so on a broader scale.
 3. Create a team of antiracist/social justice advisers/educators/mentors who can help shepherd anti-racism throughout Berks' culture.

At the same time, acknowledge the limitations of antiracist work and initiatives, but recognizing how best to integrate it into our collective teaching, service, and overall ethos as a college
 4. Encourage and incentivize faculty across the college to team up in co-teaching, the development of integrative studies classes, offering special topics classes -- just to begin the cross-pollination of anti-racist curriculum at Berks.
 5. Identify and disentangle the role of anti-racism from diversity at Berks.
 6. Resource, staff, and support an "Anti-racism Across the Curriculum" initiative.
 7. Avoid laying these work responsibilities at the feet of our colleagues of color”

8. Organize and initiate racial literacy teach-ins for all Faculty and staff.
 9. Protect vulnerable faculty by building a protective clause/policy in the process of yearly evaluations, promotion, tenure processes where particular delivery modes/pedagogies are privileged.
 10. Develop a better mechanism of accountability where Berks can hold racist and bias treatment to account through a less punitive and a more restorative model.
- Upon being asked to suggest recommendations for the Committee to consider in its report on this charge, the guests provided the following feedback:
 - Dr. Grobman:
 - course releases
 - supplemental salaries could help.
 - She noted that SRTs are affected by social justice talk sometimes, thus the need for Admin protection of faculty implementing social justice work.
 - Dr. De Senso:
 - incentivize and support (funding, course releases) this work.
 - Protect the faculty who take on the risks of such work. Protect those who take on very difficult and risky intellectual work and research, teaching.
 - Invite experts in the field, with the understanding that we have experts here at Berks already...perhaps we can ask for funds allocated specifically to growing our antiracist materials, archives, etc.
 - To normalize, to bake-in antiracism, social justice, and solidarity pedagogy, it must occur culturally here at Berks.
 - Dr. De Senso also noted the opportunities presented locally.
 - Dr. Cunningham-Stringer noted that there is a degree of risk in teaching social justice; she noted it is important to include research that delineates the impact of social justice teaching on SRTs.

Appendix E.4

Student Life Committee

November 9th, 2020, 12:15-1:15pm Zoom

Minutes

1. Call to order
2. Attendance: Kathleen Hauser, Shahid Khan, Cheryl Nicholas, Andrew Friesen, Praveen Veerabhadrappe, Hartono Tjoe
3. The Committee is saddened to lose HASS Representative Dr. David Bender. AF commits to checking with Jessica Shocker as to procedures for a replacement.
4. The Committee was briefed as to why our Legislative Report on student identification in class was presented as an Informational Report at the Senate meeting—because the Committee cannot mandate changes to faculty syllabi.
5. Update on investigating potential racial differences in academic integrity issues. AF and Joe Webb had learned that the issue had been explored by the Academic Integrity Committee last year to no effect.
6. Update on charge pertaining to police services. The Committee finalized the interview guide for our police chief. AF and HT commit to doing the interview.
7. Adjournment