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EDITORS' CHOICE

Rethinking the Tenure Process

The Influences and Consequences of Power and Culture

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When opinion leaders, politicians, and those they influence throw bricks at the academy—as is currently occurring—a familiar target is academic tenure. Outsiders to the academy, and this includes most university-governing board members, almost always have opposed tenure. In the minds of the critics, the question is, "Why should professors have an employment right that we don't, nor does anyone else?" When one points out that U.S. Supreme Court and federal judges have tenure, that lawyers in a firm essentially do, as do physicians on the staff of hospitals, the view of those opposed to tenure does not change. "Faculty

AUTHORS' NOTE: This article is a further development of arguments and empirical findings presented in papers given by the authors at the symposium "Understanding the Tenure Process as Business Schools Adapt to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century," Academy of Management Meetings, 1995, Vancouver. Copies of the papers are available from the authors at the School of Business, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 3P1. The input of Richard Brahm and Donald Parker on an earlier version of this paper is very much appreciated.

JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT INQUIRY, Vol. 5 No. 3, September 1996 221-236
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don't work, they criticize the existing social order and its stand on national issues, they vote left but live right," and so on, go the arguments.

According to another line of reasoning, tenure limits the opportunities of universities to adapt. Retaining faculty in fields with declining enrollments complicates the implementation of new programs with high growth potential. Implied in this argument are assumptions that the abilities and flexibility of faculty deteriorate with time. Parallel assumptions hold that aging faculty no longer create new knowledge, they teach poorly, and they learn nothing new—that is, aging faculty are deadwood, and tenure is the cause. Though the data do not support these claims,[1] the appeal for altering, or removing, tenure is heard often.[2] When times are tight, when expansion is not the norm, tenure is the bull's-eye for those who take aim at higher education. Further, when higher education is on one of its rare periods of expansion and jobs are plentiful, the argument becomes, "Who needs job security?"; ergo, "Who needs tenure?"[3]

In the face of these attacks, it becomes vital for us to reflect on the arguments for tenure and to examine the credibility of these arguments. In concept, tenure is a critical element of an effective higher education system. Scholarship and science are endeavors with inherently uncertain outcomes. Academic freedom protects those engaged in this most uncertain of pursuits from having to justify or account for the outcomes of their every inquiry. It allows inquiry to proceed from internal impulses rather than external pressures. Tenure is also relevant in the classroom, providing an environment that encourages unconventional topics and modes of delivery. Such freedom of exploration and expression is surely a luxury, in one sense, but it is also a necessity for a society that aspires to innovation and to material and social progress.

We recall Kingman Brewster's (1972) strong stand when attacks on tenure were running rampant. Speaking as the president of Yale, he said that if tenure were to be abolished for whatever reason, Yale would immediately restore it for its faculty. His university would not be great if its faculty were afraid to explore the unknown, to follow a tenuous clue to its consequences, to gamble a few years on a project some thought was sure to fail. If the faculty always played it safe, redocumenting what had already been documented, then the university would have abandoned its mission.

In a similar vein, Rosovsky (1990, p. 183), Harvard's former Dean of Arts and Sciences, argued that tenure is essential because its absence would, in the long run, lower the quality of faculty—the keystone of university life. Unlike most other sectors of the economy, the possibilities of technological and organizational progress are more limited in higher education in which nearly everything hinges on the quality of people.

Taking a broader perspective, intrusion from forces outside academia can be damaging to the advancement of knowledge. We do not have to look back any further than the Cultural Revolution in China to see that political interference into science and scholarship is a highly dangerous course for a society to take. However, such interference is also a very attractive and likely course of action for any group wishing to suppress free thought and inquiry.

These reasons clearly represent strong support for tenure. Nonetheless, the survival of the institution of tenure depends on the critical question: Do, in fact, tenure processes operate to support the laudable objectives they are meant to achieve? Tenure is meant to facilitate the development of knowledge via novel inquiry and exploration free from external pressures. However, tenure processes may instead result in uniformity, timidity, and conservatism among junior faculty. We submit that, to the extent to which tenure processes have the latter outcomes, it is very difficult to defend the institution of tenure against the numerous arguments of the critics.

The purpose of this article is to initiate dialogue concerning the nature of the tenure process and thereby contribute to our understanding of the process and to improvements therein. Tenure processes and outcomes symbolize the values that determine what is done in academic institutions. Developing an understanding of how tenure processes operate and the behaviors they foster is of critical importance in the current environment of fundamental change at business schools. If we want to strengthen these institutions, we must consider how the tenure process shapes our organizations through its effects on faculty attitudes and behaviors.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. In the next section, the complexity and resultant challenges and difficulties of tenure decision-making processes are addressed. A summary of interviews with business school faculty who have recently undergone the tenure process is then presented. Two conceptual explanations of the tenure process follow. First, we discuss how different approaches to decision making can influence tenure processes; applicability to the tenure process of bureaucratic politics, rational actor,

and organizational process decision-making models is reviewed. Next, tenure is described from an organizational culture perspective; it is suggested that tenure combines features of two cultural rites—rites of passage and rites of enhancement. The interviews with business school faculty concerning tenure are related to the decision-making and cultural perspectives in the latter two sections. Finally, suggestions for dealing with challenges and difficulties of the tenure processes are presented.

The theoretical perspectives we draw on are not intended to represent a comprehensive survey of perspectives that might help explain the complex tenure phenomenon.[4] Our purpose, as stated earlier, is to initiate a dialogue; we believe that the perspectives and preliminary empirical findings we draw on do provide insights into understanding the process and can provide the motivation for the dialogue we propose.

CHALLENGES INHERENT IN THE TENURE PROCESS

Let us briefly pause to consider the complexity of tenure decisions. First, the "standards by which the untenured person's performance will be judged are rarely spelled out with any precision. It is thus possible for these standards to be applied differently to different candidates" (Getman, 1992, p. 111). Further, the nature of the faculty member's job makes assessment of his or her performance inherently difficult. It is very difficult to effectively and meaningfully appraise teaching impact on an ongoing basis, and students' ratings of courses can reflect the popularity of the professor rather than the learning experience. Likewise, the value of the professor's research contribution is usually difficult to evaluate in a way that is both meaningful and would generate clear consensus. For example, simply counting publications in top-tier journals might provide more information about currently dominant paradigms than about the candidate's generation of new knowledge. The more cogent question—is the candidate "changing the conversation" about an important phenomenon?—is more difficult to answer.

The tenure decision is made even more difficult by the futurity element. The task is not simply to assess past performance but also to predict a stream of future contributions to knowledge development. Such assessments are likely to be the outcome of complex discourse aided by external evaluations. It is necessarily speculative and subjective, with consensual processes being the best antidote to personal bias (see Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995).

Tenure is also a "secretive" process, reflecting widely accepted norms of protecting the candidate's privacy concerning his or her performance. The secrecy breeds speculation among those outside the process that maybe what is really going on is that the decision makers are simply finding a way to justify keeping people they like and getting rid of those they dislike.

