Dealing with Conflict and Maintaining Faculty Morale

Conflict, according to many department chairs, is something that happens in someone else's department. Academicians with preconceptions about harmonious campus life are often reluctant to speak or even think about discord and dissension in their immediate environment. Those who think of conflict as abnormal or aberrant tend to shun the subject. Some chairs view conflict in their department uneasily and feel that it is somehow their fault. Even though conflict is a subject academicians do not like to talk about, they need to accept the idea that it can occur.

There seems to be an inverse relationship between the degree of conflict in a department and the level of morale: the more conflict, the lower the morale; the less conflict, the higher the morale. Although this discussion focuses primarily on types of conflict that may occur in an academic department, it also touches on promoting and maintaining good morale. Reducing conflict will not automatically raise faculty morale, but a good level of morale cannot exist in a department where energies are consumed by serious conflict.

The chair should be concerned about conflict within the department, because once it occurs, it tends to fester and grow. Conflict is divisive; it pits individual faculty members against each other and wastes time and effort that are best used in more creative endeavors. It often develops a dynamic and logic of its own. A conflict can polarize a department, forcing members into competing groups. In extreme cases, destructive and hostile behavior can destroy a department's effectiveness. Chairs who learn to identify and diagnose conflict at an early stage and who help their departments deal with it effectively fulfill one of the most difficult requirements of their role.

The term conflict is used here in a variety of ways. In psychology the term refers to the inner struggle between desires requiring immediate gratification and desires that can only be met by deferring the immediate in order to gain long-term benefits. For the purposes of this discussion, the term inner conflict will be used to describe tensions, anxiety, turmoil, and frustration that can impair a person's activities but that do not emerge as interpersonal conflict. Webster's definition—"competitive or opposing action of incompatibles"—reflects a more common understanding of the term. Generally a disagreement becomes a conflict when it goes beyond the normal intellectual differences that characterize academic life. Serious conflict is often accompanied by feelings of fear, anxiety, or anger, and is often evidenced by intemperate or abusive language and overtly hostile actions.

Conflict may be defined either as an incident or as a process. As an incident, it occurs as a disagreement between two persons or parties in which the first acts in a way that the second perceives to be detrimental to the latter's interests and designed to force some undesired action. As a process, conflict is manifested in a series of actions by two persons or groups in which each person or group tries to thwart the other's purposes or prevent satisfaction of the other's interests. In essence, conflict is a struggle for control of another person's behavior.

Types of Conflict and Factors Causing Conflict

Departments are made up of intelligent persons who are often ambitious, strong-willed, and competitive. Even though academicians are usually committed to the use of reason in problem solving and to the model of collegiality in interpersonal relations, conflict often arises either through personality clashes or as a result of institutional demands on

faculty members. Conflict within departments can usually be categorized as one of four distinct types: (1) inner conflict; (2) conflict between employer and employee; (3) conflict among faculty members; and (4) conflict between faculty members and students.

Inner conflict concerns a person's feelings. It does not consist of a set of observable behaviors but has to do with frustrations and anxieties that a person feels and that can affect his or her normal functioning. For example, a faculty member who has long been a successful teacher but whose research skills are undeveloped fails to get promotions or merit increases as the department becomes more research oriented. He feels that the rules have been changed in the middle of his game and is angry and bitter. He withdraws from social contacts with other faculty members.

Disputes arising over matters such as promotion, tenure, merit pay, perquisites, work assignments, annual evaluations, and working conditions can usually be classified as employer-employee conflicts. These may involve faculty members and administrators, staff persons and administrators, or other types of employees and supervisors. Chairs who try to increase productivity by asking their faculty members to teach more or larger classes without discussing the matter with them beforehand can find themselves embroiled in employer-employee conflicts.

Conflicts among faculty members can be the result of minor personality clashes or perceived inequities. Frequently such conflict arises when the egalitarian workload model is violated either by allocating varying awards for similar workloads or by allocating similar rewards for varying workloads. In the academic context, sorting out conflicting claims is extremely difficult, especially when the privileges of rank are considered. Many institutions have an uncodified, unwritten tradition that allows the senior faculty lighter course loads and more graduate courses. A more serious kind of conflict among faculty members is related to academic matters—e.g., what activities are worthwhile and what methodologies and techniques are best. Conflicts concerning the practice of the discipline are very difficult to resolve and sometimes lead to a kind of academic warfare in which entire factions are banished from the department.

