

Notes*

**Tenure Committee
Monday, March 7, 2005
1:30 - 3:00
238A Morrill Hall**

Present: F. R. P. Akehurst (chair), Tom Clayton, William Durfee, Nancy Ehlke, Jennifer Westendorf

Absent: Dale Carpenter, Carol Carrier, Carston Wagner

Guests: none

1. Committee Members and Charge

Professor Akehurst noted that he was going off the Committee at the end of the year so a new chair will be required. Professor Clayton will be on leave. The Committee on Committees will make the appointments.

The Committee agreed it should suggest to the Senate that its remit be expanded to include academic freedom because no one is in charge of it at the University. It was agreed that Professor Duvall, who chaired the task force on academic freedom, would be invited to the next meeting. A bylaw change will be prepared.

The charge to the committee includes the responsibility of annually reviewing the use of contract and non-faculty instructors in all departments and colleges. It was agreed Vice President Carrier would be asked to make a report.

2. Making Tenure More Flexible

The Committee reviewed the executive summary of a report from the American Council on Education containing a number of recommendations concerning increasing flexibility in tenure in order to assist junior women (and men) faculty. Several points were made:

- There is more flexibility in time in academia than there is outside but young women do not have role models to advise them; there are few women in senior positions to provide role models and mentoring.
- Tenure is really special and should not be altered unless circumstances require it, but it may be at the point where it should be altered to provide more flexibility—but is there already sufficient flexibility and junior faculty just do not know it (e.g., the option of stopping the tenure clock)?

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

- How would junior faculty take advantage of more extended leaves without salaries—they could not afford to be without the income? And if junior or senior faculty are allowed more extended leaves, a department would have to hire (even more) temporary faculty, faculty who would have NO future in the department.
- It could be that faculty could work less than 100% time for a period.
- Kids take a lot of time and there is a problem when both parents work; the faculty do not need years off, they need more time to do their work (so a longer probationary period might be an option).
- What happens with some junior faculty is that they have classes to teach, family responsibilities, and research obligations—and the research drops off, so they don't get tenure.
- Are people asked why they leave the University? SCFA has asked that such information be sought.
- While one would think that the passage of time would bring about change in the number of women faculty and then senior administrators, studies monitoring these trends do not support this outcome. One problem is that departments have fewer faculty positions available, because of budget cuts, so there are fewer opportunities to hire women, even though women make up the majority of undergraduate and (in a number of fields) graduate students.

The ACE report addresses issues beyond tenure and they should be referred to the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. Some of the recommendations touch on climate and leadership, not just changes in the tenure code. This Committee, however, can show that it is willing to change the code, Professor Akehurst said; he said he would have a talk with the Faculty Consultative Committee and the Faculty Senate to find out what receptivity there is to some of the proposals for change.

-- Gary Engstrand

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