

Bennington College
December 1, 1947

Memorandum

To: Members of the Faculty
From: Mr. Burkhardt

The season for reappointments is at hand. This season is unusual in that practically all of the faculty contracts come up for renewal. Normally, had there been only a limited number of renewals up, I should have made it my business to get sufficient evidence to make an independent and considered judgment. But with this great number, and my limited time in office, it has been impossible to do this. So I am faced with making a very responsible decision, affecting practically the entire faculty, with, to say the least, inadequate experience and knowledge. I should like to propose therefore that the following procedure be adopted for the coming year, and only for the coming year:

(1) Concurrently with this announcement I shall send letters to those faculty members whose contracts I do not propose to renew.

(2) All other contracts now renewable will then be recommended to the Trustees for renewal, for one year (1948-49).

(3) In 1949 the usual contractual practices will be reinstituted and I shall have the opportunity to make appointments on the basis of the new salary, tenure and sabbatical plan which we are engaged in formulating.

I can think of no other procedure which will protect the College, the faculty and myself. The alternative is for me to make a great many decisions, pro or contra, on the basis of only superficial knowledge.

I plan to submit this proposal at a faculty meeting at 3:00 p.m., December 10. In the meantime, I shall be grateful for any comment you may care to make. The proposal has already been discussed with the Faculty EPC.

Note: This memorandum does not affect faculty members whose contracts expire on dates subsequent to July 31, 1948, or who have already been notified of the termination of their contracts as of that date.