

**FACULTY SENATE
FACULTY WELFARE COMMITTEE (NORMAN)
2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT
SUBMITTED BY GREG BURGE, CHAIR**

I. Membership

The members of the 2014-2015 Faculty Welfare Committee, their departments and terms:

Greg Burge	Economics, 2014-2015 (chair)
Aparna Mitra	Economics, 2013-2016
Susan Hahn	University Libraries, 2014-2017
Chris Ramseyer	Civil Engineering & Environmental Science, 2013-2016
Chris Sadler	Drama, 2014-2017

II. Meetings

The Faculty Welfare Committee met seven times. Four times during the Fall semester and three times during the Spring semester. The ad hoc committee formed last year to investigate issues relating to bullying/incivility on campus also met multiple times each term.

III. Issues

At the beginning of the 2014-2015 academic year, the Faculty Welfare Committee identified three issues that would serve as a set of priorities during the year. Ultimately, these three issues were where we focused most of our time and energy.

- 1) The development of a campus-wide Family Fairness Policy. Having drafted a working version of the policy in previous years, we worked with various University officials in efforts to improve the policy and make it more compliant with current OU policies regarding FMLA and sick/medical leave. We are pleased to be able to announce that the policy was recently implemented through the Office of the Provost, having benefitted from open lines of communication with the Faculty Welfare Committee and Faculty Senate Executive Committee throughout the revision process.

Among the important issues addressed by the policy were:

- The federal FMLA policy does not conform to the 16-week semester schedule at OU, causing disruptions because of discontinuities in teaching personnel.
- The proposed policy is for modified duties, not a leave. Faculty cannot take a leave from certain aspects of their research and service endeavors.
- Short-term modification of teaching and avoidable service would allow faculty in these situations to focus their continued scholarly efforts on research, minimizing disruptions.
- The policy would help to create a supportive campus environment that recognizes faculty family responsibilities alongside of scholarly responsibilities.
- The policy would help to attract highly qualified candidates and retain faculty in whom the University has invested valuable resources.

- The policy would be an important step towards gender equity, in recognition of the disproportionate burden of family care that falls on female faculty in general, while keeping the policy gender neutral.
 - The lack of a campus-wide policy, and the inconsistency in accommodations made across campus, were viewed by many as unfair.
- 2) Investigating campus culture as it relates to bullying and faculty incivility. Having previously identified this as an important issue, FWC took several additional actions this year.
- a. The ad hoc committee on campus bullying consisted of members Chris Ramseyer, Aparna Mitra, Susan Marcus-Mendoza, and Susan Hahn. Susan Marcus-Mendoza agreed to serve as chair.
 - b. A draft of a survey was produced by the ad hoc committee for full discussion in the first and second meetings of the spring term. Simen Pulat and Glen Krutz, both serving as Vice Provosts, attended our December and February meetings, respectively. Each was extremely helpful as we discussed the preliminary survey the ad hoc committee drafted.
 - c. Revisions and additional discussions produced a final version of the survey that is ready to be sent out for data collection by the FWC starting next year. The decision was made that implementing the survey in the early Fall would potentially produce better results (higher response rates) than sending it out in the late spring as the academic year was drawing to a close.
- 3) We discussed the issue of budget tightness over the past several years and how it has impacted faculty, staff, and administration. Data from Institutional Research and Reporting documenting the 2007-2013 trends were discussed in multiple FWC meetings as well as FSEX meetings. The general consensus was that faculty, administration, and full-time staff had all seen modest increases in the number of personnel over this period, but that part-time staff had declined. The specific places those declines came from were identified as Postal & FAA – which we later verified were not necessarily layoffs, but essentially a reclassification of responsibilities such that OU went from being the employer of record to not. We also noted a few other trends:
- a. The rate of growth in tenured and tenure track lines over this period (16%) was significantly lower than the rate of growth in other faculty positions (45%). Much of the high rate of growth in the latter came from faculty classified as “researchers” (who experienced a 77% growth rate).
 - b. The rates of promotion to Associate and Full diverge significantly between the TT and other faculty data. Assistant professor represented about two-thirds of all ranked renewable term positions over this period.

IV. Chair Election

Chris Ramseyer was unanimously supported for the Chair-Elect position. Due to travel, Chris will be out of the country for a period during the fall of 2015. Susan Hahn indicated a willingness to serve as Co-chair, filling in for Chris during that period. She was unanimously supported as well.