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Beliefs about Post-Tenure Review

The Influence of Autonomy, Collegiality, Career Stage, and Institutional Context

Introduction

Post-tenure review is a hot topic in higher education these days. Critics argue that post-tenure review "dampens creativity and collegial relationships and threatens academic freedom" (AAUP, 1995, p. 49), while advocates suggest that it enhances faculty performance by guaranteeing systematic, continuous, and comprehensive feedback and opportunities for professional growth (Lees, Hook, & Powers, 1999; Licata & Morreale, 1997; Plater, 2001). But neither critics nor advocates have much evidence to support their claims. Little is known about the actual implementation of post-tenure review within large state systems (Alstete, 2000; Licata & Morreale, 1997). Likewise, few studies have explored faculty beliefs about and response to post-tenure review. There are a few notable exceptions. Goodman (1994) studied the outcomes of post-tenure review at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and found that "the program tended to enhance faculty morale and sense of purpose and engagement in their disciplines" (p. 93). However, other research suggests that faculty think post-tenure review is unnecessary, experience little to no benefit, and often experience it as a threat (Harris, 1996; Licata, 1986; Wesson & Johnson, 1989). A recent study by Wood & Johnsrud, (2001) explored faculty values and beliefs regarding post-tenure review in two public doctoral/research extensive universities in the Western United States. Findings suggest that union re-

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sistance to post-tenure review influences faculty perceptions of its implementation and that rather than being a "scholarly form of continuous quality improvement," post-tenure review can be "a continuous thorn that pricks at a number of cultural values" (p. 20). This research is consistent with Licata & Morreale's (1997) finding that faculty resistance to post-tenure is often related to a belief that post-tenure review threatens established faculty values and institutional mores. Clearly, additional research is needed to explore faculty beliefs about and experiences with post-tenure review as well as the factors that influence beliefs.

Conceptual Framework

This article draws upon the literature on academic culture and the academic profession to provide a context for beliefs about post-tenure review. Schein's (1992) theory of organizational culture and Kuh & Whitt's (1988) application of cultural theory to higher education settings divides culture into a conceptual hierarchy comprised of three levels—artifacts, values and beliefs, and basic assumptions. This study focused on the middle layer of Schein's three levels of culture—values and beliefs. Values are "widely held sentiments about the importance of certain goals, activities, relations and feelings" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 23). Common understandings between people about what is right or wrong, or what ought to be, are examples of values (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1992).

Values influence peoples' beliefs within specific contexts and/or groups. This study focused on the influence of commonly held values within the academic profession on beliefs about post-tenure review. Tierney and Rhoads (1993) define a profession as a "group of people who engage in similar types of work, share common values and beliefs and derive a similar sense of identity from their work (p. 11)." Across academic specialties and institutional types, three basic values are shared by faculty, two of which, autonomy and collegiality, are explored in this article (Birnbaum, 1988; Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Clark, 1984, 1987; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Autonomy in the conduct of academic work is viewed by most faculty as necessary to the advancement of learning, and is reinforced through peer review and the promotion and tenure system (Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, & Bensimon, 1996). Autonomy is considered a major value and benefit of an academic career. In the 1998–1999 HERI survey data, faculty rated "autonomy and independence" very satisfactory or satisfactory 86.8% of the time, the highest of 14 work and career satisfaction factors (American College Teacher, 1998). Rosovsky (1990) fondly described the satis-

faction he and other faculty experienced in autonomy: "A critical virtue of academic life . . . is the absence of a boss. [As] a professor I recognized no master save peer pressure. No profession guarantees its practitioners such independence as university research and teaching" (p. 163–164).

The concept of collegiality is based on the ideal of a community of scholars whereby "mutual support and opportunities for social interaction" reinforce learning for all (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 76). Faculty view collegiality between department colleagues as essential to the maintenance of shared governance. Researchers have examined and often found positive relationships between faculty members' experience of autonomy and collegiality and their performance, behavior, satisfaction, and morale. (American College Teacher, 1998; Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). However, few studies have explored the influence of these two values on beliefs about post-tenure review Research shows that beliefs ultimately influence behavior (ACE, 1999; Birnbaum, 1988; Van Maanen, 1984). Change efforts that contradict sacred values are likely to be seen as illegitimate, and ultimately fail (ACE, 1999; Bolman & Deal, 1991; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990; Weick, 1995). Because faculty and department chairs have primary control over the faculty evaluation process at the department level (Birnbaum, 1988; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), their beliefs concerning the purposes, processes, and outcomes of post-tenure review will have a significant influence on how post-tenure review is implemented. Consequently, it is important to try to understand beliefs and the factors influencing beliefs related to post-tenure review. Three research questions guided this study: What beliefs influenced the first-year implementation of post-tenure review in one state system? Did the academic values of autonomy and collegiality influence these beliefs? What other factor(s) influenced beliefs about post-tenure review and/or its implementation?

Methodology

This study investigated beliefs held by faculty and administrators that influenced the first-year implementation of post-tenure review and the factors that influenced those beliefs. The goal of this study was to identify patterns of beliefs and their influences across four campuses within one state system. The term "implementation" is intentionally broad to include the decisions made by faculty, department chairs, personnel committees, and deans to execute a new post-tenure review policy as well as voiced opinions and behaviors of the same group, which influ-

enced implementation. While the literature on organizational culture suggests that demographic variables, such as discipline, rank, gender and ethnicity, may comprise subgroups that are likely to hold different perceptions about tenure and post-tenure review (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), recent research findings suggest that faculty response to post-tenure review is not significantly influenced by discipline, rank, gender, or ethnicity (Wood & Johnsrud, 2001). In addition, research suggests that in unionized environments faculty beliefs regarding employment are more similar than different across disciplines and institutional types (Arnold, 2000; Wood & Johnsrud, 2001). The state system examined in this study was unionized. Therefore, this research focused on faculty and administrator beliefs across ranks (associate and full professor), disciplines, gender, ethnicity, and institutional type.