Conflict between faculty members and students commonly begins either with student complaints about a faculty member's teaching performance or grading practices or with a faculty member's charge of cheating or plagiarism. Student complaints about faculty members sometimes grow into wholesale protests or demonstrations, especially when students feel that their right to due process has been violated.

In all types of conflict the disagreement can concern territory, clientele, and intergroup relations. Debates over humankind's territorial nature aside, conflict often does involve territory or "turf." Administrators, faculty members, and students at times all identify certain subjects, courses, or areas as exclusively their own and attempt to defend them against encroachment by others. Territorial disputes can break out over such seemingly trivial matters as the decision to assign some persons to windowless offices. Disagreements can arise when a new clientele is identified—as, for example, when a department adopts an off-campus program and faculty members argue with each other about who must teach in the program. Faculty members might also quarrel over a particularly able student, with whom they all may want to work, or particularly poor student, with whom no one may want to work. Students may protest being assigned to particular faculty members.

Conflict in intergroup relations is often ideological. It may develop when various factions argue about what constitutes the proper methodology of a discipline. Intergroup conflict can occur when students organize and press demands. Student activism usually involves more than a department, however, and thus will not be discussed here. Other

frequent sources of intergroup conflict in the academic environment involve relations between one department and another or relations between the university and the department. Neither of these sources of conflict is especially relevant to this discussion, but they are mentioned because the chair may be involved in such disputes. When departments are reviewed by policy councils or as part of accountability procedures, the chair may be thrust into the role of leading the struggle for the department's survival.

Diagnosing and Dealing with Conflict

A number of factors that affect department morale have been identified. The chair has little control over many of these, but he or she can nevertheless try to minimize the feelings of dissatisfaction that lead to inner conflict. Two of these factors are the salary and working conditions of the department members. Faculty members can easily become depressed about the fact that their income declines in inflationary times. They also resent the imposition of heavier teaching loads or larger classes. Although the chair cannot magically produce salary increases for the entire department, he or she can reduce resentment by showing that, compared with departments elsewhere, the department is not doing as badly as its members think. If the department actually is in a poor position compared with similar departments in other institutions or other departments in the university, the chair can boost morale by showing that he or she is actively lobbying for a fair share of the funds available. Similarly, faculty members often feel that they are being discriminated against with respect to the allocation of travel funds. Again, the chair should be able to show them that they are no worse off than anyone else in the college or the institution.

Another factor that contributes to low department morale is the sense of ever-increasing bureaucratization—the proliferation of rules, regulations, reports, and increasing outside pressure on the department. The chair can raise department morale by showing that he or she recognizes the demands and the imposition on faculty time but explains thoroughly the need to respond, the benefits and the effort he or she will make to shoulder the burden of the demand. When the chair is seen as the defender of the department's welfare, he or she helps create a climate of solidarity within the department. Faculty members will come to feel that by sticking together in the face of adversity they can overcome some of the difficulties that appear insurmountable.

A common source of frustration and inner conflict for faculty members is the feeling that they are losing control over crucial department decisions affecting their future. One way to reduce feelings of alienation and powerlessness is to establish a set of policies within a department that permit the faculty to participate in the decision-making process. There should be formal means for allowing debate over department policy and procedures, such as faculty meetings that allow open discussion and debate. Written reports on policy decisions should contain evidence that a variety of points of view have been reviewed. In this way, the chair can show that minority opinions have been considered and respected.

Conflict can be reduced when the lines of authority and responsibility in the department are clarified. For example, a chair assigned a faculty member the task of making up teaching schedules for the entire department but failed to inform the department members that he had given this responsibility to one of their colleagues. When the schedule was distributed, the faculty members were confused and resentful. Had the chair informed the faculty that he had delegated this task and had he instructed the schedule maker to consult with each member of the department, this conflict would have been avoided. Whenever a

chair delegates administrative responsibility to faculty or staff members, the lines of authority must be clarified.

Department meetings should allow open confrontation over controversial issues. Confrontation need not lead to destructive conflict. Free debate and free expression can ensure a fair hearing for diverse viewpoints about significant issues. Debate can also bring out conflicts at an early stage of development, allowing them to be dealt with before they become critical. The chair can help develop an atmosphere of commitment to orderly change within the department. Autocratic methods should not be advocated, and both majority opinions and minority rights should be respected and upheld.

