

**Introduction**

Pursuant to [APSU Policy on Academic Tenure \(1:025\)](#), faculty and administrators are required to follow the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Procedures and Guidelines document, which comprises procedures and guidelines related to the retention, tenure, and promotion of all tenure-track and tenured faculty within the University. These Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Procedures and Guidelines of Austin Peay State University (APSU) apply to all tenure-track and tenured faculty within the University. These procedures and guidelines embody and communicate all provisions, definitions, and stipulations of Austin Peay State University policy.

Integrity and honesty by the faculty member and all review committee members including Chairs, Deans, Provost, and President in the RTP process is of utmost importance. It is incumbent upon the faculty member applying for RTP to review all documentation submitted within the electronic dossier (e-dossier) or any accompanying information and attest to its accuracy and truthfulness. All levels of review have the onus of verifying the information or documentation submitted. Any questions, documentation, or additional information discovered at any point in the RTP process related to the applicant’s integrity or truthfulness can be considered by the appropriate review level throughout the entirety of the RTP process.

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## **CONSIDERATION FOR TENURE**

### **Who Awards Tenure at APSU**

Tenure is awarded only by positive action of the APSU Board of Trustees, pursuant to the requirements and procedures of this policy at APSU. The President has the authority to recommend tenure or to continue faculty members in probationary status.

### **Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions**

Current reports/recommendations/decisions of all personnel actions made at every level are available to the faculty member, departmental chair/director and Dean on a timetable consistent with the APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions. The APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions is published by -The Office of Academic Affairs. All departmental and college-level reviews occur in the fall semester. Any questions concerning adjustments to the established dates on the calendar shall be addressed by The Office of Academic Affairs.

## **CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED IN TENURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Overview**

Faculty members shall be evaluated for retention, tenure, and promotion in the areas of academic assignment, scholarly and creative activities, and service.

**Retention** : Since initial appointment at Austin Peay State University and including year-to-year activity in the three areas under review;

**Tenure** : Since initial appointment at Austin Peay State University; and

**Promotion**: Since initial appointment at Austin Peay State University or date of last promotion at Austin Peay State University, whichever is more recent.

### **General Criteria for Evaluation of Faculty Members**

1. Teaching effectiveness;
2. Effectiveness in other academic assignments, including student advisement, as well as departmental and program administrative assignments;

3. Research, scholarly and creative activity;
4. Professional degrees, awards, and achievements;
5. Professional service (may include service to campus; service to one's discipline; service to the community etc.);
6. Activities, memberships, and leadership in professional organizations;
7. Evidence of continuing professional development and growth as well as potential for contributions to the objectives of the department, the college, and the university; and
8. Demonstrated willingness and ability to work effectively with colleagues to support the mission of the institution and the common goals both of the institution and of the academic organizational unit; and evidence of, regard for, and performance consistent with, accepted standards of professional conduct.

For convenience and further clarification, APSU groups these criteria into three general areas of evaluation: Effectiveness in Academic Assignment; Scholarly and Creative Achievement; and Professional Contributions and Activities.

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Effectiveness in Academic Assignment

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Research/Scholarship/Creative Activities

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Professional Contributions and Activities

Research and scholarly and creative activities are important to the University's role in society. Clear evidence of the quality of work shall be a part of every evaluation.

### **Departmental Criteria for Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Actions**

Faculty under review shall adhere to their departmental RTP criteria that are in place for the current review cycle. Departmental review committees, chairs, directors, college committees, and deans shall evaluate candidates based on the departmental RTP criteria that are currently in place.

## **APPLYING FOR TENURE**

Faculty members without years toward tenure shall apply for tenure in their sixth year. However, the faculty member may apply for tenure during the fifth year probationary period under extraordinary circumstances with written permission of the President for an exception to the normal six-year waiting period. Faculty members who are denied tenure will receive a notice of non-renewal from the President. Any faculty member denied tenure in the tenure process may not re-apply for tenure but is provided a final year of employment.

Faculty members who apply for tenure while they are in the fifth year probationary period shall submit in writing a substantive narrative rationale, aligned with published departmental criteria, to accompany the application no later than ninety (90) business days before faculty begin updates to the e-dossier as prescribed in the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

If the President allows the exception, they will forward the full request (including the written narrative rationale) for the APSU Board of Trustees' consideration and determination. In no way shall the President's written approval permitting the exception to apply for tenure in the faculty member's fifth year be construed by any personnel committee to be a guarantee that the faculty

member's application for tenure will be successful. That determination is made by the various levels of review within the normal RTP review process currently in place at the University. If the faculty member is denied tenure during the fifth year, the faculty member may not re-apply for tenure but shall be provided a final year of employment.

The approval letter from the President shall be included in the faculty member's e-dossier. The faculty member's statement of intent shall *clearly reference the exception to the normal six-year probationary period* prior to application for tenure. If the President does not allow the exception, copies of the denial letter shall be provided to the faculty member, their Chair, the Dean of their college, and the Provost.

