



Owning Your Role: Navigating Difficult Dilemmas Facing Academic Leaders



Thursday, October 15, 2020

Provosts



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Teaching Challenges for an Assistant Professor

The chair noticed that an assistant professor on the tenure track is becoming known by colleagues in the department as being "a little arrogant" with an "inappropriate and insensitive" sense of humor, particularly around race.

This behavior is detrimental in the classroom. It has been especially apparent since March when the faculty member started teaching online. The chair is aware of more informal comments from students and remarks on course evaluations.

Case study adapted from: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/188107133.pdf>

First Amendment Rights of a Tenured Faculty Member

A fictional case study inspired by:
Bigoted Views vs. Bigoted Teaching, Inside Higher Ed, 11/22/2019 (*A news report of a situation at Indiana University*)

A tenured faculty member regularly expressed racist, sexist and homophobic views on private social media accounts.

The faculty member denied that their private views impacted student learning, noting that no student has ever lodged a complaint. Following an initial review, the university confirmed that to be the case. At the same time, the university initiated a more thorough examination of that faculty member's courses for evidence of bias.

The Provost issued a statement condemning the faculty member's views on race, gender and sexuality while affirming the faculty member's First Amendment rights to express those views.

These university's responses to the issue were discussed at length by the chair, dean and provost in email messages over several days, which eventually resulted in a very long email chain. At one point, early in the email discussion, the Provost asked for and received legal advice from the General Counsel's office. It seemed with each email, more colleagues were copied on the messages. Eventually, the email chain is shared with the media.

Break

Meet back here at 12:15 pm



Discussion



Upcoming Breakout Sessions

Zoom link is in Outlook

TODAY, Thursday, Oct. 15

- **1 pm**
 - Difficult Conversations: Accountability, Candor and Understanding
 - An Update on Our Finances and Budget

- **3 pm**
 - Upholding Standards in a Pandemic: Thoughts and Discussion
 - Supporting Faculty with Kids as They Attempt Work/Life Balance During COVID-19

TOMORROW, Friday, Oct. 16

- **9 am**
 - When the World Turns Upside Down: Strategies for Resilience
 - What We Know About COVID-19 Now

- **11 am**
 - A Leader's Biggest Challenge: Dealing with Difficult People
 - Towards an Inclusive Culture for Campus Leaders



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