

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE PROMOTION AND TENURE (P & T) POLICY COMMITTEE
June 2006

Committee members: Judy Bundra, Music; Linda Camras, LA&S, Marie Donovan, Education; Mechthild Hart, SNL; Steve Lytinen, CTI; Janet Messmer, Theatre; Darrell Moore, LA&S; Beth Murphy, Commerce; Chris Murray, Education; Bruce Newman, Commerce; John Roberts, Law

The charge for the Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee

The committee has been charged with reviewing the policies and procedures related to the CTI case as documented in the September 9, 2005 memo, and addressing the concerns raised by the CTI Personnel Committee. In addition, we have been asked to review policies on promotion and tenure and recommend whether a permanent Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee should be established.

The meeting dates and agenda

We have met January 19, February 9, February 24, March 14, April 10, April 26, and May 10. Our agenda was to a) review the case involving the CTI recommendations, b) review the recommendations of the University Promotion and Tenure Board in 2003, 2004, and 2005, and 3) submit a recommendation to Faculty Council as to whether or not a standing Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee is needed.

1. COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT THE REVERSAL OF THE CTI RECOMMENDATIONS
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As stated in the Faculty Handbook, p. 12, “Any reversal of the decision of a prior level shall be reported promptly to the departmental chair and/or academic dean of the prior level along with the reasons for the reversal.”

After two CTI recommendations against tenure were overturned, CTI did not receive any notice or reasons for the reversals of their decisions from the University Board.

1. Conclusion: Assuming that the University Board, rather than the President, overturned one or both of the CTI cases, the lack of communication about the reversals of the CTI decisions was in violation of the DePaul Faculty Handbook policies on promotion and tenure.

1a. Recommendation: The guidelines from the Faculty Handbook should be followed, and any reversal of the decision from a prior level should be reported promptly, along with reasons for the reversal.

1b. Recommendation: Faculty Council should ensure that a monitoring system is in place so that all reversals are communicated to prior levels, along with the reasons for the reversal.

1c. Recommendation: Four relevant questions should also be addressed by this committee and forwarded to the Status of Faculty committee:

- Should the communication be written?

- What is the timeline for communication? What does “prompt” mean?
- Should communication about reversals move back through all four levels? President; University P & T Board; School P & T committee; Department/College/School faculty
- How does confidentiality play a role in the communication between levels?

2. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED BY THE CANDIDATE

The Faculty Handbook states, “Ordinarily materials submitted to the University Board are limited to that used in the college or department review.” (p. 14)

In the CTI case, it appears that additional materials were submitted by the candidate directly to the University P & T Board without being submitted to the CTI promotion and tenure committee. It is our understanding that this was done to bolster the candidate’s case, and the CTI recommendation was reversed.

2. Conclusion: Because the Handbook does not specify the exact type of materials the candidate can and cannot submit to the University P & T Board, it does not appear that the CTI candidate violated promotion-tenure policies as stated in the Faculty Handbook

2a. Recommendation: The Faculty Handbook should be revised to clearly state what materials the candidate can or cannot submit to whom, with specific reference to the use of annual probationary reports.

2b. Recommendation: Materials submitted by the candidate should be consistent at all levels. New evidence to support one’s case, such as additional letters of recommendation, course evaluations, or probationary reviews, may not be submitted beyond the college/school level, after the initial submission of materials.

3. CREATION OF A PERMANENT PROMOTION AND TENURE POLICY COMMITTEE

Given the concerns in recent years expressed by both the University P & T Board and the individual colleges/schools, it appears that a separate and permanent committee could assist in the development and implementation of promotion and tenure policy.

The creation of a permanent Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee could also serve two important purposes:

- 1) To serve as a liaison between the University P & T Board and the Colleges/Schools, allowing for a review of the annual recommendations from the Board.
- 2) Conversely, to serve as a liaison between the Colleges/Schools and the University P & T Board, allowing for the review of any concerns or problems from the colleges/schools, e.g., the CTI case.

If created, the Faculty Council will need to address whether a Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee would make recommendations to the Status of Faculty committee or directly to the Faculty Council. If a permanent committee is not established, we recommend that the Status of Faculty committee carefully examine the current Promotion and Tenure policy. Because some issues are vaguely worded, inconsistent, or overlooked, there is sufficient cause for concern on behalf of the faculty candidates as well as the University Promotion and Tenure Board.

