

TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES

Report from the College of Education Faculty Affairs Committee

Members: Linda Behar-Horenstein (Secretary), Mary Brownell (Chairperson), Randy Penfield, Jane Townsend, Jeff Hurt

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Background

In the fall of 2001, the College of Education Faculty Policy Council directed the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) to review tenure and promotion procedures used by departments in the college. The purpose of this review was to identify similarities and differences in department procedures, and use this information to develop college policies that would promote consistency in tenure and promotion procedures. The FAC engaged in a process of fact-finding to clarify current tenure and promotion procedures in departments, and also to identify relevant college-level and university guidelines that address this issue. Members of the FAC conducted interviews with each department chairperson in the College of Education, and solicited input from faculty by conducting discussions at department faculty meetings. Notes from each interview and department meeting were compiled. Committee members reviewed all notes and relevant documents to determine general procedures, common issues and concerns, and suggestions for improving tenure/promotion procedures in the College of Education.

The primary issues identified by the FAC committee were the following:

- No written policies exist within departments to specify the procedures used for tenure and promotion decisions. All departments mentioned following university guidelines, which specify few policies at the department level.
- There is considerable variability across departments in the college as tenure/promotion decisions are made. Key areas of variability include:
 - the role of the department chairperson
 - the process used to identify external reviewers
 - whether department meetings are held to discuss candidates
 - time lines for conducting department votes
- Faculty expressed concern that tenure and promotion criteria are unclear, and in fact change due to the differing perspectives of department chairpersons and deans. Faculty and department chairpersons emphasized the need to create a culture in the college that promotes faculty voice and decision-making regarding tenure and promotion.
- The role of the college-level committee is unclear, with faculty and department chairpersons expressing concern that the committee does not have a significant voice in making decisions about tenure and promotion. Membership on the committee changes from year-to-year, thus providing little continuity.
- Limited support is provided to non-tenured faculty from the point of hiring through the tenure/promotion process. There is considerable variability across

departments related to the assignment/availability of faculty mentors, the level of involvement of department faculty in annual merit reviews, and the content/nature of evaluative information included in annual merit review letters that is specific to tenure/promotion criteria.

Rationale for Proposed Changes

It is the conclusion of the FAC that clear and consistent procedures for rendering tenure and promotion decisions in the College of Education do not presently exist. Procedures currently differ across departments and are largely based on tradition and decisions made by senior faculty and/or chairpersons. Thus a set of proposed tenure/promotion procedures are presented to the Faculty Policy Council and the faculty of the College of Education for discussion and possible adoption. The purpose of the proposed changes is to:

- Assure equity across all departments and candidates in the College of Education as decisions are made about tenure and promotion.
- Establish a clear set of procedures to be used for all tenure and promotion decisions, thus assuring that candidates, faculty members, and administrators in the College of Education have a common understanding of the recommended procedures and decision-making process.
- Establish procedures that are consistent with other faculty governance roles in the College of Education, thus assuring that faculty are active participants in critical decisions about tenure and promotion at the department and college levels.
- Provide non-tenured faculty consistent communication and support as they are preparing for the tenure and promotion process.

Fall 2002 college-wide feedback on the proposed procedures:

The Faculty Policy Committee provided individual departments with opportunity in the fall 2002 semester to provide feedback on tenure and promotion procedures developed in the previous academic year. This feedback was collected through departmental faculty meetings and summarized for the FPC and FAC. Additionally, individual faculty members had an opportunity to provide feedback to Nancy Waldron, secretary of the FPC. Seven faculty members provided individual feedback, four from Educational Psychology and Research and three from Teaching and Learning. For the most part, departments supported the draft of the tenure and promotion guidelines. However, when departments suggested revisions, there was little consensus across departments regarding the nature of those revisions with the exception of the three-year review. While suggestions for changing the language of the three-year review varied across the departments, four departments did provide specific suggestions for improving the procedures.

The following is a summary of the feedback provided from individual departments:

