

SUBJECT: Report from the Committee to Study Professional Development of Tenured Faculty

TO:

Charles R. Bantz, Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Professor Charles Parrish, President, American Association of University Professors/
American Federation of Teachers-Local 6075

FROM:

Harvey Kahalas, Dean, School of Business Administration
Virginia Rice, Professor, College of Nursing
Mary C. Sengstock, Professor, Department of Sociology (Chair)
Phyllis Vroom, Interim Dean, School of Social Work
Seymour Wolfson, Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science
Paula Wood, Dean, College of Education; Interim Dean, College of Lifelong Learning

DATE: May 25, 2001

The current *Agreement Between WSU and the AAUP-AFT* created a committee to consider the current system for assessing and encouraging the professional development of tenured faculty. (See the letter dated June 18, 1999, in the Agreement, p. 152.) The Committee has completed its task and submits the attached Report. We hope our Report will be useful in generating discussion and action on this important issue.

Mary C. Sengstock, Chair
For the Committee

CC: Li Way Lee
Members of the Committee

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE TO STUDY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TENURED FACULTY

Preface:

The Committee was convened on May 24, 2000, and met 7 times between August, 2000, and May, 2001. The Committee consisted of the following members:

For the Administration:

Harvey Kahalas, Dean, School of Business Administration

Phyllis Vroom, Interim Dean, School of Social Work

Paula Wood, Dean, College of Education and Interim Dean, College of Life Long Learning

For the AAUP-AFT:

Virginia Rice, Professor, College of Nursing

Mary C. Sengstock, Professor, Sociology, College of Liberal Arts (Committee Chair)

Seymour Wolfson, Associate Professor, Computer Science, College of Science

The Committee examined the literature on post-tenure development (see bibliography), as well as the workload policies of the Colleges of Business Administration, Engineering, Nursing, Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, and Social Work. The Committee also examined professional development programs for tenured faculty in the Colleges of Business Administration, Education, Liberal Arts, and Social Work. The Committee made particular use of the plans developed by the Colleges of Business Administration, Liberal Arts, and Social Work. The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to all those who provided data for our use.

Preamble:

Faculty development is a joint administrative and faculty responsibility, and should be actively supported throughout the many stages of a faculty member's career. Each school, college, and department should have in place a plan which meets the needs of faculty members in these various stages. These plans should provide for the development of teaching skills, research skills, and appropriate service activities. Faculty and administration have a special responsibility to ensure that teaching delivered to our students is of high caliber. As a research institution, assurance that our faculty maintain their research skills is equally important. Service activities should enrich the community and add to the research and teaching of the faculty member.

To this end, the Committee emphasizes that the colleges and departments should develop a comprehensive plan which includes both preventive and developmental strategies, and which begins prior to the awarding of tenure. Professional development should begin as soon as the faculty member joins the University. New faculty members require early and on-going mentoring to hone their skills in all areas of a faculty member's responsibilities. Required annual reviews during this period should be rigorous in order to prevent renewal of contracts for poor teachers and scholars.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR TENURED FACULTY

The focus of the present report, however, is on the on-going development activities necessary to promote teaching excellence and scholarly productivity for *senior* faculty members. This would include activities which might stimulate the development of new teaching skills, research foci, or service activities that benefit the community, profession, the school or college, the university, as well as the individual faculty member. In particular, we focus on career stimulation in the areas of teaching and research. It should be recognized that there are a number of reasons why a faculty member may require career stimulation in the post-tenure period. These may include administrative assignments, work with other constituent groups, changes in the field, and so on. Consequently, the University needs to provide some form of specialized support to enhance productivity in this period.

Teaching:

The routine monitoring of teaching effectiveness, with immediate intervention whenever necessary, is an important function of each college and department. Teaching portfolios and student evaluation of teaching scores are important mechanisms for this purpose. Departments and colleges could also consider developing peer review teams to visit each other's classes to observe and make suggestions.

Several colleges have developed creative mechanisms for stimulating teaching improvement. Among these are the following:

Teaching Portfolios and the diagnostic sections of the Student Evaluation of Teaching forms should be used as a mechanism to encourage faculty members to review and evaluate their teaching approaches and goals and to consider ways in which they might improve their teaching effectiveness. Faculty members with low teaching evaluation scores should be encouraged to meet with the department chair or other

appropriate curricular leader, to review their teaching practices: Course design, learning activities, instructional style, and associated materials, to illuminate any problems and enhance teaching effectiveness.

Graduate Teaching Assistant support should be available for faculty members seeking to develop new courses, new approaches, or otherwise improve their teaching. Faculty members should be encouraged to work with the Office of Teaching Learning (OTL), which should be seen as a resource rather than a threat.

Use of a "Master Teacher" -- faculty members known for their teaching effectiveness and well respected by their colleagues can serve as mentors for their fellow faculty members to encourage the honing of teaching skills and the development of new techniques. In some colleges, these "master teachers" have been retired faculty members; this has the added advantage of increased confidentiality since they are not in current competition with their colleagues.

Research:

There are a number of mechanisms which colleges could use to stimulate research. Some of these are already in use in the various colleges at Wayne State University. They include:

Graduate Research Assistant support should be available to assist faculty members in developing new research initiatives, manuscript or grant preparation, etc.