We see then that the tenure decision-making process is complicated by such factors as the ambiguity of performance standards, the decision's futurity element, and the secretive and confidentiality attributes that result in speculation about what is really going on. It is no wonder, therefore, that there is considerable variation in how the tenure process is perceived.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE TENURE PROCESS

> It was fair and open. . . . I felt that it was a very good process. . . . My personal reaction is very positive about the whole thing.

> I'm pretty bitter. . . . I can't tell you the number of people who have gone through this process in this building who, even when the outcome was positive, are bitter for the rest of their lives, and there's something wrong with a process that is "positive" and generates bitter people. . . . This is a building of walking wounded because of this process. That's a problem, that's a real problem.

These divergent statements are representative of attitudes found in a preliminary study of the perceptions of business school faculty who had recently gone through the tenure process.[5] Consistent with these statements, we found that there were two patterns of tenure process perceptions. As discussed in greater detail later, respondents within one of these patterns (see Figure 1) had very negative feelings concerning the tenure process, perceiving it to be unfair (questions 2 and 3) and substantially influenced by the personal agendas of decision makers. In this pattern, power and politics (question 5) were considered to be a stronger influence on tenure outcomes than formal tenure policies and procedures (question 4) *by every respondent*.

Respondents within the second pattern (see Figure 2) had positive feelings concerning the process, perceiving it to have been fair (questions 2 and 3) and

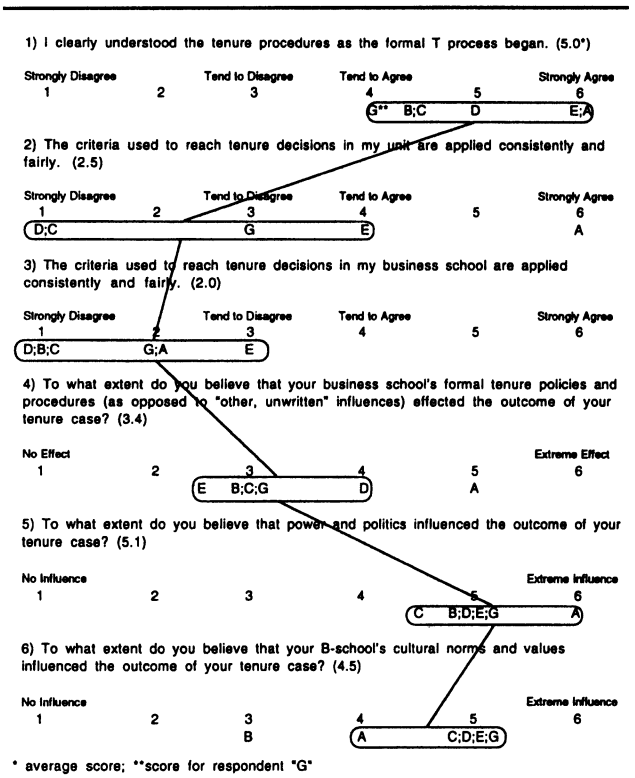

Figure 1: "Political Resultant" Profile.

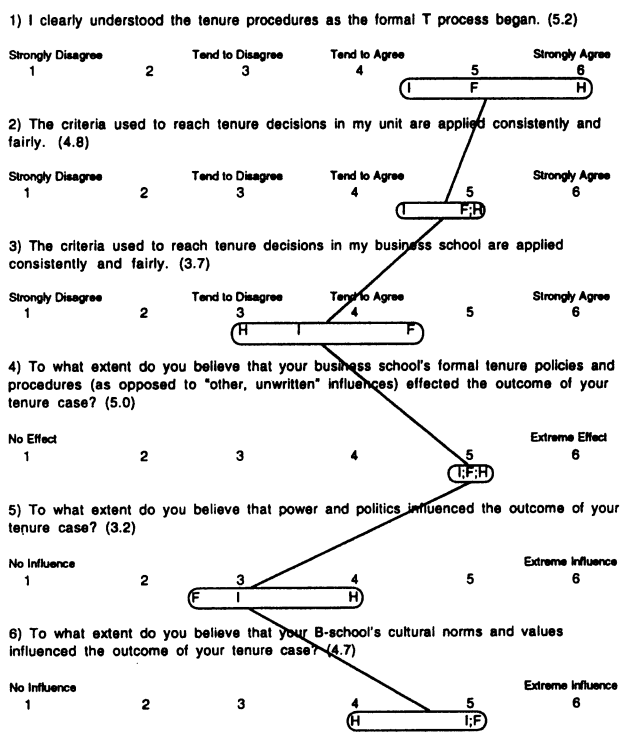

Figure 2: "Process Resultant" Profile.

conducted consistently across candidates. In this second pattern, formal tenure policies and procedures (question 4) were perceived to have a stronger influence on tenure outcomes than power and politics (question 5) *by each respondent*. Cultural norms and values were perceived to have considerable influence on tenure outcomes in both patterns (average scores: 4.5 and 4.7). The relative influence of formal policies and procedures versus power and politics, however, is reversed in the two patterns, being approximately 3 to 5 in the first and 5 to 3 in the second.

We now turn to this question: What factors might contribute to these divergent perception patterns?

CONCEPTUAL EXPLANATION OF THE TENURE PROCESS: A DECISION-MAKING PERSPECTIVE

To understand the policies and decisions emanating from a tenured faculty group, particularly decisions to extend membership, it is instructive to view the group as a power elite. The actions of this group are closely scrutinized, particularly by junior faculty whose careers are at stake. These interested observers seek predictability, understanding, and control of their fate (Sutton & Kahn, 1987) and devote much attention to the tenure-granting process. A base assumption for many is that power and politics are strong determinants of decision outcomes. In some cases, this is undoubtedly true; but in many cases, outside observers may simply misunderstand the decision process.

In his celebrated work *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison (1971) offers three models by which the actions of a power elite can be explained. The allegation by junior faculty that power and politics are operating is in some cases an attribution arising from the observation that the decision process is not simply explained by the rational actor or organizational processes models. Faculty decision makers are, and should be, using power; organizational politics, however, may or may not be skewing the process. We use the term *organizational politics* to refer to situations in which a covert purpose underlies overt behavior. The test for political ploys, thus defined, is whether the decision influencer would be comfortable if everyone became aware of his or her true motives. Let us view the tenure-granting process through the lenses of Allison's three models to build on the insights these afford.

Three decision-making models. Allison's first model, the *rational actor* model, explains decisions and policies in terms of thoughtful individuals pursuing goals. In the case of tenured faculty, these individuals are seen as being committed to their stewardship role of ensuring the long-term health of the school as a research and learning institution. Their tenured status guarantees that they will be able to take positions on such decisions without having to worry about job security repercussions; they can vote their conscience on issues and not fear sanctions worse than expressed disapproval from administrators and fellow faculty. The tenure system, viewed from this perspective, fosters the expression of the diversity of viewpoints needed to make complex judgments. It protects academic freedom not only in the individual's classroom but also in the policy or strategy arena where staffing decisions—particularly granting or denying tenure to others—constitute strategy implementation.

