

To: Faculty colleagues
From: the Academic Affairs Council
Date: January 19, 2009
Re: Proposal for revision to the Faculty Constitution regarding Academic Affairs Council recommendations on tenure-track positions

Based on faculty input received at the end of the Fall 2008 term, the AAC has revised its proposal regarding tenure-track position recommendations and is now bringing the proposal before the faculty for a vote.

The Dean of the Faculty plans to institute a new procedure for defining vacated tenure-track positions before they are approved, in order to ensure that departments and deans give systematic and comprehensive consideration to the needs and potential directions of our academic departments and programs when filling open positions. Under the new procedure, a department or program will use the attached form to provide information and justification for a particular definition of a vacated tenure line.

The Dean of the Faculty would like the AAC to play an advisory role in the new procedure and the AAC has agreed that doing so will serve the interests of the College. The AAC proposes that this advisory role be incorporated into the AAC's responsibilities as outlined in the Faculty Constitution. We ask the faculty to vote on this proposal.

The AAC's role would be:

- a) to make more transparent the process of defining open tenure positions, by actively engaging those who represent faculty and students across the campus;
- b) to help guide college-wide efforts to fulfill goals established by our Strategic Plan and the Middle States report (e.g., to support academic quality, to foster more interaction between engineering and the liberal arts, to strengthen interdisciplinary programs, and to diversify our curriculum); and
- c) to take an institution-wide perspective when looking at the needs of the curriculum.

If this proposal to include the AAC in the procedure is voted down, the new procedure for defining vacated lines will still be implemented, but the general faculty and student body will have no formal representation in the process. Departments and programs will still submit written rationale for definitions of tenure lines, and the Dean of the Faculty, with input from the other deans, will retain authority to approve or reject the requested definitions.

Please find attached:

- (1) proposed language for insertion into the section of the Faculty Manual that defines the responsibilities of the AAC (this would be voted on by the Faculty)
- (2) a form that will serve as the initial implementation of the new procedure. This form would not be included in the Faculty Manual. It is a flexible document that can be revised over time with input from the college community.

Proposal for revision to the Faculty Constitution regarding Academic Affairs Council
recommendations on tenure-track positions
January 19, 2009

To be inserted in the Faculty Constitution, at the end of Section B, “Responsibilities” (of the AAC) on FM IV, page 6.

The Academic Affairs Council advises the Dean of the Faculty regarding the definition of all tenure-track positions, whether new or vacated, except those vacated because of negative tenure and reappointment reviews. The department in which a vacated position has resided should use a proposal form supplied by the Dean of Academic Departments to describe the manner in which the department proposes to fill the position. If a vacated position resides outside a department, the academic dean overseeing the position may use this form to propose how the position may be filled. In making its recommendation, the AAC will consider information available in the Working Plan for Academic Development and in the department or program’s most recent external review, in addition to information provided by the department on the proposal form. The AAC may advise the Dean of the Faculty that the position be filled as described, it may recommend that the proposal be resubmitted after certain aspects of it are reconsidered and revised, or it may advise the Dean of the Faculty against filling the position as proposed and instead recommend that proposals be solicited from other departments or programs for a tenure-track position. The Dean of the Faculty will make the final decision regarding the definition of any tenure-track position.

Union College

Proposal Form for Filling Tenure-Track Faculty Positions

Date: _____

(Please note: If the AAC proposal is voted down, the first paragraph will be revised accordingly.)

This form is to be used for proposing how open tenure-track positions will be filled. After filling out the form, please send the proposal to the Dean of Academic Departments, S&E S-100, who will consult with the Dean of the Faculty and other deans responsible for academic affairs. The Dean of Academic Departments may then recommend revisions to the proposal before the department forwards it to the AAC. The AAC will consider proposals once each term, with a deadline at the end of the third week of the term. Proposals will also be considered at any time if a position becomes open in an unanticipated manner and quick response is needed.

1. How did this position become vacant? What was the nature of the vacated position? How did this position contribute to the department (if any) in which it resided? In what ways did this position formerly support interdisciplinary programs or College-wide programs such as General Education, including WAC?
2. Please attach a proposed position description, representing the manner in which the position will be advertised.
3. For department proposals, please indicate the numerical vote of tenure-track department members approving or disapproving of this position description. If the vote approving the description is not unanimous, please describe (without identifying individual faculty) the nature of the disagreement about the position description.
4. Describe how this position will contribute to the department and program curricular goals and course offerings and the role the new position will play within a department and/or program(s). If relevant, please provide context by describing the intellectual state of relevant disciplines.
5. If relevant, describe how this position will enable the department to contribute to interdisciplinary programs and General Education, including WAC.
6. In what other ways, not already mentioned above, does this position description support Union's Strategic Plan?

Submitted by:

Department Chair

Date

Please note: Before final approval is given by the Dean of the Faculty, an understanding must be in place between the academic deans and the relevant department chairs and program directors regarding office and laboratory space and start-up costs.