Appointments and Promotions

Policies concerning appointments and promotions have an obvious bearing on the quality of faculties, which in turn largely determines a university's reputation. One can hardly exaggerate the importance, therefore, of both the criteria which are kept in mind and the methods which are employed in this connection.

In some measure, problems of appointment and promotion are common to all organizations which maintain large, more or less expert staffs. (In the case of higher education, similarities are greatest with other bodies which grant tenure rights—for example, with some government offices and international agencies.) Universities occasionally consult business experts in order to benefit from such overall knowledge about personnel (as well as about structural organization, finances, etc.) as the non-academic world can provide. The guild tradition of faculties, however, is so distinct that the differences between university and business “personnel problems” are greater than the similarities. This is recognized by some business officials themselves. It seems best, therefore, to discuss university procedures simply in terms of the university setting.

Appointment of Administrators. Of primary interest are the appointment and promotion of faculty members, but that of administrative officers is also pertinent in so far as faculties are—or should be—involved in this process. The stake which faculties have in the selection of a president is obvi-
ous. In lesser degree, they are similarly concerned about the choosing of lesser officials. Yet, during most of the past, administrative officers 1 were appointed at Pennsylvania—as at many American universities—after little or no consultation with faculties. Such a procedure implied little confidence in faculty opinion and did not help faculty morale. But apart from that, did it make for the best decisions?

No one can guarantee the wisdom of either faculty or trustee judgment in selecting a president. In principle, trustees usually have two advantages: (1) they are aware of a president’s non-academic responsibilities, and (2) they are personally disinterested. (If a trustee permits extraneous considerations to influence his choice, he is presumably unfaithful to his trust.) Faculties, in contrast, are apt to think chiefly of a president’s academic role and have in that a sort of vested interest. But academic matters are, after all, of great significance; and faculties are the experts in this sphere, while trustees are laymen.

The different perspectives which trustees and faculties bring to bear on the presidency may, in at least one respect, result in the adoption of different criteria for selection. It is our own opinion that a president should almost always have been an academic man, and our impression is that the great majority of the faculty share this view. The Pennsylvania trustees, on the other hand, have not always employed this criterion in the past; and—for all we know—may not accept it in principle today.

In any case, the respective advantages of faculty and of trustee judgment make it desirable that the opinion of the one group as well as of the other should be considered. Hence, as noted before, it is encouraging that the present

1 Exclusive of chairmen.
University Manual provides for consultation of the Senate by the trustees when a president is selected.

The same comment may be made on the Manual's provisions for consultation of the Senate by the president in recommending appointments to other administrative posts, and for his contacts with a faculty in the naming of its dean. In our opinion, recent appointments testify to the wisdom of these procedures.

There are some staff members who would go further than this in urging that no administrators should be appointed without faculty approval. Such provision, in our opinion, is open to the objection noted in connection with the possible election of chairmen by departments; that is, it might delay the needed reform of a given unit. The requirement of faculty approval should be urged, we believe, only if the consultative program breaks down—that is, is not taken seriously. In that case, we are convinced, the risks involved in faculty vetoes would be less than are the dangers of entirely independent decisions by trustees or administrators. In a word, even faculty temporizing or ineffectiveness—unfortunate as it can be—is preferable in the last analysis to arbitrary rule.

Appointment of Department Chairmen. The selection of a department chairman presents special problems, not only because it is vital but also because it follows no common pattern. The Manual, as noted, states that a dean will consult the college committee on appointments and pass his recommendation up the administrative ladder. We have already stated the opinion that administrative appointment.

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3 Such opinion is reported, e.g., in the Survey study of the School of Medicine, 39.
4 Art. VII, No. 6.
is sound in principle; but that, ordinarily, the recommenda-
tion of a department should be followed. Here are the two
cardinal rules, (1) that the wishes of the department should
be seriously considered; and (2) that administrators will,
nevertheless, make their own, independent decisions.

Within the limits so set, the details of the appointive proc-
ess may well vary from college to college. One would think
that, within any given college, a common pattern would be
preferable; but some Deans may not desire even this degree
of uniformity. A single procedure will be easy to administer
and will presumably avoid uncertainty or misunderstanding,
while diversity will permit of adaptations to particular de-
partmental situations. Presumably, a Dean and his faculty
should agree on the one arrangement or the other, and the
faculty should be clearly informed of the processes to be
followed.

