

Kampus Koncern

by joel hansen

Tattling on Tenure

The Cadre has written critiques of the Tenure system before; yet most students do not know the nature of how a professor receives tenure! I will attempt, in this essay, to alleviate this lack of information, pronto.

To begin, some quotes from the Senate tenure document: (1972)

from pg. 12 -

A) DEFINITION:

"Tenure" means appointment without term, the right of a faculty member not to be dismissed except for cause. Appointment without term includes the right during the appointment to fair consideration for increases of responsibility and salary, and promotion in rank."

B) CRITERIA:

"The criteria to which particular consideration shall be given in deciding whether to grant tenure are the following:

- 1). The candidate's professional competence and promise as manifested by his/her teaching performance, research and other creative activities, publications and continuing productivity.
- 2). Evidence of appropriate response to the reasonable expectations of the candidate's department and faculty, and this University with respect to administrative and committee work.
- 3). The foreseeable continuing academic needs of the candidate's department and faculty, and this University.

Tenure will not normally be granted to a candidate who has not met the criteria for the rank of assistant professor."

Most professors must apply for tenure after being on staff for four years. I say most because it is written into the Senate document that the President may recommend to the Board of Governors, by-passing the tenure committee, the appointment of tenure to a person who is being hired as an associate professor or full professor. Exceptional faculty members show outstanding performance in all facets of university life may be granted tenure before the expiration of the initial four year period. (Sessional lecturers are not eligible for tenure.)

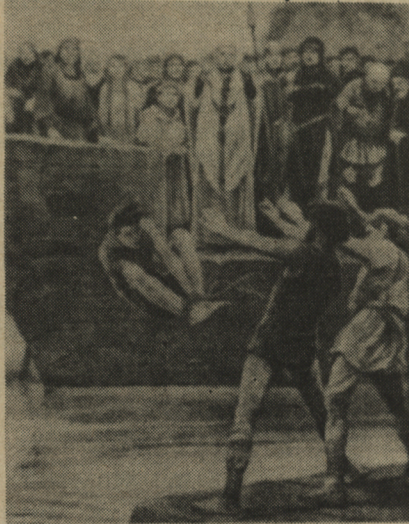
The tenure committee con-

sists of:

Three Deans (ex officio) one student representative, one representative from each faculty and two untenured faculty representatives. The terms of office with the exception of the Deans who are on the Senate tenure committee ex officio shall be two years, renewable by Senate at the end of a term.

In order to see the system in operation, let us posit an imaginary faculty member, say Sam Slick, who has been here for four years. Unless Sam Slick writes for a one year deferral of consideration, the Chairman of his department automatically begins his file of application for tenure.

(Note: any faculty member may ask for a deferral of one year; however, at the end of the year of grace extended the faculty mem-



Ancient tenure ritual shows professor being assessed: If he sinks, he is granted tenure, but if he floats he is a heretic and denied tenure.

ber must apply for tenure.)

The Chairman of the dept. then asks for a vote from the members of Samy's department (faculty) on whether Samy is competent enough in their view to be given tenure. The vote is carried out by secret ballot. The results of this vote are then recorded in Slick's file.

The Chairman then seeks from Mr. Slick whatever basic documentation he wishes to present in support of his application. This is done in the form of a written submission from Sam Slick.

Student evaluation is also considered and recorded on his file. The evaluation is usually carried out via the forms Senate has deemed official. These forms are given to the students who are studying under Samy's academic (inward?) eye, who then fill the forms out and return them to Samy who forwards them to the Chairman of the department. The

forms are then put in Sam's application file.

The Chairman prepares a summary of Sam's scholarly activities (soliciting expert advice where necessary) and inserts the summary into his file.

After all of this information is gathered, it is put in an orderly form, and presented to the Dean of Sam's faculty. The Dean informs Sam if the Chairman of his department has supported or opposed his election to tenure. If the chairman has opposed his election, Sam Slick can appeal the Chairman's resolution to an appeals committee. (the file is then reviewed by this committee and recommendations are made). If the chairman has supported Slick's application, it is forwarded to the Chairman of the Senate Tenure Committee.

The Senate Tenure Committee will meet each year between September 15th and October 7th to consider all applications for that academic year. This year Sam Slick is applying, therefore, the committee shall decide by vote, whether to grant him tenure.

If Sam is refused tenure by the committee, he may ask for a special session with the committee to re-examine his application. After the re-examination is executed a new vote is held on the granting of tenure to Samy. After this, his application is forwarded to the President.

The President will make his recommendations in writing to the Board of Governors, a copy of which Sam will receive.

The Board of Governors then notifies Sam Slick, in writing, of its decision.

(In this case Sam Slick was granted tenure - pretty slick - eh?)

Now that I have made known the system of tenure, granting at this university let us take a closer, more critical look at its operation.

In preparing for this article, I talked to Cecil Bradley, the student representative on the tenure committee. Bradley expressed some pessimism as to the maintenance of a meaningful tenure system at U.P.E.I.; his reason, tenure is granted too easily. He claims that the criteria handed down by Senate to the committee, mentioned aforesaid, are too vague for correct and meaningful granting of tenure. "Basically if a professor is a nice guy, hasn't caused any trouble at the University, and possesses some minimal

con't on pg.4