

## Section I

**Name of Committee:** University Senate Personnel Committee (USPC)

**Submitted by:** Jodi Swanson, Chair, on behalf of USPC

**Date Submitted:** April 17, 2024

### Membership Roster:

*Eva Brumberger* ([eva.brumberger@asu.edu](mailto:eva.brumberger@asu.edu))

Professor, CISA—Interdisciplinary Humanities & Communication (Polytechnic)

*Chiara Dal Martello* ([chiara.dm@asu.edu](mailto:chiara.dm@asu.edu))

Teaching Professor, School of International Letters & Cultures (SILC; Tempe)

*Michelle Fehler* ([michelle.fehler@asu.edu](mailto:michelle.fehler@asu.edu))

Clinical Associate Professor, The Design School (Tempe)

*Shauna Grant* ([shauna.grant@asu.edu](mailto:shauna.grant@asu.edu))

Associate Teaching Professor, College of Health Solutions (Downtown Phoenix)

*Mark Manfredo* ([manfredo@asu.edu](mailto:manfredo@asu.edu))

Professor & Dean's Council Distinguished Scholar, Morrison School of Agribusiness (Polytechnic)

*Venita Hawthorne James* ([venita.hawthorne.james@asu.edu](mailto:venita.hawthorne.james@asu.edu))

Professor of Practice, Journalism & Mass Communication (Downtown Phoenix)

*Daniel McIntosh* ([daniel.mcintosh@asu.edu](mailto:daniel.mcintosh@asu.edu))

Associate Teaching Professor, Department of Marketing, W. P. Carey (Tempe)

*Renee Shanly* ([renee.shanly@asu.edu](mailto:renee.shanly@asu.edu))

Assistant Teaching Professor, School of Mathematical & Natural Sciences (West)

*Laurie Stoff* ([lstoff@asu.edu](mailto:lstoff@asu.edu))

Teaching Professor & Honors Faculty Fellow, Barrett Honors Faculty (Tempe)

*Jodi Swanson* (University Senate Personnel Committee Chair; [jodi.swanson@asu.edu](mailto:jodi.swanson@asu.edu))

Associate Teaching Professor, Sanford School of Social & Family Dynamics (SSFD; Tempe)

*Brad Vogus* ([brad.vogus@asu.edu](mailto:brad.vogus@asu.edu))

Associate Liaison Librarian, Social Science Division, Hayden Library (Tempe)

### Overview Narrative:

The following summarizes committee work accomplished throughout this past year:

The University Senate Personnel Committee met regularly six times between October 2023 and April 2024. In addition to these monthly meetings, Committee members met with the Provost, Vice Provost of Academic Personnel, University Senate President (2023-2024), and University Senate

### Office of the University Senate

President-elect (2024-2025) in broad, inclusive Listening Sessions in Spring 2024. In subcommittees, Committee members researched and reported on overarching areas of concern for faculty and staff members, and the Committee shared these in action-focused conversations with administrators. The Committee Chair met with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education on multiple occasions ahead of the Senate's voting on the new general education standards in Fall 2023, toward ensuring the Vice Provost heard and understood many concerns faculty members shared with the Committee. Together with the Chair and members of the Student Faculty Policy Committee, the Committee Chair met for several meetings with point persons for administration of Cintana in Spring 2024. The aims for the Personnel Committee were to summarize and consolidate existing areas of concern and distress for university personnel members that remain problematic without meaningful change, and to devise plans forward in concert with University administrators to enact meaningful change. Overarchingly, these centered around areas of equity (i.e., particularly among faculty and particularly across tenure eligibility status), transparency of process and communication at every level within the university (i.e., particularly regarding financial matters related to salaries and benefits), and seeking areas where policies and procedures can be consistent across academic units.

## Section II

**Request for Consultations and/or topics reviewed by the committee and outcomes** (topics reviewed by the committee decided not to act/review should be listed here with, no action taken):

### a. Full-time employment definition/membership in the Academic Assembly

- **Issue:** Determining what is “full-time” employment has implications for whether personnel members are benefits-eligible, whether personnel members are eligible for serve on standing committees, and whether personnel members are eligible for promotion.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 239, RFC 240
- **Actions:** This issue was discussed with the Vice Provost of Academic Personnel and the University Senate President. Together, the University administration and the University Senate have worked to define “full time” and membership in the Academic Assembly as being “benefits-eligible”, or .5 FTE (or sometimes termed 50% FTE). Academic Assembly members are eligible to participate in faculty governance. The Senate Constitution has been amended with this language, and the ACD is presently being amended with this language.
- **Outcome:** Close RFC 239; close RFC 240.