- (1) *Selection of a senior faculty member to present the case:* Two departments provided feedback on this procedure. Counselor Education suggested that the candidate select a senior faculty member, and that the faculty member should not be the department chair. Special Education suggested that the chair and junior faculty member select the senior faculty member to present the case. The senior faculty member could be the chair and the faculty member must be able to present the case objectively.
- (2) *Selection of external reviewers:* Two departments wanted more clarity about how external reviewers were selected. Educational Leadership and Policy provided specific language to guide how the chair and junior faculty member would approach the task of selecting external reviewers. Educational Psychology wanted more precise guidelines for identifying the external reviewers.
- (3) *Notifying the candidate of the vote:* Special Education and Counselor Education wanted a 5 day period for notifying the candidate of the department vote, as a candidate may be out of town and a faster turn around could create legal issues.
- (4) *Three year review:* Four of the five departments voiced either concerns or suggestions about this process. Counselor Education and Teaching and Learning seemed concerned about how helpful the review will be for the candidate. Teaching and Learning voiced concerns about the review process becoming burdensome and maybe even punitive for the candidate; however, they seemed to agree that if a supportive process could be instituted then they would support it. To make the process a supportive one, Teaching and Learning faculty suggested specific guidelines for avoiding problems. Educational Psychology also provided specific details about how the process should be conducted, including who should vote on the papers, who would provide feedback, and when the review should be conducted. Special Education encouraged that outside letters be secured in the third year review, but did not provide further details.
- (5) *Support for junior faculty:* Special Education and Teaching and Learning addressed this issue. In special education, faculty felt that support should be the item emphasized first in the procedures. In Teaching and Learning, concerns about support focused on the three-year review and ensuring that faculty were provided with adequate institutional support if the review was negative.

The FAC considered all feedback from the department and individual faculty and decided to concentrate on the three-year review in revising the document as that section of the document received the most feedback.

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
TENURE and PROMOTION PROCEDURES**

Process at the Department Level

1. The department chairperson will notify faculty of candidate nominations, expected timelines for review of nomination packets, and expected timelines for department votes at the beginning of the fall semester.
2. A meeting will be held at the department level to discuss tenure and promotion nominations.
3. All faculty eligible to vote on a particular nomination will be invited to the meeting, or portion thereof, at which the nomination will be discussed.
4. The nomination packet for each candidate should be available for review at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.
5. The candidate will designate either the department chairperson, or a senior faculty member to present the tenure/promotion case for consideration at the department meeting. The purpose of this presentation is to highlight key elements of the candidate's case, provide relevant information not evident in the papers, and stimulate discussion of candidate performance in the areas of research, teaching, and service.
6. A faculty vote on each nomination will be taken by secret ballot. Ballots should be distributed to eligible faculty no earlier than one day following the department meeting. A voting period of five working days will be provided. Completed ballots must be submitted to the department chairperson, or his/her designee. If a faculty member is unavailable during the voting period, arrangements may be made for an electronic or verbal vote to the department chairperson or designee.
7. The votes will be counted by the chairperson or his/her designee, and a faculty member within three working days of the close of the voting period.
8. The results of the vote will be communicated to the candidate within one working day of the vote count.
9. All nominations will be forwarded to the Dean's office regardless of the ballot results and regardless of whether or not the chair endorses the nomination.

Process at the College Level

1. A college Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Committee will be constituted with one representative from each department. Committee members will be tenured, full professors who are nominated and elected by the faculty in each respective department.
2. The term for each T & P Committee member will be two years, with staggered terms to assure continuity of membership.
3. Each year the T & P Committee will select a member to serve as Chairperson.
4. The College T & P Committee will advise the Dean on all tenure and promotion nominations received. The committee will serve in a fact-finding and consultative role, reviewing each candidate's nomination packet and reporting the strengths and weaknesses of the record in the areas of research, teaching, and service.
5. The Chair of the College T & P Committee will present a written report to the Dean regarding each candidate. Copies of the reports shall be made available to the members of the College T & P Committee and department chairpersons. Each candidate shall receive a copy of his/her report.

Support for Tenure-track Faculty

1. The Dean, or a designee, will meet annually with non-tenured faculty to discuss tenure/promotion procedures, university and college criteria for tenure/promotion, and respond to specific questions and issues brought forward by the faculty.
2. The Dean's office will maintain a file of successful tenure/promotion cases that will be available for faculty review.
3. Non-tenured faculty, in consultation with the department chairperson, will select a tenured faculty member to serve as a mentor.
4. **A third year pre-tenure review will be completed with all non-tenured faculty. The review is intended to be an internal process that provides the candidate with structured feedback and ensures that they have ongoing supports to meet the criteria for tenure and promotion. The candidate will submit pre-tenure papers that include a well-developed vita, sample journal articles, and a statement of scholarship. The candidate will be given a template for the review. Use of the template by the candidate will be optional. The review will be conducted by a faculty committee, selected by the department chairperson, in consultation with the candidate. The committee will be comprised of three tenured faculty members, two selected from within the candidate's department, and one member from outside the candidate's**

department. This pre-tenure review committee will present a written summary that addresses the candidate's progress toward tenure and the supports that have been or will be provided for assisting the candidate in the process. Specifically, the report will summarize areas of strength and weakness, describe the supports that have been provided previous to the three year review, outline recommendations regarding areas that should be enhanced to meet the criteria for tenure and promotion, and the supports that the department and college will provide in order to help the candidate address the committee's recommendations. The candidate will meet with the ad-hoc committee, at minimum, and the potentially the department chair and dean to discuss the review. This written summary will be made available to the candidate, the department chairperson, and the Dean.