26 April 1994

TO: Mark Levensky, for the Reappointment Policy Study Group

FROM: Burt Guttman

SUBJECT: Your report

This is a belated reply to your excellent report. On the whole, I applaud your work and thank you for it. This is primarily to emphasize some points that were made, I think, at the 13 April faculty meeting.

Let me urge you to put back into the system all the elements of mutual evaluation that we used to have. I think the divorce of evaluation from development was a terrible mistake, and several people at the meeting spoke quite eloquently about the value of the evaluative and developmental discussions that we used to have, especially those between faculty members and deans, with an exchange of portfolios. They are right: The dean's portfolio, with all its exchanges with other faculty members, was a wonderful device, and we ought to recover it.

A second important reason for those mutual evaluation sessions relates to the work of the deans as administrators and to the ancient and revered tradition of locatability and accountability. The importance of evaluation of administrators came out most forcefully a few years ago during the crisis when Joe Olander fired Patrick Hill. At that time, I wrote, for the Agenda Committee, a long history of evaluation of administrators which then led to an Administrative Evaluation DTF, chaired by Cam Stivers. We reemphasized the importance of continuing evaluation of administrators, as a way of ensuring that they are truly accountable to the people they are serving. I think the exchange of evaluations between deans and faculty members served that important function, and I beg you to make them a part of the new system. Note that every faculty member doesn't have to have that kind of discussion with a dean every year, but they should occur regularly; new faculty members, of course, should have them every year as part of learning the ropes.