

Professional Standards Committee Minutes
January 31, 1997

Present: Block, Breitenbach, Cooney, Goldstein, Hale, Miller, Sorensen, Taranovski

Breitenbach called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. The minutes of 10 December 1996 were approved.

Breitenbach announced that the validity of student evaluations has been proposed as an issue in the Senate. Will this come our way?

Cooney mentioned that faculty have requested access to departmental statements of evaluation criteria. The committee agreed that access is appropriate, but photocopies for individuals would be burdensome.

Cooney asked that members of PSC review a document about scientific misconduct policy that has been reviewed by Sarah Moore and Leon Grunberg. Hale and Taranovski volunteered.

New business: Conflicts of interest

Discussion was initiated by letters from two faculty members and two memos from Mace (re review of the role of the PSC by the Senate's Ad Hoc Committee). We identified three issues in which conflicts of interest might arise:

1. Tenure evaluation
2. The role of the Academic Vice President in appeals
3. Spouses/domestic partners

We agreed that the issue of conflict of interest was clear in the third case. We did not discuss the second case. Our discussion of the potential conflict of interest in tenure and promotion cases focused on whether the procedure dilutes the issue, whether there was a structural conflict of interest when two people come up for tenure/promotion together, or rather, if it is a matter of bias, which is difficult to handle through the Code. The perception by some faculty that there is a "tenure quota" needs to be addressed.

We agreed that we would continue to discuss conflict of interest in evaluation at the next meeting. Breitenbach asked us to generate specific proposals so that we can draft policy to recognize and eliminate structural conflict of interest.

Respectfully and tersely submitted,

Kathy Ann Miller