### b. Exploring Instructor career pathways

- **Issue:** Instructors presently do not have a promotion path to higher or other faculty ranks, regardless of length of service or meritorious performance, despite that many would like to pursue higher ranks, responsibilities, and recognition. In this way, instructors are not considered Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty or Career Faculty members.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 162
- **Actions:** Predominantly, Instructors differ from Teaching Professors because Instructors have only instruction responsibilities, whereas Teaching Professors have instruction and service expectations. University administrators have acknowledged Instructors’

## Office of the University Senate

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
[usenate.asu.edu](mailto:usenate.asu.edu)

important role in fulfilling the university's charter and mission and are developing a career pathway to promotion for Instructors.

- **Outcome:** Close RFC 162.

**c. Raising proportion-cap for multi-year contracts for faculty not eligible to receive tenure**

- **Issue:** Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) has historically asserted that no more than 15% of faculty members who are not-tenure-eligible (NTE) can receive multi-year contracts, whereas all others must receive single-year contracts, regardless of performance. Such an arbitrary restriction undermines career security for Career Faculty members.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 171
- **Actions:** ABOR approved a raise in the proportion of faculty members who are NTE to receive multi-year contracts from 15% to 30%. Moreover, Teaching Professors who achieve the rank of (Full) Teaching Professor after having promoted from Assistant and from Associate can automatically qualify for multi-year contracts.
- **Outcome:** Close RFC 171.

**d. Ensuring multi-year contracts for Full Teaching Professors, considering cross-title years of service when applying to promote**

- **Issue:** Full Teaching Professors (previously, Principal Lecturers) should be eligible for rolling or standing multi-year contracts. Separately, individuals seeking promotion from Assistant (previously, Lecturer) to Associate (previously, Senior Lecturer) Teaching Professor are required to have been in the profession for five years; however, whether those five years must have been in the sole rank of Assistant Teaching Professor is unclear.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 505
- **Actions:** Teaching Professors who achieve the rank of (Full) Teaching Professor after having promoted from Assistant and from Associate can automatically qualify for multi-year contracts. Assistant Teaching Professors are permitted to seek promotion when they and their unit feel they can demonstrate achievement of promotion requirements at the unit, college, and university levels, regardless of titles held during five years in the profession (e.g., individuals may have held other titles during this time but also have been heavily involved in instruction).
- **Outcome:** Close RFC 505.

### Section III

**Request for Consultations and/or topics that were not started or remain unfinished and need to be carried over to the next academic year.**

***I. Issues concerning faculty members not eligible for tenure***

**a. Job security for faculty members not eligible for tenure (e.g., contract discrepancies, dismissal even when performing meritoriously)**

- **Issue:**

**Office of the University Senate**

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
usenate.asu.edu

- i. Transparency on year-to-year versus multi-year contracts seems important. Language seems necessary regarding how to attain multi-year status, along with conditions/timing for nonrenewal of contracts for faculty and academic personnel who are performing meritoriously. Multi-year contracts (or rolling multi-year contracts) for Career Faculty less than the “Full” Professor ranking may increase job security and streamline and diminish the stress associated with evaluation processes.
  - ii. Consistency of a deadline across Colleges/units for Career Faculty (e.g., March 31) regarding contract renewal for the upcoming academic year would enable unrenewed faculty to secure new employment well-before a fall semester. Questions have been raised regarding consistency of raises for a given promotion year, specifically for teaching professors. Can raises be expected with promotions beginning the year of promotion?
  - iii. Faculty Associates and Academic Professionals have been inaccurately mis-“counted” among faculty members and have an ambiguous faculty status.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 225
  - **Outcome:** Career Faculty remain fearful for the security of their positions and are not consistently alerted to non-renewal with adequate time to seek other employment (and/or are not renewed despite meritorious performance). Multi-year contracts for faculty members not eligible for tenure could demonstrate the university’s investment and value of Career Faculty. Thus, the Committee felt questions remain and will continue discussions in Listening Sessions with administrators.