The rational actor model has a normative cast to it, and observers of decisions on tenure cases are most apt to judge the decisions against this model. The judgment involves inferring objectives, assessing the "facts of the case" in the context of those objectives, taking into account constraints, and then making their own judgments about what they would have decided in their constructed scenario. If the decision that was actually made is different from their construction of the decision situation, then the difference may be attributed to sinister, unfair processes operating to bias rational discourse.

Allison's second model provides a less idealistic and more mechanistic view of organizational decision processes. The *organizational processes* model views faculty decision making as the outcome of standard operating procedures. In effect, an employment contract is specified on hiring, and the role of the tenured faculty and administrators is to carry out the operations that would ascertain whether the junior faculty member had lived up to the terms of that contract.

When hired, an individual is instructed on the standards (of research, teaching, service to the institution, service to the profession, etc.) required of faculty at that particular school. From that point on, the junior faculty member is, in effect, on an obstacle course with a time constraint. The main hurdles are publication standards, students' reception of teaching efforts, and colleagues' assessment of service contributions. The junior faculty member is (ideally) given interim feedback as to how well he or she is progressing toward earning tenure, with corrective action suggested as appropriate. The procedural mechanism is predictable and well understood: As long as the individual clears the established hurdles, the outcome is determined by the standard operating procedures.

Allison's third model looks at the same scenarios through the lens of a *bureaucratic politics* model. Drawing on the guiding metaphor of vector analysis, the decision outcome is best understood as a "political resultant," meaning that the decision can best be explained as the net result of the pushes and pulls of divergent opinions. The decision thus arrived at may not match what one might expect as the outcome of rational actors pursuing goals or of fair-minded administrators and colleagues executing standard operating procedures.

As described earlier, the complexity and ambiguity of the tenure decision process means that it might not be well modeled by the rational actor or the organizational processes model. The bureaucratic politics model may provide keener insights into how decisions are actually made. Seen as a consensual process to deal with complex, ambiguous issues (cf. Cohen & March, 1974), the bureaucratic politics model may be judged as normative in the circumstances. However, when members of the power elite are Machiavellian, situations of ambiguity and secrecy also can foster underhanded decision processes in which candidates are not treated fairly and the institution is not well served.

Specifically, Machiavellian members of a power elite can pursue or defend their own (rather than the institution's) interests by manipulating processes and creating the perception of rational actors pursuing lofty academic goals. Such individuals can distort the outcomes of standard operating procedures in tenure cases because for any candidate, there is usually a case to be made *for* granting tenure and one to be made *against* granting tenure. Given that the tenure-granting decision is a situation in which Machiavellian faculty could operate "politically" (i.e., with covert purposes that underlie overt behaviors), let us consider some of the ways in which they can manipulate the decision process to serve their ends. Political tactics can be classified as either the manipulation of situations or the manipulation of perceptions.

An example of situational manipulation occurs when a subcommittee of the tenure committee is created to prepare a case for consideration by the voting

faculty. It is usually possible to bias membership on the subcommittee to produce a favorable or unfavorable framing of the case. Colleagues often can be found to support either point of view (i.e., some who appreciate the candidate's research and some who consider it unscholarly). An administrator or influential faculty member may therefore be able to create a booster club, an execution squad, or a balanced set of viewpoints. It is likewise possible to recruit biased external reviewers to provide a supposedly "objective opinion" of the candidate's merit. In either circumstance, the outcome of the tenure review is better explained by the composition of the review panels than by the candidate's record.

A second form of situational manipulation is unobtrusive control (March & Simon, 1958). This tactic involves influencing the premises of decision making rather than overtly influencing the decision itself. The appeal of this tactic is that it is difficult to hold an individual culpable for imposing "organization-enhancing" decision premises, even when these are actually put forward as means to achieve ends in that individual's favor. An example of this would be for a member of a tenure committee to argue for altering the relative weight given to research, teaching, or service in a manner that will ostensibly benefit the institution but that in reality has the effect of helping (hurting) a particular candidate.

The manipulation of perceptions is more commonplace. Tenure committees typically are limited to making a recommendation rather than a binding decision. The same record can be described positively or negatively, producing a perceptual "spin" on the record that either supports or diminishes the likelihood of the case being approved during the next step in the process. A candidate's failure to have his or her key work accepted by the "top-tier" journals can be condemned as evidence of scholarly mediocrity or hailed as a promising record of achievement, given the rigidities of the moribund paradigm this candidate is trying to change. Similarly, a particular paper can be dismissed as "interesting but out of the disciplinary mainstream" or lauded as seminal. Teaching records can be cast as good or bad. Negative evaluations by students can be presented as evidence that "Professor X isn't pandering to students in order to be liked. The integrity of the learning experience is Professor X's top priority, and this individual should be commended for having the courage to risk being unpopular among myopic students." Similarly, a spin can be put on letters in the candidate's file.

The dark side of this latitude in presenting a case is that it allows a power elite to operate with impunity as a club (usually a men's club) that anoints its future members and creates a tenure process that justifies choices with performance-related criteria when decisions were actually made on the basis of relationship bonds. When the effect of this clubbishness is to preclude diversity of thought among tenured faculty, the power elite has not lived up to its legal and ethical obligations, and the school is hurt by having lower potential for adapting the educational and research program to changing needs.

The power elite within the faculty has thus far been portrayed as a unitary body. In many schools, the tenure committee is better understood as a set of coalitions that have formed along friendship or interest group lines. When fractionation occurs, the more powerful coalitions can disempower the less powerful by social ostracism, the operation of voting blocs, or direct influence of higher-level decision makers. These coalitions make their decisions "in the halls" and then go through the motions of participating in formal meetings to create the illusion of legitimate collegial decision making. When decisions are made surreptitiously by coalitions, major decisions such as tenure cases are slanted toward benefiting the dominant coalition rather than the school. The "out-group," meanwhile, becomes alienated because of its disenfranchisement and sense of illegitimacy; the result is academic stagnation and a resentful work environment.

In summary, it is clear that power and politics can enter the decision-making process around tenure cases. Power itself is not the problem. The institution needs a group with special characteristics, that is, an elite group, to make decisions that cannot be made consensually by a committee of the whole. Specifically, junior faculty cannot be expected to vote on their own promotion and tenure or to have the experience, insight, and broad knowledge to make hard decisions about other junior colleagues. Promotion and tenure committees are explicitly empowered to frame and make such decisions. Power is problematic only when individuals or cliques abuse that power and engage in organizational politics. Approaches for preventing the abuses that power and politics might engender are suggested later.

Perceptions of the tenure process: A decision-making lens. Consistencies between perceptions of business school faculty who recently have experienced the tenure process and the decision-making models just

described are noteworthy. As indicated earlier, analyses of our interview data indicated two patterns of tenure process perceptions. Responses within the patterns differed considerably in their perceptions of the fairness of the process and of the relative influence of power and politics, as opposed to formal policies and procedures, on the outcome.