This study employed the revelatory multiple case study method in order to build explanations (Yin, 1994) within and across the four state institutions. Revelatory multiple case study designs are used when the researcher has unusual access to study and observe a phenomenon that has been previously inaccessible or understudied (Yin, 1994, p. 41). In order to protect the anonymity of those interviewed, the state system studied will be described as the University of X. The primary data-gathering technique employed to develop case studies was interviews. Interviews have been found to be the most effective means to uncover beliefs and values, understand how actors make meaning of processes, experiences, and structures, and explore the nature of culture and cultural process (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1992; Yin, 1994). Documents such as post-tenure review policies, memoranda, related reports, newspaper articles, spreadsheets with information on post-tenure review participants, professional development center materials, and memoranda from union leadership to faculty also contributed to the database. Documents were obtained through primary informants, faculty, and the system administration.

The post-tenure review process involves multiple constituents including but not limited to tenured faculty, department chairs, personnel committee members, and deans and provosts. Because each party might view the process differently, three different interview protocols for administrators, faculty, and personnel committees were designed to explore the first-year implementation of post-tenure review.

From February, 2001 through April, 2001, semistructured interviews were conducted with provosts, deans, department chairs, personnel committee members, and faculty involved in the post-tenure review process during its first year (1999–2000). Site visits (1–3 days) were conducted to each of the four campuses, and follow-up interviews were conducted

by phone. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour in length. The number of interviews distributed over the four campuses was representative of the number of faculty who underwent post-tenure review across departments and institutions. Academic administrators on each of the four campuses acted as primary informants and assisted in selecting participants. Attempts were made to interview a mix of full and associate professors, faculty whose self-evaluations were immediately accepted and those who were asked to revise, and faculty with positive, negative, and neutral experiences with post-tenure review.

In total, 50 people were interviewed. Participants included: 19 faculty who underwent post-tenure review; 8 department chairs; 7 personnel committee members (faculty members in their role as committee members); 6 deans; 6 administrators from academic affairs/provost offices; and 4 university provosts (interviewed as a group). While many of the individuals above held multiple roles in this process, no one is counted twice, and everyone was interviewed based on one primary role (faculty member, personnel committee member, department chair, dean, academic affairs administrator, or provost). Anonymity was promised to each participant so he/she could be honest and not fear retribution for such honesty.

Data analysis began with the reading and rereading of interview transcripts and related documents, coding them, and then revising the coding, as categories emerged from the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Coding reduced the data into smaller chunks or units from which patterns emerged. Recurring words and phrases were marked and used to develop theme statements. I looked for, recorded, and analyzed divergent data that contradicted these statements (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1994). To ensure trustworthiness, I tried—as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest—to keep "triangulation as a state of mind" (p. 235). I used multiple sources of evidence and employed different methods to collect evidence, established a case study database, developed a chain of evidence, and operated the study at different levels of the four institutions to verify my conclusions (Yin, 1994).

The Context: Post-tenure review within four campuses of the University of X. Part of the University's institutional history was an often antagonistic relationship between unionized faculty and the University of X's administration, board of trustees, and the state legislature; faculty distrust of administration-led initiatives; and a faculty consensus that faculty were already overevaluated. Perhaps in response to feeling overevaluated, faculty and department chairs reported that there was a history of not providing substantive performance feedback to tenured faculty in annual reviews, merit reviews, or related evaluations (other

than promotion). When post-tenure review was first proposed by administration and the board of trustees, University of X faculty unions fought its implementation, only agreeing to it as part of a negotiated pay raise during contract negotiations. Each of the faculty unions were instrumental in negotiating a post-tenure review policy that was more formative (developmental) than summative (punitive). During academic year 1999–2000, for the first time, the University of X implemented an evaluation of tenured faculty on four campuses. By 2000 Carnegie classification standards two of the four campuses are doctoral/research intensive, one doctoral/research extensive, and one masters I. Each campus post-tenure review policy requires tenured faculty to undergo an evaluation every seven years unless the faculty member gives written notice of his or her intention to retire within three years of receiving notification of their review. Faculty under review submit self-assessments of their performance in teaching, research, and service that are reviewed by department and college personnel committees, the department chair, and the dean. There are two possible outcomes from a post-tenure review: an approval and acceptance of the self-assessment or a request by the personnel committee to revise and resubmit it. Each process includes professional development opportunities for faculty (three campuses offer small stipends). The policy states that faculty whose performance is deemed unsatisfactory must submit professional development plans and be evaluated again in three years.

In September 1999, 15% of the tenured faculty across the four campuses were notified that they would undergo a post-tenure review. About 5% of this group received waivers from post-tenure review because of retirement decisions, promotion review, administrative appointments, leaves of absence, or sabbaticals. In the end, 173 faculty, or 10% of the tenured faculty, went through a post-tenure review in 1999–2000. Of this number, 129 (75%) were full professors, 42 (24%) were associate professors, and 2 (1%) were assistant professors. Of the 173 faculty to undergo a post-tenure review, 157 were immediately accepted, and the remaining 16 faculty were asked to revise their self-assessments.

Findings

In the findings section, beliefs about the purposes, processes, and outcomes of post-tenure review are presented as subheads, employing phrases commonly used by participants. The beliefs are presented in this order because beliefs about the purposes of post-tenure review influenced beliefs about the process, and beliefs about the process influenced beliefs about outcomes. The discussion section outlines the influence of

the values of autonomy and collegiality, career stage, and institutional history and context on beliefs.