No such clarity seems to have obtained in the past. All
sorts of variations have appeared, and faculty members must
often have been in doubt as to what went on behind the
scenes. In certain cases, the wish of a department has been
almost automatically approved by administrators; at the
other extreme, departmental recommendations have been
vetoed and a chairman selected by administrators. Some-
times a Dean has informally consulted department members;
in other instances, an ad hoc committee has been appointed—
with or without administrators as members. Such commit-
tees, moreover, may or may not contain representatives of
the department concerned. And the retiring chairman may
or may not have exercised influence over the choice of his
successor.

Matters would be simplified if two suggestions made

[5 Chapter II.]
above were adopted: namely, if chairmen served for set terms, and if the Dean acted within an executive committee. The latter would then know well in advance when a chairman was to be appointed, could request recommendations from the department, and make its own suggestion in turn through the Dean. Presumably, the Dean of the Graduate School would also be consulted if the appointment had implications for graduate work, and likewise the "dean of faculties" (of faculty personnel) if such an official is in the picture. If no college executive committee exists, a similar role can be played by the college committee on appointments and promotions—the procedure indicated by the present Manual.

The alternative to all this is the *ad hoc* committee appointed by the Dean or other administrator. We prefer the standing committee because such a group acquires cumulative experience and sees the departmental pattern as a whole. The *ad hoc* committee can, of course, be tailored to any special case, but a standing committee is free to get all the special information desired. On this level, in any case, the decision should be made by the Dean and his committee: the upper administrators act subsequently and may then consult further with the Dean and his committee as they desire.

If an *ad hoc* committee is used, it should consult freely with any or all members of the department concerned and also consider the latter's formal recommendation. But such members should not serve on the committee, lest their presence inhibit free discussion and critical decisions. Nor, ordinarily, should administrators—other than the Dean—be members of the committee. If they are involved at this point, they will be in effect recommending to themselves on a higher level.

6 In Chapter II.
Criteria for Appointment and Promotion of Staff. The general assumption within colleges and universities is that staff appointments and promotions will be made on an individual basis. In contrast, public schools rarely maintain ranks and usually increase salaries by regular increments. Rewards for superiority have been tried on this level, but often arouse resentment among the majority of teachers. In whatever the pros and cons in lower schools may be, it is fortunate that the merit system is taken for granted in higher education.

The most obvious criterion for appointment to the faculties of the undergraduate colleges and of the Graduate School at Pennsylvania is possession of the conventional Ph.D. Certain colleges desire or even insist upon this degree for any full-time post; others do not expect it of instructors and are willing to make exceptions even in the higher ranks. Generally speaking, however, the trend has been to make the Ph.D.—or some professional equivalent—a **sine qua non** for appointments above the instructorship. Pennsylvania is typical in this respect of universities in the United States. The percentage of faculty members holding the degree in most independent colleges, however, is much lower.

As noted in Chapter I, the Ph.D. criterion for "college and

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7 In 1957, the American Federation of Teachers (A.F.L.) described merit increases as "gimmicks" intended as substitutes for "salary increases"; *N. Y. Times*, Aug. 18, 1957, 53. See also J. Belmock, "Why Teachers Fear Merit Rating," *Ed. Digest*, XXIII, Dec., 1957, 12 f.

8 Professional schools accept other degrees appropriate to their respective fields.

9 In the Arts College, nearly all full-time staff hold the degree. In the Wharton School, the ratios are: Professors, 96 percent; Asso. Professors, 90 percent; Ass't. Professors, 80 percent. Only about two percent of full-time instructors hold a doctorate. C. M. James, "Wharton School Educational Survey," F-1, 14 (1957).

10 A 1955 survey showed that, in fifty-six "private universities," about 52 percent of full-time staff (including instructors) held a doctorate; in independent, private (arts) colleges, 35 percent; in teachers' colleges, 30 percent; *N.E.A. Research Bull.*, XXXIII, No. 4, 137.
university" appointments has been subjected to sharp criticism over the last decade. The indictment takes various forms, notably, claims that the degree:

1) Covers so many fields that it is meaningless.
2) Depends on training which is too protracted and too specialized.
3) Focuses entirely on research, and so has little value for "college teachers."
4) Involves impossible burdens and so defeats its own purpose.

