

**FACULTY GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
2008-2009**

For 2008-2009, the Faculty Grievance Committee (FGC) comprised nine individuals: Francisco Sanchez (Language, Lit, & Culture), Patrick Nolan (Sociology), Vladimir Temlyakov (Mathematics), Michael Huhns (Computer Sci., & Engineer), Larry Wyatt (Music), Ruth Riley (Medical School), Alan Decho (Environmental Health Sciences), Lowndes Stephens (Journalism), and Sadye Logan (Social Work). The FGC is to include one ex-officio member of the Provost's Salary Equity Committee. Edsel Pena (Statistics) served the committee in this capacity. Alan Decho served as chair of the committee.

The FGC received four petitions from USC faculty members. Three of those petitions concerned denial of tenure and promotion for assistant professors in their decision year. The fourth was a petition from an associate professor seeking tenure and promotion to full professor, but was denied promotion. A brief summary of these four cases follows.

(1) The first case involves an assistant professor who was denied tenure and promotion. The candidate was supported by the unit and the chair, but was not supported by the Dean and Provost. The majority of the votes by the University Committee on Tenure and Promotions (UCTP) were in support of tenure and promotion. The candidate appealed to the committee on the basis of claims of four grounds (i.e. use of impermissible criteria; denial of academic freedom; and denial of due process), as well as an inappropriate assessment (by the Dean and Provost) that the candidate's research quantity was lower than required by the unit criteria. The FGC did not see errors in the consideration of the candidate's file that materially affected the consideration of the file at later stages, and found the assessment of the candidate's research output by the Provost and UCTP to be reasonably argued. The FGC found no evidence of a valid grievance. The President agreed with this recommendation.

(2) A second case also involved an assistant professor denied tenure and promotion. The candidate was marginally supported by the unit and chair, but not by the Dean or the Provost. The majority of the votes by the UCTP were against tenure and promotion. The candidate appealed to the FGC on the basis of errors made by the Dean in the evaluation of the file, on the use of impermissible criteria, and on an inadequate consideration of the unit criteria in the evaluation of the candidate's research in the later stages of the review. The FGC did not see evidence that the Dean, the Provost, or UCTP were not applying the unit criteria in their evaluation of the candidate's research, and so found no evidence of a valid grievance. The President agreed with this recommendation.

(3) A third case also involved an assistant professor denied tenure and promotion. The candidate was supported by a majority vote of the unit. The department chair, the Dean and Provost recommended against tenure and promotion. The candidate's file was supported by a majority of the UCTP ballots. The candidate raised claims of inadequate consideration of the unit criteria in the evaluation of both the research and teaching record. The FGC did not find a valid grievance in terms of the evaluation of the candidate's research or teaching. The President agreed with this recommendation.

(4) The fourth case involved a faculty who was hired as an associate professor, and was seeking tenure and promotion to full professor. The candidate's file was strongly supported by the unit and departmental chair for both tenure and promotion. The Dean and Provost supported the candidate's tenure, but denied promotion. The UCTP strongly supported both tenure and promotion. The candidate petitioned the FGC on two grounds: the use of impermissible criteria, and inadequate consideration of unit criteria. The FGC did not find a valid grievance on the first ground. However, regarding the issue of inadequate consideration of unit criteria, the committee found there was a significant disconnect between the professional assessments of the Dean and Provost, and the assessments by the unit faculty, outside reviewers, the chair and the UCTP. After careful consideration, it was the decision of the committee that the candidate had met, and even exceeded, the criteria for promotion to full professor. After a re-examination of the file by the Dean, the candidate was recommended for promotion to full professor. The President agreed with this recommendation.

Rick Stephens will serve as Chair of the FGC for the 2009-2010 academic year. Larry Wyatt (Music), Vladimir Temlyakov (Mathematics), and Ruth Riley (Medical School) will be rotating off the committee. Patrick Nolan (Sociology) has been appointed as Chair of the Faculty Senate, and so will not serve his final year on FGC. New members elected to the committee to begin three-year terms next year are Alvin Fox (Medical School), Beth Bilderback (Libraries), and Franklin Berger (Biological Sciences).

Alan W. Decho,
Chair, Faculty Grievance Committee
14 August 2009