

Notes*

Tenure Committee
Friday, September 23, 2005
1:30 - 3:00
238A Morrill Hall

Present: William Durfee (chair), Tracey Anderson, Carol Carrier, Tom Clayton, G. Edward Schuh, Jennifer Westendorf

Absent: Arlene Carney, Nancy Ehlke, Ruth Okediji, Jianyi Zhang

Guests: none

1. Charge and Issues

The Committee reviewed its charge, noting that its title had changed from Tenure Committee to Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, because the two matters are seen as closely linked and because no other committee deals with academic freedom issues. The Committee does not deal with individual cases but rather University and Senate policies.

Amendments to the tenure code come to this Committee, as do interpretations of the code.

It was agreed that at the next meeting the Committee would review the use of contract and non-regular faculty appointments with Vice President Carrier. It was noted that non-regular faculty can be in the position of not being full participants in faculty meetings—or if they are added as regular faculty, the strength of the tenured faculty is watered down. These positions can create disgruntlement. The academic appointments talks about percentage limits in colleges, but there are bigger issues with respect how non-regular faculty are brought in and their rights in the units.

It was agreed the Committee would monitor the post-tenure review process, and Professor Durfee would work out a division of labor on the issue with the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. It was agreed that the Committee would hear from Vice Provost Carney and Senior Vice President Jones about post-tenure review.

It was agreed that the Committee would hear about the college reorganization plans and the implications of the changes for faculty, at its next meeting.

The Committee will review the University's existing academic freedom statements and the recent report on academic freedom commissioned by FCC and Provost Maziar and then decide how active it will be on the issue. This is a hot issue nationally, but the Committee needs to review documents before it decides what it wants to do.

The Committee discussed the provisions for "stopping the tenure clock" for parents. Princeton now stops the clock automatically for new parents; at most places, including the University, the faculty

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member must request that the clock be stopped. There are problems with the six-week leaves as well, Dr. Carrier said: some departments support it fully and may provide a whole semester while others may do little. In some cases, a faculty member CANNOT take a leave because his or her research program would collapse. It was suggested the Committee talk with those who took leaves and with department heads who had to contend with the problems created by leaves. Another question the Committee should consider is what family events besides children should be covered by leaves and stopping the tenure clock, Professor Durfee suggested.

The Committee agreed that in the spring it would look at data that Vice President Carrier is attempting to gather related to the tenure success rate of probationary faculty (i.e., does the University of Minnesota grant tenure more frequently than its peers, and/or more frequently than it should?)

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota