

Memorandum



July 22, 1991

TO: EDS Faculty

FROM: Jan Blits *aw*

Attached is a copy of a memo I'm sending to the Dean, explaining why I am withdrawing my bid for promotion this year. I'm also enclosing copies of the Faculty Welfare and Privileges' recommendations to the Provost and the Provost's responses concerning the case.

In the past I have refrained from distributing such materials, but I think it is necessary to do so this time.

Memorandum



TO: Frank Murray, Dean
FROM: Jan Blits *JB*
DATE: July 22, 1991
RE: My Promotion

I write to tell you that I am withdrawing my bid for promotion to full professor. Unfortunately, the Provost's rejection of the Faculty Welfare and Privileges Committee's unanimous recommendation only adds to the likelihood that I would not receive a fair evaluation from the Department.

The Provost, in rejecting the Committee's recommendation, distorted our charges and ignored the evidence. We never said that the P & T Committee must "agree with most of the external reviews." We said, rather, that the Committee must be honest when it cites them (or any other evidence). It may not misquote, quote out of context contrary to the sense of the passage, or make it seem that a number of criticisms (four out of a total of six) came from a variety of reviews (four) when in fact they all came from just one. Our charge was that the Committee was dishonest in its use of the reviews, not that it failed to agree with eight out of nine of them.

We also never said that the Committee's failure to agree with most of the reviews "impl[ies] that [its] decisions were based on prejudice or ideological grounds." Rather, what we claimed was that the Committee (surreptitiously) rested its recommendation upon the criticisms of a single reviewer who candidly admits that his criticisms are politically based. "What ultimately gives me pause about LG's work," he says, summing up his review, "are my own social values and my views about the appropriate role of education in society." The use of such reviews is prohibited by the Faculty Handbook, which expressly requires that reviews be "disinterested" and "objective" (Chair's Supplement, B.1). The Provost's distortion trivializes our complaint. We objected to the Committee's virtually complete reliance on an admittedly political review, not to its failure to agree with anyone.

We also objected to the fact that this politically biased reviewer was suggested to the Committee by a member of the Department whom the Committee knew to have been accused by Linda of sexually harassing her. While the Provost distorts our other charges, he simply ignores this one.

The Provost's action gives licence to the Department--or an important part of it--to do anything it likes to me and then claim that it acted on its "judgment." It can be dishonest with the evidence; act on the suggestions of members of the Department who seek to harm me; rely upon reviews it knows to be grossly inaccurate, intellectually dishonest, and politically biased; accuse me of serious scholarly faults without providing a single example; and then refuse to defend its actions in an appropriate forum while maligning the Senate Committee empowered to judge it.

I know that many members of the Department want to be fair. But I also know that many, having been misled by the Committee, believe the unfounded charges that it brought against the public policy work that I did with Linda, and that a sizeable number of others are eager to harm my promotion bid, either out of pure vindictiveness or because they have a vested interest in doing so, or both. As you know, it takes only one third of the Department to block a recommendation and far less than that to kill one by severely weakening it.

In a strange example of twisted logic, the Provost assures me that I have no reason to expect unfair treatment in the Department since Linda got promoted in spite of the treatment she received from the Department. While the Provost argues that the promotion process corrects itself, he fails to mention that you (and others) strongly advised Linda not to go on after the Department's negative recommendation ("I want you to understand it is not my view that it is wise for you to complete the full promotion and tenure evaluation of your dossier this year" [memo from you to her, 1/17/90]). Moreover, he fails to mention, as well, Linda's inestimable advantage of having received a superlative recommendation from the Department just a year earlier and in her having eight glowing external reviews from eminent scholars. Without these unusual advantages, it is by no means clear that she would have been recommended by you or the Provost and have been promoted by the University.

Recent events make the Provost's assurance particularly hollow. Last year, Vic, oblivious to even the appearance of fairness, appointed a co-defendant (Bob Hampel) to chair this year's Department P & T Committee (and nominated another, David Kaplan, for the College P & T Committee), forcing me to withdraw my promotion bid. Now, this year, even before the Provost acted, Vic, continuing his harassment of Linda and me, changed my long-standing teaching load against my strong objections; reclassified my public policy research with Linda as non-research, providing no justification; and down-graded her annual ratings in research and teaching, cutting her merit raise by one third, even though her record in both areas was in fact stronger this year than a year ago.

