Board OKs 7 Profs; 6 Still Await Decision

By Rich Figel
and Lisa Burkhardt

The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to reverse their decisions on seven out of 13 faculty members originally denied tenure but tabled action on the remaining six after a three hour barrage of testimony and support from faculty and students that lasted until 12 am Wednesday night.

Reappointed were: Thomas E. Benediktsson of the English department; Edith Kurzweil, sociology department; Mark Lyndrop, chemistry department; and Adele B. McAllyn, philosophy and religion department.

Three administrative science professors were given conditional reappointment; if they receive their PhDs by the end of next semester — a qualification for tenure — they will be reappointed. Those professors are Frederick D. Crowley, Larry S. Goldstein and Abraham Stein.

Still waiting are: James Boylan, anthropology department; Joseph V. Contessa, environmental, geography and urban studies; Gary Danielson, psychology department; Margaret Duggan, English department; Eva Kantor, psychology department; and Daniel Proser, history department.

One after another, students, faculty and even outside businessmen, lined up to deliver a procession of speeches, some relating the qualifications and merits of the professors who were denied tenure, some detailing the seemingly contradictory nature of the Board's position on "quality" education, while others questioning the seemingly self-fulfilling prophecies. A parade of students, faculty and parents entered the Board of Trustees’ meeting last night in Memorial Auditorium.

THE INQUISITION: Above, Board of Trustees listens to AFT President Marco Lacatena speak at Wednesday night meeting in Memorial Auditorium.

Although speakers often repeated themselves and gave redundant arguments, a few individuals brought interesting points that usually drew some impression from the crowd. Others like department chairpersons, confronted the Board with hard facts. Quality education was not the way to keep enrollments (less students meaning less teaching jobs) did not become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Whatever the Trustees decide to do we hope that they will correct the misunderstandings that obviously exist between the employer (Trustees) and the employee (faculty) from the time of hiring.

Lacatena focused his attack on the broader higher education issues he felt were at stake — essentially saying that the Board and State were doing nothing to see that their projections of declining enrollments (less students meaning less teaching jobs) did not become self-fulfilling prophecies. "Pardon me, we’re not talking about the direction of higher ed," LeBoff interrupted.

Lacatena responded, "That's what I'm talking about — the half a dozen who still haven’t been recommended for tenure and still must be acted upon."

Much prompted LeBoff to assert, "The Board does not have to act. If you’re requesting the Board to consider."

As Lacatena finished speaking, neatly dressed students wearing ties and jackets, or dresses, and faculty, began to line up on both sides of the auditorium, patiently waiting for their turn to speak. An alumna began to speak and Lacatena headed for the back of the room, smiling triumphantly.

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In five years they will receive tenure if they fulfill a series of criteria. These criteria include recommendations from the Student Advisory Committee, the Personnel Advisory Committee, the Dean of the School, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the President of the college.

It is understood that these criteria are not law. No written document exists that conclusively states the fact that if you meet these conditions, you will receive tenure. Rather, the criteria above has merely been accepted custom. This understanding was to have existed between the employer (Trustees) and the employee (faculty) from the time of hiring.

The ethical question the Trustees must face lies in its justification for changing the custom on 26 of its employees — five years after that custom has been established. The MONTCLAIRON is not necessarily accusing the Trustees of an illegality — unless, of course, it can be proven that a verbal contract ever existed. Rather, the issue being questioned is the injustice that would be done to the six faculty members not granted tenure after they met the customary requirements.

Whatever the Trustees decide to do we hope that they will correct the misunderstandings that obviously exist between the employer and employees.
Trustees OK Seven Profs

(Cont. from p. 1) decisions. “A good college can’t make policy from year to year. They have to consider past trends and plan longer than two or three years in advance. We have to definitely decide what our institutional needs are.”

Michael Bledsoe, a senior political science major, reduced the problem to a contradiction of a “market approach versus a quality approach.” He stressed the excessive waste he has seen in the college, including construction programs and other expenses that take money away from education. Bledsoe charged the Board with the responsibility of pleading a quality case in the students’ behalf, stating, “We’ve got to place the importance of quality in our education above the consideration of figures and enrollments.”

Outside businessmen came in to inform the Board of their contacts with Boylan. Mark Schiffman, a representative of a company that prepares statements and suggestions to State and federal environmental organizations, gave strong recommendations from work he had seen Boylan submit as a consultant. “Boylan and his students prepare excellent work for us and Boylan can supervise and prepare quality material. It would be wrong for us to possibly lose him to another state system,” he said. Other students attributed their personal success to Boylan.

As the lines thinned out, Jay Livingston of the sociology department, stood in front of the Board and stared for a moment at the Trustees. “I really haven’t come up here to discuss the good qualities of Dr. Daniel Prosser,” he stated. “I just want to know why? You are all just sitting up there listening to us and saying thank you but you aren’t telling us anything. Why?”

The crowd cheered and several spectators shouted insults at the Board. LeBoff interrupted the demonstration assuring them that the Board had made careful considerations in their decisions.

“We have to look at the prospective of the future of the college. Enrollment have declined greatly in the history department,” he said.

“You are demeaning this Board with your statements,” LeBoff added. “We are not cavalier and you are questioning the integrity of the Board.”

On Dec. 1, 13 professors received notice from MSC President David W. Dickson that their reappointment for the 1978-79 academic year would not be recommended.

Irwin Gawley, Vice President for Academic Affairs, said the main reason was to restrict over-tenuring in order to maintain “flexibility” in the consideration of institutional needs.

Gawley admitted that lines were not being eliminated but shifted to programs of greater enrollment or filled by adjuncts.

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