About three quarters of faculty, three quarters of department chairs, and all personnel committee members interviewed were aligned in their mostly negative views of post-tenure review. Most department chairs and personnel committee members were also tenured faculty who had undergone or would undergo post-tenure review. In this way, they could be considered faculty "allies" in considering this issue. About three quarters of Deans, all academic administrators, all Provosts, one quarter of department chairs, and one quarter of faculty were aligned in their more positive views of post-tenure review purposes, processes, and outcomes.

The Origins and Purposes of Post-Tenure Review

Beliefs in this section followed two patterns; beliefs about post-tenure review in general, (i.e. post-tenure review is...), and a belief about how post-tenure review came to exist in the University of X system.

"Post-tenure review is an attack on the tenure system, faculty, and how faculty work." As state systems around the country considered implementing post-tenure review in the mid-to late 1990s, University of X faculty received the majority of their information from two places—the media and their campus unions. Within the national and state media faculty listened and read as state legislators and even some of their own board members discussed the University of X's problem of faculty with "jobs for life," a "lack of accountability for faculty work," and the need to, "get rid of deadwood." In this way, post-tenure review was described as a solution, and the problem was defined as the current way faculty worked and were evaluated. Increasing accountability seemed to faculty to be "code words" for changing academic culture and the nature of how faculty worked. The consequence of this media discussion of post-tenure review was that from the very beginning faculty saw post-tenure review as an attack by outsiders on them and their culture, something that they needed to defend themselves against. As one faculty member said, "The major goal of post-tenure review was for trustees to respond to the pressures from the public that tenure was a job for life." Another faculty member said, "The purpose of post-tenure review was to palliate the state legislature to make sure those of us with tenure were working." A dean concurred, "The official goals of post-tenure review were ongoing faculty development and ways to cope with career change, but shadow goals were to respond to the sense in the public culture that the academy was full of deadbeats and the public's resentment of academic's lack of a time-controlled culture."

"We were forced into post-tenure review." University of X faculty experienced their second major exposure to post-tenure review during union meetings and open forums held on each campus while the policy was being negotiated as part of faculty contract renewal. Emanating from these meetings there was a widespread belief among faculty that if they voted affirmatively for post-tenure review they would receive a pay raise in their next contract; conversely, if they voted against post-tenure review they would not receive the raise. While the contract negotiation process was much more complex than that perception, academic administrators confirmed that approving post-tenure review was associated with a negotiated pay raise in faculty contracts. The information that faculty received about post-tenure review from union communications seemed to leave two lasting impressions on faculty about its origins and purposes. First, by virtue of it having been "placed on the table" by administration, there was a belief that post-tenure review was something faculty were "forced into" by the administration, and second, that agreeing to post-tenure review meant "giving up" a long-held "right."

"Post-tenure review tampers with rights and privileges." About one quarter of the faculty, department chairs, and personnel committee members stated directly in interviews that simply the creation of post-tenure review took away from tenured faculty a right or privilege that they had earned. Several faculty members referred to the union's decision to "trade money for a right." By "right" faculty referred to a certain degree of autonomy they had held after receiving tenure. A department chair explained, "Faculty became faculty so they would not have to report to anybody," while a faculty member said, "Post-tenure review negated tenure." The regret and frustration faculty felt was palpable. One late-career faculty member explained nostalgically: "The end of the line isn't how I envisioned it, the community of scholars. As a young faculty member I saw my older colleagues put out to pasture with much more dignity, as trusted mentors with freedom to do what they wanted, but not here." A few late-career faculty felt they had experienced greater autonomy before post-tenure review and by virtue of having been at their institution many years, had seen their elder colleagues "own" more autonomy than they now held. They felt this was unfair.

"Post-tenure review is surveillance, not development or assistance." The administration made several attempts, but was mostly ineffective in terms of presenting to faculty alternative images and explanations for the purpose and utility of post-tenure review before or after it was adopted. Within the University of X system there existed an "us against them" mentality; with "us" pertaining to the faculty, their department chairs and personnel committees, and "them" referring to the state legis-

lature and board of trustees. The fact that post-tenure review seemed to have emerged from "them" contributed to the majority of faculty member's beliefs that post-tenure review's purposes were to get rid of deadwood, to control unproductive faculty, and to weed out faculty who did not meet administrator standards, not to foster faculty development. One faculty member said, "Not knowing what ulterior motives the president's office has is a problem. There is a history of the president doing things that make faculty leery. The president doesn't have respect for faculty, and faculty distrust him." A department chair said, "I do not recall being told the goals (of post-tenure review). Someone on the top of the food chain wants to start firing people, I guess." Another faculty member said: "It would be useful for the President's office to tell us in detail what this is about and why we should do this; by not doing that there is a feeling that the President's office is looking at us like tigers in circus cases, the tigers go back and forth because the guy with a gun says to." Department chairs and personnel committees were especially outspoken about their discomfort with post-tenure review's "surveillance" function. In the absence of a strong and persuasive voice advocating how post-tenure review would benefit faculty and their departments, these groups held onto the images they had gleaned from the media and the union throughout the first year implementation.