It is also pointed out that, whether the degree is valuable or not, the number who will take it will not approach the number of "college teachers" who will be needed. But this point is often combined in practice with an unfavorable opinion of the degree in itself. In view of what the Ph.D. has become, remarked a critic recently, the coming shortage of doctors "may not be such a bad thing." 11

The first point noted does not seem a very serious one. The Ph.D. has never indicated fields but rather a type and level of training, and the latter is a desirable function. It were easy to add such phrases as "in English" or "in chemistry" if this proves useful, just as one may add the name of the university where the degree is taken.

The view that preparation for the Ph.D. is often too protracted and specialized has, in our opinion, some validity. 12 But this comment simply implies a need for reform of graduate school procedures.

There is no doubt that doctoral training focuses on research, despite the fact that a large percentage of those who

12 See, e.g., the pronunciamento of four graduate deans in the N. Y. Times, Nov. 13, 1957.
take it become "college teachers"—who may or may not pursue research thereafter. And, as Barzun pointed out years ago, it is not true that "all teachers" must do research or that "all self-respecting institutions" must employ only productive scholars. But here, as so often, no distinction is made between teachers in university colleges and those in other types of institutions.

As far as non-university college teachers are concerned, we have no quarrel with Barzun's views; and we agree that a modified M.A. might meet the needs of such personnel better than does the conventional Ph.D. The chief difficulty here is that the M.A. now lacks prestige, and the able "college teacher" may desire as dignified a title as that of his university colleague. Experiments might therefore be made re a modified, teaching Ph.D., which would require as serious a training as that degree now does, but which would involve a shift in emphases. College teachers with M.A.'s might return to graduate schools for such a degree.

We are convinced, on the other hand, that most of those who hope to teach in university colleges should be selected and trained with a view to productive scholarship. Otherwise, a large proportion of non-creative persons will infiltrate faculties and the distinctive university function will be lost.

The number of truly original persons is, of course, relatively small, and some may hold that there are not enough of them to man even university departments. But we would think that, in a country of this size, such personnel could be found for twenty or twenty-five strong universities. Even

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13 Something over 50 percent for all fields, but much higher in the humanities; e.g., about 90 percent in English.
14 Teacher in America, 1945, 202.
15 Conversely, if such a teaching degree were made easy, it would be valueless and would hurt the standing of the Ph.D. at large.
16 Unless the university creates separate colleges or faculties with only teaching functions. See Chapter I.
within such institutions, not all those who find a place will live up to original promise. But the essential thing is that the proportion who do so will be large enough to set the tone of departments and of each university as a whole.

If this criterion is accepted, the question remains: Are the requirements of the Ph.D. the best way of meeting it? Quite serious is the criticism, now current, that taking this degree imposes impossible burdens and kills, rather than inspires, the candidate's latent creativity. Or, what is almost as bad, that the process has an opposite effect in forcing unimaginative students into plodding investigations. There is no doubt that the "Ph.D. octopus" has encouraged many labored studies, and that similar mediocrity results from subsequent demands for "productivity."

The answer here, however, is not the elimination of a research degree for university men. We would not throw the baby out with the bath. Everything possible should be done, rather, to lessen excessive pressures on young candidates and—at the same time—to refuse the research degree to those who do not show real promise along this line.

Candidates, for example, should be discouraged from working for the Ph.D. while involved in full-time teaching or in any other full-time occupation. And they should not be rewarded, meantime, for the length of either their "residence" or their theses. The less original among them, if they display other potentialities, may be diverted to teaching degrees.

Assuming these premises, we believe that universities should continue to employ the Ph.D. or its equivalent as a criterion for appointment. The great majority of the faculty interviewed at Pennsylvania shared this view.¹⁷

¹⁷ Even without reference, that is, to possible reform of the degree in one way or another.
The phrase "or its equivalent," above, relates not only to professional degrees but also to general learning and scholarly productivity—no matter how or where achieved. Educational requirements are now so formalized that there is always danger of judging a man by his tags or labels, rather than by his inherent merits. No rule about degrees should be so rigid as to preclude exceptions.

