

December 1, 1999

TO: Dr. Charles T. Wethington, Jr. President

FROM: Jack Gron, Chair
Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure

RE: Annual Report

Enclosed please find the 1998-99 Annual report of the Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure. I have filed official correspondence and minutes in the office of the Special Assistant for Academic Affairs as well as in the office of the Senate Council Chair.

On behalf of the committee I wish to state that we appreciated the confidence which you have shown in appointing us members to this very important assignment. We hope that we have served well the interests and needs of the University and its faculty.

If you need additional information, please contact me.

cc: Dr. Juanita Fleming, Special Assistant for Academic Affairs
Dr. Roy Moore, Chair, Senate Council

Enclosures

*Thank for sending me
the 1998-99 report
of the Adv. Com. on
Privilege & Tenure.
I do appreciate
the continued
good work of
the committee.
C. W.*

December 1, 1999

University Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure
Annual Report 1998-99

The Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure held five formal meetings between August 18, 1998 and April 16, 1999. Committee members were Mitzi Johnson, Claire Pomeroy, James Wells, Lionel Williamson, and Jack Gron, Chair. Dr. Brad Canon replaced Dr. Wells in January 1999. The committee considered three cases during this period of time. Two cases dealt with an appeal of a promotion and tenure decision, and a third appeal was concerned solely with promotion. These cases were submitted to the committee within the sixty-day deadline for filing such documents after notification from the Chancellor's office that a negative decision concerning the tenure and promotional dossiers had been rendered. Minutes and official correspondence have been included with this report while copies will be filed in office of the Special Assistant for Academic Affairs and in the office of the Chair of the Senate Council.

The committee followed University Senate Rules (1.4.5.2) and the Administrative Regulations (II-1.0-1, Page III-7) to guide its deliberations. When considering these promotion and tenure cases the committee referred to specific language in the administrative regulations, which we interpreted as assigning the committee's responsibility to the consideration of "procedural matters", "privilege", and "allegations of academic freedom."

Each formal meeting was an open meeting with posted agenda. In these cases, the Chair met first with the appellant once the entire appeal package had been delivered. After the documentation had been gathered, the information was disseminated to the entire committee for their inspection, prior to formally discussing the case. Once formal deliberations began, the appellants were invited to appear before the committee to present their cases and to answer specific questions. The committee's decisions were based on the compilation of the above-mentioned information in addition to documentation provided by the appellants' chairs or deans.

The first case was in a regular title series, and the appellant had filed his appeal based on three alleged procedural violations of the Humanities and Arts Area Committee and several administrators who reviewed the dossier. Once the committee had received the entire appeals package, an invitation was extended to the appellant to appear before the group to present the issues. At the designated date, the appellant failed to appear and the committee deliberated the case based upon facts already in hand.

It was apparent after careful scrutiny that the three violations stated in the appeal did not fall within the purview of the committee, and that the Chancellor's decision not to grant tenure with promotion was upheld. The committee cited that the appellant's college sloppily handled the case and that recommendations were forwarded suggesting that future cases be handled in a more professional manner.

In the second case, also in the regular title series, the appellant had cited four procedural violations, centering primarily upon the actions of the dean of his college. After reviewing the materials and hearing the appellant's points of view, the committee decided that there were indeed compelling procedural violations in the manner in which the dean had handled this particular dossier. The appellant claimed that the newly appointed dean of his college was applying new standards for promotion and tenure which were ones that had not been communicated, and that did not prevail in that college during his probationary period. He had argued that he had received little formal evaluation during his probationary period, and the ones which he had received, were quite favorable and complementary. He further noted that the dean's expectations regarding advocacy of courses on race, gender and oppression (not his primary specialty) reflected a stereotypical view of what an African American faculty member should be doing. Finally he stated that the dean's comments based on his lack of performance in leading a task force demanded a leadership role which was not normally expected among untenured assistant professors.

After careful deliberation by committee, it was clear that the appellant had met the levels of expectations by his college toward his bid for tenure and promotion. The annual written performance evaluations and letters from two previous deans support this fact. It was also evident that it was unfair for a newly appointed dean to expect the appellant to meet a new set of criteria toward promotion and tenure when he had been receiving favorable evaluations throughout his career at this institution. Based on all of the evidence, the committee recommended that the appellant be awarded tenure with promotion, and that a mentoring process be established by his college to enable the appellant to successfully advance to the rank of full professor in the light of new standards developed by the dean.

The third case was in a special title series and dealt only with the promotion to the rank of full professor. After receiving the appeals package, the committee members met with the appellant to hear her case. The alleged procedural violations centered on the fact that no current or accurate job description or criteria for promotion was on file when the dossier had been forwarded. An inaccurate and absolutely unrelated job description and criteria had mysteriously been inserted into the dossier. Outside evaluators, as well as the area committee had made recommendations based on this erroneous information.