AY21-15-G

Faculty Senate Issue Log Form

Title-of-Issue: Eminent Scholar Policy
Description: There is a lack of clear guidance and timelines in the policy on nominating and selecting eminent scholars. In reviewing the Faculty Handbook to identify process and deadlines, I do not see any mention of when the external reviewers are to be identified and invited to write a letter, or when these letters are to be returned, and when the department’s committee will be able to see them. Given the schedule in the Appendix of the Handbook, there are 45 days from the time the department’s committee is convened and the secret ballot. This 45 days includes the identification of external reviewers, inviting them to write letters and having these letters returned and made available to the department’s committee. The policy reads, The department/school committee shall conduct a secret ballot on the nomination no later than November 15. The department/school review letter shall specifically address the following: evidence of the candidate's sustained focused scholarly publication record or stature in the creative arts that substantiates a national reputation as a scholar in the discipline, the substance of the external reviews, and the quality of the external reviewers.? Given this language, it’s clear that external reviewers are to be part of this assessment.  Without a specified date for when the external review letters are to be returned to the university, and more importantly, an appropriate amount of time to identify and invite reviewers with enough time for them to make this important assessment, it seems unlikely the department’s first level committee will have the benefit of these letters as part of their vote.
Rationale: By comparison, the policy on tenure provides 4 months (5/15-9/15) to identify and contact external reviewers and receive their letters.  The decision on Eminent Scholars is a consequential decision and compared to the tenure process, which is defined in far more exacting terms, the guidelines, process, and schedule for approving/not approving an Eminent Scholar are surprisingly ill-defined.
Name: Steve Myran
Department: Educational Foundations and Leadership