

1978

Board of Trustees Tenure Committee March 22, 1978

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 22, 1978
Orono, Maine

TENURE COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Chairman John Donovan, Bernard Carpenter, Patricia DiMatteo, Stanley Evans, Susan Kominsky, Robert Masterton, Sawin Millett, Thomas Monaghan, James Page, Ellen Platz, Elizabeth Russell, Artemus Weatherbee.
Staff: Chancellor McCarthy, Robert Binswanger, William Sullivan and Summer Bernstein.

Chairman Monaghan convened the meeting. On motion made and seconded, it was voted to move to executive session for discussion of personnel matters.

Honorary Degree Nomination. There was discussion of a recommendation for conferral of a Doctor of Laws on Dr. Victor McKusick at the May Commencement of the University of Maine at Portland-Gorham. There being no objection, the item was referred to the regular session where action would be taken without specification of the candidate's name.

Tenure Nominations. Dr. Binswanger reviewed the procedures for processing nominations for tenure and the guidelines which have been established to structure the process. After some preliminary discussion, Trustees expressed a preference for further discussion of policy questions and process rather than detailed examination of individual nominees. Dr. Binswanger indicated that the staff would be interested in Trustee discussion of policy issues in general, and in Board guidance for future tenure presentations. A summary of the discussion on tenure issues is outlined below:

1. In response to questions concerning the guidelines for awarding tenure, Dr. Binswanger elaborated on the provision for deferring consideration of tenure until candidates have completed six years' service, and on the practice of awarding credit, in some cases, for previous service elsewhere.
2. A question was raised about the type of contract given at the end of six years to those who would not be granted tenure. It was suggested that the Board might want to insure uniform treatment of such individuals within the system.
3. There was extensive discussion of the percent of tenured faculty with respect to existing levels, probable future levels, whether limitations should or could be established at some level, and the implications for the future of a heavily tenured faculty in a system where mandatory retirement is prohibited. For next time, more information was requested on the percent of tenured faculty within departments. It was suggested it would be appropriate for the Board to ask why some departments are more rigorous than others.
4. There was discussion of the problems with the seven year up or out rule and of the need to develop alternatives to the life-time tenure track such as multi-year or long-term renewable contract options. For future presentations the staff will try to provide more data on nominations denied or deferred after formal consideration.

5. Trustees indicated it would be helpful to have more information about the scope, frequency and effectiveness of student evaluations. Concerning the weight accorded student evaluations, it was suggested that these should be available as an important component of the process, but should not be relied on as the only measure of evaluation.
6. In response to questions about performance evaluation of tenured faculty, Dr. Binswanger indicated that the Board has asked for such review informally but there is no policy for continuing evaluation. There was discussion of the need for development of clear standards and specific criteria for review which would be undertaken annually and placed on file.
7. The staff was commended for development of an orderly process and documentation system for review of tenure nominations and there was consensus that for future presentations the Trustees prefer to address the broader policy questions and insure that procedures are observed, as opposed to detailed review of individual nominees.

Following the general discussion period, each Campus President was invited into the meeting individually to present the tenure nominations for the campus. During the presentations the Presidents responded to questions from the Trustees concerning campus procedures and guidelines for screening nominations, and were requested to discuss the local campus situation with respect to percent of tenured faculty, nominations deferred or denied, impact of student evaluations and recommendations for alternatives to the lifetime tenure option.

President Olsen was asked to elaborate on a specific recommendation from his campus for awarding tenure as Associate Professor of History to an individual whose education and experience were primarily in the field of Theater. After discussion the Trustees concurred that the nomination of Nicholas J. G. Scott should be revised to stipulate tenure as Associate Professor of Theater.

When the Presidents' presentations were completed, it was agreed to forward the nominations as submitted and revised to the public meeting of the full Board for action.

Nominating Committee. Mr. Page reminded the Trustees that the By-Laws call for appointment of a nominating committee by April in order to have a slate of officers for presentation at the annual meeting and he suggested names for the committee. At the request of Mr. Monaghan the matter was referred to the Executive Committee for action in accordance with the By-Laws of the Board.

Legal Matters. Mr. Bernstein presented a brief summary of the status of suits pending against the University.

Adjournment.

JoAnne R. Magill

JoAnne R. Magill
Clerk of the Board