

## 2018-2019 Year-End Committee Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Faculty Rights and Responsibilities
<b>Charge:</b>	attends to policies regarding academic freedom, teaching, research, interpersonal conduct, terms of appointment, promotion and tenure, and related matters, particularly with regard to the Faculty Handbook.
<b>Chair:</b>	Jennifer Cole
<b># of Meetings:</b>	We had one telecom (Feb. 3), and conducted the rest of our business through group email.

### **Completed Business and/or Accomplishments**

1. The Committee reviewed the University's proposed policy on the Appropriate Use of Electronic Resources and submitted a report highlighting concerns that the proposed policy was overly broad, and vaguely worded. The Committee recommended that the University look at the privacy policy in the AAUP report on Academic Freedom and Electronic Communication as a good model.
2. The Committee reviewed the policies and operation of the University's Bias Incident Response Team, in response to concern that incident reports naming faculty members were being handled outside of the scope of policies stated in the Faculty Handbook, governing faculty discipline and appeals. The Committee consulted with Sarah Wake (Assoc. General Counsel and Assoc. VP for Equity) to better understand the status of the B.I.R.T in relation to the Office of Equity. The Committee sought information about B.I.R.T. from its Director, Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson, but did not receive the requested information. The committee's report to the Faculty Senate on this matter recommended that the Senate leadership engage the Administration to obtain the requested information about B.I.R.T. policies and operations, allowing the Committee to finalize its review and make a recommendation.
3. The Committee responded to concern from some faculty (and several other constituents of the University community) about the University's use of the E-Verify system for verification of employment eligibility. The faculty senate researcher was very helpful in providing extensive background materials to help the Committee understand the issue, which centers on the question of why the University chose to adopt E-Verify campus-wide, instead of a more restricted use of the system for units that have federal contracts, as is the practice at most peer institutions. The Committee received a detailed account of the University's process leading to campus-wide adoption of E-Verify from Pam Beemer (VP and Chief Human Resource Officer), which informed the Committee's recommendation that the Faculty Senate take no immediate further action on the

matter. (Details are in the Committee's report to the Faculty Senate dated 5/2/19.) Subsequent to submitting the Committee's report to the Faculty Senate, Committee chair Jennifer Cole received additional information from Professor Jacqueline Stevens about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University and the Department of Homeland Security. This is the document that specifies the terms of the University's engagement with E-Verify. Further questions are brought to light about the terms of the MOU, which the Committee will pursue next year.

#### **Unfinished/Continuing Business**

1. The Committee will continue to seek information about the B.I.R.T., if it is still in operation in AY 2019-2020. The B.I.R.T. website is no longer accessible, although the link to the site is still present on the Office of Student Affairs website: <https://www.northwestern.edu/inclusion/respectnu/reporting-bias-hate-incidents.html>.
2. The Committee will re-engage with the Administration to seek clarification on the terms of the MOU governing the adoption of E-Verify.

#### **New Business for Next Year**

The FRR Committee will be watching for Handbook Committee's proposal for a revised policy on Academic Freedom, and when available, will provide feedback to the Handbook Committee on the proposal as it relates to faculty rights and responsibilities.