This discussion of minimizing latent and inner conflict has emphasized what a chair can do to identify conflict before it becomes destructive. Chairs are advised to establish an atmosphere that prevents conflict from escalating, since conflict is difficult to resolve once the department is polarized. A chair who does not hear of conflicts—particularly a chair of a large department, where the probability of their existence is high—should ask whether there is something about his or her administrative style that causes the faculty, staff, and students to avoid discussing difficult situations. Perhaps the chair is perceived as too authoritarian or unyielding. If so, the chair might begin to visit briefly but regularly with every member of the faculty and staff. These visits, which may be held once a month, should be on a one-to-one basis and should not be held in the chair's office. Meetings on neutral ground, such as a faculty club or restaurant, or on the faculty member's turf, such as his or her office or home, are much less threatening. The purpose of the meetings is not to solve problems but to listen and look for the emergence of latent or inner conflict.

One skill the chair can learn is the technique of "active listening," developed by Thomas Gordon, which is useful for discovering latent conflict. Active listening is an extremely effective communications technique that is used by many thousands of parents. Academicians have some difficulty with the technique because the listener does not lecture, teach, give logical arguments, judge, criticize, question, interpret, analyze, or diagnose. In other words, all the logical and conceptual skills that are indispensable to a university career are temporarily put aside. Active listening consists of the listener (or receiver) "feeding back only what he feels the sender's message meant—nothing more, nothing less."[1]

By listening patiently and "feeding back" the feelings of the speaker, chairs may promote a good relationship between themselves and their faculty, facilitate problem solving, and, in general, foster a cooperative spirit in the department. To be an effective listener, the chair must want to be helpful, believe in the speaker's sincerity, and be willing to accept the speaker as a fellow human being. A chair who gets good results by listening quietly, with an occasional empathetic grunt and a few gestures showing he understands the speaker's feelings, would be well advised to read Gordon's classic book in order to perfect the listening technique.

Occasionally, conflict in a department may be related to a faculty member's mental state. Research has examined and brought to public consciousness the existence of "life crises" that most people undergo. The chair should be sensitive to each faculty member's state of mind. Reading some of the literature on life stages can help the chair understand some of the personal crises that can lead to unhappiness and consequent strife within a department. Many personal crises, such as divorce, a death in the family, or financial problems, can temporarily impair or disrupt a faculty member's normal functioning. The

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[1]Thomas Gordon, *Parent Effectiveness Training* (New York; London; and Scarborough, Ontario: New American Library, 1970 and 1975, 2000).

chair can arrange for substitutes in the classroom and on committees, but how long can a chair cover for a faculty member? There are no hard and fast rules. Some persons take longer to recover from crises than do others. The chair who is thoroughly aware of university rules and policies on leaves of absence and sick leaves can support faculty members in times of personal adversity.

Academicians, like all professionals, may suffer from serious personality disorders or develop patterns of behavior that are disruptive or dangerous. The chair must be able to distinguish between a person who is frustrated or temporarily disabled and one who is chronically disabled. When a faculty member is in constant conflict with colleagues or students, the chair must exercise judgment. Sometimes the chair may wait patiently in the belief that the crisis will be temporary. At other times the chair may decide to suspend the person from work. A decision such as this is a painful one: it may ease or erase conflict in a department, but only at the expense of that faculty member's professional life.

The matter of faculty members who behave erratically is complicated by the legal and psychological aspects of the issue. To suggest to a colleague that he or she is sick and needs help may result in a charge of character assassination and a lawsuit. Chairs must remember that they have no legal or professional authority to engage in psychological analysis of a department member. When someone with no training attempts to counsel an emotionally unstable person who is incapacitated by inner conflict or actively engaged in a dispute, serious and unpleasant consequences may result. If a faculty member needs to be referred to a counselor or psychiatrist, the chair should discreetly discuss the matter with the dean and legal staff before proceeding.

Thus far, we have discussed situations in which the chair has been dealing with inner conflict, latent conflict, and feelings of powerlessness against the system. We have not discussed in detail manifest or overt conflict. But conflicts, despite strenuous efforts to control them, do emerge and, in most cases, are destructive and costly. There is, of course, no clear blueprint of what to do when conflict occurs. The chair who is aware of the stages of a conflict episode and who has a finger on the department's pulse will not be surprised if conflict does emerge, because he or she will have been watching it develop. Yet there is more to dealing with conflict than simply not being surprised by it, since some persons who are not surprised by events are still unable to handle them.

