

**Boulder Faculty Assembly
Grievance Advisory Committee
2023–24 Annual Report**

Committee members:

Steve Dike
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Matters handled

In 2023–24, the GAC advised eight people who contacted us about their rights and protections as faculty members.

* Three matters did not directly or immediately involve PRR procedures, but we were able to advise the person about what steps were available to them outside the PRR.

* Two matters involved major investigations under the PRR. Both investigations were conducted in (similar) ways that the GAC considers to have been unfair to the targeted faculty members. These two cases gave rise to many of the concerns listed below. One of these matters is resolved and the other is still pending.

* One matter involved at least one PRR investigation that we believe had already been completed by the time we were contacted. The targeted faculty member was a teaching professor who was “non-renewed” shortly after contacting us.

* Two matters (which concerned allegations against a total of four faculty members) involved a dean and senior staff trying to use the PRR against faculty who strongly disagreed with some administrative actions. We believe these matters have been resolved.

Problems with the PRR

The committee has continued to identify problems with the PRR and with how it is being implemented by the administration. Unfortunately, we have not had time to give sustained attention to proposing amendments to the PRR itself or other ways of trying to fix the problems. Next year, it might be a good idea for a subcommittee of the GAC (perhaps in conjunction with

others, from ExCom or elsewhere) to work on such proposals while others focus on individual cases.

In addition to issues identified in last year's report, we've identified the following concerns:

- * Faculty members are entitled to notice when they are being investigated. For example, administrators should not conduct full-blown, months-long investigations while keeping them secret from the targeted faculty members. It is not acceptable when effectively everyone else in a department (including graduate students and including people long departed from CU) knows that a person is being investigated without their knowledge.
- * There should be a limitations period ("statute of limitations") on investigations and sanctions under the PRR.
- * The role of the Office of Faculty Relations should be clarified. That office cannot provide faculty members with "confidential" consultations while simultaneously advising administrators in the same matter.
- * Records of minor PRR matters should be maintained, if at all, at the department level, not in the Office of Faculty Affairs.
- * Administrators should comply with the deadlines set by the PRR. Compliance with those deadlines is the duty of the Supervising/Reviewing Administrator. If that person wants advice from either OFA or university counsel, it is incumbent upon them and on both of those entities to consult in a timely fashion.
- * Faculty should not be subjected to "make-work" punishments, whether denominated "sanctions" or "educational remedies."
- * Administrators should abide by the PRR's repeated admonishments to resolve matters at the lowest possible levels and not attempt to personally direct the resolution of an initial concern that ought to be referred to a lower level.