

## Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Business Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

McConnell Library 170/RUC 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room

**Present:** Staci Allen, Sandra Bond, Ashlee Claud, Vanessa Conner, Emily Fitzgerald, Mary Francis, David Halpin, Matt Harman, Stephanie Hovsepian, Debra Johnson, Kay Johnson, Mark Lambert, Jess Rothe, Deana Sentman, Scott Shull, Tom Snediker, Susan Trageser (Cabinet Liaison), Juan Urista, Meghan Viet

**Not Present:** Tom Bennett, Charley Cosmato, Chad Hyatt, Eric Lovik, Malinda Tasler

**Guests:** Rob Hoover, Sean Ramsey

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by President Ashlee Claud.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from December 13, 2023 were approved.
- 3. Discussion: Proposed Changes to the AP Annual Contract:** Guest: Rob Hoover, Radford University Vice President for Finance and Administration. (See contract proposals at the end of these minutes)  
Ashlee Claud introduced the topic and background. JMU has a 2-year contract, and we were asked to propose a 3-year contract. Virginia Tech and UVA do not have an annual contract renewal.

Discussion: Every year, AP Faculty report anxiety over the annual contract renewal and its wording. At a minimum, the wording should be updated. Hoover asked: What is the intent of the proposed changes? Messaging? The wording can be changed.

Concerns raised included inconsistencies in contracting, such as initial 6-month versus 12-month contracts; the appearance of positions being temporary; classified staff reluctant to apply for AP positions because of the contract; positions moving from AP to classified so they can be filled; hires from other institutions that do not use contracts reluctant to come to Radford because the job looks temporary, or they are worried about resigning from their former position for an unguaranteed Radford position; and concerns of AP Faculty leaving Radford because of job renewal concerns every year, regardless of length of employment at Radford. Benchmarks were discussed, which are procedural, so would be part of a process instead of documented in a policy or contract. A process would provide safeguards against non-renewal and extend trust.

Hoover said our contract does not have a clause for unsatisfactory performance. The contract renews or does not renew. Is that a fair tradeoff? He is in favor of adding poor performance to the contract. Sandra Bond responded more grievances will be filed if unsatisfactory performance is added to the contract. Hoover replied there are many steps of documentation – letters, give a chance to improve, etc., before unsatisfactory performance is given.

To strengthen retention, the proposed three-year plan includes employees working five consecutive years before applying for an extended contract. Hoover prefers putting that on the supervisor instead of by employee request. Also, as an incentive for new hires, the initial contract could be 12 months, and subsequent contracts three years. Staff have more protection than AP Faculty, and different institutions have different types of staffing. UVA no longer has AP Faculty; they have university staff. Further discussion revealed some AP Faculty had probationary periods, and others did not. The first year could suffice as the probationary period, and then go on a 3-year contract.

Hoover will consult with Human Resources and bring back other proposals from them. Based on our feedback, he thinks we can come back with at least a 3-year contract. He added we should stop the paper contracts process; these sorts of processes are good targets for automation.

- 4. Administrative and Professional Faculty Recognition:** Postponed until the group can meet.
- 5. March 1 Senator Math (Senator Elections):** The AP Faculty list is pulled on March 1 to determine how many senators should be in each division for the upcoming elections. The Elections Committee is Staci Allen, Ashlee Claud, and Mary Francis. The senators whose terms end and may be up for re-election this year are:
  - Charley Cosmato – Academic Affairs
  - Tom Snediker – Academic Affairs
  - Chad Hyatt – Central Administration
  - Malinda Tasler – Central Administration
  - Deana Sentman – Finance and Administration
  - Scott Shull – Finance and Administration
  - Kay Johnson – Library
  - David Halpin – Radford University Carilion
  - Emily Fitzgerald – Student Affairs
  - Stephanie Hovsepian – Student Affairs
  - Vanessa Conner – University Advancement
  - Mark Lambert – University Advancement
- 6. Coffee With the President Update:** There will be a coffee in March. Send Ashlee your questions. High-level/broad questions are appropriate.
- 7. Upcoming Events:**
  - Highlander Days and Open House:
    - RUC – February 24 and April 6
    - Main Campus – March 29 and April 13
  - Education Career Fair: February 16 from 10am – noon.
  - Spring Break: March 3-7
  - Career and Talent Development Etiquette Dinner: March 18, 6-7:30pm
  - Highlander Research Blitz: April 3, 5-7pm
  - Associate Provost candidates came out today – check dates.
  - From Sandra Bond:

- Education career fair: February 16, not just teachers, includes IT, finance, etc.
- Homecoming: October 3-5. Lots of fun.
- Red & White Gala: April 26
- Traditions Week: April 1-6.
- All Spring Career Fair: March 13.
- From Susan Trageser:
  - SGA Unity Fest: April 13.
  - Family Weekend: Sept. 27-29.
- From Jess Rothe:
  - Out of the Darkness Walk (Suicide prevention): April 13.
  - ESPN at Dedmon Center: tomorrow.
  - NIRSA Rec Day (National Recreation Day): February 22

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:43 pm.