What other criteria, besides that of the Ph.D. or its equivalent, should be employed in appointments? There are many truisms here relating to personality, educational background, and so on, which hardly require discussion. Nearly everyone at Pennsylvania and elsewhere states that teaching ability should also be seriously considered.

Candidates for junior appointments are not likely to have indulged in more than a year or two of college teaching, if that—plus some experience as assistants. Their appointment is reasonably safe if senior associates have been favorably impressed. Opportunities for closer appraisal will come thereafter. It is a common mistake at this point, however, to ignore the public school experience possessed by some candidates. Such experience usually makes a man very conscious of the teaching process and provides a valuable background which has been lacking—up to now—in those who have known only the graduate school environment.

The extent to which teaching ability is weighed in senior appointments will vary with circumstances. Only well-known persons are considered and their reputation as teachers can usually be determined. Ability in graduate instruction is paramount if this is where their work will lie; but qualities as lecturers and attitudes toward students are pertinent if undergraduate classes come into the picture. Outstanding scholarship may justify appointment of even a mediocre
teacher, but contact with undergraduates should then be minimized if not eliminated.\textsuperscript{18}

What criteria, meantime, should be applied to reappointments, promotions, or salary advances made on a merit basis within any given rank? Generally speaking, what has already been said about creativity and teaching applies to promotions as well as to appointments. But the former process involves additional questions, some of them of a specific nature.

Although young scholars should be appointed to universities primarily for their originality, their first promotion or merit increase in salary need not be based on further research. At this stage they should give primary heed, for two or three years, to teaching, and they should not be burdened with immediate demands for “productivity.” If teaching then seems satisfactory, and there is evidence of general responsibility, promotion or merit increase in salary is in order. The interlude here is not long enough to divert an original mind from major interests, particularly as the latter can be maintained meanwhile during the summers. Subsequent to the first promotion or reappointment, creativity again becomes the chief criterion for advancement.\textsuperscript{19}

At this point, however, already-mentioned contingencies may arise. Dr. X, whose doctoral work was promising, has been teaching reasonably well for five years but shows no sign of returning to research. He should not then be reappointed as an assistant professor for three years, since that would assure him of tenure merely by length of service. But

\textsuperscript{18} The writer was once assistant to a distinguished professor at Pennsylvania who, in fairly large classes, could never be heard back of the second rowl

\textsuperscript{19} Such a system is occasionally formalized. At Yale, e.g., the first appointment of an assistant professor is based on teaching, the second on research.
in the rare case of Dr. Y, who under similar circumstances proves to be an outstanding teacher, there should be opportunity to move up the ladder for that reason alone. This view is based on the assumptions that the Dr. Y's (1) seem likely to "stay alive" as teachers, (2) make up not more than 20 percent of a department's personnel, and (3) may be expected to carry somewhat heavier teaching loads than do colleagues who give much time to research.

The arrangement, which should be clearly understood by all concerned, can be justified as a concession to a university college's teaching obligations. But one should remember that it also has indirect implications for research itself in terms of recruitment. Many a scholar has testified that an especially stimulating and sympathetic teacher in high school or in "college" first aroused his interest in a given field.

All of these proposals are meaningless, of course, unless fairly satisfactory means for judging research and teaching are available. The first of these is usually measured approximately by the quality and/or quantity of publications, and everyone agrees—in principle, at least—that quantity has little meaning. Estimates of quality are not easy to make and cannot be entirely objective in nature. Nevertheless, a conscientious and well-informed committee can usually reach valid decisions on this ground. They have a man's publications at hand and, in the case of older men, can also consider their professional activities and reputations.

Teaching ability is another matter. Even those staff members who insist that it should be rewarded, admit that it is very difficult to judge with any objectivity. The reputations which faculty members acquire as teachers, for better or for worse, are usually compounded of various factors—the impression they make on colleagues at a lecture or on a day-to-
day basis, occasional remarks by students, the size of elective (voluntary) classes, and so on.

