

Tenure Processes: Does USMGC Have A Separate Handbook?

USM faculty face a “six-year” tenure clock, meaning that individuals must usually apply for tenure during their sixth year of employment at USM. The USM Faculty Handbook provides the possibility of a one year extension, pending approval by the faculty member’s chairman, dean, and provost. Of course, any years credit toward tenure that have been granted to experienced faculty hires apply. Apparently, USMGC faculty face a different set of standards than Hattiesburg Faculty. Consider these cases from the three years.

As has already been reported, Francis Daniel (Assistant Professor of Management, USMGC) should have gone up for tenure during the 2004-05 school year, assuming that Daniel, who was hired in 1996 and finished his Ph.D. in 1998, got the elusive seventh year on his tenure clock. At the end of his tenure window – during which he apparently didn’t successfully achieve tenure – Daniel was given a CoB administrative position, including a reduced teaching load, stipend, and administrative assistant.

Ken Zantow (Assistant Professor of Management, USMGC), on the eve of an unsuccessful Third Year Review in 2003-04, was given a Fourth Year Review in 2004-05. In essence, Zantow received his elusive Seventh Year not at the end of his tenure window, but in the middle of it. When it was clear that his Third Year Review would reach a negative conclusion, Zantow was granted an extension.

Rob Rambo (Assistant Professor of Accounting, USMGC), whose tenure window was apparently shortened, required a “Tenure Extension Committee.” According to SEDONA, Charles Jordan (Professor of Accounting) served on the 2005-06 “Tenure Extension Committee (for Dr. Rambo).” No other reference to this or any other tenure extension committee has been mentioned around the CoB.

These three situations all involve USMGC faculty, and the usual relevant tenure-related decisions all took place prior to Hurricane Katrina. Is it just a coincidence that these three major departures from the usual process outlined in the USM Faculty Handbook all occurred with USMGC faculty?

Consider the case of Larry Eisenberg, Assistant Professor of Finance at USM in Hattiesburg, whose case follows that of Zantow. Eisenberg, upon receiving a negative Third Year Review, was not offered a Fourth Year Review as Zantow was. Instead, Eisenberg received a terminal contract. Consider also that, according to other reports on usmpride, Eisenberg produced an A-level publication since 2000, while Zantow’s best effort during that period was a C-level publication. If we were Eisenberg, we would be printing many of these documents from usmpride and creating a file, post haste.

Has “SEDONA Files” uncovered similar irregularities for the Hattiesburg Faculty that we have yet to hear about? Many other questions remain. Does the USMGC Faculty follow a different faculty handbook than the one that applies to Hattiesburg Faculty? Why do these three USMGC Faculty qualify for exemptions from the USM Faculty Handbook when others at the Hattiesburg campus do not? Even if there are not separate handbooks, it is clear that there is some sort of double standard at work here.