

FROM THE FACULTY HANDBOOK

3.7.4 CRITERIA FOR THE TENURE DECISION

The choices that the University makes in granting tenure are crucial to its endeavors toward academic excellence. A decision to grant tenure must reflect an assessment of high professional competence and performance measured against national standards. Tenure should never be regarded as a routine award. The tenure decision shall be based on a thorough evaluation of the candidate's total contribution to the mission of the University. While specific responsibilities of faculty members may vary because of special assignments or because of the particular mission of an academic unit, all evaluations for tenure shall address the manner in which each candidate has performed in:

(A) Teaching

(B) Research or Creative/Scholarly Activity

(C) Professional and University Service and Public Outreach

Above all else, it is essential to any recommendation that tenure be granted that the faculty member has clearly demonstrated scholarly attainment, primarily but not exclusively through teaching and research or creative/scholarly activity.

Each academic unit, with the participation and approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost, shall establish and publish specific criteria for evaluating faculty performance in that unit, so long as those criteria are in accord with this policy. These criteria may be changed by the faculty of the unit from time to time with the approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost. The Senior Vice President and Provost's approval of the revised criteria shall indicate a date on which they become effective. The revised criteria shall apply to all faculty in the unit appointed to the tenure-track after the effective date. Untenured faculty in the tenure-track on the effective date shall be subject to the revised criteria in instances where the changes affect only the process by which the unit ascertains the quality of individual faculty performance. When the revisions involve changes in the quality of faculty performance required for granting tenure, faculty already in the tenure-track shall remain subject to the previous criteria unless these faculty consent to the new criteria in writing.

In those cases in which specific assignments might limit the faculty member's involvement in any area of faculty responsibility, a written understanding to this effect should be filed in the Office of the Senior Vice President and

Provost and approved by the dean and the chair of the academic unit at the time the assignment is made.

The award of tenure carries with it the expectation that the University shall continue to need the services the faculty member is capable of performing and that the financial resources are expected to be available for tenured employment. It also carries the expectation that the faculty member will maintain or improve upon the level of achievement which characterized the qualifications for tenure.

- return to index -

3.7.5 PROCEDURES FOR THE TENURE DECISION

(A) A faculty member who is eligible for tenure consideration should be notified by the chair of the academic unit by May 15 before the initial vote by the faculty member's colleagues. (See (f) below.)

(B) At the time of notification, the candidate for tenure shall be requested to submit material which will be helpful to an adequate consideration of the faculty member's performance or professional activities in relationship to the tenure criteria. The candidate should be advised to consult with the chair or any other senior colleagues concerning the materials to include. It should be made clear, however, that responsibility for the contents resides with the candidate.

Note 1: All the materials assembled in accord with Section 3.7.5(b), (c), and (d) constitute the tenure dossier. Once the dossier is presented to the tenured faculty members for their vote in the process, it should not be changed either to increase it or decrease it. That way, it is clear what has been seen by all parties in the review process. Should any other items arise later that should be taken into account in the tenure process, those can be sent to any person in the tenure review process with the request that that person also take that information into account in making his or her recommendation. Technically, though, that information would not become a part of the tenure dossier itself. For example, (1) an outside letter of evaluation is received after the tenure dossier has been assembled and the tenured faculty have taken their vote, (2) someone volunteers a letter about the candidate during the process, or (3) an administrator in accord with 3.7.5(n) solicits advice from others.

(Senior Vice President and Provost, 11-22-82)

(C) The chair is responsible for providing a minimum of ten copies of the

candidate's material (as described in the Senior Vice President and Provost's "Call for Tenure Recommendations") and making them available for review by the voting members of the academic unit at least two weeks prior to the vote. Following the vote, these copies (along with the academic unit's recommendation forms) shall be forwarded to the appropriate dean.

(D) Preceding the vote, all tenured faculty voters who are available shall meet for a discussion of the candidate's qualifications for tenure. It is assumed that the eligible voters will have studied the candidate's materials prior to the meeting. (See Note 1 above)

(E) The candidate should not be present during the discussion of his or her qualifications. The candidate should be available, however, to enter the meeting on invitation to answer questions or clarify circumstances relevant to the qualifications.