Nor is Vic alone. While Vic has reclassified our research as non-research, you have sent two not-so-subtle threats to Linda warning her that she could be detoured for failing to do research. You have also refused, so far, to process the paperwork for her summer salary from remaining Pioneer funds and have threatened to confiscate half her remaining funds for other College purposes. It is hard to understand how the Provost can say there is no "convincing basis [in the record] to conclude that [I] would experience unfairness and bias" if I came up.

From the Chair to the President, the administration has failed to meet its obligations in this matter. The Chair, a respondent in the original complaint, continues to harass Linda and me; from the beginning, you have openly sided with him and the P & T Committee; the Provost will not hold the Department accountable for anything; and the President was meddling in our case even while it was still before the Senate Committee. Even the Office of Women's Affairs has dragged its feet in investigating Linda's original sexual harassment complaint and has done nothing whatsoever to investigate a deliberate cover up within the Department of her charges.

It is extremely difficult for me to withdraw my promotion bid. I do it with the greatest reluctance, but the Provost has given me no choice. While it would not have taken much for him to protect me, he has refused to do anything or even to acknowledge that a problem might exist. Far from being helpful, his action has only made things worse.

cc: Byron Pipes, Provost
Gordon DiRenzo, Chair, Faculty Welfare & Privileges
Committee
George Cicala, AAUP
Vic Martuza, Chair, Educational Studies
EDST Faculty



Memorandum

→ To: Jan Blits

RECEIVED
JUL 24 1991
OFFICE OF THE DEAN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Jan, some thoughts on your memo

TO: Frank Murray, Dean *Frank*
FROM: Jan Blits *JB*
DATE: July 22, 1991
RE: My Promotion

I write to tell you that I am withdrawing my bid for promotion to full professor. Unfortunately, the Provost's rejection of the Faculty Welfare and Privileges Committee's unanimous recommendation only adds to the likelihood that I would not receive a fair evaluation from the Department.

I think you are wrong. EDS would have been beyond reproach. They would be correct etc. through-out.

The Provost, in rejecting the Committee's recommendation, distorted our charges and ignored the evidence. We never said that the P & T Committee must "agree with most of the external reviews." We said, rather, that the Committee must be honest when it cites them (or any other evidence). It may not misquote, quote out of context contrary to the sense of the passage, or make it seem that a number of criticisms (four out of a total of six) came from a variety of reviews (four) when in fact they all came from just one. Our charge was that the Committee was dishonest in its use of the reviews, not that it failed to agree with eight out of nine of them.

more or it hard

To some extent it is an empirical question whether the EDS Faculty were misled in the way you suspect, i.e. did they think there were four negative reviews, etc.

Now you know they based their conclusion on their own analysis and used the one letter rhetorically

We also never said that the Committee's failure to agree with most of the reviews "impl[ies] that [its] decisions were based on prejudice or ideological grounds." Rather, what we claimed was that the Committee (surreptitiously) rested its recommendation upon the criticisms of a single reviewer who candidly admits that his criticisms are politically based. "What ultimately gives me pause about LG's work," he says, summing up his review, "are my own social values and my views about the appropriate role of education in society." The use of such reviews is prohibited by the Faculty Handbook, which expressly requires that reviews be "disinterested" and "objective" (Chair's Supplement, B.1). The Provost's distortion trivializes our complaint. We objected to the Committee's virtually complete reliance on an admittedly political review, not to its failure to agree with anyone.

There is to his credit that he owned up to it

We also objected to the fact that this politically biased reviewer was suggested to the Committee by a member of the Department whom the Committee knew to have been accused by Linda of sexually harassing her. While the Provost distorts our other charges, he simply ignores this one.

not so

→ because he has no evidence to substantiate it.

So far we have not found any evidence to support the allegation. Crouse's critical view of her work precedes the winter session trip. all efforts to verify Linda's allegations have failed. My advice to you is not to repeat or publicize the accusation!

The Provost's action gives licence to the Department--or an important part of it--to do anything it likes to me and then claim that it acted on its "judgment." It can be dishonest with the evidence; act on the suggestions of members of the Department who seek to harm me; rely upon reviews it knows to be grossly inaccurate, intellectually dishonest, and politically biased; accuse me of serious scholarly faults without providing a single example; and then refuse to defend its actions in an appropriate forum while maligning the Senate Committee empowered to judge it.

