## **General Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure**

## **Promotion and Tenure**

## Guiding philosophy of promotion and tenure

- The faculty, department chair, and dean need to know what kind of faculty member they are trying to hire into the program in terms of teaching responsibilities, scholarship, and service, tenure track etc..
- There should be a clear process for promotion and tenure within the college.
- Units should endeavor to uphold academic standards and values. Think about the standards used at institutions that we emulate and consider applying those standards within the context of our institution.

## Eligibility for Tenure at UNR

• The candidate must have received an "Excellent" in research or teaching, and at least a "Satisfactory" in the other area and in service in order to be eligible for tenure.

#### **External Reviewers**

- External reviewers should hold a higher professorial rank than the faculty member they are evaluating. It is most desirable to select individuals from comparable or better institutions. Independent reviewers are preferred.
- Associate professors can be selected if they are acknowledged experts in the field.
- Assistant professors should not be selected.
- Tenure-track or non-tenured faculty are not typically selected as outside reviewers for out tenure-track applicants.
- Select 4-6 outside reviewers from units or institutions that are comparable or better than our university.
- It is the responsibility of the chair to select external reviewers.
- In selecting outside reviewers, consider the question of who do we, as an institution, aspire to become?
- Select good people from good institutions (strong reputation in the discipline).
- Get names of reviewers from many sources. Don't just rely on the candidate who is applying for promotion and tenure.
- Reviewers should not be closely aligned with the candidate.
- The reviewers should evaluate quality of the candidate's scholarship.
- The department chair, in his/her evaluation letter, should address how the external reviewers were selected. Make the case for why they are good reviewers.
- The department chair should endeavor to explain what the reviewers are saying, and draw conclusions based on their analysis.
- It is important to get the external review letters back by the end of August in order to meet university's deadline of November 1<sup>st</sup> for providing promotion and tenure documents to the Provost.

# **P&T** Applications

- During the recommendation for tenure, the procedures shall include a review of the faculty member's annual evaluations and any rejoinders to those evaluations and/or peer reviews (NSHE Code).
- The annual evaluations should demonstrate a productive record that has built up over time to an "Excellent" level. That doesn't mean one cannot achievement a level of excellence early in their career.
- Copies of the external letters must be included in the application package.
- Copies of the evaluations from the department chair and dean during the probationary period for candidates applying for tenure should be included.
- In assessing a candidate's reputation, when going from assistant to associate professor, consider activities such as; participation in professional meetings; publication of peer reviewed articles and papers, and external grant activity, if applicable.
- In assessing a candidate going from associate to full professor, consider time in rank: five or more years is typical. What has been their degree of productivity? What is their national/institutional reputation? Are they considered an academic leader in their field?
- Report votes (yes, no) that are taken by departmental faculty, personnel committee.
- Probationary faculty may apply for tenure during the 7<sup>th</sup> year only with prior approval from the president. Generally, probationary faculty will not be allowed to apply in the 7<sup>th</sup> year.

### Early consideration for tenure

- Faculty should normally come up for tenure during their sixth year. An early award of tenure is rendered only in the most exceptional circumstances.
- It is advised to not allow new hires to bring credit (time in rank) from other universities. Coming in with credited time only shortens the probationary period unnecessarily with no added advantage to the candidate.
- Do not encourage newly hired faculty to apply for tenure early. If they want to do so, then they should meet with the chair, the dean, and the director of other units to which they are assigned. If the Dean believes that the candidate has an extraordinary record, then the provost should be consulted.
- For positive early tenure decisions, the provost is looking for an extraordinary record of achievement. If the record is simply commensurate with the sort of normal progress that one should expect of a new faculty member on their way to tenure, a recommendation will not be supported before the sixth year, which is the normal time for tenure decisions. In all cases, the university is looking for signs of unequivocal excellence in scholarship and teaching.
- Consideration is given for work done at other institutions if requested, approved and documented in the contract of a newly hired faculty member. It supplements the record of accomplishments done here during the probationary period.
- Consider experience in equivalent positions at other institutions.
- In rare occasions, individuals, who do go up early (generally with experience in an equivalent position at another institution), should not do so until they have established at least a two year record at the university.

2

# Reconsideration

- NSHE Code, Title 2, Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 provides for the process and timelines for reconsideration from an adverse decision regarding promotion, salary or tenure. For complete details of the process refer to the Code. The Code basically states that a faculty member who has been denied appointment with tenure, a salary increase, promotion or reappointment to employment may, within 15 calendar days after notification of such denial, may provide a written request to the department chair, supervisor, or dean who rendered the negative decision asking for a statement in writing of the reasons for the denial. The response must be received by the faculty member within 15 calendar days after the appropriate administrator receives the written request for reasons.
- The third-year review is an important document during reconsideration. It should be consistent with the tenure recommendation, that is, if the tenure recommendation is negative, the third-year review should have documented performance areas in need of improvement. Chairs and deans need to be thorough and conscientious during the annual evaluation and third-year review processes, and be careful to identify areas in which faculty should improve.

## Modifications to tenure clock

- Although seldom approved, it is possible to have modifications to the tenure clock.
- If a tenure-track faculty members seeks modification to the tenure clock, it should be done early at the time of the event requiring extension, and not immediately prior to the time they are coming up for tenure.

## Third-Year Review

- An assistant professor should be evaluated in writing by the department and/or the dean regarding progress toward promotion no later than the end of the third full academic year in rank, and annually thereafter.
- The chair should meet with the faculty member and discuss the third year review.
- The dean should write a letter back to the faculty member following the third-year review.

#### **General Comments**

- An associate professor shall be evaluated in writing by the department and/or the dean regarding progress toward promotion no later than the end of the sixth full academic year in rank. The above specified times shall not be construed as a minimum time in rank before promotion.
- In the reviews of faculty progress toward promotion or tenure, strive for honest, direct, and candid feedback. Avoid mixed messages. Overly kind words can prove to be inaccurate if there is a subsequent negative recommendation for promotion or tenure.