3. Recommendation: The committee recommends that a permanent committee on Promotion and Tenure Policy should be established. The Faculty Council should delineate the set of responsibilities given to the committee, and the appropriate channels for reporting recommendations and changes.

4. UNIVERSITY PROMOTION AND TENURE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

In previous years, the University P & T Board has proposed a series of recommendations about promotion and tenure policies. Our committee reviewed those recommendations, for we believe that they have arisen out of need for more clarity and consistency. At the same time, we wish to remind the University community that the P & T Board recommendations are simply that, and it is our understanding any policy changes must be instituted through the Status of Faculty committee. When defining the scope of the Board's responsibility, our committee noted a significant discrepancy exists between the Faculty Handbook and actual practice (refer to #5, p. 9, in this document), and our committee suggests that this problem must be addressed by the Faculty Handbook committee and Provost.

4. Conclusion: A system is currently in place for initiating changes in promotion and tenure policies, and any recommendations from the University P & T Board should be regarded as advisory only. All promotion and tenure policy changes should be generated from the Status of Faculty committee and reviewed by Faculty Council.

4a. Recommendation: A system should be developed to review the Board's recommendations and work with the Status of Faculty committee to consider policy changes.

Our committee identified the key issues which emerged from the reports of the 2003, 2004, and 2005 University P and T Board, and proposed a series of recommendations.

A. UNIT REPORTS

Synopsis: Units need to provide adequate information that can be understood and a justification for their recommendations. We agreed to endorse Board Recommendation.

Recommendation: All units must provide adequate information and justification for their recommendations to the University Board.

B. UNIFORMITY OF REPORTS

Synopsis: Across all units, the reports and data presentation should be as uniform as possible.

Recommendation: We recommend that data should be reported more uniformly, but it is a topic that merits further study by the Provost and the P and T committee. A supplemental guide could be a useful source towards developing more uniform data reports.

C. UNIT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

Synopsis: Unit criteria and procedures need to be consistent with university, still meet the needs of the college/school.

Recommendation: The Provost should address the matter of standards with the individual colleges/schools in question.

D. CONSISTENCY OF UNITS WITHIN A COLLEGE/SCHOOL

Synopsis: Particular schools were cited as varying widely between the departments.

Recommendation: The Provost should address the matter of standards with the individual colleges/schools in question.

E. KNOWLEDGE OF FACULTY HANDBOOK P&T PROCESS

Synopsis: Units should know contents of faculty handbook before the review process begins to make sure their evaluation process, candidate documents, and unit reports follow the guidelines in the Faculty Handbook

Recommendation: The Provost should ensure that colleges/schools follow existing promotion and tenure policies. As suggested above (B), a supplemental guide with promotion and tenure policies, standards, and reporting should also be given to all candidates early in their appointment to DePaul.

F. ANNUAL/ BIENNIAL REVIEWS

Synopsis: Conflicting information exists as to the inclusion or exclusion of annual/biennial reviews in unit reports.

Recommendation: It is our understanding that probationary candidates' annual reviews are formative in nature, and not intended to be a factor in a final, summative assessment of one's teaching-research-service. The University Board cannot mandate that probationary reports be included as part of the promotion-tenure materials, unless the candidate chooses to include them from the beginning of his promotion-tenure application.

G. MERIT RAISES

Synopsis: Salary information was incorporated as part of the University Board materials.

Recommendation: All salary information should be omitted from Promotion and Tenure Reviews. The context and reasons for salary increases are too complex and varied to be weighed as part of the promotion and tenure review process.

H. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Synopsis: There is a great deal of inconsistency as to the selection of the student representative, the training of a student, and the quality of their reports to the University Board.

Recommendation: Student representatives need adequate training in order to be prepared to handle the responsibilities of serving on a college/school Board. This is a recurring issue that merits further discussion. Furthermore, clarification should be provided in the handbook that indicates that the P&T meeting is not an opportunity for students to provide their individual opinion about the faculty candidate. The student representative is to “carefully reflect the perception of other students.”

I. STUDENT REPORTS

Synopsis: The data collection, data analysis, and reporting of the data are quite uneven in quality and consistency.

Recommendation: Student reports should have guidelines and templates for their reports and presentations.

J. STANDARDS IN RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES ACROSS COLLEGES/SCHOOLS

Synopsis: There is a great deal of inconsistency as to the nature of scholarship. In addition, candidates appear not to have adequate preparation as they approach tenure or promotion on this issue.