### **Faculty Awarded Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure**

When a faculty member receives years of prior service toward tenure upon appointment, the rationale for awarding years toward service must be included in their letter of appointment. Additionally, the appointment letter shall inform the faculty member that year(s) given toward service will be applied at the front of their contract and indicate that their first personnel review, which will occur in their second year of service, will include these years. For example, a faculty member who receives two (2) years toward tenure will be apprised that their first review at APSU will be for Retention for Year 5. If you have been awarded "years of prior service toward tenure", refer to [Appendix A](#).

## **RTP PROCESS OVERVIEW**

### **Candidate & Departmental Responsibilities**

- a. The departmental chair/director shall inform faculty members who are to be reviewed of the nature of materials required by the retention and tenure committee and the date by which these materials must be received for committee consideration. Faculty members under review for retention, tenure, and promotion to Professor are responsible for submitting well-organized, up-to-date, and accurate electronic dossiers (e-dossiers). This responsibility shall end upon final submission of the e-dossier by the faculty member for the year under review.
- b. The faculty member under review should seek advice from colleagues who have been through the tenure process and have personal experience with preparing e-dossiers themselves. The responsibility for complying with all the rules and regulations governing the preparation and submission of the e-dossier lies with the faculty member under review. While the faculty member may receive assistance from other individuals at the university related to the technical aspects of preparing an e-dossier, the ultimate responsibility lies with the faculty member to ensure that all links and file attachments within their e-dossier work as intended and that all required items have been uploaded correctly and are available for review by personnel committees.

Furthermore, faculty members are encouraged to work closely with their directors/chairs, assigned mentors, and/or other senior faculty within and outside of their department (as necessary) to make sure that the e-dossier complies with content and other requirements as described in the [Preparing your e-dossier](#) section of this document. In smaller departments or within departments that do not have a number of senior faculty members, the faculty member under review is strongly encouraged to seek assistance from colleagues in a related discipline or colleagues in another department of the University.

- c. Faculty members should consider the preparation of e-dossiers as a year-round process, gathering and maintaining materials accordingly.
- d. Included in the e-dossier shall be a description and a curriculum vitae of the candidate's scholarly and professional achievements. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the auto-generated curriculum vitae is updated and accurate. The chair may appoint faculty to advise other faculty members in the development of their e-dossiers. Their advice should be reported to both the chair and the faculty member.
- e. Faculty members must submit an updated e-dossier for the current year's review. Activities in all the three areas of review must be updated. Faculty members who do not submit an updated e-dossier for evaluation by the appropriate retention/tenure committee during the current review cycle shall, by the act, be considered in breach of contract, and their employment shall terminate as of the end of the academic year in which they do not submit their e-dossier. Any exceptions to this requirement must have the written approval of the President.

**NOTE:** Submitting an e-dossier does not apply to first-year faculty as their first e-dossier will be submitted during their second year at APSU.

- f. Faculty members under review, at all times within the process, are able to access various reports generated in the e-dossier system following the APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions. It shall be the responsibility of all faculty members under review to read all reports generated in the e-dossier system to take any timely action(s) if warranted (for e.g., informal optional written responses, rebuttals, and/or appeals).
- g. Faculty who are tenured Assistant Professors shall follow all guidelines and requirements as described in this RTP P&G document as promotion to Professor for their promotion to Associate Professor.

### **Review Levels**

Your e-dossier will go through the following levels of review, with reports/recommendations generated at each level that become a permanent part of your e-dossier:

- i. Department Committee
- ii. Department Chair
- iii. College Committee
- iv. College Dean
- v. Provost (only Retention for Year 4, Tenure, and Promotion to Professor)
- vi. President (only Tenure and Promotion to Professor)

In addition, there are opportunities for the following optional responses or reports in the process:

- Optional written responses to negative departmental or college-level recommendations.
- Formal Appeals (if any) to the University RTP Appeals Board.

Details of these options can be found in the Formal Appeals and Informal Optional Written Responses section of this document.

**Note when department chair is a candidate:** When a department chair is being reviewed for retention, tenure, or promotion to Professor there shall be no chair's report. The chair being reviewed will have the opportunity to write an optional response to a negative departmental committee report.

This optional response should be addressed to the next level of review.

For example:

*Dear College Committee,*

*I am responding to the negative departmental report I received. (Make your case within the optional response.)*

### **Option to Withdraw an e-Dossier during a Promotion to Professor Review**

Faculty members are permitted to withdraw a promotion to Professor e-dossier at any time and at any level during the review process. For example, if the faculty member receives a negative recommendation from the college, they may withdraw the e-dossier.