The majority of our respondents (six) describe a process consistent with the bureaucratic politics model wherein a decision is best understood as a "political resultant." The political resultant profile, based on responses to closed-ended questions, is presented in Figure 1. Individuals within this profile perceive tenure criteria as being applied inconsistently and unfairly and believe that power and politics influenced their cases to a greater extent than formal tenure policies and procedures. Although pattern membership was determined by responses to closed-ended questions (Figures 1 and 2), consistencies between basic tenets of the bureaucratic politics model and interviewee responses to open-ended questions are striking. Comparisons of central tenets of the bureaucratic politics model to typical interviewee responses are presented in Table 1.

Of great relevance to schools of business, and as predicted by the bureaucratic politics model, respondents within this profile have negative feelings concerning the tenure process. Candidates within this profile lose their motivation and become resentful and bitter. The following statement is representative of this effect of the bureaucratic politics model:

> I don't have the commitment to this place that I did have. . . . My heart's not here and I don't anticipate necessarily leaving. . . . I was the committed citizen—they've actually lost a lot.

Happily, there are tenure candidates who have "positive feelings about" the tenure process, perceiving it to have been a "very good" and "fair process." These three respondents describe a process consistent with the organizational processes model wherein tenure decisions result from standard operating procedures and the outcome is seen as a process resultant. These individuals responded to the closed-ended interview questions in a manner that indicates that they perceive tenure criteria as being applied consistently and fairly and believe that formal tenure policies and procedures influenced their cases to a greater extent than power and politics (see the process resultant profile in Figure 2). Consistencies between an organizational processes model and open-ended interview responses of candidates within the process resultant profile are presented in Table 2.

We note that our respondent patterns fit two of the three decision-making models described earlier. It may be that some processes that resulted in the perceptions we captured were in fact consistent with the

Table 1
Basic Tenets of the Bureaucratic Politics Model/Respondent Statement[a]

Members of a power elite can pursue or defend their (rather than the institution's) interests by manipulating processes and creating the perception of rational actors pursuing lofty academic goals.
> Certain standards that have been set make it seem concrete or make it seem fair . . . to gain acceptance of the decision. . . . They can rationalize it to the outside world, [but] this is a way to get rid of . . . people. Yet they can hold it up and say well look they didn't have the . . . publications in these . . . journals.
Outcomes in tenure cases can be biased because for any candidate, there is usually a case to be made for granting tenure and one to be made against granting tenure.
> The various tenure committees and individuals involved in the process can take any case and . . . make a good case out of it or . . . make a weak case out of it.
> It is a political process; they can use whatever they want against you.
The outcome of the tenure review often is better explained by the composition of the review panels than by the candidate's record.
> That year's data . . . were very strong, two people got tanked, both from departments that weren't represented on the committee and three people got tenure, they were from departments represented on the committee.
> I can see this as an opportunity for [the chairman] to send a signal to the school that [my area] is not important.
A form of situational manipulation is unobtrusive control wherein the premises of decision making are influenced. As an example, it might be argued that breadth of teaching or research experiences are (or are not) important.
> I never taught undergraduate courses—that was not considered a negative in my case, while it was in the case of another candidate. My research was not focused; [senior] faculty could say that that shows good initiative. . . . This could easily, however, have been used against me.
The manipulation of perceptions is more commonplace. The same record can be described positively or negatively, as when a spin is put on letters in the candidate's file.
> If they're [letters] good, "Oh they like this guy—we can't give them any credence". . . . If they're bad, "Oh we've got to worry about this."
The power elite can thus appoint its future members by creating a tenure process that justifies choices that are actually made on the basis of relationship bonds.
> Luckily I happened to be on the good side of those power players. You know, had they been against me they could have easily swayed the case in the other direction.
The dark side of this model is that it allows a power elite to operate with the impunity of a club.
> Tenure is acceptance into "the club" for life. The question is, "Do we want this individual?" If not, a way will be found to make sure he or she does not become a member.

a. Each statement is from a respondent within the pattern being described, the "political resultant" pattern in this case. All respondents within this pattern are represented in these statements. When statements are presented consecutively, each is from a different respondent.

Table 2
Basic Tenets of the Organizational Processes Model/Respondent Statement

The procedural mechanism is predictable and well understood: As long as the individual clears the established hurdles, the outcome is determined by the standard operating procedures.
[We had] a lengthy document and a class on how you get tenure. . . . If you followed the document and went to the class you knew exactly what you needed to do in terms of publications, teaching, and service and you knew exactly what you needed to do in terms of putting your documentation together. That . . . introduced a lot more certainty into the process.
I knew what was going on all throughout the process.
The junior faculty member is given interim feedback as to how well he or she is progressing toward earning tenure, with corrective action suggested as appropriate.
Every 6 months to 1 year I was filling out some faculty activity report or some kind of evaluation report. . . . It forces you to think about your productivity.
In addition to the annual review vis-à-vis pay increases, you received a very thorough and meaningful review concerning how you were doing in making progress towards tenure and what you needed to do over the next year to be considered to be making progress.
Candidates within this profile do not have the negative perceptions concerning the tenure process, nor do they have the negative attitudinal repercussions typical of the political resultant profile.
Overall I have positive feelings about [the tenure process].
I think it was a fair process.
I felt that it was a very good process.

rational actor model. If the rational model was employed, however, it was not perceived as such by the candidates. To get a clearer indication of this possibility, decision makers as well as candidates would have to be interviewed in follow-up research.

CONCEPTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TENURE PROCESS: AN ORGANIZATION CULTURE PERSPECTIVE

As practiced in contemporary U.S. higher education, the tenure process combines features of two cultural rites: rites of passage and rites of enhancement (Trice & Beyer, 1984). Like other cultural rites, the tenure process has both practical and expressive consequences (Trice & Beyer, 1993). In the following analysis, we concentrate on the expressive side of tenure.

Tenure as rites of passage and enhancement. In his seminal work on rites of passage, Van Gennep (1908/1960) identified three phases of these rites that appeared in many different sets of events and ceremonies connected with persons moving from one status to another in many different societies. He called the three phases rites of separation, rites of transition, and rites of incorporation. He found that all of these phases were evident in some rites of passage but that others tended to gloss over some phases of the full rite. He also observed that some protracted rites cycled through the three phases more than once.

The progression of events that leads to tenure certainly is protracted and clearly involves two cycles of rites of passage. The first is the Ph.D. educational process that culminates in conferral of the Ph.D. degree. The second is the tenure process. Both cycles involve the three phases of separation, transition, and incorporation. Both are arduous and difficult passages with no certainty of success.

During the period from being hired as an assistant professor until the evaluation for tenure, the candidate is in a stage of transition from student to professor. Although the candidate may have the title of assistant and even associate professor, he or she must still prove him or herself fit to remain permanently in the community of scholars. In effect, the professorial status is provisional at this stage. Viewing tenure as a rite of passage brings a number of aspects of the process to the fore.

