

Report of the Senate Committee on Faculty and the Academic Mission (SCOF)

General Committee Charge

The Committee oversees and advises the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) on matters relating to the University's policies and procedures concerning the academic mission, including the structure of the academic staff, the tenure system, faculty appointments and promotions, faculty research and faculty governance. In general, the Committee deals with the matters covered by the following sections of the University's *Handbook for Faculty and Academic Administrators*: I.E.-F., H.2., II.A.-D.

Specific Charges and Steps Taken to Address Them

1. *Continue to review the impact of online learning initiatives, particularly emerging online certificate and degree programs, on residential learning at Penn.*

The Online Learning Initiative (OLI) has been charged with presenting a strategic plan for online learning to the Provost and the Vice Provost of Education. SCOF was offered an opportunity to provide OLI leadership, including Peter Decherney, Faculty Director of OLI, and Rebecca Stein, Executive Director of OLI, with feedback as it developed its plan.

The introduction of massive open online courses (MOOCs) in 2012 brought new opportunities to the online teaching environment. Penn was an early partner with Coursera and has developed new content on that platform since 2012. All 12 of Penn's schools have held at least one MOOC. A list of MOOCs can be found on OLI's website.

Beyond stand-alone MOOCs, SCOF is aware of the following online learning opportunities that exist at Penn: a "Robotics MicroMasters®" non-credit certificate from SEAS; a "Computer Science Essentials for Software Development" non-credit certificate program from SEAS; a number of certificate and specialization programs from Wharton Online; and other opportunities such as for-credit classes through LPS. Penn currently has two full online degrees, an online Doctorate in Clinical Social Work from the School of Social Policy and Practice and a Masters in Health Care Innovation from the Perelman School of Medicine.

OLI's current role is to support schools' faculty and staff in their thinking about the business infrastructure and staffing needs for online learning initiatives within their schools and to coordinate community-building across schools that have similar objectives. As of Fall 2017, OLI does not currently have the capacity to assist schools with instructional design needs, however, OLI leadership noted that OLI does provide instructional design support for MOOCs and provides assistance to schools that create for-credit online courses. OLI is developing a toolkit for use by those instructional design online officers that includes guidance and support for policies, budgets, timelines, platforms, marketing, contracts, quality assurance, faculty support, student orientation and program assessment. Visit the OLI website: onlinelearning.upenn.edu, for more information.

During its discussions, SCOF members suggested that OLI consider an approach similar to one taken by the Penn Center for Innovation (PCI), in which PCI embeds a PCI staff member in a school for a short period to support related developmental initiatives. Questions also arose regarding (1) whether any research has been done on the effectiveness of online learning at Penn or elsewhere and (2) faculty involvement in online learning (with respect to tenure and promotion, compensation, etc.).

In short, SCOF provides the following suggestions as Penn clarifies the institutional vision in becoming a leader in the world of online learning:

- Identify online learning outcomes and metrics for measurement;
- Identify the methods being used to evaluate effectiveness with respect to various online learning programs;
- Provide models that assess the impact of online learning on residential learning;
- Provide data on faculty load, capacity and ownership: clarify the role/outcome of faculty efforts in online teaching initiatives; and
- Provide central support to schools for instructional design in online learning initiatives.

SCOF recommends that this charge be carried over to the 2018-2019 academic year.

2. *Identify best practices for giving representation to Academic Support Staff and Associated Faculty within departments, schools and the University.*

In order to identify the best practices for giving representation to Academic Support Staff and Associated Faculty within departments, schools and the University, SCOF engaged in meaningful discussions regarding the actual role of Associated Faculty and Academic Support Staff at Penn. SCOF assembled a chart that illustrated the various Associated Faculty and Academic Support Staff titles in each school along with the caps in size for each category (if listed); unfortunately, this information was dated as sourced exclusively from the current *Faculty Handbook*. Furthermore, it was noted that no information on the size of "Lecturer" groups is available. After thoughtful deliberation, SCOF is drafting a memo to the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty on the makeup of these various groups so that the quantifiable information can be compared to similar data gathered in 2011. Moreover, since data collection in the past did not fully capture the qualitative work done by each track in each school, SCOF is interested in better understanding who is being taught by the Associated Faculty and Academic Support Staff and what actual activity is being performed by each faculty type to help determine how they contribute to the academic mission in each of the schools.

It was further determined that this level of granularity would possibly need to be collected from each individual school in order to better understand the background from which schools make requests for changes in their faculty makeups while identifying best practices for Associated Faculty and Academic Support Staff representative governance. Stanford's ongoing Provost's Committee on Lecturers provides an example of how Penn could examine its Associated Faculty and Academic Support Staff roles.

SCOF members also agreed that it should identify tools that can aid in tracking faculty numbers and roles in order to avoid delays in future questions requiring data review.