Much department conflict can be managed effectively by an astute chair. What does *conflict management* mean? For our purposes, it means the shaping of conflict in such a way that it is reduced to a process of problem solving. In many cases, this transformation can be accomplished if the chair is able to develop a clear idea about the basic attitudes of the disputing parties toward, first, the conflict they are engaged in and, second, the stakes involved. This understanding is important because attitudes toward conflict influence a person's behavior because conflict over low stakes is much easier to resolve than conflict over high stakes.

Analyzing the participating parties' attitudes to the conflict need not be complicated. The chair should know whether they feel that the conflict was avoidable and whether they feel that some agreement or compromise is possible. If disputants feel agreement is possible, they can generally be persuaded to convert their dispute into an opportunity for problem solving. If, on the other hand, they feel that an agreement is impossible, they may engage in a fierce struggle to the bitter end, especially if the stakes are high. Generally, if the stakes are high, the conflict will be much more vigorous, and the possibility exists that the conflict will not be settled amicably.

Chairs can settle a dispute if they can make the opposing parties believe that an agreement is possible or if they can get the parties to lower the stakes in their dispute. For example, an anthropology department was engaged in a bitter dispute between its structuralists and functionalists. Each side was accusing the other of not being "real" anthropologists and was preventing the promotion and tenure of young faculty members in the enemy camp. The stakes were the survival of each faction in the department. The chair, even though a member of one of the factions, was able to persuade the groups that they could live with each other and that their ideological differences need not lead to the expulsion of half the department. In this case, the stakes were not lowered, but the attitudes were changed.

The question of what "high" stakes are, compared with "moderate" or "low" stakes, is somewhat subjective but certainly includes such matters as promotion, tenure, and status in the department. Low stakes might include a large office, allocation of a new computer, and travel funds. Nevertheless, serious conflicts have erupted over the last three examples. Churchill once said that the reason academic politics are so vicious is that the stakes are so small. Low stakes for one person may be high stakes for another.

The question of whether parties to a conflict think the conflict was avoidable is of little concern here. Some persons believe that conflict is avoidable but that, if it should occur, an agreement is impossible. Research indicates that such persons often tend to withdraw from the conflict when it occurs. Generally, however, if persons see conflict as inevitable, agreement as impossible, and stakes as high, they are likely to engage in the most bitter of conflicts. Sometimes attempts to lower stakes and change attitudes do not succeed, and the results can be serious indeed.

When diagnosing a conflict, a chair must exercise analytical ability. He or she must use good judgment in deciding whether to intervene and strive to reduce conflict or channel it creatively. If the chair can identify an emerging conflict, uncover the faculty's attitudes and beliefs about the nature of conflict, and assess the stakes involved in the conflict, he or she will be better equipped to decide what to do in a particular situation. Often, the best decision is not to act. When intervention obviously will not improve the situation or even make it worse, the chair's best strategy is to remain aloof from the conflict while staying alert to the situation and sensitive to the conditions that produced it. For example, two senior faculty members have been bickering for years. Their differences do not impede the operation of the department, and the chair does not attempt a peace-making role. On the other hand, if the quarreling department members attempt to pressure the rest of the faculty to choose sides and build up factions within the department, intervention is called for.

As stated earlier in this discussion, the chair should try to transform conflicts into opportunities for problem solving. It may be useful here to make conceptual distinction between *conflicts* and *problems*. A problem exists when a set of expectations is not being fulfilled; a conflict exists when one or more persons is intentionally or unintentionally thwarting the needs or wants of another person or persons. For example, several faculty members taught an introductory graduate seminar on a rotating basis. Students who took the course from a particular faculty member had great difficulty passing the department qualifying examination. This difficulty caused conflict between the students and the faculty members, as well as among the faculty members themselves. The chair arranged a meeting of all the teachers of the course. Instead of permitting them to dwell on their differences, he limited the agenda to a discussion of what the students were expected to know at the completion of the course and what the examination should cover. By concentrating on the

problem rather than on the dispute and by reaching a mutually satisfactory solution, the chair defused the conflict.

The chair can resolve some conflicts by acting as clarifier. An emerging conflict may be reduced if the chair can show the parties that their expectations are based on incorrect information. For example, conflict in a department over inequitable teaching loads may be reduced if the chair supplies precise information about who teaches what. On the other hand, such information, if it gives evidence of real inequities, may widen the conflict.