The *separation phase* of these rites occur when the newly minted Ph.D. moves to a new town to take up his or her first professorial position. He or she leaves friends and faculty mentors behind and usually arrives as a stranger in an unfamiliar setting. Universities and departments vary in their practices, and some degree of cultural shock is inevitable. In addition, the demands of the new role are usually sufficiently heavy that not much time can be afforded for establishing purely social connections and statuses. To make matters worse, nonacademic residents of communities surrounding universities and colleges are often ambivalent about their presence and therefore seldom warm and welcoming to new faculty. This ambivalence is expressed in the term *town-gown relations,* which usually connotes a state of tension. Many new assistant professors thus find themselves somewhat isolated in their "ivory towers"—separated by their heavy work load and their academic status from the world around them. In the ivory tower itself, senior faculty are sometimes, but not always, welcoming. After all, they must remain sufficiently distant from newcomers to feel comfortable evaluating them later, and they may be reluctant to invest too much time in establishing relations with someone likely to leave. So the experience of separation may persist beyond the

encounter phase of the socialization process (Louis, 1980).

The *transition phase* of rites of passage is a period of liminality. The tenure candidate is no longer a student, nor fully a professor. Van Gennep (1908/1960, p. 75) describes the transition period as one of physical and mental weakening intended to make the novice forget the past and accept instruction in tribal law. Most assistant professors find the pretenure period a lonely and very individualized passage, a genuine ordeal that tests their abilities, courage, fortitude, and character. It is not easy to simultaneously do original research, meet or exceed the expectations of students, and serve your colleagues and institution. Candidates who fail to meet the criteria for performance of their particular employing institution on any of these dimensions will fail to make tenure. In practical terms, candidates must somehow juggle and balance their efforts to achieve acceptable performance on all criteria—often without the kinds of instruction tribal societies provide to their novices. The best academic candidates can do is circulate their papers for comments, invite others to observe their teaching, and assiduously follow the dictates of editors and reviewers on their submitted papers. Usually the feedback they receive tells them what's wrong, but seldom is it clear what they should do instead. Thus the transition period in academia is a highly uncertain and anxious time.

Denying tenure to some candidates should signal to other junior faculty and to the wider community what kinds of performance are, and are not, valued by a particular college or university. Unfortunately, as discussed earlier, the signal is rarely clear because the criteria by which the candidate's performance will be judged are rarely precise and often are applied in an inconsistent manner. It is relatively easy to cast opposition in terms of academic deficiencies and in support of excellence (Getman, 1992). When the denial of tenure is seen by other junior faculty or other members of the community as a case of academic injustice, it serves to undermine the very values the process is supposed to affirm and celebrate. Whether a tenure decision seems unjust or not, the denied candidate suffers a substantial decrement in status and credibility. To the degree that the criteria used to award tenure are shared across institutions, being denied tenure can mean that the candidate will be unable to earn tenure anywhere and thus be denied entry into the community of scholars.

This failure to successfully complete the ordeals involved in the rite of passage, although not too unusual in modern achievement-oriented societies, is a very infrequent outcome for the traditional rites of passage that boys undergo to become men in tribal and other societies. Although the ordeals and tests can be severe in the traditional rites marking the transitions into manhood, candidates very rarely fail them. Thus the greater likelihood of failure in the academic rite of passage gives it a more severe and threatening aspect to the individual making the passage than does the traditional rite of passage.

Adding to this threat, the criteria used to judge performance often change as universities or departments raise their aspirations or change their strategies. As a result, candidates cannot be sure the criteria used to judge them will not change while they are still in their period of transition. In addition, they often face evaluation from senior faculty who could not now or ever meet the standards against which they are evaluating their juniors. This mismatch of past and present standards increases the uncertainties associated with the judgment, weakens the cultural legitimacy of the rite, and increases perceptions of injustice.

The actual granting of tenure is the final stage of the rite of passage—the *incorporation phase*. By granting tenure, the academic community accepts the candidate as a permanent member. In tribal societies, this phase usually is accomplished very ceremoniously. In modern academia, the most that successful candidates usually can expect is a celebratory cocktail party or dinner given by a friend or spouse. Rarely do the members of the relevant academic community—the candidate's department—mark the occasion with a meaningful celebration. A few handshakes and notes of congratulation are often the only signal that the candidate finally has "arrived." The successful candidate often does not feel incorporated until he or she attends a meeting of the tenured faculty, perhaps a year later when tenure decisions on the next group of candidates are to be made. At some universities, not even that is possible because no meetings of the tenured faculty as a group are held.

Despite the weakness of the incorporation phase, the tenure process seems to succeed in achieving its primary, intended, expressive consequences: facilitating the transition of junior academics into the role of professor. The fact that their past performance and future potential have been adjudged acceptable by those already in the professoriate signals to them and to others that they are worthy to join this august body. Successful candidates gain much confidence from successfully completing this passage. The tougher and more selective the ordeal, the more value is imputed

to being successful. Those candidates who have made this passage at the most elite schools with the highest standards thus have been marked as the future leaders of the field. The extent to which successful candidates are perceived (by themselves and others) as "succeeding," "achieving," and "being worthy," however, is influenced by the integrity of the tenure process.

A less obvious expressive consequence of rites of passage is that they often serve to minimize changes in the ways people carry out their social roles (Beyer & Trice, 1987). In effect, these rites ensure some measure of cultural continuity. As already pointed out, the criteria for evaluating candidates for tenure is imprecise enough to allow various pressures for conformity to enter in. Candidates for tenure fear they will be judged on such factors as dress, general deportment, ostensible agreement with their seniors on matters of academic policy, and, above all, on the types of research they do. For example, women academics may fear that if they do research on women's issues their results will be seen as peripheral to the field and therefore not worthy of tenure. Other candidates may hesitate to use certain methods or study practical problems because they fear that work will be judged unacceptable. Getman (1992) called this keeping "the younger faculty in line" and observed, "Untenured faculty learn that it is dangerous to criticize or even disagree with senior colleagues. Past slights may be revenged and new intellectual movements thwarted or hindered through adverse votes on tenure" (p. 112).

Even when senior faculty are innocent of such designs or practices, untenured faculty may fear that they could occur because they have heard of, or observed, them occurring elsewhere. The end result of these pressures can be a certain kind of uniformity, timidity, and conservatism. Junior faculty seek to make new advances in knowledge but tend to pursue their efforts within the bounds of what is academically acceptable at the time.

The granting of tenure also serves as a *rite of enhancement* that confers additional status and powers on the candidate. Tenured faculty often are asked to take on committee and other administrative assignments not requested of untenured faculty. Their new status becomes known throughout the academic community and may help to make them eligible for membership on editorial boards or for offices in professional associations. A less obvious enhancement message conveyed by the tenure rite is how important the role of professor is to the wider society and to the employing institution.