SCOF recommends that this charge be carried over to the 2018-2019 academic year and recommends that it continue to reference the Appendix of SCOF's 2016-2017 report as it continues its work.

3. *Initiate a review of teaching by Standing Faculty, Academic Support Staff and Associated Faculty with respect to freshmen and sophomore courses.*

This topic was tabled for the year as discussions clarified the need for more elementary knowledge regarding the composition and responsibilities of all faculty.

4. *Identify mechanisms for better communication and collaboration between school-based faculty governing bodies and the University Faculty Senate.*

This topic was tabled for the year and recommends that the charge be carried over to the 2018-2019 academic year.

5. *Consider any matters affecting faculty size, appointments and tracks brought to the committee by individual schools.*

Professor Matthew Hartley, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Graduate School of Education (GSE), summarized a proposal to extend the term for Senior Lecturers in GSE from three years to five years. At GSE, Senior Lecturers play an important role in the instructional capacity of its programs. Senior Lecturers come to GSE after having served in other GSE roles or as experienced professionals in other industries. A Senior Lecturer must serve as a Lecturer for at least five years prior to promotion to Senior Lecturer. GSE has never exceeded its maximum allowance of 10 Senior Lecturers on the Academic Support Staff at a given time. The proposed extension would bring GSE in line with Senior Lecturer terms in other professional schools. There are renewal limits for Lecturers at which point

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they are promoted to Senior Lecturer or released. Academic Support Staff at GSE have never before transitioned into Standing Faculty roles. Lecturers and adjunct faculty serve essentially the same roles at GSE, though Lecturers tend to work full time.

On a call to question, the proposal was approved unanimously and forwarded to the Senate Executive Committee for final review, which also unanimously approved the proposal. The proposal was forwarded to the Office of the Provost along with the endorsement of the Faculty Senate.

6. Support the planning and execution of “Knowledge Teach-In” events.

SCOF advised and supported the efforts of the Faculty Senate in convening a series of “Teach-In” events at various campus sites March 18-22, 2018. Approximately three dozen events were planned that involved contributions from students, faculty and staff, across all three schools and multiple centers. It encouraged the use of the Teach-In website as a repository for materials and video generated by Teach-In events. SCOF members and Faculty Senate leadership also engaged representatives from the Penn Libraries and Online Learning on strategies for memorializing Teach-In content on online learning platforms and other archives.

Proposed Charges for SCOF in 2018-2019

1. Continue to review the impact of online learning initiatives, particularly emerging online certificate and degree programs, on residential learning at Penn.

2. Continue to work toward identifying best practices for giving representation to Academic Support Staff and Associated Faculty within de-

partments, schools and the University.

3. Continue a review of teaching by Standing Faculty, Academic Support Staff and Associated Faculty with respect to freshmen and sophomore courses.

4. Identify mechanisms for better communication and collaboration between school-based faculty governing bodies and the University Faculty Senate.

5. Consider any matters affecting faculty size, appointments and tracks brought to the committee by individual schools

2017-2018 SCOF Members

Thomas P. Sollecito, Dental School, *Chair*
Yianni Augoustides, PSOM/Anesthesiology
William Beltran, Vet School
Eric Feldman, Law School
Lea Ann Matura, Nursing School
Susan Sauvé Meyer, SAS/Philosophy
Mindy Schuster, PSOM/Infectious Diseases
Bruce Shenker, Dental School
Lyle Ungar, SEAS/CIS

Ex Officio Members:

Jennifer Pinto-Martin, Nursing School, Faculty Senate Chair-Elect
Gino Segre, SAS/Physics, PASEF non-voting member
Santosh Venkatesh, SEAS/ESE, Faculty Senate Chair

Report of the Faculty Senate Grievance Commission

The Faculty Senate Grievance Commission of the University of Pennsylvania is an independent committee consisting of three faculty members appointed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. This commission is available to members of the Penn faculty and academic support who allege they have been subject to action that is contrary to the University procedures, policies and/or regulations that is discriminatory or that is arbitrary. During Academic Year 2017-2018, the commission was composed of Mitchell Marcus (SEAS/Computer and Information Science, Past Chair) James Palmer (PSOM/Otorhinolaryngology, Chair) and Martha Farah (SAS/Psychology, Chair-Elect).

During the year, the commission was approached by seven members of the faculty, five of whom had been denied tenure, and the other two had difficulties with administrative agreements. In all cases, the individual had several initial discussions with the Chair of the Commission about the grievance process, the circumstances of the case, discussions about clarifying the issues that might be grounds for a grievance and discussions about the procedures for submitting a formal grievance letter. In two tenure cases, the faculty member decided not to pursue a formal grievance after discussion. In three tenure cases, the faculty member has submitted a formal grievance which is undergoing evaluation. In the final two cases, the faculty members filed a formal grievance, and resolution was reached with appropriate administration entities.

—James Palmer (Grievance Commission Chair, 2017-2018)