(F) Formal consideration for tenure shall originate with the polling by secret ballot of all tenured members of the candidate's academic unit, including, when practical, those who are on leave of absence. If it is proposed to consider a tenure recommendation prior to the candidate's tenure decision year after obtaining the dean's and Senior Vice President and Provost's preliminary approval to consider an early tenure decision, the tenured members of the unit shall hold a preliminary vote on whether to do so, and consideration of early tenure will proceed only if a majority of tenured faculty members favor such consideration. Subsequently, in any formal poll of tenured faculty taken prior to the candidate's designated tenure decision year, no tenure recommendation will be forwarded unless a majority of those polled favor granting tenure. Whatever the result of the faculty poll taken during the designated tenure decision year, it will be forwarded. In all cases, the result of the vote must accompany the recommendation. The numerical result of the formal secret ballot polling shall be provided to the candidate at the candidate's request.

(G) The chair and Committee A shall submit separate recommendations with supporting reasons.

(H) While primary responsibility for gathering complete information on professional activity rests with the individual faculty member, the chair or designated committee or mentor should assume a share of this responsibility to be certain that all tenure recommendations are initiated on the basis of full documentation, which must be considered by any person or group making a recommendation.

(I) All recommendations shall be in writing and, with the exception of the

faculty recommendation resulting from the secret poll, reasons for the recommendations must be stated. At the time recommendations are made at any stage of the review process, notification of such recommendations must be provided to the chair and the individual candidate. It shall be the responsibility of the chair to inform the faculty of the unit about recommendations made at the various stages of the review process.

(J) Copies of the academic unit recommendations and all appropriate documentation upon which recommendations were based will be forwarded to the appropriate dean. The dean will attach a recommendation to the tenure materials and forward all materials to the Campus Tenure Committee with supporting reasons and will notify the candidate and the chair of the unit of the recommendation.

(K) The main purpose of the Campus Tenure Committee is to provide faculty advice on whether the academic unit's recommendation with regard to both substance and process is sustained by the accompanying documentation and is consistent with the approved tenure criteria of the academic unit and the University. If it determines that the documentation is inadequate, the Campus Tenure Committee may request more information from the academic unit.

(L) The Campus Tenure Committee will attach its recommendations to the tenure materials and forward all materials to the Senior Vice President and Provost with supporting reasons and will notify the candidate, the chair of the unit, and the college dean of its recommendations. The numerical result of the Campus Tenure Committee recommendation shall be provided to the candidate at the candidate's request.

(M) The Campus Tenure Committee will be composed of nine tenured faculty members on staggered three-year terms. The Faculty Senate appoints two new members each year, and the President appoints one new member each year.

(N) In determining its recommendation, the Campus Tenure Committee may request information or advice from any person. Committee members from the originating academic unit of a case under consideration will absent themselves from discussions regarding that case.

(O) The existence of the Campus Tenure Committee in no way limits the right of administrative officers to solicit advice from faculty members in determining their recommendations.

(P) In any tenure case where the Senior Vice President and Provost plans to submit to the President a recommendation contrary to that of the Campus Tenure Committee, the Senior Vice President and Provost shall so notify the

Campus Tenure Committee, allowing sufficient time and opportunity for the Senior Vice President and Provost and the Campus Tenure Committee jointly to conduct a thorough discussion of the case before the Senior Vice President and Provost presents a final recommendation to the President. If after such a discussion the Senior Vice President and Provost and the Campus Tenure Committee are in disagreement, the President or the Committee may request a meeting between the President and the Campus Tenure Committee before the President makes a final recommendation to the Board of Regents.

(Q) At any stage of the tenure review process, the concerned faculty member may appeal in writing to the Faculty Appeals Board if it is believed that procedural violations have occurred in the case or that violations of academic freedom have occurred. If it is believed that there has been discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran, the faculty member may file a written appeal with the University Equal Opportunity Officer. Such appeals must be made within 180 calendar days after discovery of the alleged violation, and the review process will be suspended until a resolution is effected. Such an appeal shall not have the effect of extending the faculty member's terminal year should tenure be denied.

(R) The President will notify each faculty member by May 31 whether tenure has been granted, except when appeals make this impossible.

(Regents, 6-15-78, 12-14-78, 7-22-81, 12-12-85, 1-15-87, 7-23-87, 6-27-95, 1-26-99, 1-27-04, 10-25-04)