

Senate Council  
February 29, 2016

Snippet of SC Minutes from June 10, 2015 Retreat

*Provost Tracy then turned to the matter of tenure and title series. UK currently has seven titles series and within each one there are between three and four levels of promotion; on top of that there are lecturer and instructor positions. In addition to these, there are faculty in voluntary and adjunct series and both of those assignments have multiple levels. The Provost said that the system was extremely difficult to understand. The Provost said that there were no plans to do anything at the moment, but welcomed a discussion with SC and Senate on changing this to just two categories of faculty – tenure eligible and non-tenure eligible. Both series could also have the assistant, associate, and full professor rankings that faculty are familiar with. The Provost referred to the 1990 report by Ernest Boyer, “Scholarship Reconsidered – Priorities of the Professoriate” and that document’s discussion of different areas of scholarship.*

*The Provost commented that the title series appointments he sees are not standardized from one college to the next and he spoke in favor of a system that had career ladders for both tenure and non-tenure eligible series. As non-tenure eligible faculty progressed through the system, they could be rewarded with progressively longer contracts (one-year, three-year, etc.). Watt said he was aware of a university that offers three-year contracts for assistant professors, six-year contracts for associate professors, and 12-year contracts for full professors. In this scenario, if a faculty member ceases contributing to academe, their contract might not be renewed, even if they were tenured. McCormick expressed doubt that the Senate would see any such change as positive. The Provost said he just wanted a partner in taking a good look at the issue of tenure and title series, specifically how it could be simplified and how faculty could be better rewarded for what they do. Bailey spoke in favor of just relying on the requirements on the Distribution of Effort form (DOE) and the job description given the tremendous redundancies and discrepancies among a faculty member’s job description, title series description, and DOE.*

*Christ commented that there were problems with the DOE across campus – some areas use flexibility well but other colleges have a dean that arbitrarily sets a certain percentage for an aspect for every faculty member. The Provost said that he has productivity reports for every college and after starting to compare them with DOEs, he has found that the two are not really correlated but they should be. Provost Tracy volunteered to buy a copy of Boyer’s work for SC members. He said that although it was 20 years old, it could jumpstart major initiatives and it addresses the mission of a university very futuristically.*