

Northern Illinois University
FACULTY SENATE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

February 27, 2024

2:00 p.m.

Altgeld Hall Suite 203

MINUTES

Present: Abul Azad, Barbara Gonzalez, Lori Hartenhoff, Woody Johnson, Jodi Lampi, Mark Mellon, Virginia Naples, Jeanette Rossetti, Shane Sharp,

Absent: Laurel Rigertas, Bradley Wiles, Veysel Demir, Yvonne Harris, David Valentiner, Laurie Elish-Piper

Staff/Guests: Joan Parrish, Abdoulaye Diallo, Alpha Diallo, Nene-Bella Diallo, Paul Priester, Kelly Fiala, Kerry Ferris, Bryan Dallas

Call to Order

Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Gonzalez requested a motion to approve the agenda. Lampi moved. Naples seconded. The agenda was approved with no changes.

Approval of Minutes

Gonzalez requested a motion to approve the February 20, 2024 meeting minutes. Sharp moved. Mellon seconded. The minutes were approved.

Public Comments

Gonzalez inquired if there are any requests for public comment.

Promotion Appeal

Gonzalez advised the committee that they will hear from witnesses first. Melani Duffrin was given the floor. Duffrin advised that due to a disability she is unable to attend in person and may exhibit symptoms during her testimony. A committee member asked if the department felt the candidate met the requirements for promotion. Duffrin responded that she felt that he met the requirements. The school policy spoke about leadership in service. Duffrin advised that she has a broad view about leadership. Not always formal roles, sometimes daily roles. There were four things that drove her decision, he was PC Chair for 6 months, a leader in organized student events, the school elected him to represent the college level on curriculum, she didn't remember the last item, but can send later if needed. Duffrin advised that the PC voted that the criteria was met.

Gonzalez called Dr. Bryan Dallas as a witness. A committee member asked, as PC chair, how do you feel he met the criteria? Dallas advised that the consensus was that Diallo met the criteria for leadership, based on things that were completed, interim chair, curriculum committee. The PC took a broad view of what leadership would mean. A committee member asked, at the PC level, did you look at service, beyond NIU? Dallas said, yes, we looked at everything that was submitted. Dallas continued that he thinks that in the letter that the PC wrote to the college council, they did mention that they had looked at service outside of NIU.

Dean Fiala asked Dallas if that was an easy decision to make, if they had struggled. Dallas advised that there was one committee member that had concerns and had a narrower view of leadership. Dallas advised that the first time Diallo's case was reviewed, the PC voted to not approve promotion. Then the PC requested more information. Upon further review, a PC member changed their mind and promotion was approved.

Diallo asked Dallas if it was a formal review. Dallas responded that Diallo's question would be better directed to the chair.

A committee member asked if there are percentages assigned to the areas that are reviewed. Dallas responded that the PC decides how they want to weigh those, more on lateral hires, they are more structured for assistant to associate, or associate to full. Dallas says they have thresholds that they can't go behind or can't be below.

A committee member asked if direction was given to Diallo regarding increasing his service requirement. Dallas says that evaluation scores were provided, but no recommendation.

Diallo was asked what he received on his reviews. Diallo advised that he receives met and/or exceeded expectation. He continued that he has never received a need to improve.

A committee member asked if there was an MOU created when Diallo was hired. Fiala advised that there was an offer letter, but no MOU. Fiala continued that the offer letter was silent regarding service at the previous university.

A committee member asked if the PC felt that Diallo would meet the college requirements in addition to the department requirements. Bryan advised that they primarily look at the school requirements, not the college.

Fiala advised that the biggest difference is the college is a long-standing reference point.

Diallo asked Duffrin if he had been given notification of the vote. How was the dean involved in the informal process?

Duffrin advised that she has done her best to respond to Diallo's email inquiries. Duffrin advised the first meeting resulted in a negative vote, she then reached out to Diallo and advised that there was an unfavorable vote. She added that she could do consultation and negotiation for the process. She advised the problems reported by the PC. She advised the material could be organized better, so that things that were not on the forefront would be more visible. Duffrin offered to help with this process and gave guidance, which Diallo moved forward with. The updated packet was given to the PC. At this point, there was a favorable outcome.

Diallo asked if Duffrin reached out to the Dean to ask if it was formal or informal on the vote. Duffrin advised that she asked the PC if they would be favorable to her working it out. Through conversation, they were okay. She then spoke to the Dean and explained briefly that Duffrin would like pursue Diallo having the ability to organize his materials. Duffrin felt that the Dean was supportive of faculty and upholding policy that would be favorable to the candidate, as long as policy upholds this pursuit. Diallo advised that he felt he should not be in the dark about any discrepancies that were found. Duffrin advised that she had discussed this with Diallo verbally, including what the PC found deficient and offered guidance. Gonzalez asked, after the PC voted favorably and moved on to CC, was Diallo copied on what was sent up to CC and the Dean? Duffrin advised Diallo verbally of the vote and recalls that he was happy. Everything was sent to the college, but she did not send to Diallo until later. Sharpe advised that he never saw any of the material that was sent from the PC level to the CC. Duffrin advised that she has not seen anything in the PC that requires copies to be sent, but admits that she was not diligent in this regard. Dallas advised that in part two of the application, they wrote "see the attached letter". Dallas advised they did not address a letter to Dr. Diallo. A committee member stated if the PC forwarded all the documents and a letter, per the university bylaws, Diallo should have been notified. If continued, by asking if Diallo change the information after this point? Diallo says he could clarify. Gonzalez says not at that point, it can be argued after a vote, but not before. Which is what he is doing now. Gonzalez asked if there were any further questions for the witnesses. The witnesses were dismissed.

The committee entered closed session at 2:46 p.m.

The committee entered open session at 2:58 p.m.

Gonzalez advised that there is a motion that was tabled at the last meeting. It was that the policies at the college level and department level are unfair and/or inappropriate. Sharp moved. Naples seconded. Parrish took a roll call vote:

Azad: not in attendance
Demir: not in attendance
Hartenhoff: yes

Johnson: yes
Lampi: yes
Mellon: yes
Naples: yes
Rigertas: not in attendance
Rossetti: yes
Sharp: yes
Valentiner: not in attendance
Wiles: not in attendance

The appeal was granted.

Gonzalez asked for a vote on the promotion case. Sharp moved. Johnson seconded. The promotion was approved.

Gonzalez asked for a recommendation on the appeal to forward to the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Recommendation on appeal: The FSPC recommends that the appeal be granted due to misalignment of school and college application of bylaws and policies due to conceptual differences in terminology and what is considered evidence. The department and college had different understandings of the term leadership as well as application of what counted as evidence.

Meeting and Adjournment

Gonzalez advised the next meeting would be held April 2, 2024. Gonzalez asked for a motion to adjourn. Lampi moved. Johnson seconded. The motion to adjourn was approved. Committee adjourned at 3:33 p.m.