Concerns about an Administrator on the GRP

12/16/10

Potential conflict of interest

-The CRR require that a “senior administrator” serve on the GRP (370.015. section C-1), however, if an administrator who is senior to the GRP administrative member is identified as the respondent in a case, for example the Provost or Chancellor, an administrator on the GRP could be put in a position to rule against his or her direct supervisor.

-A GRP administrator’s concern about rulings that result in the disfavor of superiors has the potential to influence rulings or to create the perception of a conflict of interest that undermines the legitimacy of the grievance process.

-Administrators are under the direct authority of the Chancellor and Provost to retain and gain advancement in employment and for increases in salary that depend on job performance. This is in contrast to the two faculty members who are tenured and under the supervision of his or her department Chair, who is the faculty member’s direct superior.

The authority and influence of the administrative GRP member

-Given that a senior administrator, regardless of who it is, has had extensive experience dealing with the issues of MU governance including faculty complaints, grievances and court cases, the insights they provide are accepted as one of an “expert.”

--Despite the independent analysis of issues by faculty members on the GRP, the authority of the administrative member can weight the interpretation of grievance issues due to his or her level of expertise as an administrator. This expertise, however, is from
the perspective of an administrator and in some cases could result in a disadvantage to the grievant/

**AAUP cautions against administrators on Grievance Committees**

-In respect to faculty grievance committees the National AAUP cautions that “No officer of administration will serve on the committee.”

- In their Statement on Procedural Standards in the Renewal or Nonrenewal of Faculty Appointments the grievance committee composition is discussed:

If any faculty member alleges cause for grievance in any matter not covered by the [above] procedures described in the foregoing regulations, the faculty member may petition the elected faculty grievance committee [here name the committee] for redress… The grievance committee will consist of three [or some other number] elected members of the faculty. **No officer of administration will serve on the committee.**


**Potential Revisions of the pilot process to allow more flexibility for UM institutions:**

1) The process could allow for the option of having an Administrative Grievance Officer who first attempts to resolve the potential grievant’s concerns. If these concerns are not satisfactorily resolved the grievance will be filed a GRP consisting of three faculty members.

2) The GRP composition including an administrative member is the current policy. A second option would propose that if an administrator senior to the GRP administrative member is identified as the respondent in the case, the administrative member will be replaced by a third faculty member.