The faculty member may choose to apply for promotion to Professor at a later date. When the faculty member applies at a future date for promotion, the faculty member shall include an explanation for the missing administrative reviews from levels beyond the department. This explanation shall be included in the "Statement of Intent" section of the faculty member's e-dossier. Faculty members are advised to read Policy 2:063 for further details on promotion and conditions under which a faculty member under review may withdraw their e-dossier.

## **THE E-DOSSIER**

### **Preparing Your e-Dossier**

- a. All faculty seeking retention, tenure, or promotion must complete an e-dossier.

All reviews will be conducted in accordance with the standards in effect at the time of the review. All actions are due by the close of business (4:30 p.m. CST) on the date specified in the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions. These actions include submissions of e-dossiers; notifications of retention, tenure, and promotion recommendations to candidates; and appeals of negative recommendations.

- b. Faculty preparing e-dossiers should allow plenty of time to prepare an e-dossier, especially if they are preparing an e-dossier for the first time. All supporting materials shall be a part of the e-dossier.

Faculty undergoing personnel review for retention, tenure, and promotion must read [Policy 1:025](#) Policy on Academic Tenure, which governs tenure, as well as [Policy 2:063](#) Policy on Academic Promotion, which governs promotion. As discussed in more detail in [Candidate & Departmental Responsibilities](#), and also to ensure that materials are placed appropriately in the three areas of review and that credit for a certain activity is not duplicated, faculty members must consult closely with their department chair/director as well as with experienced senior members in their own department for guidance in preparing an accurate, well-organized, and up-to-date e-dossier.

- c. Faculty who wish to apply for promotion to Professor should inform their chair/director of their intent in writing in the semester prior to the one in which they will apply for

promotion by the date as defined in The Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions on the [Faculty Calendar website](#).

- d. All documents uploaded within the e-dossier shall be PDFs. Limited exceptions for JPG or QuickTime media are acceptable within supporting materials when related to the academic discipline.
- e. Faculty members preparing e-dossiers shall include all items as provided in the e-dossier template and described in the [Required Materials to Include in your e-Dossier](#).

### **Required Materials to Include in your e-Dossier**

Make your accomplishments clear by adding brief explanatory statements where needed because your e-dossier is likely to be examined by many faculty members who may not be completely familiar with your discipline. Do not assume, for instance, that colleagues outside of your department will understand the value of being nominated for the Pushcart Prize in fiction.

Your e-dossier must include the following items and must be entered into the appropriate text box or uploaded to the appropriate location in your e-dossier. The e-dossier is designed so materials will be arranged in reverse chronological order (most recent achievements/activities first).

1. **Brief narrative statement of intent** (30 words or less). Your statement of intent should be in the form of a letter. Use “Dear Reviewers” as your salutation. Include a date, sign your name (print in text box), and add your current rank as well as departmental affiliation beneath your name. Indicate your intention clearly. You should also include the year for which you are seeking retention (e.g., third year or fourth year etc.) and the number of years awarded toward tenure and/or promotion upon hire, if any.

Example of text for *statement of intent for retention*:

“Please consider this e-dossier in support of my application for retention for a fifth year at Austin Peay State University.”

“Please consider this e-dossier in support of my application for retention for a fifth year at Austin Peay State University. I received two years of service toward tenure upon hire.”

Example of text for *statement of intent for tenure*:

“Please consider this e-dossier in support of my application for tenure at Austin Peay State University.”

Example of text for *statement of intent for promotion to Professor*:

“Please consider this e-dossier in support of my application for promotion to Professor at Austin Peay State University.”

2. All e-dossiers must include the **Notice of Tenure-Track Appointment and Agreement of Employment**, that is, your contract, which includes special conditions that govern your employment such as years of prior service toward tenure and your starting salary. You may cover up the salary figure before you scan this document to



upload to your e-dossier. The Notice of Tenure-Track Appointment and Agreement of Employment, that is, your contract will need to be uploaded for each review. If your contract has changed, the new contract must be uploaded in that review cycle.

NOTE: The Notice of Tenure-Track Appointment and Agreement of Employment is a legal document that, along with applicable University policies, governs the faculty member's employment and relationship with the University.

Interpretations of a faculty member's contract that contravene or deviate from what is explicitly stated (such as years toward tenure, requirements for promotion, and conditions governing employment etc.) are not permitted.

- 3. Details & Supporting Materials for an up-to-date vita.** The e-dossier system will auto-generate a vita report from the materials entered by the faculty member. A vita is a continuing academic record of the faculty member's activities and accomplishments. The standard parts of your vita should include the following: your current position at Austin Peay, your prior positions, education, scholarly/creative and professional accomplishments, and other relevant achievements. At the very minimum, your vita should be current and accurate.

Materials entered into the e-dossier system should clearly indicate specific dates of activities in the three areas under review (e.g., "presented paper at College English Association meeting in March 2020"), as well as clearly distinguish among stages of development of academic scholarship within Area II (e.g., a work in progress, article accepted, submitted to, under review, accepted by editors but needing publisher etc.). See section on Irregularities in Research, Scholarship, and/or Creative Activities for further information.