But, why would they do this?

I know that many members of the Department want to be fair. But I also know that many, having been misled by the Committee, believe the unfounded charges that it brought against the public policy work that I did with Linda, and that a sizeable number of others are eager to harm my promotion bid, either out of pure vindictiveness or because they have a vested interest in doing so, or both. As you know, it takes only one third of the Department to block a recommendation and far less than that to kill one by severely weakening it.

again an empirical question. We would determine what they believe

This cuts both ways - your supporters can also block on unfair verdict, etc.

In a strange example of twisted logic, the Provost assures me that I have no reason to expect unfair treatment in the Department since Linda got promoted in spite of the treatment she received from the Department. While the Provost argues that the promotion process corrects itself, he fails to mention that you (and others) strongly advised Linda not to go on after the Department's negative recommendation ("I want you to understand it is not my view that it is wise for you to complete the full promotion and tenure evaluation of your dossier this year" [memo from you to her, 1/17/90]). Moreover, he fails to mention, as well, Linda's inestimable advantage of having received a superlative recommendation from the Department just a year earlier and in her having eight glowing external reviews from eminent scholars. Without these unusual advantages, it is by no means clear that she would have been recommended by you or the Provost and have been promoted by the University.

who has a vested interest, who profits from your failure to be promoted

what was the context?

won't you have glowing reviews?

Recent events make the Provost's assurance particularly hollow. Last year, Vic, oblivious to even the appearance of fairness, appointed a co-defendant (Bob Hampel) to chair this year's Department P & T Committee (and nominated another, David Kaplan, for the College P & T Committee), forcing me to withdraw my promotion bid. Now, this year, even before the Provost acted, Vic, continuing his harassment of Linda and me, changed my long-standing teaching load against my strong objections; reclassified my public policy research with Linda as non-research, providing no justification; and down-graded her annual ratings in research and teaching, cutting her merit raise by one third, even though her record in both areas was in fact stronger this year than a year ago.

what is unusual about our putting forward persons with excellent records

how does any of this bear on the self-connective aspect of P&T - what has to do with Raths, the College P&T, me, etc.?

Nor is Vic alone. While Vic has reclassified our research as non-research, you have sent two not-so-subtle threats to Linda warning her that she could be detained for failing to do research. You have also refused, so far, to process the paperwork for her summer salary from remaining Pioneer funds and have threatened to confiscate half her remaining funds for other College purposes. It is hard to understand how the Provost can say there is no "convincing basis [in the record] to conclude that [I] would experience unfairness and bias" if I came up.

I explained my concerns to Linda & have had no response. There is nothing unusual about my concerns. Besides, what has this to do with you or your promotion bid?

From the Chair to the President, the administration has failed to meet its obligations in this matter. The Chair, a respondent in the original complaint, continues to harass Linda and me; from the beginning, you have openly sided with him and the P & T Committee; the Provost will not hold the Department accountable for anything; and the President was meddling in our case even while it was still before the Senate Committee. Even the Office of Women's Affairs has dragged its feet in investigating Linda's original sexual harassment complaint and has done nothing whatsoever to investigate a deliberate cover up within the Department of her charges.

It is extremely difficult for me to withdraw my promotion bid. I do it with the greatest reluctance, but the Provost has given me no choices. While it would not have taken much for him to protect me, he has refused to do anything or even to acknowledge that a problem might exist. Far from being helpful, his action has only made things worse.

cc: Byron Pipes, Provost
Gordon DiRenzo, Chair, Faculty Welfare & Privileges Committee
George Cicala, AAUP
Vic Martuza, Chair, Educational Studies
EDST Faculty

Promotion is only the good opinion of all those whose opinion you don't value or respect. So what does it signify to you? Given your low regard for all parties, why do you want their approval of your work?

This is an odd way to characterize my conclusions, arrived at quite independently. Also my letter did not support Vic's or the P&T comm.'s recommendation. Moreover they accuse me of siding with you and Linda. My parsimony not only still accounts for all the facts in this case and I welcome any evidence that it fails to explain this case.

her purposes - for her proposal to

the Pioneer Fund, for the very thing she claims she wants to do.

You know they to be false as I told you that there was no threat to her tenure nor did I intend any. This is a misrepresentation. Jaw

Your case is separate from Linda's - Why he should he link them?