

1979

Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole March 28, 1979

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Meet with PK, Chancellor Page and Comm. Gervais RE: Marine Bond

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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March 28, 1979
Portland, Maine

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

PRESENT: Francis Brown, Bernard Carpenter, Patricia DiMatteo, John Donovan, Alan Elkins, Stanley Evans, Joseph Hakanson, Sawin Millett, Thomas Monaghan, Ellen Platz, Elizabeth Russell and Artemus Weatherbee.
Staff: Chancellor McCarthy, Robert Binswanger, William Sullivan, Samuel D'Amico and Sumner Bernstein. Press and public.

Dr. Donovan convened the meeting and served as Chairman. He opened the floor for discussion of the philosophy of tenure and related issues, in general, and indicated that the Presidents would present individual nominations for consideration later in the session. There was extensive discussion of tenure issues which focussed primarily on tenure ratios and the relationship of tenure and collective bargaining. For continuity, the major discussion points are summarized below:

Tenure Ratios. Trustees were deeply concerned about the ratio of tenured to non-tenured faculty which exceeds 65% at the larger campuses. In response to questions, Dr. Binswanger indicated that in fact there has been a tightening of evaluation procedures especially over the past five years, which has resulted in a screening out of unacceptable candidates at the campus level, and a greater turnover of new faculty in the first and second year of employment. He reported that there is no Board-level policy which limits percentage of tenured faculty by department and there may be some campus departments which are fully tenured, especially at the smaller campuses. He indicated that in terms of planning, the tenure track was tied to retirement ages on each campus and the statutory repeal of mandatory retirement will impact on tenure levels. There was discussion of the possibility of establishing a system-wide limit for a maximum percentage of tenured faculty. There was consensus that the Board should indicate to campus administrators that tenure levels are approaching the acceptable maximum and that Board guidelines for awarding tenure must be rigorously enforced.

Tenure and Collective Bargaining. Some Trustees had reservations about the justification for retaining a tenure system now that the University is subject to collective bargaining. Dr. Russell observed that elsewhere there have been strong moves toward contractual arrangements rather than lifetime tenure. Mr. D'Amico pointed out that the union representing University faculty is not contesting the Board's right to award tenure although it could become a bargainable issue at some stage. In response to questions, Mr. Bernstein indicated it might be possible to bargain away existing tenure agreements but the question would probably become a sharply contested legal issue. Mr. D'Amico reported that elsewhere only three institutions out of three hundred have tampered with the tenure system. Questions were raised about the possibility of modifying the tenure system to attract faculty concerned for scholarship rather than job security. Several Trustees spoke to the importance of tenure in attracting and retaining high quality faculty, indicating it would be inadvisable to dismantle the tenure system prematurely. Other Trustees were concerned that a tenure system along with collective bargaining constituted a doubling of job security for faculty.

After the general discussion period, the Committee VOTED to adjourn to executive session to discuss the individual nominations for tenure.

After the executive session, the meeting was adjourned.

JoAnne R. Magill, Clerk

JoAnne R. Magill