

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee

FROM: Committee on Faculty Affairs

RE: CFA Final Recommendation on the review of the Chair Eligibility Policy

DATE: 5/20/2020

Background: According to TCNJ policy (the [Policy Framework](#)), all campus policies should be reviewed every five years. In reviewing the [Chair Eligibility policy](#) Steering has noted that it was last revised in 2012.

Charge: In keeping with the timeline outlined below, Steering asks CFA to review the Chair Eligibility policy. Steering asks CFA to pay particular attention to the third paragraph of the policy, which refers to programs and not departments. CFA should seek testimony from Academic leaders, Faculty Senate, the AFT local, and from any other constituent bodies it deems appropriate. CFA is asked specifically to ensure that the language in the policy is clear.

Testimony on Preliminary Recommendation (Tier II from Faculty)

CFA conducted an online survey to collect feedback on a preliminary recommendation. There were 83 responses to the survey. The majority (83%) supported CFA's preliminary recommendation, which specifically prevents untenured faculty from serving as a department chair. A few (13%) had some concerns and suggested some modifications to the policy recommendations. The first concern was for cases where there are no tenured faculty to serve as a department chair. The other concerns were focused on definitions and wording in the policy.

Policy Changes Based on Preliminary Testimony

To address the concerns expressed in the preliminary testimony, CFA modified the policy to clarify definitions and added a statement to the policy to specify what happens when there are no tenured faculty able to serve as department chair. The revised policy states that a tenured faculty member from another department could be appointed to serve as chair or a faculty member could be hired to serve as department chair. It is not appropriate to have an untenured faculty member serve as department chair given the overwhelming first-hand testimony of the harm that practice does to the careers of untenured faculty.

Testimony on Final Recommendation (Tier II from Faculty)

CFA revised the policy based on the feedback on the preliminary recommendation and collected testimony on a Final Recommendation. There were 33 responses to the online survey that did not uncover any other issues with the revised policy. Dean Kenner (and one response to the survey) raised an additional concern. There are some department/programs that might not have tenured

faculty and are required by accrediting agencies to have a department chair who is credentialed in the academic domain.

CFA Final Recommendation

To address the concern raised in the testimony on the final recommendation, the policy was revised to indicate that untenured faculty/librarians could serve as chair for departments/programs with accrediting issues if there are special precautions in place to protect that person. The policy specifies the precautions that should be in place.

The policy changes were too extensive to track in a marked-up version; therefore, please compare the revised version to the original to observe changes.