### **Suggested Materials for Inclusion in Your Supporting Materials**

Examples of supporting materials might include copies of published articles; copies of representative chapter(s) in a book publication or the book itself; (c) copies of published essay in an anthology; (d) photographs of a painting exhibit or sculpture etc. If you are unsure of what might be appropriate, consult closely with your chair/director as well as with experienced senior faculty members in your department.

#### Area I:

Copies of course syllabi; representative samples of lecture notes; a few selected PowerPoint presentations; sample of graded work, and/or other appropriate teaching materials. As appropriate these should be uploaded to the specific course in the Scheduled Teaching area of the e-dossier system.

#### Area II:

Copies of articles in journals. If a book, include copies of relevant chapters and pages, e.g., title page (author name must be visible) and table of contents page. If you have presented a paper at a conference, you should submit a copy of your paper and include the program schedule (highlight your name in some visible way in the program schedule).

If you are using online articles as evidence of scholarship, save the articles as PDF files and include the complete text of all articles within your supporting materials. Because hyperlinks may become broken, you must preserve copies of your online articles that support your accomplishments in Area II. These copies should contain the access date and URL.

It shall be the responsibility of a faculty member undergoing a retention, tenure, or promotion review to retain all materials (electronic or physical format) pertinent to the faculty member's activities in the area of research/scholarship/creative activities until such time as the faculty member has attained tenure and achieved the rank of Professor. Such documents might include, among other things: (a) copies of all email exchanges between the faculty member and the editor/publisher of a scholarly journal; (b) written exchanges among multiple authors of a document; (c) written correspondence between co-authors; (d) documentation of the level of contribution by the faculty member in a multi-authored work; and (e) notes and suggestions for revisions from editors/reviewers.

### Area III:

Include evidence of your participation in the governing and policy-making processes of the University e.g., your appointment letter to a standing committee. Include information pertinent to your participation on departmental committees and leadership or advisory roles in student organizations. Include evidence of your memberships and leadership positions in professional organizations at state, regional or national levels. Thank you notes from colleagues for your service as guest lecturer in a class would be acceptable in this section.

Also include pertinent information to your service as session chair, discussant, paper reviewer, etc.

Faculty shall retain back-ups of all files and materials entered by the faculty member into the e-dossier and used in the retention, tenure, and promotion process.

4. **A brief narrative summary of Areas I, II, and III.** Provide a snapshot summary of Effectiveness in Academic Assignment, Scholarly and Creative Achievement, and Professional Contributions and Activities. This summary should provide an overview of significant accomplishments in these areas, and it should be prepared in an organized manner for reviewers. Speak to your chair/director or senior colleague about the best format as some areas require using reverse chronology, that is, list most recent achievements and/or activities first. Your narrative may include some bullet points but should include sentences and should be no longer than the equivalent of two (2) pages when formatted as single-spaced text in a Word document. For all narratives, supporting materials should be provided in the e-dossier as detailed in the previous section (c).

### **Summary of Areas I-III- during Retention**

If you are seeking retention, this summary shall be a narrative of the single year since your most recent personnel action.

### **Expanded Narratives during Retention**

For each required individual description of Areas I, II, and III, (in e., g., and h. below) expand (with a reasonable level of detail) upon the information contained in your consolidated brief narrative summary. These summaries shall all be narratives of the single year since your most recent personnel action.

### **Summary During Tenure Year**

In your tenure year, you are not required to write a separate narrative for the immediate year's activities (as you have done during previous retention cycles). During retention cycles, you were only required to provide a brief consolidated summary of activities since the last personnel review. However, in your tenure year, this summary covers all time at APSU.

### **Expanded Narratives During the Tenure Year**

In your tenure year, for each required individual description of Areas I, II, and III, (in e., g., and h. below) expand (with a reasonable level of detail) upon the information contained in your consolidated brief narrative summary. As always, discuss the most recent year's activities first and then continue with the description of your time at APSU from the date of hire.

It is not necessary to describe in exacting detail each and every activity in which you were engaged during all time spent at APSU. You may be more effective limiting your descriptive narrative to highlights and more significant achievements. Consult with your chair, your mentor, and other senior faculty within and outside of your department as appropriate.

### **Summary & Expanded Narratives for Promotion to Professor**

Policy 2:063 Policy on Academic Promotion: If you are seeking promotion to Professor, this summary shall be a consolidated narrative of your activities in the three areas since your last promotion. Similarly, the expanded narratives will expand (with a reasonable level of detail) upon the information contained in your consolidated brief narrative summary. If it has been longer than five years since your last promotion at Austin Peay State University, include within all narratives, information pertaining to the most recent five years or since your last promotion (at the candidate's discretion). If it has been longer than five years since your last promotion at Austin Peay, you also have the option to include student evaluations only from the most recent five (5) years in your promotion e-dossier.

