

CHAPTER 9: DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL OF FACULTY FOR CAUSE

9.01. PREAMBLE.

The university has a tradition of commitment to professional honesty and integrity, as described in FPP Chapter 8, and also recognizes the need for fair and adequate investigation of alleged violations of rules and policies relating to faculty conduct. The unified rules and procedures contained herein shall apply in faculty disciplinary and dismissal proceedings, within the framework established in sections UWS 4 and UWS 6 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Faculty members charged with actions which could lead to discipline or dismissal (see 9.02. and 9.03. below) are entitled throughout the proceedings to due process both by tradition and by law. The principles of due process as understood traditionally by the faculty and delineated herein (FPP 9.06., 9.08., as well as in UWS 4) include, but are not limited to: knowledge in writing of the full complaint and its source(s), access to all documentation, the right to be present at all hearings and the right to confront and cross examine, the right to be represented, the right to refrain from testimony without prejudice, appropriate appeal processes, closed hearings if desired, written findings of fact, and verbatim records of all hearings. While this chapter provides the formal structure for proceeding in disciplinary and dismissal cases, many cases will be resolved by agreement among the parties involved or by formal mediation. In cases involving alleged scholarly misconduct, the rules and procedures are those set forth in Faculty Document 867a, which is presented in the faculty legislation appended to Faculty Policies and Procedures.

9.02. CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE.

No faculty member shall be subject to discipline except for just cause, based upon a determination that the faculty member has violated a university rule or policy or has engaged in conduct which adversely affects the faculty member's performance of his/her responsibilities to the university but which is not serious enough to warrant dismissal. As used in this chapter, discipline means any sanction except dismissal imposed by the administration against a faculty member for misconduct, including but not limited to an official reprimand, reduction in salary or reduction of a departmentally recommended increase in salary, or reduction in rank.

9.03. CAUSE FOR DISMISSAL. (See UWS 4.01.)

No faculty member shall be subject to dismissal except for just cause, based upon a determination that the faculty member's conduct directly and substantially affects adversely, to a degree greater than that reserved for disciplinary action, the ability to carry out satisfactorily his/her responsibilities to the university. Examples of conduct that may warrant dismissal include, but are not limited to, fraud or intentional misrepresentation of facts for personal benefit, gross abuse of authority or influence (e.g., discriminatory or retaliatory actions, particularly where a pattern is evident), or willful and protracted violations of university rules or policies. Layoff and termination for reasons of financial emergency are not dismissals for cause, and such actions are taken pursuant to Chapter 10 of these rules.

9.04. COMPLAINTS ABOUT FACULTY MEMBERS.

Complaints against faculty members alleging facts which, if true, might constitute adequate cause for discipline under UWS 6 or dismissal under UWS 4 shall be in writing and shall be filed with the vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost (provost).

9.05. ACTION BY PROVOST ON COMPLAINTS.

A. On receiving a complaint concerning a faculty member, the provost shall determine whether the complaint deals with scholarly misconduct and/or other misconduct.

B. Complaints alleging scholarly misconduct shall be dealt with according to Faculty Document 867a and FPP 9.14. A formal allegation of misconduct in scholarly research will be referred to the chair of the department (or functional equivalent) or to the corresponding academic dean or, in the case of conflict of interest on the part of the chair or academic dean, to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education.

C. If the complaint alleges misconduct other than scholarly misconduct, the provost shall determine whether a prima facie case exists for the imposition of discipline or for dismissal. The provost shall also consider the timeliness of the complaint, particularly in light of related state and federal limitations statutes. As used in this section, a prima facie case for discipline exists whenever the information submitted in support of the complaint would warrant disciplinary action, if considered on its face to be true and not subject to refutation or exculpatory explanation. A prima facie case for dismissal exists whenever this standard is met, but with the additional requirement that the information submitted in support of the complaint be of such substantial character that the magnitude of the alleged conduct warrants contemplation of dismissal if determined to be true. If a prima facie case does not exist or if the complaint is not considered timely, the complaint shall be dismissed.

D. Whenever the provost receives a complaint against a faculty member which he/she deems substantial and which, if true, might lead to dismissal under UWS 4, the provost shall proceed under UWS 4 and the provisions of this chapter of FPP.

