

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

WARTBURG COLLEGE

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1 November 2010

Dr. Darrel D. Colson, President
Wartburg College
Waverly, IA

Dear President Colson:

A key responsibility of the Wartburg chapter of the AAUP is to work for the adoption and implementation of Association-supported standards on our own campus. Several of AAUP's recommended standards relate to faculty participation in the evaluation of administrators. These standards have their fullest expression in two documents: the 1981 statement on *Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Administrators* and the recent *Faculty Evaluation of Administrators*, both available in the Redbook or on line [www.aaup.org; search for faculty evaluation of administrators (2006)].

We are writing on behalf of the chapter to commend both these documents to your attention and to encourage you to follow these recommendations in the next faculty evaluation of the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA). A faculty review of the VPAA performance was put on hold with the transition to a new president. We think the review is now long overdue and encourage you to conduct such a review this year.

When the review is conducted, we hope the following basic principles will be observed (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 the custom here for at least the last twenty years, the review should be entrusted to ART whose members are elected by the faculty and which is "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."

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- 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.”

Faculty members are familiar with evaluation. They not only perform significant evaluation, but are evaluated in turn by students, by peers, and by administrators. Given this culture of assessment and the faculty’s expertise in evaluation on this campus, it seems most fitting that faculty should be broadly and deeply involved in the implementation of the next evaluation of the VPAA.

Sincerely,

Warren T. Zemke, President

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Brian Jones, Secretary

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