



# University of Delaware

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  
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(302) 451-2101

June 21, 1991

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Professor Jan Blits  
Department of Educational Studies

FROM: Richard B. Murray *RBm*  
Acting Provost

SUBJECT: Your Complaint to Senate Committee on Faculty  
Welfare and Privileges

This letter is in response to the report of the Committee on Faculty Welfare and Privileges (FW&P) dated May 31, 1991. The report deals with your complaint alleging prejudice and unfairness in the evaluation of your scholarly work (published jointly with Dr. Gottfredson) by the 1989-90 Educational Studies Promotion and Tenure Committee (P&T) and by Victor Martuza, Chair of the Department of Educational Studies. Your complaint also alleges that the evaluation of your work has compromised your prospects for promotion. I have studied the report of the FW&P Committee, the transcript of the hearing of February 22, 1991, and documents introduced as relevant to this case.

Part I of the FW&P Committee report deals with procedural issues. I will not comment on these issues as I find that the substance of the case is given in the record referenced above.

Regarding Part II of the FW&P Committee report, Unfairness in Department Promotion Proceedings: Your complaint is, of course, closely coupled to that of Professor Gottfredson on this same issue. The report of the FW&P Committee on your complaint leans heavily on their analysis of the Gottfredson case. I come to the following conclusion regarding your complaint of prejudice and unfairness in the evaluation of your scholarly work: the reports of the P&T Committee and Chair on Professor Gottfredson's scholarship, including papers published jointly with you, represent the opinions of the P&T Committee and Chair. The issue then becomes a question of how the decisions were made: did the P&T Committee and Chair reach their decisions objectively and on the basis of their best judgement, or were they motivated by

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other factors ? I find no convincing evidence in the record to indicate that the decisions of the P&T Committee and Chair were driven by factors other than their academic judgement. In reaching this conclusion I am cognizant of the external references obtained in the evaluation of Professor Gottfredson's work and the fact that those references were predominantly positive. At the same time it is most important to recognize that external evaluations are advisory to those involved in the promotion decision. The decision must be reached by University of Delaware personnel and they are under no obligation to agree with the majority of external reviews.

Your complaint further alleges that the evaluation of your papers with Professor Gottfredson has compromised your prospects for promotion. The underlying issue is whether an unfair and prejudiced evaluation has occurred that would impact your promotion. As indicated above, I do not find convincing evidence that an unfair and prejudiced evaluation did take place. I therefore do not find in the record a convincing basis to conclude that you would experience unfairness and bias on the part of the P&T Committee and Chair at a future date.

In summary, I do not find a convincing case to support your complaint.

Finally, the report of the FW&P Committee recommends that I explore the possibility of relocating you to a different academic unit at the University. As a general matter, a faculty member at the University is free to seek relocation to a different academic unit. If you wish to pursue this idea, you should discuss it with your department chair and dean. Such a move would, of course, require approval of the new unit and would have to be consistent with University budget planning.

RBM:nb

cc: Gordon J. DiRenzo  
Ralph P. Ferretti  
Robert L. Hampel  
David W. Kaplan  
Richard L. Venezky  
Victor R. Martuza  
Frank B. Murray