9.06. INVESTIGATION AND FURTHER ACTION.

A. If the provost determines that a prima facie case exists for imposition of discipline or dismissal and the case is timely, he/she shall institute an investigation by appointing an investigator or investigators of his/her choosing. The provost shall also offer to discuss the matter with the faculty member concerned, giving the faculty member an opportunity to speak to the matter, and shall provide the faculty member with a written statement of the matter(s) to be investigated. The faculty member shall also receive a copy of the original signed complaint, subject to the possible need to redact information pertaining to third parties that will not be considered part of the investigation. The faculty member concerned shall have the right to be advised and represented by counsel or other representative at his/her expense throughout the investigation and thereafter.

B. The faculty member can state objections to the provost's selection of investigator(s). The investigator(s) shall investigate the complaint as soon as practicable and provide an oral and/or

written report to the provost. Following the investigation the provost shall consult with recent past chairs of the University Committee and the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities who shall advise the provost as to the actions that should be taken as enumerated in C. below.

C. Actions that the provost may take are:

1. Dismiss the case; or
2. Refer the complaint to the department(s) or the equivalent functional unit(s) in which the faculty member concerned holds membership if the investigation indicates that the case involves a matter which should be resolved at the departmental level and in which disciplinary action by the provost is not warranted; or
3. Prepare to invoke an appropriate disciplinary action. In doing so, the provost will present the faculty member with a written summary of all evidence obtained both for and against each charge brought forward for disciplinary action or dismissal. The provost shall then invite the faculty member to participate in voluntary and confidential settlement negotiations which could involve, with agreement of both parties, formal mediation.

If formal mediation is invoked, the parties shall agree on the appointment of a mediator or mediators. Formal mediation must be completed within 30 days of the appointment of the mediator(s), unless both parties agree to an extension of no more than 30 days. At any time, either party may withdraw from the mediation process.

4. If settlement is not achieved by negotiation or mediation, invoke appropriate discipline or dismissal. When the provost invokes either discipline or dismissal, he/she shall provide the faculty member with a copy of any investigatory report produced and a copy of any written recommendation as provided above. The provost shall also inform the faculty member of his/her right to appeal to the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (CFRR). Such appeal must be filed with the Office of the Secretary of the Faculty within 30 calendar days of the provost's notification as detailed in this clause.

9.07. COMMITTEE ON FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

A. When a faculty member appeals a disciplinary action to the committee, the committee shall:

1. Conduct fact-finding hearings if requested by the faculty member or by the provost or if deemed necessary by the committee;
2. Make recommendations to the chancellor concerning the validity of the appeal.

B. When a faculty member appeals dismissal, the committee shall under UWS 4.03 serve as the standing committee to hear and act on the case, except for cases involving allegations of misconduct in scholarly research in which the Hearing Committee on Misconduct in Scholarly Research shall be the standing committee, under Faculty Document 867a. For the purposes of Wis. Stats. s. 36.115(4)(b), this panel serves the role of impartial hearing officer.

9.08. CFRR HEARINGS.

When CFRR is holding a fact-finding hearing in a discipline case or is acting as a hearing body in a dismissal case, it shall operate as provided in UWS 4.05 and 4.06. Additionally, the faculty member shall have a right to:

- A. service of notice of hearing with specific charges in writing at least twenty days prior to the hearing;
- B. notification of the name(s) of the complainant(s);
- C. be heard by all bodies passing judgment or making recommendations;
- D. refrain from testifying without such omission being used as formal evidence of guilt; and
- E. a stenographic record of all hearings and transcripts thereof at no cost to him/her.

9.09. FINDINGS BY CFRR.

- A. A finding of just cause for the imposition of discipline or just cause for dismissal must be based on clear and convincing evidence in the hearing record.
- B. A finding by the committee of just cause for discipline or just cause for dismissal requires a majority vote with not more than two dissenting votes. Otherwise, the committee shall report that just cause for discipline or just cause for dismissal has not been established. The vote shall be reported in every case.

9.10. SUSPENSION.

The faculty committee to be consulted by the chancellor in considering suspension under UWS 4.09 is the University Committee.

9.11. TRANSMITTAL OF CFRR FINDINGS IN DISCIPLINE CASES.

- A. CFRR shall transmit its findings of fact and recommendations in discipline cases in writing to the chancellor, with copies to the provost, to the faculty member involved, and to the complainant within ten days of the conclusion of its proceedings.
- B. Within ten days of the transmittal of the committee's findings and recommendations to the chancellor, the faculty member concerned or the original complainant may file written objections with the chancellor.
- C. The chancellor shall, as soon as practicable after the expiration of this ten-day period, render his/her decision and transmit such decision to the committee, the provost, the faculty member concerned, the original complainant, and the University Committee.