5. **Narrative Description of Academic Assignment**. Your narrative description should expand on the snapshot summary in d. above.
6. **Teaching Philosophy Statement**. A summary of your teaching philosophy that is the equivalent of one (1) to two (2) pages when formatted as single-spaced text in a Word document. Your teaching philosophy may reflect changes from year to year.
7. **Narrative Description of Scholarly and Creative Achievement**, including evaluations by off-campus authorities in the relevant field. Your narrative description should expand on the summary offered in d. above.

8. **Narrative Description of Professional Contributions and Activities**, including evaluations by off-campus authorities in the relevant field. Your narrative description should expand on the summary offered in d. above.
9. **Peer Evaluations of Teaching**. All summative reports from any peer evaluations shall be included in the e-dossier, and uploaded to the specific course in the Scheduled Teaching area of the e-dossier system. Previous peer evaluations should not be deleted from the e-dossier. Beginning in Fall 2023, faculty will need to follow the Enhanced Peer Review of Teaching section below for specific procedures for entry into their 2024-25 e-dossiers.
10. **All student evaluations of instruction since coming to APSU**. Do not include evaluations of study-abroad classes, APSU 1000 classes, Winter Term, May Session summer courses, or classes not routinely evaluated by the University (such as independent studies, and individual instruction).

The student evaluations shall be uploaded to the specific course in the Scheduled Teaching area of the e-dossier system.

Evaluations shall be included *except for narrative comments, which must be removed*. Faculty shall not extract any other sections of SurveyDIG or other survey instrument evaluations. In courses with an enrollment of fewer than 5 students at the time of evaluations, student evaluations may be included.

Faculty must provide a brief explanatory statement for courses that have not been evaluated and upload this to the specific course in place of the student evaluation.

Faculty being reviewed for promotion to Professor shall include all student evaluations of instruction for at least the most recent five-year period.

Faculty members may comment on their own student evaluations. These faculty comments related to student evaluations shall be uploaded to the specific course the faculty members are commenting on in the Scheduled Teaching area of the e-dossier system. If a faculty member has comments regarding any student evaluations, these should be included in item 11. [Reflective narrative analysis of student evaluations](#) below.

### **Any Narrative Comments Written by Students Must Be Excluded from Your e-Dossier**

Narrative comments written by students at the time of the regular faculty evaluation process or narrative comments from online surveys must not be included within the faculty member's e-dossier. Student comments should be used only informally by the faculty member for their assessment and/or improvement. The department chair/director shall also receive a copy of the students' narrative comments.

### **Learning Opportunities (APSU High-impact Practices)**

Faculty who engage in activities that meet or exceed high impact practices criteria and best practices shall be permitted to include such activities toward credit in Areas I, II, or III as appropriate according to departmental criteria in the retention, tenure, and promotion process. These activities might include service learning, study abroad, internships, undergraduate research, and other high-impact practices.

#### **11. Reflective narrative analysis of student evaluations.**

Student evaluations shall be used as a formative, supportive tool rather than as a criterion for evaluating faculty. Every faculty member is expected to be a reflective practitioner. Faculty will write a narrative analysis of student evaluations during the current dossier cycle. The narrative will describe opportunities for growth and future goals for Area I. There is no required length for this narrative; however, it should be concise and complete.

**12. Prior Administrative Reviews.** Beginning in 2023 (January for first year, September for all other), these reviews will be part of the record automatically. However, faculty must include copies of all previous years' APSU personnel recommendations by departmental and college committees, Chairs/Directors, Deans, the Provost and the President. These reviews should be arranged in reverse chronological order, that is, from the most recent to the earliest review. Group these items by the calendar or academic year under review.

**Note to all faculty:** Do not include any Annual Faculty Evaluation (AFE) reviews in your e-dossier.

### **Application of Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure and of Work Accomplished at APSU**

Beginning in Fall 2019, if past productivity and years of prior service are awarded at the front, then the quality of the prior work that a faculty member includes in their e-dossier must, at a minimum, meet or exceed the established standards in place as outlined in the criteria for the department's personnel actions. Past productivity in Area 2 may include work accomplished in the most recent years that correspond to the same number of years that a faculty member was awarded toward tenure and promotion. For example, a faculty member hired in Fall 2023 who was awarded two (2) years of prior service toward tenure may use prior accomplishments within the most recent two years, but that faculty member may not use work produced earlier than Fall 2021. Activities related to areas 1 and 3 shall not be considered for years toward tenure.

The faculty member who plans to include prior work completed at another institution should consult with senior departmental faculty and the chair to confirm that any prior work that is included in the e-dossier meets departmental standards and the timeline above.

