

TO: Vijay Nair, President, University Senate
FROM: Study Committee on Academic Freedom, Tenure and Promotion:
Ed Hagan, Paula Maida, Averell Manes (Chair), Oluwole Owoye, , Burton Peretti, Steve
Ward, and Terry Wells
DATE: 5 March 2004
RE: Request for discussion by the University Senate

RATIONALE:

- The current promotion and tenure process, and standards for academic freedom, at Western Connecticut State University have been in place in their current form since the late 1980s.
- Recent retirements by numerous faculty and Dr. James Roach, and the resultant new personnel joining the WCSU community provide an opportunity for discussion of the established procedures and standards associated with promotion, tenure, and academic freedom.
- Two forums sponsored by the WCSU Chapter of the AAUP during the fall 2003 semester, and numerous informal discussions around campus prompted the formation of a group of concerned faculty, as an ad hoc Study Committee on Academic Freedom, Tenure and Promotion, to address concerns that go beyond the purview of the Promotion and Tenure Committee.
- After an information gathering phase, during which the procedures and standards of other institutions were reviewed, along with the history of procedures and standards at WCSU, and a number of meetings to discuss these findings, the Study Committee on Academic Freedom, Tenure and Promotion would like to propose several issues for discussion and clarification to the University Senate.

ISSUES PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION:

- Overall, we propose expansion and clarification of policies for promotion and tenure, 193A and 14 of the Faculty Handbook, and that the Promotion and Tenure Committee review and revise their by-laws accordingly.
- Clarification of definitions of Creative Activity, within and across disciplines and schools
- Clarification of definitions of Professional Activity, within and across disciplines and schools
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- Value of student opinion survey standards and format as viewed by the Promotion and Tenure Committee
- Development of teaching portfolio practices, in alignment with the WCSU's mission as a teaching-focused institution
- Mentoring for candidates and Department Evaluation Committees (DECs) by the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the academic community of WCSU
- Optional presence of a DEC member present during Promotion and Tenure Committee presentation of a candidate's file, to provide clarification and address questions and concerns
- Review of Southern Connecticut State University's promotion and tenure system, for possible adoption, which provides feedback to promotion and tenure candidates (Please see attached.)
- Discussion and clarification of the promotion categories of "not recommended," "recommended," "highly recommended," and "unanimously highly recommended"
- Discussion and clarification of the criteria for the ranks of "Instructor," "Assistant Professor," "Associate Professor," and "Full Professor"
- The perception that the requirements for tenure and promotion have changed (particularly with regard to research and publication) without a university-wide discussion on the matter

PROPOSED MINOR STRUCTURAL CHANGES:

- Term limits for members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, to encourage broader membership
- Rotation of Promotion and Tenure Committee meeting times, to encourage broader membership