Perhaps all this adds up, in many cases, to reliable estimates. But there are also haunting doubts. Colleagues, if they like a man who lacks scholarly distinction, may assume that he is at least a good teacher. Large elective classes may only indicate that a staff member is easy or perhaps a showman,20 rather than a sound instructor. And occasional remarks by students may not provide a good, random sample of undergraduate opinion.

In an effort to overcome the last-named objection, many institutions record student reactions in a systematic manner. The arrangements vary widely. All students or special groups (classes, councils, etc.) may be involved. Reports may be made every year or at longer intervals, and they may be simple or complex in form. The returns finally are sent in some cases to chairmen or deans; in others, only to the teacher himself. The latter procedure is followed at the Wharton School. The School of Medicine has its own method for eliciting student opinions and these are made known to administrators. The Dean believes that the procedure has been helpful in revealing weak areas in the teaching program.

Faculties who have had no experience with student rating systems are apt to oppose them in principle, usually on the ground that student opinion is unreliable if not meaningless.21 Conversely, faculties which have become accustomed to such procedures seem to accept or even approve them. Approval is most likely where, as in Wharton, only the teacher sees the returns. It is difficult to see why there should

20 There are ways of checking on this, however, (1) by direct observation of junior men, and (2) by comparing enrollments and grades.
21 This reaction was encountered with the majority of Arts faculty interviewed, although a minority held the opposite opinion.
be objections to such a self-rating program, provided it is not too complex and time-consuming.

Although self-rating will not aid chairmen or deans in appraising teaching ability, it may accustom a faculty to student polls and so persuade them in time to consider more far-reaching procedures. Meantime, it provides the individual teacher with student appraisals.

Our own inclination would be to go further than this on the ground that student reactions should not be ignored. Consumers are not always able to judge a product well, but their opinion is one factor to be taken into account. Some of us, recalling student days, believe that we could have given meaningful appraisals of many of our teachers, though one also changes his views in retrospect in certain cases. Generally speaking, we think university faculties are oversensitive about any check on their teaching—an attitude which, however justifiable in graduate (university) work, should not be carried down to the undergraduate level.22

We would therefore suggest that deans, in those undergraduate colleges which now take no student polls, urge their faculties to approve such a program. The returns need be shown only to the teachers themselves, but administrators could be authorized to request a copy from any teacher if they desire. The teacher should feel free to decline but, if he does so, the burden of proof would be shifted to his shoulders. One may assume that administrators would be wise enough not to judge teaching ability solely by the student returns—particularly by those from any one class or any one year.

As for the form of student polls, our preference would be for simplicity. The writer once taught in a university where

22 See Chapter I.
each class, after being given conventional grades by the teacher, rated the latter in terms of these same grades (A, B, C, etc.). Although this procedure is oversimplified and certainly not of much help to the teacher himself, it seems preferable to the other extreme. The more elaborate a rating sheet, the more pertinent is the objection that replies have little meaning. Preferably, students will be asked to rate only a few major qualities; for example: 23

(1) Is there apparent knowledge of subject?
(2) Is presentation clear? Interesting?
(3) Are there any teaching devices which are helpful?
(4) Is presentation too formal at one extreme, or too rambling at the other?
(5) Do you acquire worthwhile knowledge or ideas?
(6) Is there a friendly interest in the class?
(7) Are there any personal limitations or idiosyncrasies which lessen teaching effectiveness?
(8) What is your over-all rating?

Even a list of this length involves some overlapping of categories and some qualitative judgments on which students might legitimately differ among themselves. The list could doubtless be tightened up and made more exact by those accustomed to the preparation of questionnaires.

So much for the major criteria of research and teaching. As noted, there are other tests which would usually be taken for granted, such as those relating to personality and to open-mindedness in one's own field. Yet within any discipline which is inexact, a particular "school of thought" may come to dominate a department or a small college. Where such

situations obtain, efforts—including the appointment of more open-minded persons—should be made to overcome them.24

As a final comment on promotions, one may note that certain services—quite apart from research or teaching—are often viewed as factors which deserve consideration. An assistant—or associate—professor may, for example, have given excellent service on committees, in special administrative roles, or to activities of value to the community. Conversely, another man may be known for his disinclination to serve the University along these lines. It is only human to reward the one type and not the other.