When the chair receives reports of a conflict, he or she would be wise to begin a discreet inquiry into the situation before taking any overt action. For example, two faculty members were engaged in a bitter feud because one believed the other had misrepresented her ability and record to a Washington funding agency and thus was responsible for its rejection of her grant proposal. By conducting a few interviews, the chair was able to clarify the situation. Discreet inquiry was also effective in a case involving rumors of sexual misconduct by a faculty member. When the chair met with some graduate students, he discovered evidence of a pattern of sexual exploitation in which the faculty member threatened the careers of students unless they granted him favors. In some instances when rumors of misbehavior were ignored, the university was later subjected to adverse publicity and legal action.

The department as a whole, or committees within the department, can be used to settle or reduce conflict. For example, a bitter quarrel over who was to teach a certain course threatened to disrupt the activities of a statistics department. The department referred the problem to a committee and asked its members to develop a set of criteria and procedures for determining who would teach specific courses in the department. The decision of who was to teach each course, including the one in question, would henceforth be made on the basis of established policy.

Some conflicts are caused primarily by problems that the chair may be able to identify but not be authorized or suited to address. In such cases, the use of an outside authority may be required. For example, a faculty member's alcoholism was ignored and even concealed by his colleagues and chairs until a committee of graduate students spoke with an attorney about the man's chronic absenteeism and erratic behavior. The chair then discussed the matter with the dean, and they contacted a staff member who was an effective alcoholism counselor. Together they worked out a program of action that they offered to the faculty member.

Occasionally a chair will encourage an emerging conflict in the belief that getting things out in the open will help correct misunderstandings and ultimately result in a more positive relationship. Some chairs may even induce conflict in order to discover the intensity of feelings about a particular issue. Only a skilled conflict manager should attempt to introduce a dispute into the department. The potential for damage is high and the probable outcome too predictable.

When thinking about the kind of strategy to use to reduce a conflict, the chair should examine the values held by the opposing parties. He or she should be aware that intervention might unwittingly lend support to one party's values. Examining values is especially important when the department has no clear priorities or goals. In such instances, the chair, by supporting a value or goal, is causing a conflict value to be downplayed or rejected. The chair then becomes a party to the conflict rather than a mediator, part of the problem rather than part of the solution. In departments that have no clear-cut goals, the value supported by the chair establishes priorities and creates a latent conflict situation. For example, in a department that had established no priorities concerning the value of research or teaching, the

faculty members began to argue about the relative merits of generating large numbers of student credit hours rather than publishing research. The chair sided with the advocates of teaching large classes. By so doing, he established a priority that would later cause conflict between the disaffected researchers and the rest of the department.

Although it is often wise to adopt a neutral stance toward conflict in the department, the chair must sometimes become embroiled in a conflict because the role demands it. On such occasions, one of the parties in conflict may perceive the chair's action as partisan or punitive. Thus far we have emphasized the chair's role as a problem solver, but there are times when the attempted solution to a conflict requires that the chair make a decision that arouses someone's anger and hostility. Indeed, on occasion traditional ways of reducing conflict are not successful and a party to conflict must be warned, disciplined, or reprimanded. Chairs should know what authority they have to order persons to desist from certain behaviors. They should be aware of institution rules and regulations and know the extent of their legal powers as chair.

In some cases of conflict the best action is to intervene immediately. If equipment, students, faculty or staff members are threatened with danger, the chair must act quickly and effectively. In the rare case of hostility or threatening behavior, the chair and the staff should know how to contact police or security officers. The chair should also know what to do in the case of fire, storms, and accidents. Thefts should be reported promptly, since they may be part of an organized and systematic activity that the police might be able to identify and stop. Some disputes can be settled only by consultation with a dean or other official. Such disputes include quarrels between departments, quarrels between a department and the administration, and quarrels between a department and a university committee. With chairs vigorously advocating the claims of their own departments, quarrels can escalate into conflict. In such an event, the dean or the academic vice president must try to settle the fight. For example, a school of education offered statistics courses to its own students, while a statistics department offered courses to the university in general. When many arts and sciences students began to take courses in the school of education, the statistics department pressed for a regulation that would prohibit crossing college lines for statistics courses. Each department began accusing the other of proselytizing, so the chairs decided to cool things down by taking the problem to the academic vice president. Another example: When the graduate policy committee suspended a department's authorization to grant graduate degrees, the department claimed it was treated unfairly. Again, the chair took the problem to the dean. In both instances, the chairs were part of the conflict, but they used their knowledge of the dynamics of conflict to arrive at a solution.

