FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICIES

VII. Progress Reviews of Probationary Faculty

It is University policy to conduct a review of each untenured faculty member’s performance and dossier during each year prior to mandatory tenure decision time. A primary purpose of this review is to identify current strengths and weaknesses in the faculty member’s performance and to make suggestions for improvement; however, this review also leads to a decision concerning retention.

The review process within a division consists of evaluations of the dossier by a single faculty committee, by the departmental chairperson (area head, program director) if the division has such administrative subunits, and by the dean. The faculty committee normally will be a departmental (area, program) committee if the division has administrative subunits; otherwise, it will be a divisional committee.

The faculty committee reviews the record of each probationary faculty member who has not reached mandatory tenure decision time and recommends whether to continue the person’s appointment. The committee’s recommendation must include a discussion of evidence in the dossier showing the person’s progress toward meeting the criteria and standards for tenure. The recommendation also includes any suggestions for improvement that the committee considers appropriate.

The next stage of the review process consists of an independent recommendation by the departmental chairperson (or by the dean in divisions without administrative subunits) based on a review of the dossier and of the recommendation of the faculty committee. The departmental chairperson’s recommendation includes a discussion of evidence in the dossier showing the person’s progress toward tenure and may include any suggestions for improvement that the chairperson considers appropriate.

The dossier, together with recommendations from the departmental committee and the departmental chairperson, is transmitted to the dean. Except in cases where there is an automatic review by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, a review by the dean is the last step in the annual progress review of probationary faculty members. The dean notifies the departmental chairperson and the faculty member of his or her decision and may include suggestions for improvement.

Review by the Executive Vice President and Provost is automatic in two cases: (1) whenever the dean decides that the probationary faculty member’s appointment should not be continued; and (2) in the review process which occurs two years before mandatory tenure decision time. In these cases the dean makes a recommendation which is forwarded to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for the final decision. The dean notifies the departmental chairperson and the faculty member of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs’ decision. If the decision is that the faculty member is not to be retained, then the faculty member is no longer eligible to apply for promotion or tenure.

If a probationary faculty member has not completed requirements for an appropriate terminal degree, the dean may decide that retention of the faculty member shall be contingent upon completion of all degree requirements by a specific date (which can be no earlier than the date specified in the faculty member’s letter of appointment). Written notification to the faculty member by March 1 of the decision to impose this contingency constitutes notice that the individual’s employment at the University terminates at the end of the academic year unless all degree requirements are met by the specified date; however, the dean may set a later termination date.
A decision not to retain a probationary faculty member who holds an appropriate terminal degree must be transmitted in writing to the faculty member by March 1 during the first year of employment and by December 15 in the second year. Otherwise, the faculty member may remain on the faculty for an additional year.* If the decision not to retain the faculty member is made during the third or subsequent years, the faculty member’s appointment will not terminate until the end of the following academic year.* Consequently, the review for first year probationary faculty members should occur no later than January, with recommendations reaching the dean by February 1. Reviews during the second year should occur no later than October, with recommendations reaching the dean by November 1. Reviews during the third and later years should be conducted early enough to ensure that the faculty member is notified of the decision prior to May 15.