***b. Release for Academic Development for Career Track Faculty***

- **Issue:** The [ACD 705](#) specifies that tenured faculty, academic professionals, and administrators with faculty ranks, all with six years of employment, qualify for sabbatical leave; presently, career-track faculty do not qualify. Although sabbaticals were historically unique to academia and reserved for tenured faculty, private-sector employees and others now qualify for sabbaticals. Considering competitiveness and attracting top talent, the lower-income relative to other faculty, weighty instructional and service loads, and the invaluable roles in their units of career-track faculty, an option for quality for sabbatical leave seems an equitable, inclusive, and innovative action. Career-track teaching and clinical faculty could use sabbaticals to advance teaching engagements, enhance knowledge in their fields, and network in private and public sectors to bring back to the classroom and to provide students a realistic connection to their career after graduation. It is expected that these periods of release from instructional and service responsibilities for academic development must follow an application, similarly to tenured/tenure-track faculty members’ applications for sabbaticals. Moreover, a minimum-level professional development funding for faculty members’ activities should be established.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 160
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussion with the Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and the Provost. In lieu of formalized sabbaticals, Career Faculty may receive a release for academic development and may be eligible to apply for one regularly every few years. Members of the Committee felt questions remain and will continue discussions in Listening Sessions with administrators to learn more regarding academic development opportunities, including a timeline for their implementation and details for those seeking such opportunities.

**Office of the University Senate**

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
 PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
 480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
 usenate.asu.edu

## **II. Transparency/communication regarding salaries, compression, inversion, and other payment issues**

### **c. Transparency regarding wage increase exercises**

- **Issue:** The process for and size of wage increases (e.g., merit increases) appears to warrant clarity and transparency; processes are not consistent across Colleges or even among smaller units within Colleges (e.g., Schools, Departments), with limited process transparency. Limited transparency exacerbates inequities across and within Colleges, and this is especially problematic for Colleges with a substantial proportion of career-track faculty members. To our knowledge, the overall pool of money allotted to each College for merit-based wage increases is dependent upon faculty salaries within that College, yet average faculty salaries already vary dramatically by College and Colleges with lower-average salaries receive lower merit increases than Colleges with higher-average salaries, compounding existing inequities. Cost-of-living increases and macro-economic-related increases should be considered.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 124, RFC 253
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussion with the Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and the Provost in Listening Sessions. Discrepancies in recent wage increases for some faculty members appear to be tied to discrepancies in market rates. The Committee developed some recommendations for transparent communication of processes and decision-making:
- **Recommendations for actions focused on equity, inclusiveness, and innovation:** Involve faculty members in exploring a more equitable and transparent approach to allocating funds for merit increases. In keeping with ACD511-01 ("Performance Funds"), provide university-level communication and oversight to ensure that an equitable and transparent process, discussed openly and clearly with faculty, is utilized within each College. Provide yearly information about average merit increase percentages by rank across the university. If cost-of-living increases are not viable, explore innovative approaches for partially offsetting the rising cost-of-living to increase the likelihood of attracting and retaining top-level faculty talent.

### **e. Compensation for overload courses, compensation for faculty associates, online revenues**

- **Issue:** Wages for overload courses vary across units, sometimes as much as half the compensation in one School/College as another. Moreover, some units allow for negotiation of pay or have reflected cost-of-living, inflation, or the prep and person-power necessary for a course, whereas others have remained a flat rate for some time. One concern expressed that some units employ faculty associates as a method of maintaining lower per-overload-course compensation, but that may result in inequitable opportunities for instructional Career Faculty. Additionally, how ASU Online revenue is determined and how it is dispersed to units is unclear, including dollars per credit hour and sufficient compensation to units developing and delivering instruction.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 254
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussions with university administrators.

## **Office of the University Senate**

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
usenate.asu.edu

#### f. Inverted pay based on terminal degree, benefits that reflect economic shifts

- **Issue:** In some units, Career Faculty members with Ph.D. degrees are systematically underpaid, compared to those with Master's degrees. Separately, ASU personnel members on a high-deductible health care plan have a Health Savings Account to which ASU contributes that has been a fixed amount for several years, despite that ASU's contribution to other healthcare plans increases with healthcare, inflation, and cost-of-living increases.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 260
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussions with university administrators.

