

Minutes of November 3, 2005 of the Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards Committee

Members in Attendance:

Henry Baker
Elizabeth Bolten
Douglas Cenzer
Gary Cornwell
Curt Hannah
Marc Heft
Tony Ladd
Sharon Rush
Gregory Schultz
Eric Triplett

Also attending: Kyle Cavanaugh

Minutes by Eric Triplett with editing by Elizabeth Bolten.

Meeting began at 3:04 PM

Chair, Curt Hannah, invited Human Resources Director, Kyle Cavanaugh, to meet with the AFTPRS Committee to discuss the proposed Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) and how this position/process would impact the function of the AFTPRS Committee. Mr. Cavanaugh said that the DRO would be under his supervision and would be located in the HR facilities in the stadium.

The DRO position received generally favorable reception. There were however some concerns expressed by the members present and from other faculty which included the following:

1. What is the process that the DRO would follow in handling a complaint/grievance/notice?

Cavanaugh proposed that grievances would first go to that officer to attempt an informal resolution. The DRO would then have 30 days or some other specified period of time to resolve the matter. If no resolution occurs, then the faculty member takes his/her grievance to the AFTPRSC. The DRO could then help the faculty member through the grievance process as it goes forward.

2. Would the DRO be able to adequately represent faculty in an unbiased manner given that he/she is part of the administration and is located in that facility?

Discussion was that this would not be a problem if the process were carefully designed and put in place with coordination among AFTPRS and the Faculty Senate.

3. Would the complaint necessarily have to be made public to conform to the Sunshine Laws or would it be possible to maintain the confidentiality of the complainant at least until the process has run the entire course, what ever that may be? In other words, it may deter a faculty member from seeking the help of the DRO if the process were to be public record immediately when the process is over with the DRO?

Curt is going to discuss this with Barbara Wingo, our advisor and member of the University Counsel's Office.

4. What is the exact position description of the DRO officer? Curt Hannah will ask Kyle to put the DRO position in writing with regard to process, job description, and sunshine

5. The time frame of 30 days to file a complaint is too short to accommodate most situations.

Curt Hannah and Sharon Rush will work together on a draft to change the grievance time frame from 30 days to 1 year. That is, we propose that the time between the event that caused the grievance and the time when the grievance was filed should be one year, not 30 days. This new language will be considered at our next meeting.

It was suggested that the College of Medicine's sexual harassment rules would make a good model and some of the language of this procedure would be helpful in modifying the current procedures of the AFTPRS. Curt Hannah suggested that at a future date, we will consider re-crafting our rules to take advantage of much of the language in the College of Medicine's sexual harassment rules.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45.