

May 10, 1991

Dr. Robert E. Hemenway  
Chancellor, Lexington Campus  
111 Administration Building  
Campus 0032

Dear Chancellor Hemenway:

The Academic Area Advisory Committee for the Extension Title Series is offering suggestions on ways in which promotion and tenure dossiers might be improved. We discussed some of the suggestions at our meeting with you on April 22, but others have been added by individual members of the committee. The following suggestions are offered for your consideration:

- One of the most common problems with Extension dossiers is their bulk. The required information listed in the Administrative Regulations can be provided in a reasonable-sized dossier. Including examples of a lot of publications is usually what adds excess volume. It is difficult for the candidate to know how much sample material to include, and most prefer to err on the side of too much rather than too little. The result often is overkill. The committee can't possibly review all such material. Furthermore, most of it is accessible to the committee in other locations, if wanted.

Some guidance from your office to departmental chairs regarding this matter would be helpful. Perhaps limiting the candidate to three or four major program thrusts with a paragraph description of each and three to five supporting educational materials developed for the program would help solve the problem.

- Undoubtedly, the most valuable and useful piece of information in the dossier is the curriculum vita. The candidate can provide most of the information required by the Administrative Regulations, except letters and program of work, via the CV. We don't think there are serious problems in this regard, but departmental chairs should urge candidates to prepare well-organized CVs that consolidate as much as possible the evidence required by the ARs.
- Another important component of a dossier is the letters. In addition to letters from colleagues and outside peers, letters from Extension Agents and Extension Specialists in other departments would be helpful in evaluating the effectiveness and individual

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contributions of the candidate. In requesting these letters, departmental chairs should select Extension Agents and Specialists who have cooperated in or contributed to the candidate's program, or who are otherwise familiar with it. Departmental chairs should be reminded of the importance of letters and urged to handle that aspect of the promotion and tenure process in a way that will ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the candidate's reputation and performance.

The perennial problem of timeliness keeps cropping up. The committee is aware of efforts that you have made to ameliorate the problem. Because of the compelling need to let candidates know of decisions as early as possible, those efforts must be continual. The membership and chairmanship of the committee change annually, and each new committee should be reminded that promotion and tenure is one of the top-priority responsibilities of a faculty member. Continue to send guidelines, deadlines, and instructions to the committee chair and try to ensure that they and the importance of following them are communicated to the committee members. The meetings that you have held with all area advisory committees together have been particularly beneficial in fostering the exchange of ideas among the various committees.

Thanks for meeting with the Extension Area Advisory Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to make suggestions that might help improve the promotion and tenure process.

Sincerely,



Wilbur W. Frye, Chair  
Academic Area Advisory Committee  
Extension Title Series

WWF/ms

cc: Committee members



May 10, 1994

Dr. Robert Hemenway, Chancellor  
111 Administration Building  
University of Kentucky  
Campus 00325



Dear Dr. Hemenway:

The 1993-94 Academic Area Advisory Committee for the Extension Title Series held a final meeting on April 27, 1994 to discuss recommendations that we might make to you concerning the promotion process and some of the unique aspects associated with the Extension Title Series.

1. As a somewhat noncontroversial starting point, the committee continues to be overwhelmed with the volume of material provided to support the individual dossiers. The volume may be greater with extension faculty because of the nature of their responsibilities. However, the committee feels that material adequate to support the promotion of an individual can be contained in one three-inch binder. We recognize that preparation of this material is the responsibility of each department chair and we recommend chairs limit the volume of information to selected examples of accomplishments.

2. In contrast to the above request to limit the volume of the dossier, this committee once again observed that some dossiers were deficient in letters of support from county agents, extension specialists from supporting departments and constituents from the public sector whom Extension Title Series appointees serve. You might suggest to department chairs that such letters of support are important to the evaluation process.

3. Persons in the Extension Title Series who were evaluated this year had quite different types of job responsibilities. The committee attempted to base their judgements on existing Administrative Regulations. However, it was extremely difficult to evaluate some of these cases using only these criteria. The committee felt that a) inclusion of some type of job description or brief plan of work in the promotion dossier, and b) inclusion of those portions of departmental rules related to evaluation of job performance would provide additional tools to more objectively measure how someone meets departmental expectations. Chairs should encourage departmental faculty to use the departmental rules as a guide in writing evaluation letters. If departmental rules clearly state what Extension Title persons are expected to contribute to research and teaching, as well as the usual extension programming, it makes this committee's job easier.

4. The committee recognizes that inclusion of the results from performance reviews for three previous years is required but one member of our committee felt that this information is distracting and could potentially bias the findings of the committee. This was more of a problem with cases that were already marginal; merit ratings may be inflated and contradict other evidence (or lack thereof) in the dossier. Two other committee members felt that such information was an essential part of the dossier.

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Dr. Robert Hemenway  
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5. The committee was particularly troubled by the type of situation exemplified by an appointment at the assistant professor level with primarily administrative responsibilities. In the committee's opinion, it is extremely difficult for such an individual to meet the standard minimum criteria for promotion and/or tenure by following the existing Administrative Regulation statements, even though the closing sentence following ARII-1.0-1.VI.A.2.c. states that "[a]pplication of the above criteria should be weighted in terms of the individual's assignment". We still wonder whether such individuals should be placed in the Extension Title Series. It clearly is a disservice to such a person when they are hired into such a position and are expected to make tenure. On the other hand, promotion of individuals meeting these unusual expectations, which are neither extension, research nor teaching, sends a negative message to those who are fulfilling the standard expectations of the Extension Title Series.

6. While the committee recognizes that their role is advisory and that other factors enter into your final decision, they have taken their assignment seriously and were somewhat dismayed to learn that their recommendations on the majority of the difficult cases were overruled. The instructions to the committee in your September 1, 1993 Memorandum, item number 5 stated that the committee "should not base [a] recommendation on whether or not the department should be hiring someone in a particular area or on the directions in which a program should develop". Yet, it would appear that those same considerations were very important in your final recommendation. If the committee's function is to only affirm recommendations of the units, then it might be better, and more efficient, to simply change the rules and make appointments effective at the department level with the approval of the dean, thus eliminating many hours of relatively useless committee time.

7. Finally a comment on instruction number 11 from your September 1, 1993 Memorandum. This provides for the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee to provide expert advice on any case. Given the expected turn around time that our committee has experienced, difficulties with the logistics of the appointment of such a committee and fact finding makes any reasonable assistance seem highly unlikely.

It is the sincere desire of this committee that these observations be taken seriously and that they are communicated to the appropriate responsible parties.

Sincerely,

Douglas L. Dahlman, Chair  
Area Advisory Committee,  
Extension Title Series

cc: George Duncan  
Fudeko Maruyama  
A.J. Powell  
Lionel Williamson  
Mary Witt