

CREM Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2021

In attendance: Barb Cherry, Paul Coats, Beth Gazley, Jon Trinidad

Co-Chairs Barb Cherry and Paul Coats began the discussion with a brief history of the charges given to CREM via the Executive Committee and where those originated (a new policy from the UFC), as well as what the immediate task of CREM is (gathering feedback from the BFC for direction related to the charges).

As Jon Trinidad had served on the previous CREM committee and had helped develop the proposed policy that was ultimately ratified by the UFC under the title ACA-41, he gave further background that this policy was the result of “housekeeping” review of existing policies by Alex Tanford. He further emphasized that there had been no precipitating event that had caused this policy to be created by the UFC—in fact, IU had just been accredited with a AAA credit rating at that time. In this case, it recognized that “financial exigency” as grounds for terminating tenured employment appears in policies but is not well-defined. It was further clarified in the committee’s discussion on March 4th that:

- ACA-41 is intended to focus on dismissal of faculty; and financial exigency is restricted to externally generated events.
- This policy also encouraged campus faculty councils to develop lists of faculty members who may be part of the financial exigency committee at the UFC level.
- Though not a recommendation from the UFC policy itself, the adoption of said policy provides an opportunity for IUB to consider whether it should also adopt a campus-only policy to address internal financial problems. (IUPUI’s policy is an example, though this was created in the early 1990s.)

After the general discussion of its history, the members of CREM analyzed the charge they were given and suggestions were made, that the main intent of any such internal policy should be prevention and implementation and that, perhaps, CREM could inform such a policy by obtaining further information from IUB’s Restart Committee, which could provide useful experience in consideration of a IUB policy of financial problems/exigency. As a review of the Restart Committee is to be done, its content could inform whether/how to develop an IUB financial problems/exigency policy. It was reiterated that, if IUB is to adopt a campus financial problems/exigency policy, perhaps its purpose should be framed as preserving a faculty role in “financial crisis management” – both crisis prevention and key principles/procedures if such crises occur. One question posed was, in the (unlikely) case that we at IUB needed to dismiss tenured and non-tenured faculty, what kind of faculty input would we need/want, particularly for issues that do not arise from financial exigency? This prompted a call from several members for the absolute need for transparency and communication between faculty and administration.

Barb Cherry added that we might also ask IUPUI for its experience under its Financial Difficulties policy. Asking if IUPUI intends to adopt a new policy to implement the new UFC Policy ACA-41 and if they anticipate the need to modify their campus Financial Difficulties policy.

The composition of CREM for consideration of financial exigency policies was also discussed, and it was agreed that CREM must have the ability to obtain info and consult voices, as needed, to complete its tasks transparently and with input from all affected parties to the best of its abilities.

One final thought was to determine whether, for the March 16 BFC meeting, specific poll questions should be prepared in advance by Elizabeth Pear. (NOTE: In a post meeting discussion between the co-chairs, it was determined that a poll or set of polls would ultimately limit the depth of feedback and take time away from our allotted slot.)

Respectfully submitted,
Barb Cherry and Paul Coats, CREM Committee Co-Chairs