

Recommendations of the University Board on Promotion and Tenure 2004-2005 Academic Year

Based on the experience garnered during this year's hearings, the Board makes the following recommendations to improve the tenure/promotion process.

1. *Role of Deans and Chairs:* The Board appreciates the commitment of Deans and Chairs to fairly and accurately representing the majority views of their units. We do, however, feel that Deans and Chairs should be free to express their own views even if these differ from those of the majority, especially in difficult cases provided they make clear that these views are their own. We view with concern cases in which chairs question unit members after a vote in an effort to interpret vote as something other than what is reported (e.g., "Although the majority voted "no," I questioned member x and learned that he would have voted differently if . . .).
2. *Role of Student Representations:* The Board is very concerned about the unevenness in the quality of Student reports across the University. We recommend:
 - a. That each unit explain how the student representative was chosen, that the student representative clearly indicate whether or not he/she has taken a course from the candidate, and that student representatives not be closely affiliated with a candidate (e.g., one of his/her advisees).
 - b. That departments develop procedures for garnering a truly representative sample of students from all course levels and sections that the candidate has taught during the previous three years. The sample should not merely be a self-selected group of respondents to a general e-mail. Follow-up e-mails and telephone calls are essential to ensure that those who respond are not merely students who feel strongly about the candidate, one way or the other.
 - c. That student reports contain numeric data and student comments as well as the student representative's written report.
3. *Scholarship:* The Board requests further clarification on the nature of scholarship based on the realization that different units have different expectations and standards. Specifically the Board requests:
 - a. That each unit clearly identify its expectations as to quality and quantity (where appropriate) of scholarship for tenure and promotion.
 - b. That each candidate clearly distinguishes between publications, papers, and presentations that have been externally reviewed and explain the review process in cases where this process might be ambiguous.

- c. That in cases of collaborative scholarship the candidate and the unit make clear the relative contribution of the candidate and how the home counts values/counts collaborative works. For example, in History a single authored manuscript would generally be valued more highly than an edited work, which would still count for more than an article. The candidate would also be expected to document precisely what he/she contributed to the volume and to the editing process.
 - d. That the status of publication be clearly defined. Works “in press” (at the publishers and in various stages of proofing and printing) may be counted as completed. “Forthcoming” works may not be counted as published but do count as evidence of scholarship, provided their acceptance for publication can be documented. Works “under review” or “under contract” may be used as evidence of a scholarly agenda, but may not be counted as publications.
 - e. In cases of promotion to full professor the unit should make clear how the external reviewers were chosen. Units are reminded that external reviewers should not be so closely affiliated with a candidate as to compromise objective judgment. However, the Board recognizes that in certain fields candidates may well know those best qualified to assess their work. A distinction between “knowing” and “being influenced by” needs to be made.
 - f. Considerable ambiguity still exists on the nature and timing of publications used to justify promotion to full professor. Is the candidate judge only on work done since promotion to Associate or on work as a whole? To what degree can work done for promotion to full professor be derivative of earlier work, and to what degree must it involve new or at least continued research? Units should clarify their own guidelines, but the Faculty Council should consider clarifying guidelines in the *Faculty Handbook*. If candidates submit revised or updated editions, they should clarify the scope and nature of the changes made.
4. *Teaching*: Some candidates have been criticized for teaching too narrowly within their unit with no adequate explanation of teaching expectations presented to justify such criticism. If units have expectations as to the scope and level of teaching, they should spell these out in the department guidelines for tenure and promotion.
 5. *Collegiality*: The *Faculty Handbook* does not include collegiality as a criterion for promotion and tenure. A 2002 article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* raised serious concerns about vague and imprecise references to collegiality being used as against candidates whom a department simply does not like. The article noted that women and people of color are most likely to be penalized by such an

approach. If units wish to introduce collegiality as a criterion, it should be precisely defined in a way that can be accurately and fairly assessed.

6. *Rebuttals*: Candidates clearly have the right to respond in writing to a negative vote at any level *based upon interpretation of material already in their file*. What is less clear is whether or not they have the right to introduce new material to bolster their case in the rebuttal document. Faculty Council should address and clarify this matter. They should also make clear that only the candidates have the right to submit a written response to a negative vote. Further letters of endorsement, department responses to negative college votes, etc., are not appropriate.
7. *Vote Reporting*: Both negative and positive votes within a unit must be clearly identified at the outset of a unit report. Minority Reports must be signed by those endorsing them in order to acceptance.
8. *Probationary Reviews*: The Board fully recognizes the Faculty Council's concern over the desire of confidentiality of probationary reports to increase the likelihood of their being candid. However, the Board reiterates the point that when a unit recommends against promotion and particularly when it recommends against tenure, advice given to a candidate during the probationary period provides information vital to ensuring that a candidate is treated fairly. For example, if a unit votes against promotion and or tenure, the Board has a responsibility to ask whether or not the candidate was clearly advised of weaknesses in his/her teaching, scholarship, and teaching. Without the probationary reports the Board has no way to verify if fair and accurate council was given to a candidate being denied tenure and/or promotion.

To respect the Faculty Council's Concern for confidentiality and the Board's need to have accurate information in difficult cases, the Board recommends that Faculty Council require inclusion of probationary reports in the file *only in those cases in which a unit recommends against tenure and/or promotion*. The Board stresses that its desire to see such documents stems entirely from a desire to protect the rights of candidates.