The most important cultural consequence of tenure as a rite of enhancement is that it signals to other aspirants what they have to do to achieve similar status and powers. Ideally, the tenure conferral process buttresses the central values of academia by rewarding those whose efforts and performance conform to those values and blocking entry to others. But, as already discussed, the process does not always operate in ideal fashion. Definitions of excellence vary. Many candidates are on the borderline on one or more criteria, and the judgment calls that ensue often are attributed by those not making the decision to "other" factors more political and personal than the norms prescribe. The predictable results are feelings of rage and injustice on the part of the unsuccessful candidates and cynicism and confusion on the part of those next in line. If the processes are repeatedly perceived as rewarding the "wrong" criteria, or no consistent criteria are reflected, the department and university involved may fail in its mission. How can it achieve its research goals or its teaching goals if its faculty are not certain what these are?

Perceptions of the tenure process: An organizational culture lens. Cultural norms and values were considered very influential determinants of tenure outcomes by respondents within both the political resultant and process resultant patterns (see question 6 in Figures 1 and 2). Consistencies between perceptions of our interviewees and insights from viewing the tenure process from an organizational culture perspective are noteworthy. Examples of these are presented in Table 3.

Responses to open-ended follow-up questions (e.g., "What were the cultural norms and values that influenced the outcome of your tenure case?") provide useful insight into what respondents were referring to in considering these as important tenure determinants. Replies to these questions indicate three categories of cultural norms and values: "good citizenship," "not making waves," and "understanding of thresholds and adherence to policies and procedures" (see Table 3). Consistent with the patterns, as presented in the "Decision Making" section earlier, respondents within the political resultant pattern indicated that norms concerning "good citizenship" and "not making waves" were important aspects of culture that influenced tenure outcomes, and respondents within the process resultant pattern felt that "understanding of thresholds and adherence to policies and proce-

Table 3
Basic Tenets of an Organizational Culture Perspective/Respondent Statement

An expressive consequence of rites of passage is that they often serve to minimize changes in the ways people carry out their social roles. The criteria for evaluating candidates for tenure are imprecise enough to allow various pressures for conformity.

> There just is a way that you are "supposed to be." Now when I say that, I don't necessarily say that I endorse it or I think it's right [but] I think it's the reality of the situation.

Pressures to conform extend to such factors as dress, general deportment, and lifestyle.

> You know, having married someone who wasn't accepted by the faculty. I think that could have had an influence. . . . Yeah. I think it is the whole package they look at. They look at the lifestyle, your spouse, are you a clean, living exemplar for that institution? . . . I do think that that does play a part, I don't think it would be brought up in a discussion, but it does play a part.

Of central importance is ostensible agreement with their seniors on the types of research junior faculty do. For example, women academics may fear that if they do research on women's issues, their results will be seen as peripheral and not worthy of tenure.

> I tend more and more into gender issues in organizations [now that I'm tenured] which I did not do pre-tenure review. I did some but not as much then as in the later stages. . . . I felt well, again, you are identified as a particular type . . . They just use these things against you.

Candidates may hesitate to use certain methods because they fear that work will be judged unacceptable.

> Some of my latest work is more case driven and I think that ticked off a lot of people. . . . "This is too qualitative, based on cases. How can this be good research?"

Although junior faculty seek to make new advances in knowledge, they tend to pursue their efforts within the bounds of what is academically acceptable at the time.

> The great irony of my research career is that . . . at the end of the day I think things [concerning my tenure] would have gone more smoothly around here if I did more of a straight, quiet job.

The end result of these pressures can be a certain kind of uniformity, timidity, and conservatism.

> I might very well have been a borderline case. . . . So that's why I deliberately . . . went out of my way to do things they [the senior faculty] would like rather than going against them.

Tenure criteria are imprecise, and many candidates are on the borderline; judgment calls that ensue often are attributed to factors more political and personal than norms prescribe.

> I felt I had some real friends in the department and that they would protect me through this whole process.

Predictable results are feelings of ambivalence on the part of successful candidates.

> After receiving tenure I couldn't celebrate. I didn't feel good about it because the people . . . who I felt were as good as, if not better, than I am academically did not receive tenure. And so it really dampened the whole outcome.

Cultural Norms and Values

- Good citizenship (political resultant pattern):

> The cultural norms and values that influenced the outcome within this building were . . . rewarding good citizenship and things like that.
>
> Well again I think the good citizenship aspect of it all.
>
> I think the personality and the willingness to be part of the department plays an . . . important role. . . . What is unclear . . . is . . . how you fit in to the department. That thing is a little difficult to define. While they do not want to admit that's an important criterion . . . it plays an important role.

- Not "making waves" (political resultant pattern):

> My philosophy all through the first 5 years was to lie low, not make waves, get along with people.
>
> Present the image they want; don't make waves.

- Understanding necessary thresholds and adherence to policies and procedures (process resultant pattern):

> I knew the kinds of targets that are required broadly. These are things you understand over time. They are tacit; they cannot be articulated.
>
> The required levels of publications, teaching, and service (in descending order of importance). There is a certain culture about that.

dures" were important elements of culture at their institutions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE TENURE PROCESS

So where do these conceptual descriptions and initial empirical results leave us? Viewing tenure from a decision-making perspective indicates that decisions need to be made by a select group of the faculty who have the requisite experience and knowledge. This group has considerable power over junior faculty and over the well-being of the institution. This in itself is not necessarily a problem; however, when this power is coupled with what we have called organizational politics, it rapidly becomes one. Viewing the process from a cultural perspective indicates substantial potential for developing uniformity, timidity, and conservatism among junior faculty as well as feelings of injustice and cynicism among many faculty. These analyses motivate the question of what we can do to prevent the kinds of misuse we have described and with which we are all too familiar from happening.

As argued by Getman (1992), most cases of tenure injustice involve instigators and supporters. Instigators are those who take the lead in making a case against a candidate. They tend to be motivated by base and ignoble impulses. Commitment to excellence offers a way for them to clothe their hostility in nobility. Because tenure criteria are so difficult to define, opportunities for instigators to act on their base impulses are

great. Those who support, as opposed to those who instigate, tenure injustice frequently do so with great reservation. One of the saddest features of academic life is that these supporters often sacrifice their own best values (Getman, 1992, p. 128).

We believe that two distinct but closely related mechanisms can contribute to improved, more equitable tenure processes, ones that are conducted in the best interests of the individuals and institutions involved. The first and more concrete of these is a consensually validated code of ethics. The second is a strong sense of community and a common purpose that provides a set of values, explicit behaviors, and standards that ground the code of ethics and against which faculty can monitor the tenure process. We propose that a tenure code of ethics can introduce barriers to potential instigators' subversion opportunities, whereas the community of scholars suggestion can create an organizational culture in which those who might otherwise be supporters of injustice will be more apt to take a stand for their values and those of the institution.

