

Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure

Annual Report, 2007-2008

The Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure (SACPT) held eight formal meetings during the previous year. The first meeting was held on Sept. 25, 2007 and the final meeting on Aug. 7, 2008. The members of the committee included Jodelle Deem, Anne Harrison, Deborah Hill, Robert McKenzie, David Royse, Jeffrey Suchanek, Susan Straley and Hollie Swanson (Chair). During this period, the committee reviewed three cases and is currently involved in a fourth. One was initiated during 2006-2007 and involved a case in which a faculty member requested clarification as to whether a Dean has the authority to prevent a department faculty and chair from assembling a tenure and promotion dossier to submit for reconsideration by the College in the seventh year. A second involved denial of tenure and the third involved termination of a lecture position. The fourth ongoing case involves a denial of tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor.

Summary of cases investigated:

1. Case of faculty member requesting the SACPT to clarify whether a Dean has the authority to prevent a department faculty and chair from assembling a tenure and promotion dossier to submit for reconsideration by the College in the seventh year.

The SACPT concurred (with the President) that this case did not appear to involve a violation of academic freedom, privilege or written procedure. However, the SACPT believed there was an issue of fairness in this case that should have been taken into consideration. It was the opinion of the committee that the apparent lack of communication between the Chair and Dean with the faculty member served as a detriment to the faculty member. The President concurred with the Provost's conclusion that this tenure case should not be reopened.

2. Case of denial of tenure, Regular Title Series.

The SACPT concluded that there was no evidence of procedural violations. However, the SACPT expressed a concern with respect to the extensive variance in the percent effort of the faculty member's DOE for research effort that may have influenced faculty productivity.

3. Case of decision not to renew Lecturer appointment.

The SACPT concluded that no procedural violations occurred in the non-renewal of the Lecturer appointment. However, the SACPT is concerned that with

respect to termination/renewals of these non-tenured track positions there does appear to be a lack of clearly communicated procedures.

4. Case of denial of tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor.
This case is ongoing.

Recommendations

1. A common thread in all of these cases is poor communication between faculty and administrators and in some cases, lack of consideration of loyal employees. With respect to faculty in non-tenured appointments, a policy of reasonable (for example three months) notice of decision not to renew should be implemented.
2. The SACPT is concerned about service performed by tenure-track junior faculty that meet the needs of the college or unit, but that are detrimental to their successful promotion. With this in mind, the SACPT recommends that both administrators (i.e., departmental chairs) and junior faculty pay particular attention to AR II-1.0-5 Policies for Faculty Performance Review B.3. *“... An individual who is hired with the prospect of becoming a tenured faculty member shall be assigned duties by the unit commensurate with making due progress toward meeting requirements for tenure.”*