**Future Meeting Dates:**

- March 13, Guest Speaker, President Bret Danilowicz (Probably in Heth). RUC regular room is probably fine.
- April 10, Guest Speaker, Vice President Dannette Gomez Beane
- May 8

**AP Contract Change Proposals:**

**Proposal 1 – Three-year contract Add to section 1.2**

*Optional three-year reappointment contract:* If it is determined to be in the university's best interest to enter into a three-year contract with a specific AP member, such a contract may be established with approval from the appropriate vice president after consultation with the appropriate supervisors. For AP members not reporting under a vice president, the president will determine whether a three-year contract is appropriate.

AP members can apply to be considered for a three-year appointment no more than six months prior to their five years of consecutive service to Radford University. At that time, AP members must request consideration of the appointment in writing to their Supervisor and Vice President. If the request is not granted, there is no appeal process, but employees can apply for the following contract period.

To be eligible for a three-year contract, the AP member must have a minimum of 5 years of consecutive, full-time service with Radford University and have an overall history of at least satisfactory performance. The service years may consist of any combination of full-time classified, instructional and AP Faculty employment. Periods of part-time employment are

not counted. CLARIFY - These positions are excluded: Non-exempt and Restricted Administrative and Professional Faculty. (ask Leah, and should others be added?)

It is within the discretion of the university to grant a three-year contract.

If a three-year contract is established, it will automatically renew for additional three-year terms, unless the university notifies the faculty member that the contract will not be renewed. All non-renewals will be processed according to the policies and procedures of Radford University.

Additionally, make the following highlighted edit to section 1.2 of the handbook

Length of Notice:

Less than 1 year of service      1 month notice

1 to 5 years of service          3 months notice

More than 5 years of service    ~~the full term of one contract period~~ 12 months notice

## Proposal 2 – Automatic renewal to one-year contract

Make the three following highlighted edits to the handbook

### 1.2 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT AND CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT

Appointments to AP positions are term contracts of 9, 10, 11 or 12 months depending on programmatic needs. To the extent that specific terms and conditions set out by any appointment letter are in addition to, contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Handbook, the terms and conditions of the appointment letter shall supersede this Handbook. If the appointment letter deviates from the standard template letter in the AP Recruitment Guide, the hiring supervisor must provide the Chief Human Resource Officer with a copy of the letter for review prior to making an offer or renewing a contract that has special terms and conditions.

Contract renewals are ~~not~~ considered automatic. ~~Job performance at a high level of productivity, effectiveness and continued need by the University will be some of the determinants of any reappointment decision.~~

The 12-month contract period is from June 25 to June 24. All AP members are paid over 24 pay periods regardless of the length of their contracts. Starting and ending dates for the 9-, 10-, and 11-month contracts are dependent on the programmatic need. Typically, the initial contract will cover the period from the date of the appointment to the beginning of the normal contract period (e.g. June 25 is the beginning of the normal contract period for 12-month contracts).

AP members whose contracts are not being renewed will receive written notice of the non-renewal. The length of the notice is determined by the length of the AP member's Radford University years of service as follows:

Length of Notice:

Less than 1 year of service      1 month notice

1 to 5 years of service            3 months notice

More than 5 years of service    ~~the full term of one contract~~ 12 months notice

(NOTE: Restricted AP positions are covered under section 1.1.4 and are not subject to provisions of this section.)

If the contract of an AP member is not being renewed, he or she will be presented with a notification of nonrenewal of the contract from the office offering the contract through their supervisor. The notice of non-renewal will specify the notice period required for the AP member based on his or her length of service. If the notice period extends beyond the current contract period, the AP member will receive a terminal appointment letter for the period between the ending date of the current contract and the ending date of the required notice. For example, if an individual on a 12-month contract with four years of service is notified on May 25 that his or her contract is not being renewed, he or she will receive a terminal appointment letter for the period of June 25 to August 24 to meet the notice requirement of three months. However, if the same AP member is notified on March 25 that his or her contract is not being renewed, he or she will have been given the required notice of three months by the end of the current contract and a terminal appointment letter for a period beyond the current contract will not be necessary. The non-renewal of a contract with the appropriate notice is not grievable as defined in Section 1.10 of this Handbook and does not fall under the AP grievance procedure.