

Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibility (CCAFR)

Meeting September 10, 2018

Attendees: Jennifer Ebbeler, Brian Evans (chair), Alan Friedman, Denise Gilman, Martha Hilley, Richard Lowery, Deborah Parra-Medina, and Pauline Strong

Other Members: Ann Cvetkovich and Desmond Lawler

Academic Freedom: Faculty members have academic freedom in teaching, scholarship and expression per the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and other policies. Safeguards include due process, faculty governance, and tenure. CCAFR involves all three safeguards.

Scope of committee: Propose new policies, propose changes to existing policies, and investigate appeals from faculty members concerning (a) procedures in faculty evaluations and/or (b) the exercise of academic freedom in teaching, scholarship and expression.

Examples of work:

- Investigated 36 appeals from faculty members of all ranks over the previous 9 years.
- Motion against using Academic Analytics for faculty evaluations at a spring 2018 Faculty Council meeting (passed unanimously) and follow-on press coverage
- Proposed changes to university policies and policies for 17 colleges/schools to include due process through CCAFR for mid-probationary reviews (accepted by the Provost)
- Informal feedback on questions

Inclusion in policies: CCAFR is part of university policies on tenure, promotion, annual, comprehensive, and mid-probationary reviews: <https://provost.utexas.edu/faculty-affairs/evaluation>. CCAFR is also embedded in the faculty grievance procedure: <https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/faculty-grievance-procedure>. Due to the faculty grievance procedure, the Provost or President's office is supposed to notify CCAFR if a faculty member is under investigation.

Concerns Expressed Today: Lack of transparency. Lack of clarity at the departmental and school level about faculty evaluation procedures. Need to educate faculty members, administrators, and faculty affairs staff persons about due process and faculty governance.

Action: Martha Hilley (past chair of the Faculty Grievance Committee) and I have agreed to write a letter to all faculty members about CCAFR, Grievance and Faculty Ombuds.

Action: All CCAFR members are encouraged to reach out to faculty colleagues, department chairs, deans, etc., about academic freedom rights and safeguards.

Signs: Externally facing signs in faculty offices

- Concerns about Gun Free UT once the signs went up
- Faculty Council response to the upper administration – no unilateral actions
- Two previous university committees on window policies (political signs in dorm rooms) developed policies, which did not include faculty offices
- Law faculty Doug Laycock (1st amendment) and David Rabban (academic freedom): faculty have 1st Amendment protections and Academic Freedom rights to display signs