Memorandum
University of Illinois at Springfield
College of Business and Management
Department of Business Administration

To: Lynn Fisher, Chair, Campus Senate

From: Robert Wright, Acting Chair, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee

Subject: Resolution Regarding Change in Academic Freedom and Tenure Statue

Date: November 5, 2012

The Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee met on Oct 25, 2012 in UHB 1004 to discuss a Resolution regarding change in the Academic Freedom and Tenure Statue for the University of Illinois. Members Present were Sviatoslav Braynov, Chris Mooney, Carolyn Peck, and Robert Wright. Absent was Teena Helton, who is on sabbatical. The Meeting was called to order by Chair Wright at 9:00.

The committee carefully read over the proposal and had an in-depth discussion of the various issues involved.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE STATUTES, ARTICLE X, SECTION 2

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2 Section 2. Academic Freedom
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4 a. Academic freedom is the freedom to teach, both in and outside the classroom, to conduct research
5 and to publish the results of those investigations, and to address any matter of institutional policy
6 or action whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance. Academic staff
7 members have the freedom to speak to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest
8 to the larger community, subject to the applicable academic standards of conduct.
9 [a.] b. It is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage full freedom within the law of inquiry,
10 discourse, teaching, research, and publication and to protect any member of the academic staff
11 against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict the member’s
12 exercise of these freedoms in the member’s area of scholarly interest, as well as to maintain full
13 freedom of discourse regarding University policies and actions whether or not uttered as a
14 member of an agency of institutional governance. The right to the protection of the University
15 shall not, however, include any right to the services of the university counsel or the counsel’s
16 assistants in any governmental or judicial proceedings in which the academic freedom of the staff
17 member may be in issue.
18 [b.] c. As a citizen, an [faculty] academic staff member may exercise the same freedoms as other
19 citizens without institutional censorship or discipline. International members of the academic
20 staff shall enjoy these same freedoms. An [faculty] academic staff member should be mindful,
21 however, that accuracy, forthrightness, and dignity befit association with the University and a
22 person of learning and that the public may judge that person’s profession and the University by
23 the individual’s conduct and utterances.
24 [c.] d. If, in the president’s judgment, an [faculty] academic staff member exercises freedom of
25 expression as a citizen and fails to heed the admonitions of Article X, Section 2[b]c, the president
26 may publicly disassociate the Board of Trustees and the University from and express their
27 disapproval of such objectionable expressions.
28 [d.] e. An academic staff member who believes that he or she does not enjoy the academic
29 freedom which it is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage shall be entitled to a hearing on
30 written request before the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure of the appropriate
31 campus senate. Such hearing shall be conducted in accordance with established rules of
32 procedure. The committee shall make findings of facts and recommendations to the president
33 and, at its discretion, may make an appropriate report to the senate. The several committees may
34 from time to time establish their own rules of procedure.

Overall, the committee felt that the proposed change to the Academic Freedom and Tenure
Statute addressed issues of substantial importance to academic personnel. One key point of
discussion was the definition of “Academic Staff” as used in the proposed change. The
committee felt the definition of “Academic Staff” should be clearly spelled out, so everyone
would know exactly who was covered.

The committee also felt that the intent might better be realized by including language covering
the issues in the Personnel Policy, rather than in the Academic Freedom and Tenure Statue. The
principle of Academic Freedom is fairly well established, but it is typically seen as protection
related to teaching “truth” and undertaking intellectual inquiry to uncover “truth” in one’s area
of academic preparation and expertise. It is not clear that the issue under discussion is directly
related to Academic Freedom, but it is clear that it is a matter of importance to academic
personnel. The committee felt that inclusion in the Personnel Policy might also result in stronger
protection of “Academic Staff” by explicitly covering the “right to address any matter of
institutional policy, and to speak to any matter of interest to the larger community, subject to
academic standards of conduct.” Inclusion in the Personnel Policy would explicitly recognize
these rights as they are related to personnel evaluation. Evaluation of personnel would then
proceed with all evaluators having knowledge of these rights.