

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AUTONOMY

1. The Red Book and the MSP collective bargaining agreement identify two independent steps at the department level for most personnel actions (such as those for promotion, tenure, and sabbatical recommendations). The DPC is charged with offering its recommendation, and the chair/head is charged with offering his/her recommendation. The DPC's recommendation is credited with greater weight than that of the chair/head, CPC, or dean, and as the collective bargaining agreement's Article 11 says:

“Academic administrative officials may make a recommendation or decision counter to the original faculty recommendation only in exceptional circumstances and with compelling reasons in written detail which shall specifically address the content of that recommendation as well as the established standards and criteria.”

The DPC's recommendation is "the original faculty recommendation" and the chair/head's is that of an "academic administrative official." They must be independent of each other.

2. Joint deliberations by the DPC and chair/head undercut the independence of each. Therefore, the DPC should convene itself, deliberate without the chair/head, and formulate its recommendations independently.
3. This principle of independent action should be upheld even if the DPC members and chair/head mutually agree to meet; neither DPCs nor chairs/heads have the authority to negotiate departures from what has been bargained by the University and MSP.
4. Subsequently, the chair/head should review the DPC's recommendations, formulate his/her recommendation independently, and not be influenced by the DPC except through the formal recommendation process. Just as the chair/head should not attempt to impose a viewpoint on the DPC, so the DPC should not attempt to impose one on the chair/head.
5. Further, communications between personnel committees and other levels of review—such as when the dean or provost consults with the committees in compliance with the Red Book's Section 6.4(g)—should be in writing, should be communicated to the candidate and should be added to the file in order to document the consultation and to avoid any perception that a candidate's fate is being decided in “backroom deals.”