

Report of the Committee on Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures 2015-2016

The members of the Committee during the 2015-2016 academic year were Mary Carver, John Gaskins, Tim Holmstrom, Brett Hursey, Sean Ruday, and Sara Miller.

The Committee met once in the fall, twice in the spring, and a number of times in-between via email. We were asked to consider many issues and the Committee drafted four proposals. Below is a summary of our work this year:

- *Committee Description-* At the request of the Senate Executive Committee, we reviewed our Committee's description. We recommended that one restriction be added so the make-up of the Committee includes one lecturer and one assistant professor to ensure voices from faculty in various positions and stages of the review process are included.
- *Evaluation of Lecturers and Clinical Educators-* We were asked to review the timetable for evaluation of lecturers and clinical educators during the first year of employment. The Committee agreed that the requirements in the fall semester of the first year were burdensome on the faculty member and the department's P&T Committee. After further research and discussion (see next bullet), we drafted a proposal to change the first year requirements to mirror the 2nd-5th year timeline. This proposal was sent back to the committee to update the language concerning two of the other proposals below (final letter and timeline for observation). The committee is currently working on revising this proposal so it will be ready for next year.
- *Department's Use and Evaluation of Lecturers and Clinical Educators-* The Committee has had a number of requests that involved lecturers and clinical educators in the past few years. Because of this, we began researching how departments in the various colleges were using these faculty members. There was wide variance between programs and colleges with most having a very small number of lecturers and/or clinical educators with the exception of English and Modern Languages. We also inquired into how departments are evaluating these faculty (i.e. what is required in their professional file) and this too was very different by program. There are a number of areas that we would like to continue

looking at next year, including guidelines for evaluating lecturers in their 6th year and requirements for senior lecturers.

- *Legal Review of Promotion or Tenure Cases-* We were asked to include "or their agent" to the list of people who have access to a faculty member's file during the review process. This addition would allow the President's or the Board of Visitor's legal counsel to view a faculty member's file without the faculty member's knowledge. The Committee did not think this addition was necessary and felt that the faculty member should be notified if legal counsel was needed and would be accessing their file. No proposal was drafted.
- *Timeline for Faculty Observations-* The Committee was asked to review the timeline for faculty observations in the spring semester. Concerns had been raised that the Department P&T Committees and Chairs need to complete observations in a very condensed timeframe once the spring semester began to have positive or negative letters completed by the due date on the timeline in the FPPM. We did not feel that there would be sufficient time to rebut any negative evaluations if the timeline was moved back into the spring semester. However, we felt that adding language in the first statement in the fall about notifying faculty of their observations would help departments plan for fall and spring observations as well as clearly communicate this to the faculty under review. A proposal was drafted and approved at the April Faculty Senate Meeting with clarifying revisions stating that the Department Chair will give faculty copies of the department "policies and observation timeframe" for probationary review.
- *Recommendation Letters-* We were asked to review the FPPM's guidelines on what should be done if more than one letter is written at any stage in the tenure process (due to a reversal in position- either positive or negative). After hearing from a department in this position recently and reviewing the language currently in the FPPM, we felt that the intention was for the final letter to be passed on to the next person in the process, but this was inferential, not something clearly stated. We drafted a proposal to add the phrase "final letter" as well as a sentence stating, "No letters or appeals prior to final recommendations are to be sent unless requested in writing by the candidate." This proposal was sent back to the Committee to check on legal and accreditation issues. The committee is currently working on revising this proposal so it will be ready for next year.

- *Consultation Among Administrators for Promotion Review*- The Committee was asked to discuss and make a recommendation about whether upper level administration should be encouraged to consult with one another during promotion review of faculty members. We felt that this can and should happen, especially when there is disagreement or mixed recommendations. We wrote a proposal to add a statement making this clear but retracted it from the agenda of the Senate meeting when we were asked to put the same language in the tenure section of the FPPM and discovered language already there in conflict with the proposed addition. The committee is currently working on revising this proposal so it will be ready for next year.

Submitted by Sara Miller, Chair