

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prof. R. Miller, President, Faculty Senate
Prof. M. Berbrier, President-Elect, Faculty Senate

Cc: Dr. R. Altenkirch, President
Dr. B. Wren, Associate Provost

FROM: Vistasp M. Karbhari, Provost and Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs

REF: Senate Resolution 12/13-05

DATE: May 22, 2013



I have reviewed Senate Resolution 12/13-05 and discussed it at length with the Academic Deans, the Associate Provost, the President, and Campus Counsel. I am unable to approve the resolution in its current form.

The consideration of personnel matters such as tenure and promotion are among the most important responsibilities that we have as faculty to our colleagues. In fact the basis of our rank and performance evaluation system depends on the integrity of the faculty who serve on such committees. By its very nature it is possible that a committee does not agree on all aspects under consideration, and the general expectation has always been that the committee report would be unbiased and would address both the positive and negative aspects related to the candidate under consideration. While it is definitely an option for a subset of the committee to submit a minority report this is by no means a necessity, and forcing a committee to do so would often, if not always, remove the balanced perspective that is essential for such reports to be of value. Our handbook in fact leaves the option open without requiring it, presumably for that purpose.

Given that the general expectation is that a report would represent the combined, although not necessarily a unanimous, opinion of the members of the committee it would be inappropriate to require members to identify themselves as agreeing or disagreeing with the report through both the requirement of a minority report and of separate signatures identifying their association. Our committees work well because of the anonymity that is assured through the group and requiring separate signatures effectively destroys this.

I believe that we must have faith in the integrity of our colleagues and of the system.