

Rules Committee

2013-2014 Annual Report to the University Senate

Introduction:

The Rules Committee (RC) is an organizing committee of the University Senate and is responsible for monitoring the “Rules of the University Faculty” and of all statutes and bylaws pertaining to the Senate. It ensures all published rules and bylaws within the Senate’s purview are up to date, and initiates, receives, reviews, and recommends improvements to existing rules.

The RC consists of ten voting members: Six faculty members (each of whom must be a senator), three students and the secretary of the University Senate. The RC traditionally works closely with key personnel in the Office of Academic Affairs and other administrative units. Individuals from these and other offices regularly attend RC meetings and provide valuable counsel, data, and support.

During the 2013-14 academic year, RC met the second and fourth Thursday of each month during Fall Semester and Spring Semesters. The routine business of the committee includes announcement of any new requests for rule changes, updates and discussions on rule changes currently under consideration, and votes on proposed rule changes. The 2013-14 year was particularly busy for the RC and as it engaged in bringing the rules into alignment with the Rule changes approved by the University Senate in Spring 2013. The alignment required locating and correcting terms, e.g., “regular faculty”, that changed as a result of Senate action. Some of the highlights from the committee are listed below.

Significant Rule Changes Adopted by Senate:

Rule 3335-9-11 Tenure-track, clinical faculty, research faculty, and senior administrative and professional employees pursuing additional degrees.

In Spring Semester 2014, the RC was asked to consider whether or not faculty could pursue additional degrees from within their own colleges. Under the existing rules, faculty could not pursue such degrees. After consultation with the deans of the respective colleges, it was determined that faculty could pursue additional degrees offered by the college in which the faculty member holds an appointment provided it was not from their TIU (tenure initiating unit). Changes were also made that makes it possible for administrative and professional employees to pursue additional degrees.

Rule 3335-6-03 Exclusion of time from probationary periods

The purpose of this change was to clarify the conditions under which faculty could obtain an exclusion of time from probationary periods. Prior to the proposed changes, there was confusion among faculty as to the conditions under which exclusions could be obtained and the amount of time that could be excluded. The proposed rule changes clarified both of these issues.

Rule 3335-5-48.2 Council on libraries and information technology.

A change was proposed in the name, purpose, and composition of this committee to reflect the movement toward distance education occurring within the university. The proposed name would be the Council on distance education, libraries, and information technology, membership would be expanded from 14 to 16 members, and duties and responsibilities would be changed to include the delivery of distance education. The proposed changes were past at the March meeting of the University Senate.

Rule 3335-9-23 Minimum scholastic requirements.

The purpose of this rule change was to change the minimum scholastic requirements for warnings, probation, and dismissal of students given the change from quarters to semesters and to bring existing requirements more in line with AAUP guides.

3335-5-48.9 Committee on academic freedom and responsibility

The purpose of this rule change was to remove ambiguous and outdated language from the definition of duties and responsibilities and to expand the membership to include a non-tenure track member. The expansion was accommodated through an increase in the number of members from 9 to 10.

Additional Changes

In addition to these changes, Rules updated the language and terminology in 57 other rules. This required a careful reading of each and every rule in the Faculty Rules to ensure the terminology was consistent with rule changes made over the past two years. Some of the changes included the replacement of “quarter” with “semester”, the removal of “regular” as a modifier of faculty, and the substitution of “associated” for “auxiliary” as an adjective to faculty. This was a very time consuming process that required each change be considered and discussed to ensure the intent of the rule was maintained even though the terminology was being changed. In some cases, simply substitution could not be done and these required Senate approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey Ford, Ph.D.
Chair, 2013-14
Rules Committee