

Guidelines on Tenure and Teaching in The University of North Carolina

I. Introduction

At the November 1992 meeting of the Board of Governors, questions were raised about the procedures and criteria for the awarding of tenure and about the evaluation, recognition, and reward of teaching, particularly in tenure decisions. The chairman of the board referred the questions and concerns to two standing committees, the Committee on Personnel and Tenure and the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs. The report entitled *Tenure and Teaching in the University of North Carolina*, adopted by the board on September 10, 1993, distilled what was learned by the committees and recommended additional steps to encourage good teaching within the university and to see that the quality of teaching continues to be a prime consideration in tenure decisions.

In its report, the board reaffirmed the concept of tenure. The central question that led to the review was whether sufficient consideration is given to the quality of teaching when tenure decisions are made. The board recognized that the relative importance given to the three major functions of teaching, research, and public service varies at specific institutions depending upon their respective missions. Nevertheless, the report confirms that, regardless of classification, "each institution should view teaching as a core requirement. The board states in its long-range plan that teaching or instruction is the primary responsibility of each of the UNC institutions. Thus while neither teaching nor service nor research is the sole measure of a faculty member's competence and contribution at any UNC institution, teaching should be the first consideration at all of the UNC institutions."

II. Recommendations

This policy lists the recommendations adopted by the Board of Governors and provides instructions to be followed by the constituent institution in complying with them.

1. *That the Board of Governors, through the President of the University, instruct the Chancellors of each constituent institution to do the following:*

- a. Review institutional mission statements, tenure policies, and the criteria for making faculty personnel decisions and, where necessary, to revise them so as to give explicit recognition to the primary importance of teaching in the University.
- b. Revise institutional policies and procedures, as necessary, to require (1) that clear and specific statements of criteria for evaluation of faculty performance at every level (institution, college/school, department) are provided in writing and discussed with each probationary faculty member before initial employment and at the beginning of the first term of employment and with each candidate being reviewed for reappointment or tenure at the beginning of the year in which the review is scheduled to be made, and (2) that a record of these discussions be kept in the individual's personnel file;
- c. Review procedures for the evaluation of faculty performance to ensure (1) that student evaluations and formal methods of peer review are included in teaching evaluation procedures, (2) that student evaluations are conducted at regular intervals (at least one semester each year) and on an ongoing basis, (3) that peer review of faculty includes direct observation of the classroom teaching of new and non-tenured faculty and of graduate teaching assistants, and (4) that appropriate and timely feedback from evaluations of performance is provided to those persons being reviewed.

Any proposed revision to institutional mission statements necessitated by the review referenced in Recommendation 1.a. should be submitted to the president by January 21, 1994, so that they can be acted upon prior to adoption of the revised long-range plan. A full report on actions taken in response to Recommendation 1 with respect to criteria for faculty personnel decisions and policies and procedures for evaluation of faculty teaching performance at both the undergraduate and graduate levels should be sent to General Administration by April 4, 1994.

Proposed changes to tenure policies and regulations, which require the approval of the president and the board, should be separately identified in the report.

2. That the President of the University be asked to report on these reviews to the Board of Governors by July 1, 1994.

3. That the Board of Governors, through the President of the University, call upon the chancellors of institutions which do not now have awards for outstanding teaching to establish such awards either campus-wide or at the college/school level.

Institutions that do not now have awards for outstanding teaching should submit a report on the actions taken in response to Recommendation 3 by April 4, 1994.

4. That the Board of Governors create annual system-wide teaching awards with monetary stipends which are designated "Board of Governors' Awards for Excellence in Teaching." (The Chairman of the Board of Governors should name an ad hoc committee to work out the details and present recommendations concerning implementation of this proposal.)

Chairman Poole has appointed an *ad hoc* committee to work out the details to implement the awards. Institutions are invited to submit recommendations or suggestions by December 1, 1993, for the consideration of this committee.

5. That the Board of Governors seek appropriations for each campus in biennial budget requests to establish or to strengthen centers and activities designed to encourage and support teaching excellence and to improve teaching effectiveness throughout the University.

The report recognized the special efforts of many institutions to emphasize professional development activities intended to have a direct and positive impact on teaching. But it also acknowledged that greater efforts need to be made in this regard at a number of campuses, especially those with limited resources available for such initiatives. Despite financial strains, it declared that "each institution should allocate a portion of its budget for faculty development and target a specific part of that for the development of teachers and teaching." It is the board's clear expectation that an institution which does not have a special center for teaching and learning should plan to create such a center as soon as possible. The report also urged institutions to provide tangible incentives and encouragement for tenured and non-tenured faculty and graduate teaching assistants to take advantage of these professional development opportunities. In addition, Recommendation 5 commits the board to seek appropriations in biennial budget requests to give greater support to centers and activities designed to encourage and support teaching excellence.

6. That greater efforts be made to develop and strengthen the teaching skills of graduate students, and that the Board of Governors ask the President to prepare, in consultation with the University-wide Graduate Council, a report with specific guidelines and recommendations for the training, monitoring, and evaluation of graduate students who teach courses in UNC institutions.

A committee from the University-wide Graduate Council is addressing this recommendation and should report to General Administration by February 1, 1994. Thereafter, the council's proposals will be shared with constituent institutions for their reactions and comments.

[This is a rewrite of Administrative Memorandum #338.]