The proposed OSU Faculty Records Policy states: "The faculty member has the right to review with appropriate University personnel any information contained in his personal file." This policy if adopted will be to the detriment of the University and, in the long run, to the detriment of the individual faculty member.

The evaluation of a faculty member's performance is based in part on letters from colleagues, outside reviewers, and students. In order to guarantee a clear, critical, and forthright evaluation, it is essential that the authors of these letters remain unknown to their subjects. We can well imagine the reluctance with which a student will give an opinion of a professor, knowing that this opinion may well be read by that professor. We can also imagine the bland comments that we will write about our colleagues in order to spare ourselves future embarrassment on meeting them in the halls. We can sense the difficulty of extracting critical discussion from outside reviewers who know that their remarks will not be held in confidence.

Should this policy be adopted, the written subjective evaluations in the files will degenerate to cautiously phrased comments of little value. Subjective evaluation will then be based on oral statements, of which no record will remain, or, worse yet, on what one remembers of someone else's oral statements. Adoption of this policy may well lead to a decision-making process that is more, rather than less, capricious than the present one.

T. Darrah Thomas
Chemistry
May 14, 1973
From A Smear Born of Ignorance

or

A Little Knowledge is Dangerous

John T. Yoke has, in the May 1973 Faculty Forum Papers, focused upon a misunderstanding which may be prevalent on our campus and concerns major medical insurance, the Oregon State Employes Association, and collective bargaining. The following chronology of events should assist those faculty who have been without benefit of additional information.

The 1969 O.S.E.A. General Council passed a resolution (Working Conditions No. 11) calling for an impartial study of the State Services fringe benefits. A resultant Blue Ribbon Committee appointed by O.S.E.A. and composed of members from O.S.E.A., the state legislature, and private industry, reported June 30, 1970, that the most needed fringe benefit was improvement of, and state monetary contribution toward, medical and hospitalization insurance programs for state employes. Subsequently, the governor appointed a committee (known as the Governor's Task Force) to draft medical legislation identifying four plans: basic, major medical, a comprehensive combination of the first two and the Kaiser Plan.

Our present medical and hospitalization insurance plan, and the $10.00 per month state contribution became law during the 1971 legislative session. Immediately, the seven member State Employes Benefits Board, not O.S.E.A., was charged with finding a carrier and administering the program.
It should now be apparent that O.S.E.A. did not write our present medical and hospitalization insurance program, nor did O.S.E.A. find it necessary to "lobby" in support of medical and hospitalization insurance program statutes which were by then already enacted. O.S.E.A. had, through General Council, sought a state monetary contribution toward, and improvement of our medical and hospitalization program during the latter 1960's. O.S.E.A. continues to seek improvement of the present plan.

The "very substantial increase in our out-of-pocket expense" covering additional major medical benefits, was in reality approximately $8.00 per month for 291 former T.I.A.A. members with families from the group of 3,150 faculty and staff and O.S.U. who are presently members of the Blue Cross Plan. It is questionable that four persons who really complained to the Employment and Staff Benefits Office about the premium increase were spokesmen for the faculty.

John Yoke's vague "same sort of a problem" concerning the O.S.U. Faculty and O.S.E.A.'s interests as a bargaining agent is actually nonexistent. One should remember that any collective bargaining agent is hired to work toward goals specified by members of the bargaining unit, even a faculty unit.

Frank W. Adams
Agricultural Chemistry
May 11, 1973
Secretary, O.S.E.A. - O.S.U.
Faculty Chapter No. 72
Advance Notice of Criteria for Faculty Evaluation?

Proposed state tenure rules for faculty include the requirement that institutions establish criteria for the periodic pre-tenure and post-tenure evaluations of faculty members. However, the proposed administrative rules for the State Board of Higher Education presented for the Public Hearing on 22 May left open the matter of revealing such criteria in advance so that presumably the criteria might not actually come to light until the time of making the annual evaluation.

A suggestion on behalf of the University Professors for Academic Order (UPAO) presented at the hearing asked that the Board consider including "provisions for making known to each faculty member thus evaluated the particular criteria which will apply to evaluation of his performance...at the beginning of the period of service over which he will later be evaluated." The UPAO statement also suggested providing for appeal of the "appropriateness of the criteria" for any individual faculty member in the light of his duties.

Objective evaluation needs a definitive statement of criteria before the period of service evaluated rather than to leave the way open to the suspicion that the criteria have been selected or weighted subjectively afterward. Moreover, a faculty member who knows in advance the standard to measure his performance will more likely demonstrate superior performance. If the criteria do not truly fit his own assignment, then he should obtain a reconciliation of criteria and assignment before a substantial part of his service year has passed, lest inadequate communication result between professor and evaluator.

Colleagues who believe the foregoing concepts advanced by the UPAO represent academic good order should file supporting statements with the State Board. The proposed administrative rules regarding tenure are still open in a public hearing which was continued from the meeting of 22 May to the 23 July meeting of the State Board of Higher Education. Communications in writing or oral statements will be received by the Board for the 23 July meeting. The proposed tenure rules obtainable from the Chancellor's Office at Eugene deserve scrutiny by all faculty colleagues, and the Board deserves a candid faculty response via the Public Hearing. "Speak now, or forever hold your peace!"

Fred W. Decker,  
Vice-President, UPAO.  
Atmospheric Sciences

31 May 1973