A comparison of the document on Rank and Promotion Requirements (9-18-81) with Senate Document EC 002.1A Rank and Promotion Requirements (3-5-81), with Background Information and a Recommendation.

From: Faculty Status and Welfare Committee

Background

The Faculty Senate at the request of the administration began work on a Rank and Promotion document in Spring, 1978. A procedures document which supported the philosophy and college criteria and guidelines was passed by the Senate on December 14, 1978. A complete Rank and Promotion document, FSW 001.3 Rank and Promotion Policy: Criteria, Guidelines, and Procedures, was passed on April 10, 1980 and forwarded to the administration.

During the Spring, 1981 semester, Dr. Zacharias presented the Senate with a Rank and Promotion document (1-26-81), written by Vice-President Davis and the Council of Deans and asked the Senate to review it and make suggestions. This resulted in the production of a second complete document, EC 002.1A Rank and Promotion Requirements, passed by the Senate on March 5, 1981. The Executive Committee in a two-hour session discussed this document with President Zacharias and Vice-President Davis on April 10, 1981.

The Executive Committee on September 30, 1981 received a document, Rank and Promotion Requirements (9-18-81), written by President Zacharias.

Comparisons

The following is a comparison of differences between the promotion document due to be presented to the regents on October 27 (hereinafter designated RPR) and the most recent rank and promotion document, EC 002.1A 3-5-81, passed by the Senate in May, 1981 (hereinafter designated FS).

I. Rank and Promotion

A. General Principles

2. RPR: Each dean of an academic unit has the responsibility, in consultation with the faculty and other administrators within the unit, of developing specific criteria for determining what constitutes "demonstrated achievement" for each rank. These criteria must conform to minimum university standards and must be distributed to each faculty member. Guidelines for all ranks must be recommended by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President and approved by the Board of Regents.
FS: It shall be the responsibility of the departmental faculty to develop and maintain up-to-date, written criteria and guidelines to specify levels of achievement appropriate for each rank. These criteria and guidelines must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the departmental faculty.

It shall be the responsibility of each college to form a committee, consisting of one professor elected from each department, which will regularly review departmental criteria and guidelines for promotion in order to ensure some reasonable degree of (1) equal opportunity and (2) equal quality of achievement for faculty members in all departments within the college. This committee will report its findings both to departments which seem to be out of line with the rest of the college and to the dean of the college.

Comment: RPR contains no requirement for departmental faculty to specify criteria and guidelines for promotion nor any provision for departmental faculty to elect members to a college promotion committee. The only requirement is that the dean consult with the faculty in a way that is unspecified and is apparently left to the discretion of each dean.

II. Criteria for Individual Ranks

B. Associate Professor

RPR: 1. Academic qualifications: The earned doctorate or the appropriate terminal degree in the profession.

2. Experience: A minimum of five years' service at the rank of assistant professor.

3. Demonstrated achievement appropriate for this rank in teaching effectiveness, research/creative activity, and university/public service.

OR

1. Academic qualifications: Master's degree plus advanced graduate study equivalent to all courses except dissertation (ABD) in appropriate discipline.

2. Experience: A minimum of ten years' service at the rank of assistant professor.

3. Demonstrated achievement appropriate for this rank in teaching effectiveness, research/creative activity, and university/public service.
FS: 1. Academic qualifications: The earned doctorate or the appropriate terminal degree in the profession, or the master's degree plus at least thirty-six semester hours graduate work related to the faculty member's academic area.

2. Experience: A minimum of five years' service at the rank of Assistant Professor.

3. Demonstrated achievement appropriate for this rank in teaching effectiveness, research/creative activity, university/community service.

Comment: RPR no longer allows promotion to Associate with the master's degree plus thirty-six semester hours, but does permit promotion to an ABD who has had at least ten years as an assistant (instead of the five years required for a faculty member holding the doctorate or the appropriate terminal degree.)

C. Assistant Professor

1. Academic qualifications

RPR: The earned doctorate or the appropriate terminal degree in the profession, or the master's degree plus at least twenty-four semester hours' graduate work related to the faculty member's academic area.

FS: The earned doctorate or the appropriate terminal degree in the professions or the master's degree.

Comment: The RPR no longer allows promotion to assistant professor with only a master's degree. Promotion requires a master's plus at least twenty-four semester hours.

D. Instructor

Academic qualifications

RPR: Master's degree or demonstrated ability in the field in which the candidate is employed.

FS: Master's degree or the equivalent or demonstrated ability in the field in which the candidate is employed.