Tenure code of ethics. A tenure code of ethics, provided it had strong commitment from the tenure committee's members, would guard against many of the abuses mentioned earlier. Such a code, for example, could require faculty to *consider and identify* their *biases* so that a neutral or at least a balanced tenure subcommittee could be formed. Issues that might bias a committee member, positively or negatively, should be considered in determining the composition of the subcommittee. Topics such as social friendships, past experiences that might have led to hard feelings, and attitudes concerning research content or methodology would be appropriate considerations in forming the subcommittee. The code of ethics should include norms concerning *confidentiality*. Senior faculty should not be gossiping about a case, nor should they be leaking information in a way that sways the outcome (e.g., "Professor Y is a tough call because there is so much weakness, as well as some strength"; "You should see the outside reviews. Little did we know how poor the record looks to colleagues at other institutions"). In fact, all discussion about a case should be specifically restricted to designated committee and subcommittee meetings.

The code of ethics also should thoughtfully define how much of the tenure committee's work should be done *secretly*. Although secrecy tends to be a tenure norm, it may well be that more openness would help to make the process fairer because people are less likely to attempt self-serving behaviors when they can be held accountable. Having the candidate present during consideration of his or her record should be contemplated. Though it could be embarrassing for candidates to hear their work critiqued, secrecy results in candidates having no chance to defend their records. Open voting accompanied by the necessity to explain one's position also might be considered in an effort to create a more open and accountable process.

The code of ethics also should address the *candidate's rights*. It should specify the candidate's right to know what actions are taking place and why. It also should specify the extent of the candidate's involvement in the process. Should this include the submission of a personal account of his or her research, teaching, and service records; a personal presentation of the same; the nomination of a "proponent" to present his or her case; or the nomination of an "advocate" to ensure that all procedures are carried out properly?

To ensure closely reasoned decisions during the deliberation process, someone could assume the *devil's advocate* role to counteract group biases (such as *groupthink*) that could prove unfair to the candidate or run counter to the best interests of the institution. In an extension of this concept, one prominent business school assigns one faculty member to make the case for, and one to make the case against, tenure. After the cases are presented by the assigned *proponent and opponent*, the rest of the senior faculty enter the formal deliberations. The purpose of this approach is to encourage thorough analyses and open debate before the committee and to necessitate thorough preparation by all who take part.

Finally, the code of ethics needs to include an explicit statement giving *responsibility for the integrity* of the process to all members of the committee. This means that silence in the face of ambiguity and confusion as well as more outright wrongdoing violate the code. It means that all members of the committee are required to take an active role in making sure that abuses or lapses don't occur. In an effective code of ethics, silence as well as other forms of failure to act must be identified as unacceptable.

A community of scholars. Developing such a code of ethics is only part of the defense necessary to counteract Machiavellian behavior. For no matter how clear and thorough a code of ethics is, by itself it is not enough to prevent all individuals from abusing the power given to them as members of a tenure commit-

tee. Commitment, including adherence, to the code and to its purpose needs the foundational support of a true community.

In many academic institutions, faculty see themselves as individuals operating in a Hobbesian environment. This viewpoint is understandable, given the experiences most faculty have on their 10-year journey to tenure. As a doctoral student conducting original research, the individual at least temporarily becomes the world authority on the precise research question he or she is investigating. If the individual survives this trial and then succeeds in the job search process, he or she is eligible to run the tenure gauntlet. Again, this is ultimately a lonely quest, because senior colleagues will scrutinize the research output to ascertain *independent* research contribution. When teaching, a young faculty member is almost always alone in the classroom, with virtually total discretion concerning how to manage the learning experience of students. This can be a very lonely life, one that tends to result in a community of highly autonomous individuals—an atomistic faculty—rather than a community of scholars. Faculty function as a set of research and classroom entrepreneurs carrying out specialized tasks, coming together rarely for faculty meetings to discuss recruiting or implementation of administrative policies.

A second feature of this Hobbesian academic environment is that its central operating principle is exclusion. Doctoral committees are designed to weed out unworthy Ph.D. candidates; faculty recruiting is designed to eliminate low-potential candidates as early in the process as possible; and promotion and tenure committees are designed to excise those who fail to clear the hurdles of research, teaching, and service. In this last phase of exclusion, cliques and power coalitions within politicized faculty ostracize "outsiders."

A true community, in contrast, is inclusive. It is a group of academics who trust each other and who are bound together by a clear, expressed common purpose, respect for each other as individuals and professionals, and a deep interest in and concern for the vitality and integrity of the institution. When a school faculty does not constitute such a community, the temptation of some members to misuse power can overwhelm good judgment and ethical treatment of junior faculty. Even if only a few individuals engage in Machiavellian tactics, the integrity of the tenure-granting process will be compromised. Responsibility for compromised integrity lies not just in the actions of the few but in the tacit collusion of power abusers—the instigators—and those who lack the courage to speak out against them and thus become their implicit supporters (Getman, 1992).

In the presence of a true community, a coalition between Machiavellians and moral cowards cannot form: Members of a true community have obligations and concerns that extend beyond their short-term self-interests and their desire to be accepted by the "good old boys," and they are motivated, if not compelled, to articulate those obligations. Indeed, it is necessary to live up to community values in a demonstrable way to gain respect in the true community.

The two conditions necessary for the formation of a community of scholars are rites of passage and an inclusion principle. The latter is vital, indeed *primary*, because rituals can be oriented toward exclusion just as easily as they can toward inclusion. This is most obvious in fraternity hazing or the prerequisites for gang membership but is also true in the subtle testing of new members that occurs in faculty cliques. This testing may involve such things as following the lead in faculty voting, playing golf, smoking cigars together, or contributing to the ostracism of an out-group member. Such exclusionary practices are cancerous to the community and cannot be allowed to persist if the tenure process is to have integrity.

The code of ethics and community of scholars suggestions presented above can influence the integrity of the decision-making process itself. Our discussion of the tenure process as rites of passage and enhancement, however, reveal how culturally unaware we usually are to the detriment of the candidate himself or herself. As noted, although their likelihood of failure is substantially greater, tenure candidates receive little of the community support, instruction, or celebration that is typical in more traditional cultural rites. The community of scholars concept, particularly its principle of inclusion, contributes to addressing such weaknesses. Examples of more specific suggestions related to viewing the tenure process as rites of passage and of enhancement follow.

All tenure candidates experience considerable anxiety and uncertainty. Cultural practices during this period should be focused on reducing and not exacerbating the uncertainty and threat experienced. Our research indicates that regular evaluations with clear feedback to the candidates detailing how they have or have not met expectations help. Public celebrations of progress, such as getting a paper accepted for publication, also would be helpful. Some sort of regularized practice—going out for drinks together or some

equivalent social event—can be established as a departmental tradition.

When the candidate finally makes it—is awarded tenure—more efforts should be made to provide a meaningful rite of incorporation. Like some business firms do when a person reaches managerial rank after a training program, the newly tenured faculty member and partner could be invited to some social event to which only other tenured faculty are invited. There should also be some sort of public announcement at a faculty meeting, memos of announcement as soon as possible after the news is official, and maybe even the presentation of some sort of gift that marks the new status—a desk set, a new set of stationery, or another artifact associated with being academic.