To assure sustained productivity, faculty members who were hired with service years added at the front must continue to complete and demonstrate scholarly/creative activity in Area 2 for retention, tenure, and promotion during their employment at Austin Peay State University. Faculty cannot reasonably expect that they will receive tenure or promotion at

Austin Peay State University only on the basis of prior work without performing some scholarly work during their time at APSU. The work performed at APSU must meet departmental standards as outlined in the criteria for APSU for retention, tenure, and promotion.

### **Storage of e-Dossiers**

Because of record-keeping requirements, official personnel records are to be kept a minimum of seventy-five years from an individual faculty member's last date of employment in a paper or imaged format. In addition, due to the time frame in which an individual faculty member could file an EEOC complaint and/or lawsuit, an electronic dossier of any faculty member must be stored on a server or some other media for a minimum period of four (4) years from the point when the final personnel decision is made on the faculty member's status at the institutional level or at the APSU Board of Trustees level.

After the separation of a faculty member from Austin Peay State University service and the expiration of the timeframe in which an EEOC complaint may be filed, an imaged copy may be kept in any format compliant with federal and state record-keeping requirements. All existing paper dossiers not converted to electronic format must be maintained until converted to imaged format after the separation of the faculty member from APSU employment.

A faculty member's e-dossier that is prepared for personnel reviews is the property of APSU and shall be maintained on a server or other media. However, faculty members may save or print materials from their e-dossier. For further information about records retention see [Policy 4:017 Records Retention & Disposal of Records](#) and [Policy 5:038 Personnel Records](#).

## **ENHANCED PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING**

### **Who will be governed by the enhanced peer review process?**

Starting Fall 2023, this enhanced peer review process will apply to all tenure-track faculty who will be reviewed for retention, tenure, and promotion. This process also applies to all tenured faculty seeking promotion to Professor.

**Note:** This enhanced peer review process will not apply to any fully ranked tenured faculty or non-tenure-track faculty.

### **Number of Enhanced Peer Evaluations Required**

- Each *tenure-track* faculty member shall receive a minimum of two enhanced peer evaluations during any RTP cycle.
- Each *tenured* faculty member who will be reviewed for promotion to professor shall receive a minimum of two enhanced peer evaluations within one year before the e-dossier is due for a promotion review.

Faculty who will be reviewed may choose to include additional enhanced peer evaluations beyond the minimum requirements of two peer evaluations within an RTP review cycle. If a faculty member has requested additional peer evaluations, the faculty member shall include *all*

completed peer evaluations of instruction from that review cycle and *not selectively pick* from among completed peer evaluations for inclusion in the e-dossier. Any additional peer evaluations beyond the minimum requirements must follow the prescribed guidelines described below.

### **Selection of the Peer Evaluators**

Two *tenured* faculty members are required to complete the two peer evaluations of a faculty member during any review cycle. Only *tenured faculty at APSU may serve as peer evaluators*. In so far as possible, the faculty member will provide the chair/director of the department with suggestions for one of the evaluators from within the faculty member's discipline. The chair/director will select this evaluator from the suggestions. The other evaluator will be selected by the chair/director.

The same two peer evaluators may review more than one faculty member, or each faculty member may be reviewed by a different set of evaluators from the same department. Sometimes, a situation may occur where a department does not have a sufficient number of tenured faculty to conduct the necessary peer evaluations. When a department finds it logistically difficult to comply with the above requirements, the department—in consultation with Academic Affairs—shall have the option of choosing one of the evaluators from an allied discipline. At least one member of the peer evaluation team should be from the same department in order to improve the validity and reliability of the review.

While it may be recommended in principle, it is not necessary that an evaluator from *outside* a particular department be from the same college. This individual could be from a different college altogether if they are from a relevant discipline. For example, it could very well occur that the second evaluator for a faculty member in Department of Allied Health Sciences could be an evaluator from the Department of Nursing. Also, it could be likely that the second evaluator for a faculty member in the Department of Accounting, Finance, and Economics could be a tenured faculty member from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

Note: Each peer evaluator will write an **independent evaluation** of the faculty member being reviewed. The two peer evaluators shall not consult with each other.

### **FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING**

A formative evaluation is designed to provide information to help instructors improve their teaching, typically used for newer and less experienced instructors.

A summative evaluation is designed to measure instructor performance following a sustained period of teaching with the focus on identifying the effectiveness of the teaching instruction, typically used for more experienced instructors.

All faculty who are being reviewed, whether tenured or tenure-track, will receive a total of two evaluations, comprising of one or two reports depending on the RTP review cycle. All summative reports shall be included in the faculty member's e-dossier. However, while formative reports shall **not** be included in the e-dossier, the details of any formative evaluations (including, but not limited to, date and time of the formative evaluation) shall be included in the summative report. Narrative comments from the evaluators based on objective overall impressions of the classroom instruction must be included in all summative reports.

