

FAC meeting 9/27

Minutes by Gerry Lanosga

Attending Jeremy, Kim, Cassandra, Jonathan, Logan, Gerry, Beth, Lana, Carrie (Zoom)

The committee discussed its charges for the year, focusing especially on the ongoing work to revise BL-ACA-D27 to align with the newly-revised ACA-33 (which was approved by the trustees earlier this year). This discussion also touched on policies and procedures needed for compliance with SEA 202.

Regarding BL-ACA-D27, there was continuing discussion about getting clarity regarding what constitutes common and severe sanctions. ACA-33 now has definitions.

Carrie reported that the Faculty Misconduct Review Committee has not been seeing cases, though she has met with the committee to discuss how it could be used more effectively. She said the FAC discussion this year is an opportunity to re-envision the committee's role because the procedures in current policy don't mesh well with ACA-33. She noted previous discussion suggested its role should be closer to the beginning of the case review process rather than at end. Acknowledging concerns about faculty workloads if the committee becomes involved in minor issues that a dean could resolve, she said the FAC needs to determine what FMRC can reasonably be expected to do under ACA-33.

The committee discussed the chair or dean level as the first line of action when misconduct is reported, with mediation as the goal. Then, cases would route to the FMRC if an investigation is needed.

Further regarding concern about faculty bandwidth to participate, it was noted that faculty seem to be willing to become more active given the enactment of SEA 202. Carrie reported some numbers for context: Last year her office handled 21 misconduct complaints, 11 of which resulted in either no finding or an informal resolution at the local level. She indicated 10 cases would have gone to FMRC if the policy had called for it. In addition, three cases are still pending in initial stages, so it could have been as many as 13 that FMRC would handle.

The consensus on the committee was that complaints should be handled at the local level with an informal investigation rather than automatically going to the FMRC. Unit-level grievance committees are recommended where possible/applicable (e.g., in larger departments). FMRC would then be brought in to review a case that could result in severe sanctions; the FMRC would review and make recommendations to the Provost.

Carrie said it is the dean or chair who would initially determine whether potential misconduct is common or severe. She added that in all cases, the Office of Institutional Equity must make an initial determination whether a complaint should be handled there. A

committee member raised a concern that could mean that all SEA 202 complaints would have to go to OIE first.

Based on the discussion, FAC co-chairs will begin working on BL-ACA-D27. The next meeting will include further discussion of SEA 202. A third agenda item, the issue of an exit interview process for faculty, was not discussed.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 1 p.m.