Proposed Policy Changes Address Professional Conduct, Textbooks, Clinical-Track Faculty

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Feedback is being sought on several major policy revisions to the University Handbook for Appointed Personnel that would clarify guidelines for faculty-authored course materials, broaden the UA's professional conduct statement, add faculty titles, and update the promotional review process for clinical-track faculty.

The proposed revisions are scheduled to take effect on July 1 except for the changes to the professional conduct statement. Conversations on those modifications will continue into the fall, said Tom Miller, vice provost for faculty affairs.

Details about the proposed revisions can be viewed here.

Printed Materials

The proposal generating the most interest on campus, Miller said, is the revision to policy 2.11.01. The changes aim to address concerns about a potential conflict of interest for faculty who profit from the sales of textbooks they wrote and require for their courses.

The original policy requires deans to review all situations where faculty use their own textbooks. The policy was not widely enforced and a review showed that some faculty were profiting off custom-published textbooks that are created for specific courses through contracts that faculty make with publishers. While the price tag for custom-published textbooks may be cheaper compared with textbooks published in large numbers for use by students across the country, none of the price can be recouped by selling used copies to the bookstore at the end of the semester unless the same textbook is used in the very next semester.

The revised policy will require faculty whose estimated profits from book sales to their students is expected to exceed $500 in a particular class to disclose that conflict of interest to their students and to the dean of their college. Instructors and deans must then work together to minimize the conflict of interest, which could entail donating royalties or profits in excess of $500 to course activities like field trips, guest speakers or social events.

The effort to revise the policy has been led by professor Jeff Stone, chair of the Faculty Senate's Student Affairs Policy Committee. The revision is part of an ongoing effort to reduce costs for students while balancing academic freedom for faculty, he said.

"We're trying to do that by providing guidelines for addressing the conflict of interest that arises when faculty require textbooks that provide them with significant profits," Stone, professor of psychology and psychiatry, said. "But the intent behind the revision is to support the use of self-authored materials in the classroom by providing guidelines that minimize that
potential conflict of interest and guard against some of the negative things" that can come with requiring students to buy custom-published textbooks, he said.

"If I use my own textbook in a graduate seminar with 10 people and I make $2 a copy, that $20 didn't create much of a conflict of interest," Miller said. But in a course with hundreds of students and a larger share of the sales price, the profit for faculty can be thousands of dollars.

Although the revision isn't scheduled to become effective until July 1, it would not apply to course materials until the spring 2019 semester since course materials for fall 2018 have already been adopted.

**Faculty Titles and Promotion Procedures**

Proposed revisions to the Faculty Titles and Promotion Procedures would add four new faculty titles in order to recognize distinctive contributions of career-track faculty and others working off the tenure track. The proposed titles are:

Laureate ? This addition would formalize the title given to faculty "whose appointments bring exceptional strategic benefits to departments." It was most recently given to renowned linguist Noam Chomsky when he joined the Department of Linguistics in August.

Global Lecturer and Global Professor ? These titles are intended for faculty appointments on the UA's international microcampuses. "Global lecturer" would apply to designated campus colleagues who work for partner institutions, and "global professor" would be used for faculty employed by the UA.

Additional emeritus titles ? This change allows for the creation of a "clean emeritus" or other secondary emeritus title, given to administrators who return to the faculty to recognize a distinguished record of service. The title would require approval from the president and would not include the benefits that emeritus faculty receive upon retirement.

Another proposed revision to this policy would add promotional review processes for clinical-track faculty working in the College of Medicine ? Tucson and the College of Medicine ? Phoenix. The new process aims to better recognize the distinctive duties of clinical faculty and strengthen the alignments of career progressions with the quality of clinical care.

"These revisions provide reasonable ways to focus reviews of clinical faculty appointments and promotions while retaining rigor and adding flexibility required by the colleges," said Ron Hammer, professor of pharmacology and psychiatry and chair of the Academic Personnel Policy Committee.

**Statement on Professional Conduct**

Also under consideration are changes to UHAP's statement on professional conduct. The current statement, which was last updated in 1971, only outlines the University's expectations for faculty in teaching settings. The revised statement addresses issues of collegiality and underscores the University's intolerance for bullying and sexual harassment, Miller said.

Chair-Elect of the Faculty Jessica Summers, associate professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies, said she will continue to work on the statement with other members of the Faculty Senate through the summer. The changes could appear
before the Faculty Senate as early as the first meeting in the fall.

"It’s really important that faculty have good and positive relationships with students as a form of conduct, but it’s also really important that they have good relationships with each other," Summers said. "There’s not really anything in place right now that faculty can look to for those kinds of expectations."

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