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).
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 employees.
   • 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?

• Incorporate input from today’s meeting.
• Present these recommendations to administration (ELT).
• 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.