

Faculty Well-Being and Work-Life Balance

Ad Hoc Work Group Recommendations

Membership

- Appointed by President Jennifer Boyd in January 2023
- Dawn Ford, Chair (HHP, CHEPS)
- Participating Members:
 - Hope Klug (BGE, CAS)
 - Carolyn Runyon (Special Collections, Library)
 - Dominik Heinrici (English, CAS)

Process

- Charge: ***Develop recommendations to improve faculty well-being and work-life balance to be addressed by administration.***
- Meetings January-April 2023
- Reviewed best practice materials and policies/activities at other institutions.
- Reviewed discussion board posts in Full Faculty canvas site, Faculty Well-Being Discussion Board.
- Solicited feedback from other groups.
 - Example: Commission on the Status of Women

Results

- Recommendation list encompasses 4 themes:
 1. Communication and Recognition
 2. Work Life
 3. Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, Tenure, and Retention
 4. Child Care, Sick Leave, and Parental Leave
- We have attempted to identify the appropriate office to take the lead in addressing each recommendation.

Results

- We acknowledge -
 - Some recommendations also apply to staff and students.
 - Some recommendations are in the process of being addressed.
 - We may not be aware of some policies, programs, and procedures that may help address some of these recommendations.

Theme: Improve Communication and Recognition (2 categories)

1. Improve Campus Communications to Faculty (Provost Office)

Communicate to the faculty more frequently and more positively.

2. Improve Faculty Recognition (Provost Office)

- Acknowledge and reward faculty for their achievements regularly.
- Organize the annual Faculty Awards ceremony.

Modify the UC Foundation Professorship nomination process to allow for non-department head nominations. A more inclusive process would allow for a greater number of faculty to be considered for this award.

Theme: Improve Work Life (6 categories)

1. Encourage Work-Life Balance

- Schedule non-emergency emails to be sent during regular work hours, 8 am-5 pm, Monday-Friday (all administrators, Marketing and Communications)

2. Address Faculty Workload Concerns

- Analyze service loads by race and ethnicity, gender, age, and status and address any inequities that are identified (Provost Office).
- Amend the Faculty Handbook to value university service work more heavily for tenure and promotion because of high service loads (Faculty Senate).
- Analyze faculty personnel needs to manage increasing workloads through a peer institution review process (AA administrators).

Theme: Improve Work Life (6 categories)

3. Address Summer Work of 9-Month Faculty (AA administrators)

- Refrain from requiring 9-month faculty to complete work outside their 9-month contracts.
- For work that needs to be completed over the summer by 9-month faculty, employ an equitable compensation plan.
- Allow and encourage 9-month faculty to use “out of office” messages during the summer.

4. Improve Flexible Work Options (Provost Office, Human Resources)

- Allow and encourage supervisors to allow work from home and flexible schedules when appropriate.
- Evaluate the options to adopt a 35-hour work week and/or compressed work week.
- Encourage virtual options for meetings for time efficiency and flexibility.
- Minimize frequency of departmental and committee meetings, spending meeting time addressing the most critical and time-sensitive needs.

Theme: Improve Work Life (6 categories)

5. Clarify and Adjust Academic Calendar and Breaks

- Clearly define breaks and holidays for all faculty and communicate these definitions (Provost Office).

Adjust the academic calendar so that winter break is longer, aligning with those of peer institutions (Registrar).

- Modify the grade appeal process so that faculty are not required to respond to emails over official breaks (Registrar).

6. Address Summer School Teaching Salaries

- Re-vamp the summer course funding model to allow for more faculty teaching in summer (Provost Office)

Theme: Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Retention Practices (4 categories)

1. Ensure Equitable Hiring Practices of Administrators (Human Resources)

- Ensure that administrative positions posted internally are emailed to campus and are posted for at least 30 days (this is more than the policy minimum of 10 days).
- Ensure that people of all race/ethnicities, ages, and genders are considered for administrative positions.

2. Ensure Fair Evaluation Practices of Teaching

- Develop a process for faculty to request that abusive or unprofessional course learning evaluation comments be removed from their evaluation report (OPEIR).
- Employ fairer student evaluations, especially for women and BIPOC faculty (Faculty Senate).

Theme: Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Retention Practices (4 categories)

3. Improve Tenure and Promotion Practices (Provost Office)

- Review and publish anonymized tenure and promotion appeal data, results of FARC recommendations, and 3rd year reviews of tenure-track faculty.
- Remove collegiality as a consideration for tenure and promotion from departmental bylaws, as collegiality can be weaponized against faculty and there is no standard definition or means of measurement.

4. Address Hostile Work Environments

- Require supervisory faculty (department heads and deans) to report all code of conduct complaints and mental health concerns to Human Resources for follow-up (Provost Office, HR).
- Intervene promptly when bad behavior such as bullying is reported (All administrators).
- Create a safe environment for all faculty to speak up about concerns, no matter their status (All administrators).

Theme: Childcare, Parental Leave, and Sick Leave (2 categories)

1. Develop and Implement Leave Options for Faculty (HR)

- Make 12-week parental leave standard for all employee.
- Implement a sick leave policy for 9-month employees (see MU-Ohio for example).
- Evaluate an option of an unpaid leave of absence policy for faculty to take care of family emergencies (see IUPUI for example).
- Consider a “wellness” leave policy (see Murray State for example).

2. Develop and Implement Childcare Options (HR)

- Create a 3-year plan to work towards offering guaranteed, low-cost quality childcare on campus for faculty and students at all times there are class sessions held.
- Offer extended hours at UTC Children’s Center for faculty and students to manage evening classes.

What's Next?

- Incorporated any input from FS meeting.
 - Support voiced for the recommendations
- Present these recommendations to administration.
- Share with Total Organizational Health group
- Follow-up next year on development, adoption, and implementation of plans, policies, and procedures for these recommendations to improve faculty well-being and work-life balance.