**NOTE:** Refer to the section of this document describing Faculty Awarded Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure. For the enhanced peer review process, a faculty member awarded three years of prior service toward tenure shall be seen as a fourth-year faculty member during their first year of service at APSU because years of credit are awarded at the front end. Furthermore, since their first review will occur in their second year, their first enhanced peer review process shall be seen as Retention for Year 6.

### **A. Retention for Year 3**

This section applies to faculty who are seeking retention for 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

Faculty who are seeking retention for 3<sup>rd</sup> year will be evaluated by *one evaluator* per semester for the formative and summative evaluations. These should occur in two different semesters, with the evaluators selected based on the following, as well as the process described in the Selection of The Peer Evaluators section above:

- For the first semester of review the Department Chair or their designee will serve as the evaluator.
- For the second semester of review a tenured faculty member as selected by the faculty member under review will serve as the evaluator.

The recommended gap of time between a formative and a summative evaluation of a faculty member in a standard semester-length course is four (4) to six (6) weeks. Evaluators shall consult the notes of the formative evaluation to respond with a summative evaluation during the second visit to the course of the faculty member under review to include in the summative report.

If the faculty member under review teaches both in person and online courses, the faculty member and the chair should mutually agree on the modality to be observed.

These evaluations cannot occur during the same semester in which the faculty member is being reviewed for retention as there is not sufficient time for a formative and summative evaluation to occur before the e-dossier closes. For example, a faculty may not request a review in late August for a dossier that is due in September. There is not enough time for a formative and summative review to take place in this short time frame.

### **B. Retention for Years 4-5**

This section applies to faculty who are seeking retention for 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Faculty who are seeking retention for 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year will be evaluated by *two evaluators* for the formative and summative evaluations, which should occur within the same course and semester. The evaluators are selected based on the process described in the Selection of The Peer Evaluators section above. For in-person evaluations both evaluators will attend the two class sessions together.

The recommended gap of time between a formative and a summative evaluation of a faculty member in a standard semester-length course is four (4) to six (6) weeks. Evaluators shall consult the notes of the formative evaluation to respond with a summative evaluation during the second visit to the course of the faculty member under review to include in the summative report.



If the faculty member under review teaches both in person and online courses, the faculty member and the chair should mutually agree on the modality to be observed.

These evaluations cannot occur during the same semester in which the faculty member is being reviewed for retention as there is not sufficient time for a formative and summative evaluation to occur before the e-dossier closes. For example, a faculty may not request a review in late August for a dossier that is due in September. There is not enough time for a formative and summative review to take place in this short time frame.

### **C. Review for Year 6, Tenure, and Promotion to Professor**

This section applies to faculty who are seeking retention for a sixth year, tenure, or promotion to Professor. These faculty will have two separate evaluators each providing summative evaluation of teaching effectiveness in two separate courses.

The evaluators are selected based on the process described in the [Selection of The Peer Evaluators](#) section above.

Two different courses may be evaluated and need not occur in the same semester. However, if the same course is evaluated, the two evaluations should occur in different semesters.

If the faculty member under review teaches both in person and online, one peer review will be conducted in person and the second will be conducted online for these faculty.

#### **Selection of Time and Date of the Enhanced Peer Review**

The faculty member under review and the evaluator(s) shall agree on a mutually convenient date and time to conduct each class evaluation.

- For fully online courses, each review will occur over a two-to-three-week period that has been mutually agreed upon in advance.
- For all other modalities, each review will occur on a specific date and time that has been mutually agreed upon in advance. Evaluators are expected to observe classes at the *start time* of the class to capture the plan and context of the class and to avoid classroom disruption.

#### **Minimum Evaluation Period of Time**

The expected minimum amount of time to evaluate a class shall be 50-55 minutes. For courses that are scheduled longer than 55 minutes, evaluators may choose to leave after the first 50-55 minutes of observation.

In the case of online classes that are asynchronous, the evaluator should spend an equivalent amount of time in the course management system (e.g., D2L). Evaluators observing an online course should be permitted to look at course content materials only and not student grades with associated names. Evaluators shall be assigned a role with the equivalent *non-edit access* of a student in the course.

#### **Expectations for Evaluators and Professionalism Within the Process**

During all of their observations, evaluators are expected to act independently and produce separate objective evaluations in order to increase the reliability of the enhanced peer review

process. Personal comments unrelated to the teaching effectiveness of the faculty member are not permitted within the formative or summative reports.

Each evaluator will be required to complete the evaluation tool and provide it to the faculty member after each summative evaluation. The results of formative evaluations should be shared with the faculty within one week from the date of evaluation for developmental purposes. Documentation of formative evaluations and follow up meetings shall be included on the appropriate summative evaluation form.

## **COMPOSITION OF REVIEW COMMITTEES**

### **For All Committees**

A faculty member who is normally eligible to serve on review committees but who is on a leave of absence or on faculty development leave during the current review cycle shall not participate or vote in any RTP process. Ideally selection/assignment of committees should occur in the semester prior to e-dossiers closing to allow for appropriate creation of e-dossiers and the workflow.

