

Faculty Senate  
Faculty White Committee Report and Recommendations  
on Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP)

*The Charge and Purpose of the Committee*

The charge of the committee was to determine what provisions, policies, or practices are needed to address the issue of departments needing to change criteria for retention, tenure, and promotion of faculty, while faculty are in the process of meeting these criteria on tenure-track, but on year to year contracts. The committee determined that departments may be warranted in upgrading or clarifying standards and criteria, however, any change in the criteria from what was in place when a faculty was hired may be seen as unfairly moving the target to prevent that faculty from achieving tenure or promotion. At best the action may be seen as unsupportive and uncaring, or conveying a negative message where unintended. The purpose of our recommendations is to maintain or establish a more supportive environment for faculty attempting to meet RTP criteria, but also accommodate the need for departments to develop new criteria without being seen as unfair or non-supportive of faculty already in the process of meeting the existing criteria for RTP.

Recommendations for Approval as Policy

*For the Departments and Chairs*

- 1) New faculty will be notified by the respective Departmental Chair in writing of changes in the retention, tenure, and promotion, process or requirements.
- 2) RTP criteria may only be changed by a department every four years as part of its criteria review cycle. The new criteria will take effect 4 years after new criteria is determined, i.e. changes decided by May 2010 take effect August 2014 and any changes decided by May 2014 take effect in August 2018. Promotion, tenure and retention will all fall within the four year cycle process of change.

Departments will have both existing criteria and ones planned for implementation for the next cycle at any one time. Faculty will know at hire both the current criteria and any new criteria that will be implemented in the upcoming cycle. Tenure-track faculty would have a maximum of one new change during the probationary period and will have no less than four years to comply with new criteria.

- 3) Departments shall incorporate these recommendations in the process of making changes and voting on the changes in criteria:

- a. Both tenured and tenure track faculty shall be involved in making any changes to departmental criteria, from input into the draft stages to final voting on proposed criteria changes. Tenured and tenure-track faculty shall be represented on the drafting body or committee unless there are no tenure-track faculty or tenured faculty, in which case consultation should be sought from faculty of either status in a related department.
- b. Once a draft is ready for discussion, face to face or electronically it shall be distributed no less than 3 days before discussion.
- c. After discussion, faculty shall have at least 3-7 days to consider any changes to the draft before anonymous voting by ballot can occur on proposed changes.
- d. Ballots with proposed changes *should* be done to protect the anonymity of participants using methods like uniform writing utensils and collection methods determined by the chair or director.

*For the College Committees on RTP*

1. The College Committees on Retention, Tenure and Promotion should have at least two key roles in its review of dossiers of faculty for RTP. One is to review and evaluate dossiers to ensure departments have applied their criteria accurately and fairly, thus acting as a check and balance on the departmental committees. Another role may be to compare and assess departmental criteria for RTP across departments to ensure consistency, standardization, or for other cross departmental purposes of comparison. However, the College Committees on RTP shall not use the review of dossiers for RTP as the opportunity to make these comparisons or make judgments among departmental criteria. The two roles, however valid and valuable each is, are distinct and shall be separate and not mixed.
2. It is not acceptable for the College Committee for RTP to require additional standards to be met for faculty than what the departments have determined, where there are criteria. However, in the event a department has no formal written criteria submitted for use in the RTP process, the College Committee for RTP may apply any standards it wishes including rejecting all RTP actions. It is highly recommended all departments have documented standards for RTP.