

香港浸會大學教職員工會
Hong Kong Baptist University Faculty and Staff Union

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Union Circular (23)

Conversion, Re-titling / Promotion Proposal Criticized at Social Sciences Faculty Board Meeting; Proposal Could not Get Through

December 12, 2004

Dear Colleagues,

Since the Personnel Office distributed the consultation document on the Implementation of the New Pay and Reward Structure in early November 2004, each Faculty is proposing implementation criteria and undertaking consultation. After each Faculty obtaining approval from respective Faculty Board meetings, the proposals will be submitted to the Staff Affairs Committee for consideration / information. Since the conversion arrangements will actually affect the appraisal, title, salary and promotion of every teaching staff, colleagues should scrutinize whether any loophole is embedded in the arrangements proposed in your respective Faculty.

During the 2nd Faculty Board Meeting of the Social Sciences Faculty Board on 2 December, 2004, colleagues expressed their concerns over the proposed arrangements for re-titling and promotion (Please refer to the attached FOSS consultation document (Appendix 1)). They are concerned that procedures for assessing performance and promotion eligibility lack transparency. They are also worried that criteria for promotion will become harsher and too restrictive in the future. Since the Dean could not provide satisfactory answers to the queries, the proposal was not approved by the Faculty of Social Sciences board meeting at the end.

The Social Sciences colleagues query the proposal on the following grounds:

1. The Conversion and Promotion proposal lacks transparency. The proposal suggests that conversion, re-titling and promotion are conditional upon the vague adjectives such as 'Good' and 'Excellent' performance. Since many departments have not yet developed a transparent appraisal system in teaching, research and service without staff input, the colleagues are concerned that these vague standards could be easily manipulated in a discretionary manner. Any approval to this proposal would be analogous as signing a blank check which gives the sole authority to the administration to intensify the workload in teaching, research and service.

2. The Conversion and Promotion proposal does not provide adequate background information for the colleagues to make a well informed decision. The proposal does not mention whether there is any constraint attached to the proposed conversion and promotion exercise, i.e. quota, financial constraints. For quite some time, a number of the colleagues have experienced much frustration when the administration fails to deliver its promises. For example, some colleagues applied for substantiation are ‘rewarded’ with “substantiable but not substantiated”; the colleagues recommended for salary increment do not receive pay rise in the end because of “stringent financial conditions”; those recommended for promotion though classified as ‘promotable’ but not promoted in the end.
3. For the re-titling exercise in the conversion proposal, the colleagues request that the re-titling should be automatically transferred from the existing salary point to the new title of the same salary point without any additional appraisal.

We believe that the queries of the colleagues in the Social Sciences to the Conversion and Promotion proposal reflect the kind of problems created by this unilateral alteration of salary and contract terms. The colleagues in the other faculties should make full use of the opportunity in your faculty board meeting to exercise your rights to express your concerns towards this critical conversion proposal especially when its consultation is done in such a hasty manner.

Yours sincerely,

Hong Kong Baptist University Faculty and Staff Union
Executive Committee

Appendix: Consultation Document from the Faculty of Social Sciences

For SOSC Faculty Members only

Re: Implementing the New Pay and Reward Structure - Conversion Arrangements for Teaching Staff (A Consultation Document)

Each faculty member has already received a consultation document on the captioned subject from the Personnel Office in early November 2004. While the University's consultation document gives the general framework on the conversion arrangements, the Faculty would like to suggest some criteria for the implementation and solicit members' opinions on the following suggestions. After obtaining the Faculty's approval, the suggestions will be submitted to the Staff Affairs Committee for consideration / information.

Suggestions for Discussion

It is understood that the conversion exercise (i.e. re-titling) and promotion may be conducted simultaneously in the coming year and may result in the delay in the implementation of the former. One major difference is that conversion exercise will be primarily processed by the Faculty subject to final endorsement by the University Panel, while promotion will also invite comments from external assessors. Another may be the continuous adoption of the old versus new salary scale (the former may be higher). We believe that apart from a "horizontal" move based on the current salary, a conversion to a higher rank (as compared with the existing title) will also expect an overall good performance.

For simplicity, the following criteria are proposed for faculty members' consideration. The conversion tables extracted from the University's Consultation Document are attached for your easy reference.

Conversion in title only

1. Senior Instructor (>B5) to Senior Lecturer
- At least **Good** in 3 areas (or average in 3 areas is good)
2. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor
- At least **Good** in 3 areas (or average in 3 areas is good)
3. Associate Professor (A) to Professor
- At least **Excellent** in 2 areas and **Good** in the third area

Promotion change in title and salary

1. Lecturer to Senior Lecturer
- At least **Excellent** in 2 areas and **Good** in the third area plus external assessment.
2. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor
- At least **Excellent** in 2 areas and **Good** in the third area plus external assessment.
3. Associate Professor (Scale B) to Professor
- At least **Excellent** in 2 areas and **Good** in the third area plus external assessment.
4. Professor to Chair Professor
- At least **Excellent** in 2 areas and **Good** in the third area plus external assessment

** - Further revisions will be subject to guidelines approved by the Staff Affairs Committee at its meeting to be held on 20 December 2004.*

Faculty of Social Sciences (25 November 2004)

c.c. Prof. CF Ng, PVC
Prof. Herbert Tsang, AVP