

TITLE: Academic Freedom Committee

AUTHOR: Chief Academic Officer

APPROVAL DATE: November 28, 2005

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 28, 2005

PURPOSE: To define the functions of the Academic Freedom Committee

REVIEWER AND REVIEW DATE: Chief Academic Officer
Fall 2006 and every five years thereafter

OPERATING DETAILS:

1. The Academic Freedom Committee functions to resolve differences between the University Administration and aggrieved faculty members.
2. The Committee, upon request, will review charges against faculty members who are dismissed or terminated for cause, denied promotion or tenure, denied a raise in salary, or otherwise discriminated against, when academic freedom may be at issue. It is the committee's responsibility to determine whether the faculty member's academic freedom has been violated according to the university's academic freedom policy and whether the faculty member has fulfilled the responsibilities of his or her position. In cases of misconduct in research, it is the committee's responsibility to determine whether a violation of MUW's policy statement 1311 has occurred and to recommend appropriate action, depending on the nature of the misconduct.
3. Membership on the committee shall consist of two tenured faculty members from each College. Representatives from a College must be from different departments within the College. The committee will elect a new chairperson for each case.
4. The committee meets at the request of the Chief Academic Officer, when a written request is submitted by an aggrieved faculty member or when a case is referred by the Faculty Appeals Committee or Faculty Research Committee.
5. The Chief Academic Officer will prepare a statement of charges and deliver it to the faculty member concerned at least one month before the date set for the hearing. At the hearing, faculty members shall have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense, and they shall be permitted to have an advisor of their own choosing who may act as counsel. The faculty member and chosen

counsel shall have the right to question witnesses, and to produce depositions from witnesses unable to be present. If the faculty member so desires, a full stenographic record of the hearing shall be made available without cost. If there are charges of incompetence or failure to maintain professional standards of conduct, the testimony shall include that of teachers and other scholars. Such hearings are not open to the public, but observers from professional organizations shall be allowed to be present at the request of any of the parties concerned.

6. Following the hearing, the Academic Freedom Committee will make its recommendation for action in the case to the Chief Academic Officer, basing the recommendation upon substantial evidence presented in the hearing, and will present to the Chief Academic Officer and the faculty member concerned a copy of its record of the hearing. The Chief Academic Officer shall forward the recommendation to the President.
7. If the President does not concur in the recommendation of the Academic Freedom Committee, the Committee will be presented with a written explanation of the grounds for disagreement. The Committee shall respond to this explanation in the form of a new written recommendation. Additional hearings may be conducted at the discretion of the Committee or at the request of the President. A copy of this recommendation and a record of any additional hearings shall be forwarded to the faculty member concerned.
8. After a second review, the President will take action as deemed necessary in the best interests of the University. If this action includes termination or dismissal of the faculty member, this recommendation shall be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning, together with the original recommendation of the appropriate individual and/or committee, the recommendation of the Academic Freedom Committee, and such other documents as may be deemed pertinent, including the President's final statement to the Academic Freedom Committee and its response.