

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA**

**AS-723-11**

**RESOLUTION ON FACULTY AFFAIRS  
REVIEW OF RETENTION PROMOTION  
AND TENURE FOCUS GROUP REPORT**

- 1 WHEREAS, The Academic Senate Research and Professional Development Committee during 2009  
2 reviewed the *Retention Promotion and Tenure (RPT) Focus Group Report*; and  
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4 WHEREAS, On May 1 2009 the Academic Senate Research and Professional Development Committee  
5 endorsed recommendations 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the *RPT Focus Group Report*; and  
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7 WHEREAS, On June 2 2009 the Academic Senate endorsed recommendations 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of  
8 the *RPT Focus Group Report*; and  
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10 WHEREAS, On March 16 2010 the Academic Senate Instruction Committee submitted its comments to  
11 recommendations 4, 5, 10, and 11 of the *RPT Focus Group Report*; and  
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13 WHEREAS, On April 6 2010, recommendations 4, 5, 10, and 11 of the *RPT Focus Group Report* were  
14 forwarded to the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee for its review; and  
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16 WHEREAS, The Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee concluded its review and submitted its  
17 comments to recommendations 4, 5, 10, and 11 of the *RPT Focus Group Report*; therefore  
18 be it  
19  
20 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate endorse the Faculty Affairs Committee's comments on items 4, 5,  
21 10, and 11 of the *RPT Focus Group Report* as attached; and be it further  
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23 RESOLVED: That the Faculty Affairs Committee comments be forwarded to the Provost and the members  
24 of the Retention Promotion and Tenure Focus Group for attachment in the *RPT Focus*  
25 *Group Report*.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee  
Date: October 25 2010  
Revised: November 2 2010  
Revised: January 14 2011

**Focus Group's Recommendation #4. "The implementation of an online student evaluation pilot program in the College of Liberal Arts and the Orfalea College of Business to study and evaluate the effectiveness, benefits, and disadvantages of online student evaluation."**

FAC observations:

The Faculty Affairs Committee agrees with the Focus Group's Recommendation #4. However the FAC members have the following concerns:

1. As in the current system, only students that are actually attending class should be permitted to evaluate the faculty.
2. The Provost designated committee should contain significant faculty involvement.
3. The Provost designated committee should include ASI representation.
4. Faculty must volunteer to participate in the pilot study.
5. A faculty member's student evaluation results are confidential. The confidentiality of the data must be ensured.
6. To aid in data mining, a student's eventual grade in the class should be linked to their evaluation.
7. Automatically normalizing or scaling the results should be controlled by college or department faculty committee. The method of norming or scaling used should be provided along with a data summary.
8. The pilot study should consider whether it is necessary for the students to enter the data online or if similar results and efficiencies can be gained through an improved scanned form.
9. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the pilot study must be accomplished with significant faculty involvement.

**Focus Group's Recommendation #5. "The University should explore the use of electronic faculty evaluation processes and set up a pilot process in one college."**

FAC observations:

Faculty Affairs Committee agrees with the Focus Group's Recommendation #5. However the FAC members have the following concerns:

1. Faculty must volunteer to participate in the pilot study.
2. The Administration must provide appropriate support to the faculty to ensure that faculty workload does not increase due to participation in the pilot study.
3. The Provost designated committee should contain significant faculty involvement.

4. As in the current system, WPAF files must be returned to the faculty member. The system must ensure that no copies are maintained elsewhere.
5. The pilot study must allow for, and support, a reviewer who wants to use paper copy instead of the electronic format.
6. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the pilot study must be accomplished with significant faculty involvement.

**Focus Group's Recommendation #10. "The University or colleges should articulate a policy indicating how learning assessment can be linked to teaching, service, professional development, or some combination of them all."**

FAC observations:

1. Faculty Affairs Committee agrees with the Focus Group's Recommendation #10, provided that the recommendation refers to faculty participation in learning assessment rather than learning assessment itself. The policy should be articulated at the department level, rather than college or University.
2. FAC agrees that "clarity of faculty expectations with respect to learning assessment will lead to a better understanding and implementation of learning assessment."

FAC Recommendations on Focus Group recommendation #10:

It is the departments, rather than the colleges, that should articulate policies indicating as to whether or how faculty participation in assessment can constitute a form of service, improve teaching, count as a faculty\_member's professional development, or some combination of them all.

**Focus Group's Recommendation #11. "The University or colleges should provide direction for faculty members to better evaluate teaching effectiveness."**

FAC observations:

1. Faculty Affairs Committee agrees with the Focus Group's Recommendation #11, as formulated in the above sentence. FAC members, however, do not agree with linking "instructor's process of defining learning outcomes for their courses" to the RPT process.
2. FAC opposes the Focus Group's assertion that "All faculty members should include the course learning outcomes in their syllabi so that teaching effectiveness can be evaluated against course learning outcome."
3. FAC opposes the standardization of "student evaluations, grade distributions, and other relative evaluative parameters," as recommended by the Focus Group.
4. FAC opposes the Focus Group contention that "Peer Review Committee evaluators need guidance in how to best determine if instructors are effective teachers." It is the departmental faculty

themselves, possibly with the aid of university resources, which could provide guidance in how to best determine if instructors are effective teachers – not the University or colleges.

FAC recommendation:

Departments and colleges should continue their work to update and further clarify their RPT criteria and processes and provide direction for faculty members to evaluate teaching effectiveness in the peer review framework.

State of California  
**Memorandum**

To: Rachel Fernflores  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: March 16, 2011

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong  
President



Copies: R. Koob, A. Liddicoat,  
D. Wehner, T. Jones,  
D. Christy, E. Smith,  
L. Halisky, P. Bailey

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-723-11  
Resolution on Faculty Affairs Review of Retention Promotion and Tenure Focus Group  
Report

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I formally acknowledge receipt of the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.

Please express my appreciation to the committee members for their work on this issue.