"Post-tenure review is redundant, unnecessary, extra work." Initially, most faculty, department chairs, and personnel committees were concerned post-tenure review would significantly add to their workload. They felt that the very detailed annual review process was a sufficient form of faculty evaluation. Although this same group later reported that the paperwork involved in post-tenure review turned out to be "no big deal," they nonetheless maintained the position that the few hours spent preparing their post-tenure review was a waste of time. One personnel committee member said: "This is one more bit of work, and we are already super-serious [about faculty evaluation]. Our committee is very labor intensive. What could we possibly get out of this? This is yet another layer of bureaucracy, another duty imposed by administration, one we were already involved in. This is not useful for faculty. It is useful for administrators." There was a general belief within these campus cultures that faculty, department chairs, and personnel committees were overworked. Consequently, they saw no good reason why these groups should have to produce anything "extra," especially if there was no perceived benefit to faculty. One late-career faculty member expressed considerable anger with this belief, suggesting that she had been violated or at least profoundly disrespected by being required to complete a post-tenure review: "This is my thirty-first year here, I built this institution.

By the time we get to post-tenure review we have been evaluated annually, [most] promoted to full professor. I was ripped because I knew nothing would come of it. It [the work related to post-tenure review] was a non-sensible, futile act."

"Post-tenure review has benefits." About one quarter of the faculty and department chairs and all academic administrators believed post-tenure review had some positive benefits for faculty, including the opportunity for faculty to reflect on future career directions, get up to speed on current issues in their disciplines, and interact with, and reinvest in their departments. One faculty member said, "It does give you a sense of confidence that eagerly, willingly, even reluctantly, they [administration] looked at my future plans and said okay. It created a motivation in me." This group saw post-tenure review as having institutional benefits as well, including holding faculty accountable for future plans and influencing the productivity of faculty who had slowed down. A department chair on one of the campuses that had combined post-tenure review and an accreditation process said it helped his faculty "to rethink their roles in relationship to the department." A few faculty members and department chairs noted their belief that post-tenure review increased collegiality within their departments by virtue of giving more faculty knowledge of and appreciation for each others' work.

The Process of Post-Tenure Review: Performance Feedback and Peer Review

Beliefs about the process of post-tenure review focused on peer review and performance feedback. "Performance Feedback" refers to a process by which one or more of these parties might have provided useful, concrete, and substantial comments and reflections on faculty members' work with the goal of assisting them in meeting their career goals and improving their job performance. About three quarters of faculty who participated in post-tenure review said they received little (one paragraph) to no performance feedback on their self-assessments from department chairs, personnel committees, deans, or the provost. In this section, beliefs that supported the practice of not providing performance feedback as part of the peer review of tenured faculty work are described.

"Giving performance feedback to tenured faculty is inappropriate, not collegial, and hard." The majority of faculty, department chairs and personnel committee members believed that providing substantive performance feedback to tenured colleagues through post-tenure review, whether positive, negative, or neutral, was a bad idea. There were several reasons given. First, it was not believed to be the university's or departments' role to provide "career advice" to faculty members, given

their tenure contract with the university. Faculty equated tenure with autonomy over career decisions and freedom from exactly this kind of evaluation. One late-career professor said, "Mostly this kind of thing is better for therapy—not the business of the university. The university has no right to tread into things that belong in a psychiatrist's office." A department chair said, "It is the tenet of an unwritten contract, academic freedom to pursue what you consider important." A second department chair concurred, "It goes to the freedom of scholars," implying that any substantive feedback would violate a cultural value and understanding within their department. A third department chair agreed, "People seem to know the direction of their careers and don't need us to suggest it for them; it is pretty hard to do that anyway." These faculty and department chairs felt that academic freedom guaranteed tenured faculty autonomy in their work so that no administrator could "direct" any aspect of their teaching, research, or service responsibilities, and substantive performance feedback might damage that valued independence.

There was also a belief that providing substantive feedback was not collegial. A faculty member said, "We are all brought up to be courteous and forgiving and not call people on things." A department chair said, "Because of professional respect we won't tell that person anything [negative]." Faculty, department chairs and personnel committee members prized collegiality, and because they felt reviewing their tenured colleagues in any depth or with any critique was not collegial, they did not believe they should do it.

For all of these reasons, offering performance feedback during the post-tenure review process was considered to be hard. One faculty member said, "It is difficult for me to imagine one colleague saying to another, 'This isn't good enough for post-tenure review.' It is a delicate business giving critical feedback, the chair will remind people to have office hours but otherwise. . . ." A personnel committee member explained, "Critical feedback is hard (to give) if not impossible, and that's why it only happens in reaction to crisis."

"We don't really have the information to provide performance feedback." Even if providing performance feedback were something that department chairs and personnel committees felt was appropriate and within the bounds of collegiality, they did not believe that they had the right kinds of information to make good judgments on faculty performance, given their current organization and structure. Faculty explained that within their departments and colleges, "no one really knows what others are doing," so critiquing their performance is inappropriate. One faculty member offered, "You can never be quite sure if someone is working or not working anyway." This belief seemed to be couched in an

understanding of the evaluation of an "average" faculty member, with average or above average teaching evaluations, who provided the average amount of department and/or institutional service and advising. Once this was established, the personnel committee did not feel that it had any database from which to make evaluative judgments about the quality or quantity of research or outreach. The value of autonomy supported this belief as neither faculty nor department chairs said that they believed a more substantive database was needed.

"Performance feedback from my department colleagues would not be helpful to me." Perhaps the strongest belief regarding the use of performance feedback in post-tenure review was that it was not helpful for tenured faculty. Several mid-career faculty, and most late-career faculty felt that because of their career stage, feedback on their professional work from colleagues in their department was "irrelevant." Faculty were quite descriptive in explaining the foundations of this belief. First, most often their colleagues were not familiar with their area of scholarship or the content area of their courses. One mid-career faculty member who had recently conducted most of his scholarly work in the area of distance education said, "My colleagues know nothing about on-line education," and explained how this made his post-tenure review particularly ridiculous. In explaining this position, faculty gave the impression that performance feedback from colleagues within their own scholarly area may have been helpful, but then contradicted that proposition by stating that because of their career stage, even feedback from knowledgeable colleagues would not have told them anything they did not already know. One faculty member explained the consensus among most faculty, department chairs and personnel committees this way: "We all take for granted that we are doing our scholarship well, we don't expect our colleagues to be able to give helpful advice about the direction of our teaching and research unless there is something egregious. Maybe for a younger faculty member, but not for us."

