

2016–2017 UC Annual Report

The 2016–2017 academic year was quite eventful for the University Committee and the Faculty Senate. The UC took a number of code changes to the Senate, including a revised post-tenure review policy, an annual review policy, and a revised UWGB Chapter 5 on program discontinuance. Moreover, the UC participated in additional meetings and intensive discussion on the transition to a 24-credit load for faculty and on the \$2 million expenditure reduction for the coming year.

The UC consisted of Andrew Austin, Katia Levintova, Chuck Rybak, Patricia Terry, Christine Vandenhouten (Faculty Representative to UW System), and David Voelker (Chair). Jan Snyder and Katrina Hrivnak served as University and Academic Staff liaisons, respectively. SGA President Nik Austin also attended many meetings.

Fall 2016:

During the Fall semester, the UC devoted a great deal of time and energy to creating a new post-tenure review policy for UWGB that would comply with Regent Policy 20-9. The UW System required this policy to be created on a relatively short timetable, and draft policies received unprecedented scrutiny from UW Legal Counsel and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Jim Henderson. Although the Faculty Senate approved a policy that complied with 20-9 on schedule, President Cross added a new requirement for administrative review that was not specified in 20-9, leaving UWGB and other campuses scrambling to revise their policies in order to meet the deadline for consideration at the December's Regents meeting. The Regents approved the policy at that meeting. David Voelker subsequently sent a memo to Ray Cross, on behalf of the UC, describing the difficulties caused by the procedural disarray due to the changing policy requirements and urging him and the Regents to be more respectful of the shared governance process. As noted in the historical comment that should appear with this policy in the Faculty Handbook, the Senators approved the revised policy with administrative review only because they felt they had little choice, and they believed that the specific procedures outlined in the UWGB policy would do more to protect shared governance and tenure than any policy that might be imposed by UW System. (Note: President Cross did not respond to the memo noted above.)

Throughout the Fall semester, the UC engaged in discussions with the Provost and participated in discussions held by the Provost, Associate Provosts, and the four Deans regarding both the shift to a 24-credit workload system and annual review policy. Given that the 24-credit workload policy was still being finalized at the end of the Fall semester, the UC recommended to the Provost that the annual review policy be developed in the Spring and that reviews be put on hold, awaiting the development of university and unit policies. The Provost agreed and ultimately required only PARs for the previous academic year.

In a continuing effort to make sure that faculty committee time is well spent, the UC helped coordinate the disbanding of three committees: the Legislative Affairs Committee, the Library

Advisory Committee, and the Facilities Management Committee. These committees had generally become an inefficient means of conveying information, or, in the case of the Legislative Affairs Committee, no longer served a clear purpose.

In September, at the invitation of Chancellor Miller, the UC met with members of the Council of Trustees Advocacy Committee in order to increase understanding and cooperation between the two groups.

In response to state and national political changes, the UC took resolutions to the Senate to reaffirm the faculty's opposition to concealed carry on campus and to voice our support of students regardless of their citizenship status.

Spring 2017:

The UC discussed the domain structure for faculty representation in shared governance in light of the newly implemented four-college model. The UC determined that the existing domain structure should remain in place. Given existing challenges with filling committees, it does not seem realistic to expect each of the four colleges to have representation on every faculty committee. The domain structure thus remains the most effective option for determining committee membership, etc.

In addition to routine business, the UC prepared two major code-change policies that were passed by the Senate: an annual review policy and a revision of UWGB Chapter 5.

The annual review policy was created pursuant to a requirement of Chancellor Miller. The policy that was passed by the Senate is based upon the PAR, exclusively. Tenured faculty undergoing any other review (merit, post-tenure, or promotion) during a given year are deemed to have met the annual review requirement.

The revision to UWGB Chapter 5 was a response to Regent Policy 20-24 (and related statutory changes) from 2016. The revised chapter 5 lays out procedures specific for UWGB for program discontinuance for reasons of financial emergency or academic reasons.

David Voelker, as UC chair, and Christine Vandenhouten, as Faculty Representative, participated in a series of meetings with university leadership to plan approximately \$2 million in expenditure reductions for the coming academic year. Voelker and Vandenhouten focused on conveying faculty concerns, with an emphasis on protecting the quality of education for all UWGB students. At the conclusion of the 2016–17 academic year, budget reduction discussions were ongoing.

At the final Senate meeting for Spring 2017, the UC presented a resolution on the value of General Education, which had been endorsed by the General Education Council. The purpose of the resolution was to establish that a consensus exists among the faculty regarding the value of general education for all undergraduate programs, regardless of college.

At the close of the final Senate meeting, UC Chair Voelker explained UW System policies and requirements for making any changes to the university's select mission—a process that Chancellor Miller has indicated he intends to initiate. Chancellor Miller spoke briefly on this matter and agreed that the process should wait until the fall, when faculty and students are present on campus.

Respectfully submitted by 2016–17 UC Chair, David Voelker, on June 22, 2017.