### III. Faculty members' rights and expectations regarding how they are evaluated and how materials are utilized

#### a. Bias, inconsistency, and high-stakes consequences in students' course evaluations

- **Issue:** Students' course evaluations are utilized in high-stakes decisions, including promotion and tenure, despite that they often represent a single-observation datapoint and may not be related to teaching effectiveness. Evaluation instruments are very often unchanged for decades and are utilized in the absence of regular supervisory or peer course evaluations. Are specific standards (and transparency concerning those standards) possible regarding the weight units apply to students' course evaluations? For example, do units disregard extremely positive or negative evaluations or consider how students' grades may affect their responses? Do unit, like merit raises, develop their own measurement of faculty evaluations? Finally, a vast literature indicates that faculty members who identify as gender and racial minorities are disproportionately ranked poorly in students' course evaluations.
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussions with university administrators. Because evaluation instruments vary widely across academic units, and because units have intellectual freedom of design and choice regarding which items are included and the language of such items, it is unlikely a standardized series of course evaluations will be utilized; however, the University Promotion and Tenure Committee intentionally and consciously takes into account all aspects of a candidate's promotion portfolio when making promotion decisions, and it is recommended that units' internal promotion committees intentionally and consciously take into account other aspects of portfolios and extenuating circumstances that may have resulted in particularly low evaluation ratings.
- **Recommendations for actions focused on equity, inclusiveness, and innovation:** Base considerations of students' course evaluations on the ratio of submitted evaluations to classroom enrollment, perhaps arriving at a minimum percentage for evaluations to be highly considered in terms of instructor retention. Come up with a consistent outreach plan, beyond e-mails, to encourage more students to submit evaluations. Require units to revisit and revise evaluation instruments regularly (e.g., every five years) for relevance and equity. Develop a means of coding and analyzing students' open-ended responses, particularly for promotion candidates.

### Office of the University Senate

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
usenate.asu.edu

**b. Faculty members have little understanding of how, whether, and when their developed course materials online are used for other instructional or demonstrative purposes, such as in partnership with Cintana**

- **Issue:** ASU's partnership with Cintana, a for-profit, public benefit corporation that connects international universities with ASU knowledge, courses, and educational innovation, permits Cintana partners to make requests to access ASU Online courses on behalf of the Provost's Office, to be shared in Cintana's content repository. Faculty members and unit leaders have little understanding of this process and have voiced dissatisfaction with the lack of transparency.
- **Relevant RFCs:** RFC 261
- **Outcome:** This issue is under ongoing discussions with university administrators in collaboration with the Student Faculty Policy Committee. The Provost and Cintana leadership presented overview information to the University Senate; however, Senators and other faculty members continue to express concerns and have questions.

## Section IV

### Recommendations to the Senate or Final Comments

The USPC is seeking to work collaboratively with University administrators to better bring to light facets of ASU employment that are and are not meeting personnel members' wellness and growth needs for healthful functioning, including faculty and staff members' feeling physically and emotionally safe, feeling valued for their high-quality productivity and impactful instruction and mentorship, and feeling satisfied with the compensation they receive for the efforts they invest in their careers on behalf of ASU. The Committee plans to continue regular Listening Sessions with University administrators with firm action plans forward, and the Committee recommends the formation of regular (e.g., semesterly or more frequently) Town Hall meetings with administrators, perhaps hosted and moderated by the USPC, to give faculty and staff members a direct communicate outlet.

**Please type a summary in 100 words or less in this space. This paragraph will be cut and pasted directly into the Senate Annual Report.**

The aims for the Personnel Committee were to summarize and consolidate existing areas of concern and distress for university personnel members that remain problematic without meaningful change, and to devise plans forward in concert with University administrators to enact meaningful change. Overarchingly, these centered around areas of equity (i.e., particularly among faculty and particularly across tenure eligibility status), transparency of process and communication at every level within the university (i.e., particularly regarding financial matters related to salaries and benefits), and seeking areas where policies and procedures can be consistent across academic units. In response to concerns raised, the Committee held sessions with administrators toward sharing these in civil, listening-centered conversations, with a strengths- and solutions-based approach.

## Office of the University Senate

Interdisciplinary B Room 361  
PO Box 871703 Tempe, AZ 85287-1703  
480-965-2222 Fax: 480-965-0814  
usenate.asu.edu