Comment: The RPR no longer makes provision for the equivalent of the master's degree

III. Procedures for Recommending Promotion

B. Rank and Promotion Committee
RPR: Each academic department establishes a Rank and Promotion Committee composed of all faculty members at the rank of professor who are tenured. The committee is chaired by the head of the department regardless of his or her rank or tenure status. For departments with fewer than six tenured professors, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A sufficient number of tenured associate professors is added to bring the committee to six.

2. If the number of tenured professors and associate professors is fewer than six, a sufficient number of tenured assistant professors is added to bring the committee to six. The associate and assistant professors will be selected on the basis of those with the longest employment at Western Kentucky University.

3. If a department has fewer than six tenured faculty members, the dean of the academic college will appoint a committee of three to six people from the department to carry out the review.

A committee member who is a candidate for promotion is not permitted to be present during deliberations on his or her rank. When a department head is being considered for promotion, the dean of the college will chair the committee or appoint a temporary chair.

FS: Each department of the university shall establish a Rank and Promotion Committee made up of the department members who are senior in rank to the candidate being considered for promotion. This committee shall not include the department head.

Comment: The RPR has much more detail on the make-up of this committee with a preference for major participation by tenured full professors. The RPR makes the department head the chair of the committee. The FS specifically excludes the department head from the committee.

C. Order of Recommendation

RPR: The department's Rank and Promotion Committee reviews all relevant factors and provides a report of its vote. The department head also reviews all relevant factors and forwards an individual recommendation, all evaluation materials, and a written report of the committee's vote to the college dean, who in turn forwards a recommendation and all evaluation materials to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Upon receiving all written materials and a recommendation from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President reviews the recommendation and forwards to the Board of Regents his recommendations for promotion.
FS: The department Rank and Promotion Committee will review all relevant factors and provide a written advisory opinion to the department head. The department head will review all relevant factors and forward a recommendation (along with the advisory opinion of the department Rank and Promotion Committee) to the college dean who will in turn forward his recommendation and all evaluation materials to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will review these materials and make a recommendation to the President.

Comment: The RPR provides only that the department's Rank and Promotion Committee report its vote to the department head in contrast to the FS requirement for a written advisory opinion.

D. Disapproval of Recommendation

RPR: Whenever a recommendation to promote is disapproved at any level, this fact must be reported back to the preceding levels. The department head must inform the faculty member in writing that disapproval has occurred. Any related appeal through administrative channels or the University Grievance Committee must be initiated in writing by the faculty member to the department head within thirty days after receiving notification from the department head. The purpose of the Grievance Committee is to review the file to insure that established procedures were followed in considering the faculty member for promotion. The Grievance Committee does not attempt to judge the academic qualifications or achievements or the candidate.

FS: If the faculty member is not recommended for promotion, he/she will be so advised by the administrative official making such a recommendation. Written notification of this action and supporting statements shall be forwarded to the faculty member involved and all persons previously involved in the review process.

A University Rank and Promotion Review Committee shall be selected by draw from a list of full-time professors of the faculty elected one from each department. The President shall convene the University Rank and Promotion Review Committee upon written request of the faculty member. The Committee will then collect all pertinent information, review all relevant factors, and seek to resolve the complaint. Within three weeks from the time the complaint is received by the President the University Rank and Promotion Review Committee will provide an advisory opinion to the President on the appropriateness of the decisions made. The Committee shall also forward a copy of this report to the faculty member involved and all persons previously involved in the review process.
Comment: The RPR makes no provision for a faculty member not recommended for promotion to be given supporting statements explaining the decision. The faculty member is merely informed in writing that disapproval has occurred.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The members of the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee are in agreement in feeling that there are serious deficiencies in the RPR proposal, particularly in the failure to allow departmental faculty to elect members to a college promotion committee, requiring only that a dean consult in some undefined way with his faculty. The members of the committee feel that there should be a provision which spells out a significant role for departmental faculty in establishing college criteria for what constitutes "demonstrated achievement" for each rank.

The members of the committee are deeply concerned about the failure of the RPR proposal to give a faculty member rejected for promotion any reasons for the decision, thus providing the faculty member no protection against a decision which may be totally arbitrary and no guidance as to what the member might do to remove any perceived deficiencies. Further the committee feels that it is important for the appeals process to allow consideration of substantive as well as procedural matters. The Senate has shown by its votes in the past that it considers these matters to be of great importance.

The Faculty Status and Welfare Committee, therefore, offers the following resolution:

Resolved: That for the reasons stated above the Senate go on record that it does not endorse the Rank and Promotion Requirements document of September 18, 1981 as now written and respectfully requests that the President give some reconsideration to the sections of the document that arouse its concern; and that, if he chooses to present the document as now written to the Board of Regents, he communicate to them the fact that the Senate has withheld its endorsement.