

# AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

## WARTBURG COLLEGE

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12 February 2008

Jack R. Ohle, President  
Wartburg College  
100 Wartburg Blvd.  
Waverly, IA 50677

Dear President Ohle:

The primary responsibility of the Wartburg chapter of the American Association of University Professors is to work for the adoption and implementation of Association-supported standards on our own campus.

Several of the AAUP's recommended standards relate to faculty participation in the evaluation of administrators. Based on the concept of shared governance (as delineated in the 1966 *Statement of Government of Colleges and Universities*), these standards have found their fullest expression in two documents: the 1981 statement on *Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Administrators* (enclosed) and the very recent *Faculty Evaluation of Administrators* (enclosed).

I am writing on behalf of the chapter to commend both these documents to your attention and to encourage you to follow their recommendations in the next faculty evaluation of the vice president of academic affairs.

To our knowledge, the last time the faculty participated in a review of the current VPAA was eight years ago, in the summer of 2000. The minutes of the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee, however, record that the committee has been working on an evaluation form for a VPAA evaluation since at least the fall of 2004 and that last academic year the committee finalized that form and asked you three times to distribute it. We therefore expect that a faculty review of the VPAA's performance will occur soon. Any further delay would surely raise questions.

When the review is conducted, we hope that the following basic principles will be observed (quoted from *Faculty Evaluation of Administrators*):

- The review should provide both for the orderly transmission of faculty concerns and for the fair and equitable treatment of the administrator equivalent to what we expect in the case of faculty members.
- The process should be so designed that members of the faculty have reason to believe that their participation in the review has been meaningfully weighed in the outcome.
- The review should, as far as possible, be constructive and provide the supervising administrator with adequate grounds for reaching an informed appraisal.

- The consequences flowing from such a report should be understood by all parties and should allow for further exchange and feedback as the review may require for ensuring administrative effectiveness and responsiveness to the faculty voice.

We also hope that you will take into account these three practical recommendations derived from the same report:

- As has been custom here for at least the last twenty years, the review should be entrusted to ART as “a body . . . perceived as credible and fair (neither rubber-stamping a preconceived outcome nor acting vindictively in its pursuit of an unpopular administrator) and able to protect confidentiality as much as is required during the process while being as open and honest as possible.”
- The evaluation should ensure “a wide spectrum of faculty participation” by giving *all* faculty the opportunity to fill out a questionnaire, in this case the one developed by ART.
- Some sort of report of the evaluation should be issued. As the authors of *Faculty Evaluation of Administrators* point out, “when the faculty is not provided with a report following a review, there is likely to be pervasive suspicion that its role in the process has not been important. This does not mean that all faculty members necessarily have the right to the ‘raw’ report in its entirety, only that a trusted representative body of the faculty most directly engaged in its preparation have the opportunity to know the results.”

The recent re-accreditation report of the visiting team of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association praised the college for its efforts in the area of assessment, for achieving what North Central calls “a culture of assessment.” No campus constituency is as familiar with assessment as faculty, who not only perform much of it, but who are evaluated in turn by students, by peers, and by administrators. Given this culture of assessment and the faculty’s expertise in evaluation, it seems most fitting that faculty should be widely and deeply involved in the implementation of the next assessment of the performance of the VPAA.

On behalf of the chapter, I would be pleased to discuss this matter with you further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Warren T. Zemke, President  
Wartburg AAUP

Enclosures

cc: Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee  
Faculty Council  
Wartburg AAUP