Faculty posited another reason performance feedback was not helpful to them—the intimate nature of their departments. A department chair explained, "Small departments have more problems doing that [giving performance feedback] than others—there is a different dynamic." In the first year most faculty who underwent post-tenure review were late-career faculty who had known their colleagues on the personnel committee and their department chair for decades. Consequently, faculty felt that they already knew what their colleagues thought about their work.

About a fourth of faculty went beyond noting that receiving performance feedback would not be helpful to saying that it would be offensive. One late-career faculty member stated: "I am of an age to find the

phrase 'faculty development' offensive, an import from high school; the idea that anyone is going to direct my career at my age." One such faculty member said: "I lost one and a half years just being angry, I dug in my heels because I was so insulted. I considered quitting. The whole thing felt arbitrary and capricious, like being hit by a train in my sunset years." Another faculty member seconded these negative feelings about post-tenure review by saying, "This felt like a bunch of people getting together to discuss what I could do to improve myself." A department chair who had himself gone through post-tenure review stated: "The dean said we would all feel good about ourselves. I have written seven books and I don't need to sit down [and write about it] to feel good about my academic life. I learned absolutely nothing about myself, it was just a task I had to do." Both statements were said with a significant degree of frustration and anger. This frustration seemed to have "spilled over" within departments, impacting faculty and others who might otherwise not have cared much about post-tenure review. For example, one faculty member commented on the overall effect of post-tenure review on his department's climate, "It made people grouchier."

The paradox of peer review: "No big deal or intimidating?" Beliefs about the peer review element of post-tenure review represented an interesting paradox. Most deans, department chairs, personnel committee members, and faculty said that faculty were accustomed to peer review so it was "no big deal." The most common comment on the peer review element of post-tenure review was characterized well by one faculty member: "Peer review was not anxiety provoking because I am valued by my department." A department chair added a wrinkle to this interpretation by stating that peer review was normal for faculty, but that did not mean that faculty liked it. "They are used to having their peers judge them, but don't like to be managed; they like to be viewed as independent contractors."

Data in this area suggest a defensive stance on the part of the participants. For example, a department chair seemed to be defending his department when he said, "We had no concerns (about peer review) because we have a strong department, we have no deadwood to get rid of, we knew we would fare well." When asked about peer review in post-tenure review, to say anything other than that it was "no big deal" would have suggested that they themselves and/or their department were vulnerable in one area or another, that something in their record was deficient. While many participants likely felt that the peer review element of post-tenure review was "no big deal" based on their own record and their intimate relationships with their colleagues, it is not clear that they would have admitted otherwise, even if they were concerned, by virtue of how they felt this admission would have been perceived.

There was in fact evidence that peer review was "a big deal," to some faculty. About a quarter of department chairs said that several of their faculty saw the process as "nerve-racking." One said, "People were very anxious, even stars saw it as a threat." He explained, "Being reviewed by one's peers is both challenging and threatening for faculty." A personnel committee member described peer review as the "trepidation of having your performance scrutinized by the eyes of strangers." By strangers he referred not to the review by department colleagues but by administrators later in the process, reiterating the suspicion faculty felt about post-tenure review as surveillance.

This study did not include faculty who chose to retire. However, participants in this study perceived a strong connection between post-tenure review and retirement decisions made by their colleagues. There were faculty who believed that submitting their work to their colleagues for post-tenure review was threatening, exposing themselves to critique in a way that they had not in many years. One faculty member said, "A colleague of mine said he did not want to go through that [post-tenure review] process, be subjected to that scrutiny. There was no value in putting him through that, but he is a terrific classroom teacher. He doesn't want to explain why. . . . It is a shame to loose this guy." Several faculty acknowledged colleagues who were retiring "not to have to go through that." An administrator also noted their belief in the connection between post-tenure review and retirement, saying, "People retired, not because they would be fired by post-tenure review but because of the embarrassment of submitting (their portfolio) to their colleagues. The respect of their colleagues is important to them." The crux of the problem seemed to be late-career faculty and even some mid-career faculty fearing that they would be held to standards currently used to recruit and tenure younger faculty, standards they felt were unfair to apply to their careers. A late-career faculty member explained, "It can be a potential problem for older faculty if tenure criteria get applied to older faculty like publications and big money grants. I don't feel like it happened in this case, but it could be humiliating and anxiety producing." All four provosts, and all of the deans interviewed reported that they received more notifications of retirement during the first year of post-tenure review than in previous years and that the peer review element of post-tenure review very likely influenced retirement decisions.

Post-Tenure Review: Expected Outcomes

A major theme running throughout beliefs about post-tenure review outcomes was the view that post-tenure review would have no influence on faculty performance.

"Post-tenure review will not change faculty performance because performance is already exemplary. Although there were no interview questions directly soliciting data on beliefs concerning overall faculty performance, almost every department chair, personnel committee member and faculty member took the opportunity of the interview to explain the significance of their own work and that of their department colleagues. Most often this information was given in the context of the "story of their academic careers." One faculty member explained that he had just written a book on line and become a national expert on distance learning within his discipline. Another faculty member began describing his post-tenure review experience by saying, "You see, I direct a large science program." Many senior faculty described their entire careers, noting accomplishments while in senior administrative positions, directing doctoral programs, obtaining large grants, and reforming the curriculum. Faculty were particularly descriptive about their own research accomplishments, likely responding to the stereotype that late-career faculty are not writing.