Within narrow limits, moreover, such action seems justifiable, particularly in cases where there is a nice balance of opinion for and against promotion. But these special services, as criteria, should always be subsidiary to major considerations re teaching and research. If a man’s administrative work merits distinctive recognition, for example, an administrative appointment may be in order; but two values are being confused if he is rewarded, rather, by promotion in academic rank.

Some may hold, nevertheless, that a man who gives much time to administrative or community functions should not be expected to publish much in qualifying for promotion. Would he not be at a disadvantage in comparison with a colleague who gives all his time to teaching and research? In reply, one may note that the most time-consuming special services are usually demanded of professors who are beyond promotion in any case. Among such men, special services could indeed be accepted in lieu of publications as meriting salary increases. In lower ranks, men with special

24 This point is emphasized in the Educational Survey Report on the School of Social Work.
burdens should be relieved of some teaching load rather than of responsibility for creative work.

*Procedures Used in Appointments and Promotions.* Appointments to the lowest ranks (assistants or instructors) is a simple matter in most American universities. A chairman usually recommends to a Dean or to a college executive committee, and approval at that level is final. Endorsement by higher administrative officers, if required, is rarely more than a formality.

Procedures involving higher ranks are more complex. Within a department, the chairman usually consults at least the senior members, and some of these units even secure formal votes on recommendations to be made.25 Initiative is usually taken by departments regarding higher as well as lower ranks, though some institutions still leave all such actions primarily in the hands of administrators.26

Upon receiving departmental recommendations involving upper ranks, an administrative officer or executive group usually consults a college faculty committee before reaching a decision. The latter may take any one of various forms. It may be appointed or elected, standing or *ad hoc*, specific or general in functions, merely advisory or entitled to make its own recommendations, and it may or may not include members of the department concerned. After this committee has been consulted, the Dean or executive body passes recommendations on up to higher administrators. The latter consult among themselves on the University level, ask for any further advice which is desired, and make final proposals to the trustees.

26 This was true of about 30 percent of 80 institutions recently studied by Clark Byse and L. Joughin, but not all of these were universities. “Tenure Plans and Practices in American Higher Education,” 1957, 19 ff.
Such, with rare exceptions, are the procedures followed at Pennsylvania. Within the limits implied, however, some variations obtain among the different colleges, and these may be illustrated by the practices of the Arts College, the Engineering Schools, the School of Medicine, and the School of Veterinary Medicine.

In the Arts College, the Dean refers departmental recommendations to a “personnel panel” of ten to twelve faculty members. This body, largely limited to professors, is elected by the faculty and operates through subcommittees for special cases. It reports back to the Dean. The latter then recommends to the provost, noting the opinion of the committee if it differs from his own.

In the Engineering Schools, an administratively-appointed faculty personnel committee of 21 (of all ranks) also operates through subcommittees. The procedure of this committee is unusual in that it will consider proposals brought before it by any faculty member—with or without the approval of the “directors.” 27 The personnel committee makes recommendations directly to the Vice President for the Engineering Schools.

The School of Veterinary Medicine has an executive committee made up of department chairmen, and departmental proposals go to this group. The Dean “abides by” its recommendations, which are then submitted to the whole college faculty. The latter’s decisions are apparently final in the case of junior ranks, but, otherwise, are submitted to the medical vice president.28

The simplicity of the School of Veterinary Medicine organization may be ascribed, at least in part, to its small

27 Heads of particular schools, who correspond to chairmen of large departments.
size. Quite the reverse is the scale of the School of Medicine, with a faculty of about 1,100 and a large council of full professors. This council chooses an executive committee of thirty-one, which is the real governing body. Lower-rank actions 29 are initiated by chairmen and then submitted by the Dean to the executive committee. This committee's decisions re lower ranks are final, but it elects ad hoc committees (which also include administrators) to consider upper-rank proposals. If the ad hoc committee disapproves a chairman's recommendation, the latter may withdraw it. But if he insists, the committee must report its own recommendation back to the executive committee, which then passes it up with their own comments to the medical vice president. The Dean expresses his views in the executive committee, but cannot block the procedure noted.

