

## Faculty Senate Agenda Item

Number: 08-05

**Subject:** Proposed changes to the currently existing Grievance Policy and Procedure (Appendix IX of the Faculty Handbook)

**Description:** Currently, Washburn University Conflict of Interest policy does not include a description of the grievance process and procedures when one or more individuals are accused of a conflict of interest. Given that Washburn University already has a process and procedure for grievances, it seems pragmatic to alter the currently existing Grievance Policy to allow for charges of Conflict of Interest.

The proposed changes to the Grievance Policy are as follows:

1. Throughout the document, replacement of “Chair/chairperson of the Personnel” with “President of the Faculty Senate”: Considering that the Personnel Committee is no longer in existence, it seemed prudent that the President of the Faculty Senate would be the appropriate replacement for the Chair of the Personnel Committee.
2. Addition of section A.6. (*“Days” refer to calendar days.*): Throughout the document, the word “day” is used. In some instances, it is preceded by the word “calendar.” Section A.6. serves to clarify that in all instances, “days” refers to calendar days.
3. Amendment to Section E: According to the Conflict of Interest policy, the accused individual(s) may be subject to “disciplinary sanctions which may include, but is not limited to, suspension from or termination of employment.” Because a conflict of interest may result in termination, Section E must be modified to be consistent with the current Conflict of Interest policy.
4. Amendment to Section 3.a.: A grievance should allow insights from a diverse group of individuals; thus, all of the major academic units should have a voice. While it could be argued that the inclusion of an individual from the same major academic unit as the accused or accuser may be biased, it is highly unlikely that that individual would affect the outcome of the grievance process. This amendment also makes it explicit how many individuals will serve on the grievance committee.
5. Deletion of section 3.a.i. and 3.a.iv.: The amendment to Section 3.a. is in contradiction to section 3.a.i. and thus 3.a.i. would need to be deleted.
6. Amendment to Section G.: In those instances when a faculty member is either the grievant or respondent, it would seem fair that an appeal would move from a small group of faculty to a larger one. Moreover, allowing the Faculty Senate to review the decision of the Grievance Committee would allow for an additional level of faculty involvement in the grievance process. Adoption of the amendment would allow, if circumstances resulted in appeals to the highest level possible, two faculty and two non-faculty groups

to review the grievance. As it stands presently, a grievance involving a faculty member is reviewed by one group of faculty and two non-faculty groups.

**Financial Implications:** None.

**Recommendation:** The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) of the Faculty Senate recommends that the proposed changes be approved by the Faculty Senate, the General Faculty, President Farley, and the Washburn University Board of Regents.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 04-07-2008 \_\_\_\_\_

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Brenda Patzel, Chair of the FAC