



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
August 14th, 2024

Report of the Faculty Appellate Panel for the 2023-2024 year

The Faculty Appellate Panel dealt with two grievance cases during the 2023-2024 academic year. In the first case, the main issue was whether the recommendations made during the 2022-2023 year had been implemented to a satisfactory extent by the respective school. The Chair had several discussions on that matter with one of the grievants and Vice-Provost Fitzpatrick. Part of the discussions was how to untie aspects of civility, academic freedom, and administrative problems. The other case concerned a Title IX process. The Panel conducted a review of the materials provided by the grievant but decided not to open a broader investigation.

Both cases prompted the general question how to reconcile the rather broad mandate that the Faculty Manual had assigned to the newly created Panel, the fact that findings and recommendations of the Panel can only be implemented by the administration, and the highly diverse nature of the processes where faculty could bring a grievance before the Panel. Grievances in T&P cases, which were traditionally the main task of the Panel, can build on a well-established tradition at USC; there are well-structured processes at USC, such as Title IX and Civility, that have a legal framework and already contain an ability to appeal; the Panel has a clearly defined role in certain disciplinary matters as outline in university policies; and there are more general issues like academic freedom. This diversity of possible cases and how to define our role is an ongoing discussion within the Panel, and it may be resolvable only on a case-by-case basis. The Chair of the Panel had discussions with Vice-Provost Fitzpatrick and Faculty Senate Chair Outten in this respect. The Chair also had a discussion with the Faculty Ombudsperson Robin DiPietro because some grievances that Faculty experience might be better resolved along this route; on the other hand, the Panel could be a possible level of appeal should the case not be resolvable along that line and after a final administrative decision.

The Panel elected Michael Stoeltzner of the Department of Philosophy for another and final year as Chair for the academic year 2024-25.

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