Once a recommendation reaches a vice provost, provost, or vice president, it is referred to a University committee on appointments and promotions which is made up of such officers and the president. This administrative committee gives serious consideration to upper-rank proposals and makes the final recommendations to trustees. 30 To sum up, most actions of this nature at Pennsylvania are formulated within a department, are then considered at the college level jointly by faculty groups and administrators, and then are finally passed on at the University level by top administrators.

Generally speaking, these procedures make for careful decisions—the more so, we believe, because faculty committees are now influential on the college level. 31 Committees seem adequate and, indeed, more effective for this purpose than are entire college faculties, although certain institutions,

29 Below assistant professor.
30 Trustee disapproval is rare.
31 Only a decade ago, e.g., the arts college dean still acted independently, without advice from a "personnel panel."
such as Yale College, submit actions concerning upper ranks to the whole senior faculty. Such a process, similar to that followed in Continental universities, demands too much of the members unless the college is small.

Certain other universities bring faculty committees into senior appointment-and-promotion actions on the university level. At California (Berkeley), for example, such recommendations for all colleges are acted on by the University Senate committee on budgets and interdepartmental relations, which reports to the president. At Johns Hopkins, again, the faculty-elected Academic Council appoints ad hoc university committees, and recommends directly to the provost and president.

Conceivably, an all-university faculty committee could be set up likewise at Pennsylvania to pass on all recommendations coming from colleges and to recommend directly to the president. Such a super-committee could be appointed by the president or chosen by the Senate. It might occasionally check on low standards in a weak college which had slipped past administrators, even as the latter are expected to check any laxity on the part of departmental or college faculties. But an all-university faculty committee is open to three objections. First, it would insert another reviewing body and so complicate the machinery. Second, it would oversee so many colleges that, apart from the burdens involved, it could hardly add much to the president's understanding. Third, any virtue it might possess in regard to representing the faculty can be attained just as effectively on the college level.

It is apparent that, in the procedures at Pennsylvania, negative actions can be taken at each level on recommendations from below. But final decisions are only reached on the upper level; deans, for example, may not block the processing

32 Except for the "Medical Institutions."
of recommendations and their views can be reversed above. The need for such qualified authority has been recognized here; and we would only add the suggestion that, in case of negative actions, an explanation should be returned down the line. Otherwise, decisions may seem arbitrary. Thus, a chairman should be told if and why the Dean or committee has disapproved his recommendation; and a similar explanation is owed the Dean if his decision has been reversed above.

The degree to which the appointment-and-promotion process may be reversed at Pennsylvania by administrative initiative is not clear. Certainly, the right to do this should be maintained but exercised with due discretion. And the process should then indeed be reversed; that is, the administrator or committee should seek departmental approval. Only in exceptional cases, as when a department needs reorganization, should administrators—as a last resort—act in opposition to a department’s wishes. And here, again, explanations are in order.

Regardless of what channels are followed in processing recommendations, one must also consider (1) what methods are used for securing information, (2) what time schedules are employed, and (3) what appeal procedures are available.

The methods used for securing information on faculty personnel are fairly obvious. Part-time assistants are usually chosen from among local graduate students already known to department members. If candidates apply from other institutions, their records and opinions of their professors must usually suffice, but interviews may help if feasible. Opinions submitted from the outside, regardless of the rank involved, must be read critically—especially in the case of a professor who is recommending a former student. The former’s estimate may be essential, since he probably knows the man in
question better than does anyone else. But the situation re-
quires that the department, as far as is possible, evaluate the
sponsor as well as the candidate. This lesson, unfortunately,
is often learned only by experience.

Appointments to the rank of instructor or assistant profes-
sor, if the candidate is not known locally, should involve in-
terviews as well as letters, and examination of his thesis or
other writings. If someone can visit the man on his own
campus and perhaps sit in on one of his classes, so much the
better. It is simpler to bring a man on to the University, but
interviews so arranged are apt to be awkward and not too
revealing.

Appointments to senior ranks also involve the procedures
noted, although a candidate’s general reputation will be well
known. He can be asked to give one or more lectures; and it
is even better, if feasible, to invite him to teach at the Uni-
versity for one or two semesters.