Department chairs and personnel committee members were equally confident about their fellow faculty member's performance. One department chair said, "We are an immensely productive faculty, there wasn't anything anybody would say that wasn't sterling," a second said, "We four faculty have a kazillion grants and publications," and a third department chair explained, "We showed through the report that we don't let grass grow under our feet." While just about every faculty member, department chair, or personnel committee member agreed that "somewhere out there," there were or might be tenured faculty who were not productive in some way, the vast màjority believed that their own job performance and that of their department colleagues met or exceeded university expectations. Consequently, they did not believe post-tenure review would influence performance—rather they believed exemplary faculty performance would persist through, and in spite of, post-tenure review.

"Post-tenure review will not change performance because it has no real consequences or rewards." Comments from faculty, personnel committees, department chairs, deans, and provosts, revealed a common belief that the contract language in the post-tenure review policy guaranteed that the process "had no teeth." The post-tenure review policy language stated that a faculty member's refusal to revise their self-assessment or even complete a post-tenure review could not be the basis for disciplinary procedures. Faculty, department chairs, and personnel committee members were all aware of this policy language, mostly through union communications. This contract language was used by the faculty union to intentionally promulgate a belief that the existing post-tenure review policy could not be used by the administration to "make"

faculty do anything. As one faculty member explained, "Because of the fact that we have a unionized faculty, there are no real consequences to post-tenure review and anyone who wants to stop the process can." Ironically, faculty and department chairs critiqued the post-tenure review process for not having any significant consequences for poor behavior, but then suggested that if it did have "teeth," they would also disapprove. A faculty member said, "It is bad that it has no teeth, but if it had teeth, that would be worse."

Additionally, faculty did not think much of the "rewards" related to post-tenure review. In most cases faculty received between $1,200 to $3,000 in professional development funds associated with post-tenure review, a sum not considered significant enough by faculty to act as an incentive to influence work performance.

"Post-tenure review will not change faculty performance because faculty are intrinsically motivated." One of the stated goals of post-tenure review was that it facilitate faculty professional development. Professional development could mean faculty improving performance in areas where they were deficient and/or building upon areas of proven strength. However, whether it be annual reviews, merit pay decisions, or other kinds of evaluation, there seemed to be a widespread belief that tenured faculty were intrinsically motivated, and by the time they were tenured they had been socialized into a "work track" within which they would remain the rest of their career. Faculty explained that the challenges of lack of commitment to career were factors that universities could not, and implied, should not, try to control. A faculty member explained, "Nothing practical will be accomplished with a faculty member who has given up on their career." A department chair used a metaphor to describe the role he felt post-tenure review would play in encouraging faculty to engage in professional development to improve performance. He said, "You can put a saddle on a horse but he is still going to trot."

"Specifically, performance feedback will not influence faculty performance." This belief seemed to be based on past and present experience, communicated as "stories" of unsuccessful attempts at remediation. One department chair described a post-tenure review case in which the faculty member was asked to revise his self-assessment because he had made no research plans. The faculty member resubmitted his plan having written something vague like, "I will improve my research," and was asked to revise again with more specifics. He refused. One year later the issue was still outstanding and, as the department chair said, "Nothing has happened to him." These kinds of failed attempts at seeing improvement from performance feedback were common and had become somewhat "mythic" across the four campus cultures, convincing department

chairs that providing performance feedback was not worth the "effort." One personnel committee member laughed when asked if he gave critical feedback to a colleague who he felt had been performing substandard in teaching and research. He said, "Sure, I would have given it, if I had known the administration would have backed me up" (but he knew they would not have, so he did not). Another department chair said, "It would not do any good, as a department chair I have written critical feedback in annual reviews and saw no movement." A faculty member observed, "There is no way to make a faculty member do anything, so feedback is useless and just causes tension."

"Professional development is not worth the effort for late-career faculty." Up until this point in the article, findings have referred to both mid-career and late-career faculty, even though the majority of faculty who underwent post-tenure review in its first year were late-career. However, one belief related specifically to the probable outcomes of post-tenure review for late-career faculty, often referred to as "senior faculty" by participants. It has already been stated that most faculty did not believe that they or their peers needed professional development or remediation. However, even when professional development was warranted, there was a feeling among three quarters of the faculty, department chairs, and personnel committees that it was not worth the resources and energy to update senior faculty expertise. Faculty themselves said that the resources required to get senior faculty "up to speed" would not be worth the investment for the institutions based upon the limited amount of time that the faculty member would be employed at the university. One faculty member said, "You cannot change faculty behavior after a certain age." In some cases, late-career faculty might be employed for five to seven more years, but the feeling was the same. It was not clear to faculty, department chairs, or personnel committees why "short-timers," as one faculty member called faculty with less than ten years to retirement, would want to engage in professional development or why the university should fund it. One faculty member in the sciences explained, "I have six years to go, if they wanted to spend the money to improve me they would only get two to three years from it. If I had ten to eighteen years then it would have value." A department chair characterized his faculty as, "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," and said, "The department needs to reinvent itself and the faculty who went through post-tenure review this year have ten years to go but cannot imagine such change." This belief seemed to exclude faculty who were the "stars" of their professions and to focus only on those who were considered "out of date." It also assumed that the purpose of professional development activities was to improve upon deficient performance.