Recommendation: Given the differences between colleges/schools, it appears that a university-wide standard cannot be applied. The Provost should review individual colleges/schools scholarship standards, and determine if the standards are consistently high. Furthermore, a school's/college's standards should be communicated clearly to the probationary faculty members at the start of their employment.

K. QUALITY/ QUANTITY OF RESEARCH

Synopsis: Units need to address the quality and quantity of research or creative activities, making clear the criteria being applied when the research or creative activities are inadequate. Reporting units should explain their evaluation of research, noting leading or prestigious journals

or publishers and why research would be regarded as significant. How collaborative research is judged should be addressed by the units, familiar with the nature of research in a given field.

Recommendation: Evaluative criteria among levels of research, scholarship and creative activities should be clearly communicated in writing as part of each unit's promotion and tenure guidelines; furthermore, units need to specify how collaborative publications are regarded.

L. PUBLICATIONS

Synopsis: Units need to clarify what they can and cannot accept when a publication is under review or in press

Recommendation: As stated in #2b above, a candidate's materials should be consistent at all levels of review. If a publication or creative activity is pending, it should be noted by the candidate as such, and recommendations for or against promotion/tenure should be made based upon a review of the entire candidate's portfolio as originally submitted.

M. PUBLICATIONS/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

Synopsis: Should the work of a candidate for full professor be evaluated from the point of associate professor forward or should the entire career of a candidate be considered?

Recommendation: The quality and quantity of work completed since promotion to associate should be evaluated, along with an examination of the overall contributions of a candidate in his/her disciplines/fields. Furthermore, the work of candidates for full professor should be compared with faculty from peer institutions. Unit guidelines for promotion to full professor need to be clarified, with particular attention to the question of new or continued research/creative activities.

N. EXTERNAL REVIEWERS FOR PROMOTION TO FULL

Synopsis: The selection of external reviewers needs to be carefully delineated.

Recommendation: Unit guidelines for promotion to full professor need to state clearly how the external reviewers are selected, and reviewers should explain their relationship with the candidate in their letters. External reviewers should be selected with input from both the candidate and their unit.

Units are reminded that external reviewers should not be so closely affiliated with a candidate as to compromise objective judgment. However, the Board and the P and T Policy Committee recognize that in certain fields candidates may know those best qualified to assess their work. A distinction between "knowing" and "being influenced by" needs to be made.

Subject for further discussion: Candidates up for tenure should also be required to comply with the same requirements for external review.

O. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Synopsis: The size, composition, and responsibilities of the personnel committees and their reports are inconsistent from college to college.

Recommendation: The size, composition, and role of the unit's personnel committee in the promotion and tenure process should be clarified by each unit. The faculty handbook requires that the unit's personnel committee (if one exists) provide a report to the entire faculty of the unit prior to their promotion and tenure meeting. We recommend that units read and follow the existing faculty handbook.

The committee recognizes the difficulty in generating the negative comments needed to justify a vote against tenure. However, this is a faculty responsibility. Deans should be encouraged to address this issue with their assigned units.

P. ROLE OF DEAN/CHAIR

Synopsis: The deans and chairs play a significant role in shaping the Board's perceptions of a candidate's worthiness for promotion or tenure. They offer a valued opinion, informed by the members of the candidate's departments/schools. The question has been raised as to how much they can represent and re-interpret faculty votes on a candidate.

Recommendation: It is important that deans and chairs do not overstep the bounds and re-interpret faculty votes; rather, the faculty votes should be allowed to stand as is, and the written report of the School's/College's faculty should serve as the faculty voice.

Q. VOTES

Synopsis: Inconsistencies exist between colleges'/schools' reports of the faculty voting.

Recommendation: The Provost, who reviews all school and college reports, should deal with those reports that appear to be inconsistent or incomplete.

Synopsis: The use of absentee ballots was discussed and the committee was not unanimous. Some believe that faculty can be knowledgeable about a candidate and have their vote count in the process even though they have legitimate reasons for not being able to attend the meeting.

Recommendation: The committee does not believe that there should be a mandate about who should vote in each unit. Each unit should specify their policy in writing and clearly follow it.

R. UNTENURED FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN PROMOTION AND TENURE PROCESS

Synopsis: The participation of untenured faculty in the Promotion and Tenure unit meetings differs between colleges/schools.

Recommendation: Units need to be specific in clarifying the role of the untenured faculty and whether they are able to attend P&T meetings.

S. STUDENT EVALUATION DATA

Synopsis: The reports of the deans and personnel committees are sometimes inconsistent with the student evaluation data.

