Meeting Brief*

**FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS
TENURE SUBCOMMITTEE
TENURE WORKING GROUP
Friday, April 5, 1996
2:00 - 4:00
238 Morrill Hall**

Present: John Adams (moderator), Kent Bales, Victor Bloomfield, Sue Brorson, Cheryl Coryea, Sam Myers, Roberta Humphreys, Naomi Scheman

Guests: Mary Burgan (General Secretary of the National AAUP, & Professor of English at Indiana University)

Others: Nicole Boldt and Gary Engstrand (University Senate)

1.   INITIAL DISCUSSION

Professor Mary Burgan asked the faculty to review the process of the tenure discussions to date. Particularly, she asked why the University formed the Working Group (Group) when it already had the Tenure Subcommittee. Professor John Adams said that the Group was appointed by the Chair of FCC and the Sr. Vice President of Academic Affairs to initiate the discussion on tenure. Other comments about this group included:

*   The Tenure Code (Code) clearly states how proposals must be handled once they are presented or drafted to the Tenure Subcommittee. The Code does not state how the process should be handled before this stage.
*   There was concern because the Tenure Subcommittee was not directly in charge of the initial process.
*   Setting the agenda is a very powerful exercise.

Professor Burgan said that the <u>AAUP Red Book</u> explicitly states how faculty governance should operate. She pointed out two structural matters that can influence the governance process: What is the relationship between the entire University Senate and the committees that work out the details, and Is there a better way to effectively manage faculty governance given the interest that exists in departments and disciplines as opposed to concern of the entire institution.

*   The Administration is not using the faculty governance in a consultative role. There seems to be a plethora of "after the fact" consultation.
*   Is there a way to resolve this problem of improper consultation?
*   Decentralization initiated in the 1960s has led to a number of problems at the University.

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*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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs   2
Faculty Consultative Committee
Senate Judicial Committee
Tenure Subcommittee
Tenure Working Group
April 11, 1996

*   The extent to which the Administration listens to faculty governance, quality faculty become
         involved in the process.
*   The Administration does not seem to intentionally sidestep the faculty governance system.

         Professor Burgan said that it is *not* true that universities around the country are reviewing their
tenure codes. She added that there are several systems (Penn State, Arizona, Oklahoma) that have
made/are making moves to alter their tenure regulations, largely due to legislative pressure. This pressure
develops from public criticisms including dissatisfied undergraduates and their parents, as well as those
who see lay-offs in the private sector and wonder why faculty receive tenure and they do not.

         Professor Burgan reviewed the draft amendments with the group in attendance. She said that the
document does not describe how much tenure has eroded over the past several years and how the faculty
may address this issue.

Comments by the faculty in attendance:

*   Some departments have used to the Code to retain faculty to the detriment of the department and
         the University as a whole.
*   The unemployed Ph.D. graduates are willing to take whatever they can find, creating pressure on
         the tenure system. The group continued discussing about the role of faculty in education on the
         high school/remedial teaching.
*   The Administration is calling for revision of the Code to resolve problems in AHC that arose due
         to administrative mismanagement.
*   The revision process has proceeded such that each group has tried to "out-guess" the other.
*   The faculty are often too busy to attend to situations that are outside of their direct responsibility.
*   The Non-retirement Subcommittee of SCFA has been stalemated by the discussion on tenure.
*   Some of the proposed amendments to the Code could be addressed more effectively by adjusting
         the Judicial Committee procedures.

1. Debating the Issues:

*   Faculty who develop an expertise on an issue (i.e., tenure, restructuring, etc.)are going to have
         insight that may be contrary to popular opinion. When this occurs, these peers are labeled as
         administrative allies, when in fact, they are speaking from a perspective that is very sophisticated.
*   Faculty tend to seek examining specifics (draft text) rather than reviewing general concepts.
*   Text and context (AHC issues)are two separate issues.
*   Post-tenure review exists with the current Tenure Code. This University is said to already be
         policing itself better than most other institutions throughout the country.
*   It is very difficult to discuss a review of tenure when the faculty are unsure of the type of
         infrastructure that will exist at the University next year.

2. Poling Faculty

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs   3
Faculty Consultative Committee
Senate Judicial Committee
Tenure Subcommittee
Tenure Working Group
April 11, 1996

*   To what extent do we represent the views of the faculty? At Indiana University, poles the junior
         faculty and the members of Senate committees to view major opinions on issues.   Major
         decisions are considered in blanket poles of all faculty.
*   Maybe the University should pole the entire faculty regarding changes to the Tenure Code.
*   Good faith efforts need to be made to face the Board of Regents request for review of the Code.
*   The Tenure Subcommittee may be interested in poling the faculty. Such a non-binding survey
         could ask for faculty opinion those items that are most important and "do-able." This may help
         faculty to retain a sense of confidence in the governance/mediation structure.

                                        -- Kevin Gormley

University of Minnesota