9.12. CFRR TRANSMITTAL OF FINDINGS IN DISMISSAL CASES.

CFRR shall transmit its findings of fact and recommendations in dismissal cases in accordance with UWS 4.07.

9.13. NO FURTHER JEOPARDY.

Following recommendations of CFRR and a decision by the chancellor, or following action by the provost if the committee is not involved, the faculty member concerned shall not be subject again under these rules to the same charges arising from the original complaint.

9.14. PROCEDURES WHEN MISCONDUCT IN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH IS ALLEGED.

Whenever the provost acting as the Deciding Official pursuant to Faculty Document 2668a has issued an institutional decision imposing discipline or dismissal of a faculty member on the basis of misconduct in scholarly research, sections 9.01. through 9.05.B., 9.10., and 9.13. of this chapter, as well as other sections specifically noted below, shall govern faculty dismissal and disciplinary actions as follows:

A. The report of the Investigation Committee provided for in Faculty Document 2661a shall constitute the investigation required by 9.06.A. and the complaint referred to in 9.01. and 9.04. When serving as Deciding Official pursuant to Section VI of Faculty Document 2668a, after reviewing the report of the Investigation Committee and the response, if any, of the faculty member, if the provost believes that dismissal may be warranted, the provost shall proceed in accordance with UWS 4, or, if the provost believes that lesser discipline may be warranted, the provost shall proceed in accordance with 9.06.C.3. or 9.06.C.4., and UWS 6.01. If the provost decides to dismiss the case, he/she shall proceed in accordance with 9.06.C.1. A hearing to appeal the provost's actions shall be conducted by the CFRR under Faculty Document 2668a, as provided below and in Faculty Document 2668a Section VII.

B. The Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (CFRR) shall serve as the body to hear the appeal provided for in Section VII of the Faculty Document 2668a. The chair of the CFRR may request the substitution of up to two regular members of the CFRR with not more than two special members of the CFRR who have the scholarly competence and expertise appropriate for the hearing of this matter.

C. The CFRR shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of UWS 4.04-4.06 and Faculty Document 2668a, Section VII. In this appeal, the University bears the burden of proof for all issues related to the allegations of research misconduct. The faculty member bears the burden of proof for any claims asserted in opposition to the institutional decision.

D. Within 10 days after service of the notice of the institutional decision, the faculty member may appeal to CFRR by giving written notice of the appeal to the Deciding Official, as determined under Section VI of Faculty Document 2668a.

1. CFRR shall review the record made by the Inquiry Committee, the Investigation Committee and the Deciding Official, but shall not receive any new evidence. CFRR may ask members of the Investigation Committee to explain matters within their expertise, and the faculty member is entitled to be present when any such explanation is given and to ask pertinent questions. As directed by the CFRR, the faculty member may submit a written statement and appear personally before the CFRR.

2. The institutional decision shall be affirmed unless CFRR determines (a) that the factual findings are clearly erroneous, or (b) that the Investigation Committee or Deciding Official erred in applying the law and that this error influenced the committee's decision, or (c) that the recommended sanction is inappropriate. In determining whether a factual finding is clearly erroneous, the question to be answered by CFRR is not whether it would have reached the same conclusion as the Investigation Committee or Deciding Official but, rather, whether reasonable people could have considered the findings to have been supported by a preponderance of the evidence. Similarly, the criterion for reviewing the sanction shall be whether reasonable people could consider it appropriate under the circumstances of the case. If CFRR finds error as defined above, it will recommend to the chancellor actions to remedy the error. If CFRR finds an inappropriate sanction was recommended, it will recommend a different sanction.

3. If the institutional decision is appealed to CFRR, CFRR shall formulate a written decision and transmit it to the chancellor and the faculty member within 45 days after the initiation of the appeal. Within ten days of receipt of the recommendation from CFRR, the faculty member may file objections with the chancellor.

4. The chancellor shall issue an appeal decision and rationale to affirm, reject or modify the action specified in the recommendation from the CFRR within 30 days of receipt of the recommendation. This period may be extended for good cause.

E. If no appeal is taken to CFRR from the institutional decision, the faculty member may file objections with the chancellor within ten days after receipt of the institutional decision.

F. Procedures thereafter shall be according to UWS 4.07-4.10 or UWS 6.01.

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