

Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico

San Germán, Puerto Rico

(MEMBER MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

J. WILL HARRIS, FOUNDER

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The Buckingham,

§ J.T. Akers

Scarsdale, New York

April 15, 1947.

copy
Mr. Earl Clarke
Polytechnic Institute
San German, Puerto Rico:

Dear Earl:

Your letter of April 2 which you say you are sure will be bad news is far more than that. This entire year has been a series of disappointments which I have been able to meet only with the conviction that eventually things would work together for good if we could only weather the present. That is the only way in which I can meet this situation. We made our plans and budget for this year- in so far as one can make a budget these days- on the basis of my salary being full pay for one semester and 3/5 for another, with faith that the understanding which you and I had reached in this matter was valid. It is too late now to revise plans and we must meet obligations which are far greater than anything we anticipated.

You say that Dr. Seel feels that it would be a mistake to change an established policy until he has time to study the matter. Certainly that is the only attitude he can take and no one who has been at the Institute as long as we have would expect any new administrator to wave a magic wand or be able to please everybody. I am confident however, that when he does go into this matter he will find that no policy actually had been established in respect to a 3.5 sabbatical salary for the wife of a faculty man, irrespective of the load carried. When the matter of sabbatical leaves was first announced, there was no intimation that it was to be a "restricted policy". Such interpretation was not brought forward by the administration- at least to the knowledge of those of us whom it might affect- until years later, in the spring of 1945 I believe. Naturally we felt that it was not just in principle and certainly not fair to apply a retroactive discrimination. After some discussion of these points I recall receiving a communication offering me some portion of a sabbatical salary "in order not to disappoint you". And I objected to that on the basis that an ethical and professional principle was involved and that it concerned others-i.e. Mrs. Castillo and Mrs. Bover- as well as myself. You may recall that

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Dr. Morris wrote us that time did not permit him to submit to the Trustees meeting in mid-winter last year, a report of his views of which he had sent us a copy from New York. You probably recall too that when I received that copy earlier I had sent him a letter stating the grounds on which we objected. Since at no time later he ever mentioned his views, we supposed it was justifiable to consider that they were dropped and that as bonafide members of the faculty we were eligible to the provisions of the sabbatical leave to which our positions and our service entitled us.

I have written the above simply to present the history of this controversy, at least from my viewpoint. I had hoped the issue was closed. I do not see how a Christian co-educational college could subscribe to a policy which would deprive a part of the women members of the faculty from privileges extending to others rendering the same professional services. Furthermore I do not believe that the accreditation agency would lightly view such a situation. Some of us have worked too long and given too much of ourselves into achieving accreditation to see it jeopardized without protest.

There are a number of factors which I think should be pointed out. I realise that the combined salaries of a husband and wife at the Polytechnic appear somewhat larger than that of man and wife on the foreign mission field. But the personal expenses are also far greater since:

- 1- we pay all our own travel
- 2- we pay all our own medical and hospital expense
- 3- we receive no allowance for the education of our children
- 4- we are not provided with places to live at moderate rent or no rent while we are on leave in the States.

And although I have tried to keep all of this consideration on an impersonal basis, I think it is not irrelevant to note that some of us have taught at the Polytechnic more than twenty years without receiving a leave on salary, although we have taken the time out to better prepare ourselves professionally for the work we were doing.

I realise as I write that financial affairs of the school are matters of paramount importance and well do I know what it means to weather the lean years as we did at one time during the depression when we took a 50% salary cut. I suppose you know that Dr. Morris met with at least a part of the board last week to help clarify the picture. Afterwards Duncan Findlay told Boyd that things were not nearly so bad as they had thought. I am hoping that Dr. Seel will have the same experience.

There is another matter which I have been tempted to bring up, but I have refrained from doing so, because it seemed a minor and personal issue compared to the one already mentioned. But I should like to know why part time salary has been computed as it has. According to the salary scale, there is a difference of \$500 in my salary as head of the department and what it would be otherwise. When on part time I have carried all the responsibilities of head which are usually greater than (when I myself am teaching full time.) Yet my salary has been

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when I myself am teaching full time. Yet my salary has been estimated at 3/5 of the total \$2700 instead of 3/5 of \$2200 plus the full \$500. You can see that that makes a difference of several hundred dollars per year. If a policy of 3/5 sabbatical leave salary for the wife of a faculty man should be adopted then she loses 2/5 credit toward leave when teaching full time. If the method of evaluating part time salary is as it has been, then she loses full credit for departmental responsibilities when teaching part time.

This letter has become much longer than I had planned and I must apologize for the typing. My machine has many eccentricities which I find difficult to manage at present.

Boyd has been running his legs off trying to help work out dates for the Masa Coral. Everywhere it is the same story-- they would be interested if it were for a year from now, but plans have been made too far in advance to squeeze in extra things at this time. Churches were concerned about Easter and now about winding up affairs in hand before summer and schools have all the activities of their own that they can handle before the year is out. As for commercial music propositions they are a racket in New York into which amateurs cannot penetrate. It is to be hoped that things are not so tightly sewed up in areas farther from New York. The difficult thing about it is that so many contacted who are unable to do anything themselves always have ideas of some one else or some other organization which could be interested. Then on a chance you have to follow up a lot of leads which turn out to be will-o- the wisp. Lots of organizations would be glad to have them free. It is too bad the whole thing was not undertaken a few months ago, or even right after the successful Florida tour. The telephone strike makes for many more difficulties.

With kind regards to all of you there,

Yours very sincerely,