Making the various stages of the rite of earning tenure more public and ceremonious also helps to make this passage more effective as a rite of enhancement. As each phase is celebrated, the candidate feels rewarded and reinforced for what he or she has accomplished thus far. At the same time, those who are watching get messages about what is approved behavior in the academic community and may be thus motivated to strive for similar accomplishments. Of course, sensitivity must be shown to those who do not "make it." Sensitivity, however, is shown more by conducting the process with integrity than by not celebrating achievement. Moreover, as various important milestones on the tenure journey are feted, celebrating achievement will become an expected norm. Practices such as those described earlier serve to mitigate the stress and reassure the person who has made progress, provide support from the relevant community, send important cultural messages of what is expected and what is approved to other candidates, and contribute to a principle of inclusion.

Rosovsky (1990) presents the case for tenure as a social contract between professor and institution, one which is consistent with our concept of community:

> I have in mind tenure as social contract: an appropriate and essential form of social contract in universities. It is appropriate because the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. It is essential because the absence of tenure would, in the long run, lower the quality of faculty. . . . Faculty are shareholders without bosses, not employees. The dean is *primus inter pares*, a colleague temporarily running the show before being replaced by another peer. (pp. 183-185)

This is an attractive perception; we find it wanting only in that it does not include rights and obligations within the wider academic community. We add that dimension. Distinguished, tenured faculty around the world participate in assessing the worth of a candidate as the local tenure committee sends them samples of the assistant professor's scholarship. The committee is to weigh the judgment of the outside experts heavily in making its decision. In this way, a newly tenured professor has a social contract with members of the discipline whose expertise has been established. The professor automatically belongs to an elite group that transcends the local institution. In this way, tenured faculty are members of a broad "community of scholars" who have responsibilities to each other. These members do not have to run for reelection, compromise first principles, or sell themselves to a fickle public. The reputation of one member depends on that of others. Membership, therefore, means upholding the highest scholarly standards and coming to the defense of members being attacked by the mean-spirited or uninformed, knowing that others will do the same. What tenure confers is much more than job security, even more than academic freedom. Tenure means being fully received by one's peers into a community of scholars.

In summary, the process by which candidates are granted or denied tenure needs oversight to be sure that both the candidates and the institution are being served well. Power is vested in senior faculty cadres, but senior faculty should not allow each other, or administrators, to abuse their power. A consciously developed and nurtured community, backed by a consensually validated code of ethics, seems to be the best way to ensure that the tenure process works well. Integrity of the tenure process is dependent on all members of the community accepting the responsibility to take an active role in making sure that abuses or lapses don't occur.

Although the tenure process is of critical importance to the direction of academic institutions, it is but one strand in a web of processes that determine that direction. The suggestions we propose, therefore, must be considered within the context of a broader web of processes that are affected by and affect the tenure process.

CONCLUSION

The conferral of tenure is among the most important cultural rites in academia. Through this rite, the academic community communicates, affirms, and celebrates its most central values. Institutional values

that are communicated by tenure processes include the weight given to issues of process integrity and fairness. As reported earlier, there appears to be substantial variability in the extent to which these values are perceived to be affirmed and communicated by business schools through their tenure processes. Of great importance to those who are responsible for the stewardship of schools of business are the effects of such perceptions on faculty attitudes and commitment.

Ultimate responsibility for improving the tenure process lies with all those involved—untenured faculty, tenured faculty, and administrators. For each of these groups we refer to Selznick's (1957) warning that failures in leadership result in short-run, opportunistic decisions and organizational drift. Selznick argued that failure of leadership is generally due to default because of lack of understanding or failure of nerve. It is hoped that the ideas presented in this article and, more important, the dialogue it is meant to motivate will contribute to greater understanding of the tenure process and to increased willingness on the part of those involved in the process to take a stand consistent with the values on which tenure is based.

APPENDIX
Methodology

Sample. We interviewed 10 individuals who had been tenure candidates within the previous 2 years. Respondents included candidates who had and who had not been granted tenure. All respondents were at North American business schools. The nine universities and business schools represented varied on a number of dimensions. Most were large (university average number of students was 31,600, range 17,500 to 50,000; business school average number of students was 3,620, range 1,250 to 8,000; business school average number of faculty was 125, range 60 to 230). All but two of the schools had Ph.D. programs. The schools were from various regions of North America.

Data gathering. Given the originality of this study, semistructured, in-depth interviews were conducted. The interviews averaged 1 hour in length (range: 30 minutes to 90 minutes). All but one interview was tape-recorded. An interview guideline was designed to ensure that we captured tenure process perceptions with minimum researcher direction or influence. The sequence of the interview, therefore, was the following:

(a) Open-ended questions: To minimize researcher effect and to uncover perceptions of the tenure process that we could not anticipate, the interviews began with a series of open-ended questions.

(b) Close-ended questions: Subsequent issues addressed in the interviews were drawn from the theoretical perspectives (i.e., culture, power and politics, economics) presented in the symposium "Understanding the Tenure Process as Business Schools Adapt to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century" (Academy of Management Meetings, 1995, Vancouver). These questions tended to be closed-ended.

(c) Open-ended follow-ups to the close-ended questions: These ensured that we gave the respondents the opportunity to add anything not yet addressed.

(Surveys and guidelines used in the interview are available from the first author.)

NOTES

1. Although different age cohorts can produce at different rates (Cole, 1979; Pfeffer, Leong, & Strehl, 1976) and are affected by departmental age distributions, a number of studies demonstrate that high producers remain high producers over the course of their career, whereas initially low producers remain less than average (Blackburn, 1972; Blackburn & Lawrence, 1986, 1995; Clark & Corcoran, 1986; Clemente & Hendricks, 1973; Cole, 1979; Crane, 1972; Long, Allison, & McGinnis, 1979; Pfeffer, 1981; Reskin, 1979, 1985). In addition, another set of studies shows little change between pre- and posttenure performance (Ashcraft, 1983; Holly, 1977; Orphen, 1982; Tien & Blackburn, 1996).

2. Examples within the past 18 months include the following: St. Bonaventure fired 22 professors, 18 of them tenured, as a "cost-cutting measure" (Cage, 1995); Bennington eliminated 20 of its 62 faculty and replaced tenure with individual contracts of 1 to 5 years ("On Bennington College," 1994); the Arizona Board of Regents debated starting their new university planned for Pimar County without tenure (Wabnick, 1994); the College of the Ozarks abolished tenure (Leatherman, 1994); Alberta's government entered discussions with its universities concerning the future of tenure (Mitchell, 1994); the American Association for Higher Education has launched an "alternatives to tenure" 2-year study, sensing broad agreement that the tenure system, as administered, is too rigid (Edgerton, 1995, pp. 3-7).

3. Of the many authors on tenure and academic freedom, we recommend Walter Metzger's piece in the *Texas Law Review* (1988) and his "good-times-bad-times" essay (1975).

4. As just one example of another promising perspective, Jay Barney (1995) has addressed tenure from organizational economics and strategic alliance perspectives.

5. The methodology used in this study is presented in the Appendix.

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