A conflict poses a more difficult dilemma for chairs when none of the possible interventions seems likely to resolve the whole problem. On occasion a chair may hesitate to intervene in a conflict for fear of losing his or her effectiveness as chair, alienating powerful members of the department, or possibly losing his or her position.

The chair's role in dealing with conflict and maintaining morale is crucial to the smooth operation of the department. He or she must be aware of the conditions in the department that might give rise to conflict and be prepared to use analytic ability, good judgment, and creativity in order to handle conflict effectively. He or she must be able to recognize and analyze a conflict when it occurs and to exercise good judgment when deciding whether or not to intervene. The kind of intervention depends on the facts and dynamics of the situation. The chair must be creative and deal with each situation individually. In the case of recurring conflict, the irrational and emotional elements of the situation can be defused if the chair can find or get the department to develop a regulation or

policy covering that type of conflict. As a general rule, conflict that can be reduced to an opportunity for problem solving has the greatest chance of being settled. This transformation requires that the chair explore the limits of his or her own creativity. Although no formula exists that can be applied to all conflict situations, the following guidelines can be of help to the chair.

- Keep in touch with the feelings and attitudes of faculty members. Through frequent meetings, the chair can discover latent conflict situations before they emerge.
- Be aware of the four stages of conflict episodes in order to be able to deal with them at the earliest opportunity.
- Use techniques of active listening to raise morale and to understand the perceptions of faculty members who may be engaged in conflict.
- Structure the department in such a manner that conflicts can be discussed, aired, and dealt with through normal governance procedures.
- Be sensitive to faculty members with personal problems but do not necessarily get involved. Intervene only if the operation of the department is impaired.
- In cases of conflict, determine what conflicting values are held by the parties.
- Do not take sides in a conflict that does not concern the welfare of the department.
- Do not intervene in conflicts unless you have reason to believe that intervention can help the situation.
- Find out whether disputants perceive the stakes as high or low. If they are perceived as high, try to reduce them.
- Find out whether parties believe the conflict is amenable to solution. Try to persuade them that solutions are possible.
- Try to change any conflict to an opportunity for problem solving.
- Be prepared to make discreet inquiries about reported potential and actual conflict.
- When appropriate, use department committees to establish policies and procedures that govern situations in which conflicts have occurred and may occur in the future.
- As soon as possible, clarify misconceptions that may cause conflict.
- Communicate clearly with the faculty about any unprecedented action that might cause conflict.
- Do not violate laws or institutional regulations when dealing with conflict.

We have briefly discussed, from both a theoretical and a practical point of view, conflict as it occurs in academic departments. Chairs of academic disciplines other than the social sciences may be unaware of the great amount of research conducted by sociologists and psychologists in the problems of identifying, analyzing, and resolving conflict. Knowing how to deal with conflict can be useful in managing families, schools, churches, businesses, legislatures, and international affairs. Chairs, in order to be effective, must continually be alert to the possibility of conflict in their departments. They must be sufficiently wise to determine whether they should get involved. If they decide to become involved, they must select the strategy that has the best chance of solving or diffusing the conflict.

Questions

1. Have you, or has your department, recently dealt with any of the types of conflict discussed in this chapter—inner; employer/employee; faculty/faculty; faculty/students? If so, how was this resolved?

2. Identify factors that have raised morale in your department. Did you have any influence over these factors?

3. Suppose that two very influential faculty members who generally disagree about each other's principles and practices and who both are extremely vindictive have joined forces to deny junior faculty members the opportunity to teach certain courses and the opportunity for released time to do research. The two faculty members are politically strong enough to threaten the chair's position. The junior faculty members have approached the chair and asked for assistance in the conflict. What should the chair do?

4. A tenured faculty member of long standing who has always been outstanding in his work has begun to have problems, possibly emotional, that are affecting the performance of his assigned duties. You and his colleagues have attempted to assist him in every possible way during the past year. However, his performance has become so poor that appropriate actions must be taken. You have tried talking to him but he will not open up to conversation. The situation does not improve. What should the chair do?

5. Described below are three skeleton sketches of conflict situations in a department. Assume that you are the chair who must resolve each of the conflicts. Use your experience and imagination to expand each sketch into a more comprehensive case study by adding more details.

   a. Students complain, with some justification, that an instructor's grading practices are discriminatory.

   b. Faculty in a department have polarized into two camps and are feuding. Students are suffering because of the conflict.

   c. An attorney calls you and asks for an appointment to discuss a matter dealing with a student and one of your faculty members.