Promotions to senior ranks involve scholars who are fa-
miliar figures in a department, and in many cases the staff
will feel no need for outside evaluations. They may well se-
cure the opinion of local colleagues in related fields, how-
ever, unless they wish to leave this to the Dean and his
personnel committee.

Opinions differ sharply on whether, in addition, outside
opinions should be solicited. Some professors object that it is
“absurd” or “embarrassing” to ask outsiders about “our own
men” at this stage. Yet, in the well-known ad hoc commit-
tees at Harvard, two or three scholars from other universities
—representing the field involved—are usually brought in as
members. Their opinions are considered, along with those of
Harvard professors in related fields, in formulating recom-
mandations that go directly to the president.

This procedure, in our opinion, has both the advantages
and limitations of any ad hoc arrangement. Our own preference for standing committees has already been indicated. But if the Harvard type of committee is used, the writer believes that the presence of the outsiders can be helpful. After all or nearly all Harvard members have agreed that X is the "best man in the country" for the post, an outsider may declare that Y in some other institution is even better. At this point, everyone sits up and takes notice!

The writer is inclined to agree, however, that the views of outsiders elicited only by mail are of uncertain value. The man who responds, with no responsibilities and no one to question, may see little point in hurting the chances of "X" at some other university. Moreover, a chairman who desires promotion for "X" may consciously or unconsciously select sponsors who are apt to be favorable. De candidato, nil nisi bonum.33

The opinion of outsiders is brought to bear on a department, of course, whenever a member receives "offers" from other institutions. If the latter are reputable, the department is rightly impressed and may be justified in seeking promotion and/or salary increase in an effort to "hold" the man in question. It is unfortunate, nevertheless, if such pressure is the chief or even the only means by which advancement may be secured.

There may be situations in which administrators, hard-pressed for funds, naturally allocate them to those desired faculty members who would otherwise go elsewhere. But the faculty are then tempted to seek invitations which, actually, they would not wish to accept. The unwary man may be hoisted here by his own petard if his department does not wish to hold him. But if the reverse is true, the department

33 This is not to deny that, in a particular situation, some outsider's opinion may be helpful.
should have been able to evaluate him on his inherent ability without waiting for another institution to do this for them. The writer's impression is that advances are now less dependent on outside pressures than was true a generation ago. If so, the trend has been salutary.

In the matter of timing actions, some departments at Pennsylvania employ rather casual procedures; others follow a formal schedule. The latter is doubtless more necessary in large departments, particularly in those in which the chairman consults all senior members or even the entire full-time staff. Preferably, the status of each member should be evaluated regularly each year. This may be done by the chairman in consultation with his colleagues in terms of whatever procedures the department employs.

If, as recommended, the chairman makes an annual report to the Dean, these evaluations should be included. They can then be made the basis for subsequent annual evaluations by the college personnel committee—which may or may not agree with those of the department. The former's functions include not only a check on undesirable advances, but also a searching out of cases of departmental neglect.

Whatever departmental procedures are followed, they should be so correlated with those of the college authorities that men, if notified about recommendations, are not kept long in suspense about decisions. And the final decisions should be announced not later than about March 1. If delayed thereafter, the staff member has little chance to adjust his own plans for the ensuing academic year.

Appeals. What, finally, of the staff member who believes that his advancement is long overdue but that there is no inclination to grant it? In principle, opportunity for appeal should be provided, even though, in many cases, advance
may not be merited. Able persons are occasionally neglected by their departments for one reason or another. At Pennsylvania, some men have gone to deans and their appeals have been considered. But others do not know whether such a right exists. The situation is uncertain and should be clarified in the *Manual* or elsewhere.

The chief problem involved in appeals is the level on which decisions should be reached. Some institutions provide for high-level consideration. At Princeton, for example, a University committee with this function has direct access to the trustees. It would seem more feasible in large universities to permit appeals only over the head of the department to the Dean and his committee. Even though the latter considers all personnel in due course, the impact of a direct petition would make for special consideration. There is no objection in principle, however, if appeals are permitted to go up to the provost or to a vice president, if they prove so rare as to impose no burden on these officers.