Recommendation: Units are responsible for providing information that allows a meaningful review of the student evaluation results, including both quantitative and qualitative data. For example, means should be provided along with the number of students completing evaluations. A comparison of the candidate's evaluation results to the evaluations of the unit should be provided. In addition, information should specify whether a candidate teaches courses which are required by students, or whether the courses are in the major. Student evaluation data should also be interpreted by other sources of teaching evaluation, such as mentor reports or observations of teaching.

T. SIGNATURES

Synopsis: A question was raised as to the inclusion of faculty signatures.

Recommendation: The committee concurred with the Board recommendations that names of faculty should be typed along with their signatures, and minority reports should be signed by faculty members endorsing the reports.

U. SERVICE

Synopsis: Questions continue to be raised about the nature of service to DePaul and to the profession, and levels of service expectations at various ranks.

Recommendation: Guidelines on service which were published by Faculty Council on February 7, 2001 should be integrated into the Faculty Handbook.

V. TEACHING

Synopsis: A question was discussed regarding the focus of a candidate's teaching load.

Recommendation: The dean and the unit chair should specify what is considered acceptable teaching assignments in terms of breadth, if this issue is raised about a candidate's teaching load.

W. THE ROLE OF COLLEGIALITY

Synopsis: The Faculty Handbook does not incorporate collegiality as a criterion in promotion and tenure reviews. But because faculty votes are anonymous and justifications for one's vote are not made public, the use of collegiality cannot be legislated either way. It is our hope that the strengths or weaknesses of a candidate's teaching, research/professional activities/service serve as the bases for voting.

Recommendation: Collegiality should not be a factor in a candidate's promotion and tenure review or report.

X. CANDIDATE REBUTTALS

Synopsis: Can research which was not submitted with the candidate's original materials be submitted for consideration by the Board?

Recommendation: As stated above in 2b, a candidate's materials must be consistent throughout all levels of the process. No additional materials may be submitted to higher levels after the college/school vote has taken place.

5. SIGNIFICANT ISSUES NOTED BY THE PROMOTION AND TENURE POLICY COMMITTEE

In reviewing the Faculty Handbook for upcoming revisions, several significant issues came to the attention of the Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee. They are listed below as follows:

A. ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY BOARD

"These guidelines are to be informed by criteria specific that that unit's professional discipline, field or interdisciplinary area. The academic unit employs these guidelines only after they have been approved as being consistent with the general university criteria stated in this Faculty Handbook. The University Board on Faculty Promotion and Tenure, consisting of representatives from the colleges or schools appointed by the Faculty Council, shall be responsible for making these determinations." (Section V., p. 3)

"The University Board on Faculty Promotion and Tenure shall review the criteria prepared by the college, school and department. The Board shall determine whether said policies are consonant with the general university policy on promotion and tenure. If the Board finds college or school policies to be inconsistent with university guidelines, it will so inform the academic unit with the expectation that the academic unit shall revise criteria accordingly." (Section V, p. 9)

"The board shall have the following responsibilities...to review college/school guidelines and criteria to insure consistency with stated university expectations as well as reasonable application of these criteria to the evaluation of faculty members." (Section V, p. 14)

Conclusion: Based upon these three sets of statements, it is evident that there is a great deal of inconsistency between the policy as stated in the Faculty Handbook and actual practice. What is the role of the University Board? Who oversees the standards for promotion and tenure—the college, school, department, or the University Board? What is the role of the Status of Faculty Committee?

Recommendation: It is our recommendation that this matter be addressed as soon as possible, and clarification of this matter should be considered before convening the next University Promotion and Tenure Board.

B. LENGTH OF SERVICE

“As a general norm, the university requires seven (7) years of continuous service with a regular full-time appointment at DePaul.”

Conclusion: The committee understands that probationary faculty members apply for tenure in their sixth year. We regarded this statement as confusing and potentially misleading.

Recommendation: A timetable should be created and incorporated into the Faculty Handbook, to avoid any misconceptions about the length of one’s probationary service.

C. EXTERNAL REVIEWS

“Assessment of these contributions by professional peers and other experts in the field...”
(Section V, p. 4)

Conclusion: The committee also pointed out that the Faculty Handbook states that peer review should be included in tenure application materials. It was our understanding that peer reviews are included only in promotion to full professor.

Recommendation: The question of external reviewers for tenure should be addressed as soon as possible, particularly before the next academic year begins.