"If weaknesses in faculty performance are revealed, the administration might let people go and we could lose those faculty lines within our department." There was a period within the University of X system when serious budget cuts resulted in faculty lay-offs and the closing of several departments. Although this occurred ten years prior to this study and few tenured faculty were let go, the lay-offs were embedded in institutional memory. Budgets were still tight within the University of X system and faculty retirements were not all being replaced with new hires. As a result, a belief existed that faculty who underwent post-tenure review and received critical feedback could become targets for administrative cut-backs. There was a paradox here, because faculty also believed that the post-tenure review contract language guaranteed that post-tenure review could not result in faculty being fired. Faculty, department chairs, and personnel committees seemed to believe that there were no real "teeth" to post-tenure review, but just in case there were any "teeth" that they were not aware of, they would protect their own faculty by not providing anything but brief praise in their reviews, as was their custom anyway. The faculty believed that they needed to support each other in this way, even if it meant hiding some of their own weaknesses.

Limitations

While these findings make an important contribution to previously unstudied aspects of post-tenure review literature to date, the generalizability of the findings is limited by the distinctive nature of the institutions studied. Specifically, the institutional context of difficult faculty-administration relations and unionized environment influenced faculty beliefs such that beliefs described here may be different in other settings.

Discussion

Exploring the factors that influenced beliefs about post-tenure review was not unlike tracing the threads of a spider web. Each belief could be attributed to one of four factors—the value of autonomy, the value of collegiality, career stage, or institutional context/history. But often a belief was influenced by several factors, like threads that were closely intertwined. In this section factors influencing beliefs are discussed.

Institutional history and context were a major factor influencing beliefs about the purposes and origins of post-tenure review in this system. Researchers have found that mid-career and late-career faculty tend to view institutional change in light of an institution's history, myths, and struggles (Clark, 1987; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). This certainly was true in

the case of the University of X's faculty's and allies' views of post-tenure review. The belief that University of X faculty were forced into post-tenure review was directly related to the details of the contract negotiation between the faculty unions and administration and to the history and context of a divisive relationship between the two parties in general. Because post-tenure review was viewed as coming from "them" and not "us," it was constructed by faculty and their allies as a form of surveillance, not development or assistance. The belief that performance deficiencies should be hidden from administration in order to protect jobs was another artifact of the context of a lack of trust between faculty and administration as well as experience with tenure-track lines having been decreased over the last twenty years. Bender (1988) and Felicetti (1989) identified unionization as a factor in how faculty respond to post-tenure review. The findings from this study are consistent with these studies and Wood and Johnsrud's (2001) finding that the history and presence of a strong faculty union resisting post-tenure review significantly influences faculty beliefs about post-tenure review and its implementation. Findings from this study are also consistent with Wood and Johnsrud's (2001) observation that "details related to post-tenure review implementation, and potential outcomes of the policy " (p. 8) are likely to influence faculty beliefs, as the belief that post-tenure review had no real consequences or rewards was closely associated with ambiguous policy language concerning consequences for noncompliance.

The academic values of autonomy and collegiality were major factors influencing faculty members' beliefs about the two major process components of post-tenure review—performance feedback and peer review. Research supports the use of performance feedback and peer review in faculty development and its transfer to post-tenure review (Licata & Morreale, 1997; Seldin, 1980). However, beliefs about both processes kept them from being employed as intended in post-tenure review. The belief that giving performance feedback to tenured faculty was inappropriate was closely linked to the values of autonomy in that faculty, department chairs, and personnel committee members believed providing such feedback would threaten the faculty members' authority to direct their own work, an authority necessary to the effective functioning of their departments. However, the same group also believed it was inappropriate to provide performance feedback because it was not collegial and because of the faculty member's career stage. For example, several late-career faculty couched their beliefs that the post-tenure review process was "redundant" within an understanding of his/her and other faculty members' longevity with the institution. Others explained that providing performance feedback and post-tenure review, in general,

were inappropriate for someone so advanced in their career (e.g. someone who has taught for fifteen years and written seven books). In addition, department chairs, faculty and personnel committees reflected the value of autonomy when they stated that their culture and evaluation processes did not make the right kinds of information available from which to provide performance feedback. However, they did not see this as a problem or desire a change in the process. Findings in this study were consistent with Wood and Johnsrud's (2001) suggestion that "existing norms and expectations regarding faculty evaluation in general" (p. 8) are aspects of institutional context likely to influence faculty beliefs about post-tenure review because existing norms related to peer review and performance feedback in annual reviews and merit processes strongly influenced the same processes during post-tenure review.

Both the career stage of participants and beliefs held by participants about career stage influenced beliefs about post-tenure review. For example, career stage influenced faculty beliefs about and experiences of the peer review aspect of post-tenure review as "no big deal" or "intimidating." Despite decades of teaching and research accomplishments, some faculty feared that in a peer review process their "records" might be devalued by younger colleagues more accomplished than themselves in research. Other faculty reported that by virtue of their longevity with the institution, career stage, and accomplishments, they believed that the peer review aspect of post-tenure review was "no big deal." In both reactions and sets of beliefs about post-tenure review, career stage was front and center. Finally, participants attributed their belief that performance feedback and professional development were not "worth the effort" for late-career faculty to the concept of time left in the position and what they considered the "intractability" of the late career.

Implications

This study has several implications for those interested in reforming existing or implementing new post-tenure review processes and for those who study how academic culture influences and is influenced by reforms in faculty evaluation.

Findings from this study suggest that there is a great deal of cultural work that needs to be done by academic leaders to "manage the meaning" faculty, department chairs, and personnel committees members have made of the purposes and scope of post-tenure review (Dill, 1982). This cultural work includes but is not limited to (a) repairing and/or transforming divisive relationships between faculty and their administration/board that were further agitated by post-tenure review, (b) engen-

dering a more expansive view of the potential benefits of performance feedback and professional development for tenured faculty, (c) minimizing stereotyping of late-career faculty, and (d) nurturing a post-tenure process that causes faculty to feel more loyal to, and appreciated by, their institution, as opposed to offended or violated. This is largely work for deans, department chairs, and faculty leaders. These potential change agents might take the following steps to manage and/or transform beliefs that influence post-tenure review.