Grant preparation and submission could be encouraged by allowing greater opportunity and flexibility for faculty members to buy-off their time once a grant has been received. In order to encourage faculty members to develop manuscripts and grant proposals, editorial assistance for the development of manuscripts and grant proposals can be helpful. This allows faculty members the opportunity to concentrate their efforts on the substantive areas of their fields, rather than the procedural and formal aspects of manuscript or proposal preparation. One innovative approach focuses upon the creation of research teams. These groups allow for unique ideas from different individuals to be melded together to form an innovative concept as well as a device designed to provide individualized support for the members of the team as they explore a research concept. Establishing research clusters among faculty members, both on campus, and with faculty members in other institutions, would encourage faculty members to develop new research interests and liaisons. Workload credit could be used on a selective basis for a variety of research related activities, such as manuscript or grant preparation, group research projects,

directed studies, etc., which are linked to the faculty member's research activities. Workload credit could also be used on a selective basis to allow faculty members to take courses to stimulate the development of new areas, either for research or for teaching. It should be recognized that research stimulation presents particular problems in certain areas. In the laboratory sciences, for example, new research initiatives may be impossible without the purchase of new equipment. In others, data transcription or coding may be essential. Cash awards which can be used for such research related activities are important research stimulants in these areas.

Mentoring for Senior Faculty Members:

Implicit in many of the suggestions presented above is the importance of providing mentoring for faculty members in the area of research and/or teaching. Most faculty members are desirous of performing well in these critical areas. Unfortunately, it is often assumed that mentoring ends with the achievement of tenure. However, persons in all fields need to refresh their skills as they move throughout their careers, and may require advice and assistance in doing so. Hence mentoring is essential not only at the early stages of a faculty member's career. It is equally useful at later stages. Allowing senior faculty members in departments or colleges to provide support to other faculty members, both at the junior and senior levels, is probably the best and the least confrontational way of gaining faculty support for this type of support initiative. In many instances, these may turn out to be mutual support and development teams. To achieve this objective, support must be available in the form of reduced teaching and/or research financial support for both the individuals needing the support and those providing the support. Only by providing some support for both parties will we be able to gain the necessary commitment to achieve the objective.

PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH AND/OR TEACHING STIMULATION RESOURCES

Program Funding:

Colleges have developed some creative mechanisms for funding these initiatives. These involve the use of endowment, overhead, or other discretionary funds available within the colleges. Cooperative funding mechanisms with the Office of the Vice President for Research may also be involved.

The mechanisms by which faculty members can apply for these various resources are varied. Among them are formal proposals, submission of an annual plan of work or set of objectives, etc.

It is critical that funding be available not only for grant stimulation but also in areas or for specific purposes not normally funded by granting agencies (such as in the humanities or for interdisciplinary research).

Evaluation of Program Effectiveness:

Colleges or departments which choose to develop research or teaching stimulation plans should also take care to measure the effectiveness of the programs. Several measures might be suggested, including: Faculty members receiving special research or teaching resources may submit written reports of their activities. Results of a project can be presented in faculty seminars. Increases in the quantity and quality of research/scholarship can be evaluated by monitoring the number of refereed publications and the amount of external grants received by the faculty members.

Earmarking Funds for Post-Tenure Productivity Assistance:

The committee was concerned about the relatively small resources that are likely to be available to assist senior faculty members in generating new research programs, revitalizing their teaching, or otherwise improving their productivity. In the past, it is sometimes the case that any resources for research and/or teaching tend to be earmarked either for faculty members who have already well-established research and teaching plans; for young faculty members, for whom departments and colleges have a legitimate interest in tenure preparation; or for administrators leaving administrative positions. While these are, no doubt, laudable goals, if improving the productivity of post-tenure faculty members is also a goal, then resources should be specifically earmarked for this objective.

Determining Eligibility for Post-Tenure Productivity Assistance:

To this end, the Committee recommends that the availability of post-tenure productivity resources in a college or department be made widely known to faculty members, and that faculty members be encouraged to make application for them. The Committee stresses that it is critical that the effectiveness of this approach is best if left voluntary. Should either application for or acceptance of these funds be seen as punitive in any way, it is likely that faculty members will be resistant to making use of them. Assistance must be offered with support and not criticism.

Once applications have been made for post-tenure productivity resources, the Committee recommends that the appropriate administrator (the Dean, or Department Chair in departmentalized colleges) work with an appropriate faculty committee to review applications for these resources. Appropriate committees would be the Promotion and Tenure Committee or Salary Committee of the department or college. Either of these are likely to have knowledge of the productivity of various members of the faculty, and will, therefore, have the resources to compare faculty proposals and determine which proposals are most appropriate for funding. Finally, the Committee believes there should be alternatives available for those individuals who, for whatever reason, opt not to participate in enhanced development opportunities. In particular, the University should develop more attractive buy-out packages for faculty members to encourage consideration of early retirement. The current situation at the University in this regard is inadequate and erratic, changing from year to year, and not allowing faculty members to plan effectively. A more effective early retirement plan is an important component of a program to resolve concerns related to senior faculty members who have lost their interest in or ability to be productive scholars and excellent teachers.

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APPENDIX: COPY OF LETTER CREATING THE COMMITTEE

[Not included]