



**BOARD OF REGENTS OF
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

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October 1, 2021

Dr. Matthew Boedy
Georgia Conference of the American Association of University Professors
University of North Georgia

Via Email: Matthew.Boedy@ung.edu

Dear Dr. Boedy,

Thank you for your letter, and for including Mr. Scholtz's letter. We all agree that these are weighty matters and deserve serious consideration.

USG is committed to faculty involvement at all levels. When Chancellor Wrigley formed the Post-Tenure Review working group last year, more than half of the committee were faculty, including the chair of the USG Faculty Council. The group met regularly for more than nine months, gathering information from all 26 USG institutions and taking into account a systemwide survey with more than 900 responses.

It was only after much consultation and work that the group released its recommendations in June 2021. These were presented to the Board at the August meeting. In short, their recommended changes aim to support career development for all faculty and ensure accountability and continued strong performance from tenured faculty members.

That includes the recommendation to add a new assessment element of student success. Yes, it is a new criterion, but frankly recognizes the multitude of ways in which faculty already deepen student learning and engagement through activities both inside and outside the classroom. Activities such as advising, mentoring, experiential learning and involvement in professional development are already included on many campuses as optional aspects of faculty assessment. The new required element confirms this as an essential part of the faculty role, alongside instruction, research and service.

As has always been our practice, each institution is responsible for establishing clear and transparent criteria for faculty assessment, as well as the institutional policies and procedures to carry out that assessment. These policies provide systematic specifications for these assessments, but also provide sufficient flexibility to allow our 26 universities and colleges to develop their *own* criteria in ways fitting to their mission and values. The ongoing development of each institution's new review criteria, including the new assessment of student success, will be no different. Their establishment will engage each institution at all levels of the academic affairs organization and faculty governance.

Since its inception, Post-Tenure Review in USG has had the ultimate possibility of tenure revocation or separation for faculty whose performance is consistently poor. The new policy language clearly articulates the process that could ultimately lead to that outcome, should a faculty member's work performance be judged consistently poorly by their

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colleagues. Far from summary dismissal, the year-long process is distinct from that used for dismissal due to malfeasance, but provides no less due process or faculty involvement. The procedure involves review by a body of peers both at the beginning and at the end of the process, and provides for appeal. The intent of the process is to enable a faculty member whose performance is unsatisfactory to make improvements and continue their work, and if they are not able to make good progress then some measure will be taken. Separation and tenure revocation are not the only measures that a campus president may elect to carry out, should a faculty member be determined by their colleagues to have unsatisfactorily completed their Performance Improvement Plan. Regardless, the process followed is one spelled out in the policy on Post-Tenure Review.

The fact that the process is distinct from the procedures that govern removal for malfeasance is made clear at the end of that Post-Tenure Review policy section. It is also made clear at the beginning of the policy section 8.3.9 pertaining to Discipline and Removal of Faculty Members.

I understand concerns that the originally proposed language expressing the above fact in 8.3.9 could be understood in other unintended ways. This sentiment is also expressed in Mr. Scholtz's letter.

As you point out, the words of the text matter. We have modified the proposed language to clearly articulate the intent of that sentence (see text in red):

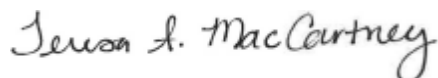
Policy 8.3.9

The President of a University System of Georgia (USG) institution or his or her designee may at any time remove any faculty member or other employee of an institution for cause. Cause shall include willful or intentional violation of the Board of Regents' policies or the approved statutes or bylaws of an institution or as otherwise set forth in the Board of Regents' policies and the approved statutes or bylaws of an institution. Such removals for cause shall be governed by the following policies on Grounds for Removal and Procedures for Dismissal. Remedial actions taken as part of the post-tenure review process shall not be governed by these policies on Grounds for Removal and Procedures for Dismissal, but rather shall be governed by the Board Policy on Post-Tenure Review.

I hope this response helps clarify both the ways in which the system as a whole has been involved in the creation of the proposed changes to faculty review, and also how ongoing dialogue and feedback is continuing to help USG refine the policy language to more clearly convey the working group's recommendations.

Thank you for reaching out with your concerns.

Sincerely,



Teresa MacCartney
Acting Chancellor, University System of Georgia

cc: Dr. Bonita Jacobs, President, University of North Georgia