First, post-tenure review needs to be structured in ways that are not perceived by faculty to conflict with basic academic values and traditions of autonomy and collegiality. Key to establishing a post-tenure review process that is not perceived as undermining autonomy and collegiality is developing faculty consensus and comfort about the "range of issues" included. Department chairs can help change beliefs that post-tenure review is like "a bunch of people getting together to discuss how I might improve myself," by helping faculty to see that they have choices and control of both the summative and formative aspects of the review. For example, while many summative policies have sanctions associated with low performance, most sanctions can only go into effect after the faculty member has had multiple opportunities, over time, to improve in that area, to appeal the decision, or even to make a case for why different criteria should be used to evaluate that activity. Formative policies often provide faculty choices in how they spend professional development funds, and ask them to chart out future career directions on their own. Department chairs and deans can intentionally inject stories into their cultures, stories that underscore how the post-tenure review process validated autonomous career decisions made by faculty (Dill, 1982). Kanter's (1977) landmark research on organizations reminds us that when people feel out of control and powerless they become defensive and territorial. The more choices faculty are given, and the more that they are made to feel in control of their own review, the less they will resist it (Kanter, 1977).

Likewise, it is important to note that a few faculty and department chairs in this study reported that post-tenure review caused an increase in collegiality within their departments by virtue of giving more faculty knowledge of and appreciation for each others' work. Department chairs and deans should take note of this finding and consider ways to shape their post-tenure review processes toward similar outcomes, that is, drawing people who have become isolated back into a department and creating a process that makes accomplishments and contributions public enough that more people within their department learn of them and become appreciative.

Second, post-tenure review needs to incorporate basic knowledge of academic career stages, their challenges and strengths. The research on mid-career and late-career faculty tells us two things about their experiences. First, faculty in these career stages perceive many challenges, including feeling marginal or left out of their departments (Knefelkamp, 1990), threatened by new institutional emphasis on research, relegated to subordinate status, resentful toward an ungrateful administration, and suspicious of better-trained junior colleagues (Baldwin, 1990; Bowen & Schuster, 1986). Findings from this study were consistent with these findings in that mid-career and late-career faculty felt undervalued, and some late-career faculty feared peer review of their work by junior colleagues. Post-tenure review seemed to exacerbate rather than ameliorate these career challenges. However, research also shows that despite the challenges, mid-career and late-career faculty are more likely than other faculty groups to attend teaching development workshops (Mbuh, 1993), hold important positions in national associations (Alstete, 2000), and although their average research productivity drops with age, late-career faculty remain highly productive and shift their research focus to higher quality over quantity (Bland & Bergquist, 1997). Because of both the challenges to mid- and late academic career and the benefits of accumulated experience, Alstete (2000) suggests that late-career faculty are best suited to forms of professional development that respect and utilize their years of experience and accumulated knowledge. Such examples might include diagnosing institutional problems, clarifying institutional or department goals, or facilitating program implementation (Diamond, 1988, p. 10). Post-tenure review could be an excellent opportunity to pull faculty who are feeling disenfranchised back into the center of the department, engage their experience in curriculum reform, program building, and interdisciplinary activity in ways that genuinely contribute to their own professional development and to the institution.

Also, department chairs and deans need to disrupt "mental models" (Senge, 1990) about the potential contributions of late-career faculty in their last five to seven years with the institution. Findings from this study suggest that while many faculty, department chairs, and deans had high opinions of individual and collective faculty performance, some late-career faculty were "typecast" or "written-off" as unproductive and incapable of change, at least partially because of their age. One strategy is to create rituals to publicly share late-career faculty accomplishments and celebrate how departments have benefitted from accumulated experience. We need to nurture the belief that all faculty can remain vital, distinguished contributors to their institutions throughout their careers.

Institutional context and history must be a major consideration in

planning for and implementing post-tenure review. After considering the influence of institutional context and history on faculty beliefs about post-tenure review in the University of X, it is perhaps not surprising that among a list of demographic variables, only campus was found to be a significant factor influencing faculty beliefs about post-tenure review in Wood and Johnsruds' (2001) study. Licata and Morreale (1997, 2002) have examined post-tenure review nationwide and suggest that over time post-tenure review generally becomes accepted and works well, while Walker (2002) predicts that post-tenure review will not be successful in most colleges in the United States but instead be "actively rejected or passively ignored " (p. 229). Findings from this study suggest that how institutional context and history are managed in the initiation of post-tenure review influences faculty response. History and institutional culture should be taken into account to shape how post-tenure review is presented, negotiated, and implemented to achieve the most favorable outcomes for all parties.

Conclusion

Much about post-tenure review, such as additional factors influencing faculty beliefs, and post-tenure review's influence on faculty development, is yet unknown. Future research might explore how the length of time post-tenure review has been in place influences beliefs, the differences in faculty response across institutional types, the views of pre-tenure/early career faculty about post-tenure review, and the influence of beliefs on outcomes.

Kuh and Whitt (1988) note that "culture represents how people have learned to cope with anxiety and the problems they face as a group-altering institutional culture is like asking faculty to give up their social defenses " (p. 102). As institutions initiate new post-tenure review programs or try to reform existing ones, it will be important to recognize the values of autonomy and collegiality and to consider both career stage and institutional context in designing a process that supports both faculty and institutional effectiveness.

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