

Notes*

Tenure Committee
Monday, November 15, 2004
1:30 - 3:00
238A Morrill Hall

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

Absent: Dale Carpenter, Carston Wagner

Guests:

1. Endowed Chairs

Professor Akehurst reported that there could be changes to the tenure code with respect to endowed chairs; if so, the Committee will be involved. Questions have been raised about endowed chairs and it appears there are no regulations. There is a feeling that there needs to be something more systematic. There is nothing in the tenure code about endowed chairs; if there are regulations, they could find their way into the tenure code, although it is not clear that they would fit in the code. He said the Committee will wish to know what other universities have in the way of regulations for endowed chairs.

2. Committee Activities

Last year the Committee went through Section 7 of the code and made suggestions for minor changes, including references to the Tenure COMMITTEE, not subcommittee. The Committee is to review the code and advise on changes that may be needed, including footnotes and interpretations.

3. Role of the Chair

Professor Akehurst related that he is sometimes asked for advice about the redress of grievances. Most such issues go to the Judicial Committee or the University Grievance Office. He said that he believes he, as chair, should not get involved in issues in the event that the Tenure Committee is called upon to issue an interpretation of the code. To what extent should he agree to be a faculty advisor? How much advice should he give?

There are no funds for an ombuds function so the Grievance Office is filling that role. But that could be a conflict of interest, if there is need for advice to go to the grievance office. The problem is that there are not many faculty around who can help colleagues with difficulties. Committee members offered several comments:

-- One possibility would be to use retired faculty; that is an effort that would have to be organized.

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- The request for advice comes up perhaps 3-4 times per year.
- There is an ombuds function for students; it seems like there should be one for faculty and staff as well.

The Committee agreed that a "traffic cop" role is appropriate for the chair but did not believe the chair should serve as an advisor.

One problem is that grievance office decisions are sometimes not enforced. In that case, Vice President Carrier said, one should register a complaint with the dean or responsible administrator.

Professor Akehurst adjourned the meeting at 2:20.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota