

Your department is located in a building with two types of offices: the offices on the exterior of the building have large windows that face the mountains and offer terrific light and views. The offices on the interior of the building have no windows and are frequently too hot or too cold, as the thermostat for your space is located in the hallway between the exterior and interior offices and influenced by the extreme temperatures of the exterior offices. In the summer, the windows make the exterior offices very hot and trigger the A/C; in the winter, the windows make the exterior offices chilly and activate the heating system.

The retirement of a member of your department has left one exterior office open. Two of the remaining faculty members have expressed a strong desire to move.

Prof. Green has been with the department for over 35 years. She was once a very productive member of the university community, but for the past 4-5 years has increasingly withdrawn from the life of the institution. She actively avoids volunteering for roles required to make the department function, often misses department meetings and hasn't engaged in research for the last several years. Even her once-stellar teaching evaluations have demonstrated a significant drop off. It seems clear to you that she has made a decision to retire soon and is biding her time until she rides into the sunset, though she has said nothing to anyone about an intention to do so.

Prof. White has been with the department for only 4 years but in that time has become an integral member of the team of scholars gathered there. She is a very popular teacher, beloved by her students and responsible for establishing a number of extra-curricular opportunities for them to engage with the discipline. Her research is very influential in your field; she has received sizable grants to support her inquiries and regularly publishes in the leading journals. She is also a go-getter outside the department, volunteering for leadership roles on university-wide committees and generally representing your department very well to the university community.

Profs. White and Green are locked in a battle about who gets the office. Both have raised the issue in a recent faculty meeting, making their cases to the entire department. Both have come to you independently, demanding that they be given the office. Neither is currently speaking to each other and both are actively soliciting allies to their position. It's become clear that this issue isn't going to go away.

How do you resolve this conflict?