Note: Any faculty who is currently serving in the role of faculty ombudsperson shall not serve on any RTP review committee nor shall the faculty ombudsperson be allowed to vote in any personnel action.

### **Department Committees**

The department chair/director and all full-time tenured faculty members of a department constitute the official body eligible to make departmental personnel recommendations and shall be required to participate in personnel processes.

Departmental personnel committees shall consist of at least three (3) tenured faculty members not counting the department chair/director. In departments having fewer than three (3) faculty members eligible to serve on their departmental personnel committee, the Provost may assign the review of faculty to the departmental personnel committee of another department. In such an instance, all eligible faculty from the department consisting of fewer than three (3) tenured faculty shall be included in all departmental personnel committee proceedings.

When a small department must constitute RTP committees with faculty from other departments, chairs from other departments may not serve on this RTP committee. The department-specific criteria of the faculty member being reviewed for tenure or promotion shall be the criteria used in making determinations by the departmental personnel committee created under this provision. The Chair's evaluation shall be made by the chair of the department that has fewer than three (3) tenured faculty. The Chair of the department with fewer than three (3) members shall meet with the personnel committee while their faculty member is being reviewed and shall leave prior to a vote.

College committee members who were eligible to vote on a personnel action at the departmental level shall not be eligible to vote on the same action at the college level. Administrators holding full-time positions outside the department or involved in making personnel recommendations at the college or University levels shall not participate in

departmental personnel actions. Departmental Chairs/directors may not act on their own retention, tenure, merit salary adjustment, or promotion.

### **College Committees**

A college retention and tenure committee shall be composed of one (1) tenured faculty member elected from each department or school within the college. All tenured and tenure-track faculty within the department or school, with the exception of the chair/director, shall have an opportunity to vote on departmental/school nominee(s) for the college committee, and a simple majority vote shall determine the outcome. Chairs/directors and Associate Deans shall not serve on or preside over college-level RTP committees.

Members of the college committee are not permitted to vote on candidates from their own department. When they complete the ballot, they should select “non-voting department member.” If a college has fewer than four (4) departments, two (2) tenured faculty members from each department shall be elected to serve on the retention and tenure committee. If a department/school has an insufficient number of tenured faculty members to serve on the college committee, the department shall elect appropriate representatives from other departments within the college provided that they are not representatives from their own department.

Each college shall have an additional tenured member elected at large by the electorate of the college. The at-large member shall be elected from among all eligible faculty members not serving as a departmental representative on the college committee. All tenured and tenure-track faculty in a college are eligible to vote for the at-large representative. If the vote is tied, the college dean shall cast the deciding vote. The at-large member of any college-level retention, tenure or promotion committee shall be a voting, full member of that committee, but the at-large member shall not vote for members of their own departments. If a department/school has no tenured faculty, the committee as a whole will protect their interests.

### **The Departmental Representative to the College Committee**

The role of the departmental representative on the college committee is informational. The departmental representative shall answer questions posed to them by the members of the college committee without advocating either for or against the retention, tenure, or promotion of the candidate within the representative’s department. However, as discussion ensues, the departmental representative may seek permission from the presiding officer to rectify incorrect factual information (for example, the conversation may surround a single conference the faculty member attended, but the departmental representative knows, for a fact, that the candidate actually participated in two conferences.) The departmental representative should strive for objectivity on behalf of the department committee and refrain from offering personal opinions.

Departmental representatives are required to attend personnel meetings in their own department as well as the college-level meetings in which candidates from their department are being reviewed. If the departmental representative knows in advance that they will not be able to attend a departmental personnel meeting, the department shall elect an alternate candidate to serve as departmental representative. If the departmental representative knows in advance that they will not be able to attend a college-level personnel meeting, they must inform the alternate faculty member who will serve in their place. If an alternate faculty member has not been selected, the department shall elect an alternate candidate by whatever reasonable and expedient procedure is available at the time.

## **RTP REVIEW PROCEDURES**

### **Confidentiality of Meetings**

All retention, tenure, and promotion (personnel) committee proceedings and deliberations are confidential.

### **Evaluation of Materials**

At the departmental and college level, it is the professional responsibility of all faculty members serving on any personnel committee to review fully a candidate's e-dossier before casting a vote. Particularly at the department level all faculty members on the personnel committees are expected to evaluate all materials in the faculty member's e-dossier.

Additionally, those preparing written reports must state reasons for their decisions.

However, in colleges where a large number of e-dossiers have to be evaluated at the college level and where the process may need to be expedited, the dean of the college may choose to set up a more convenient procedure for presenting e-dossiers at the personnel meeting.

### **Informing Committees of Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure & Reviewing Past Productivity**

At departmental level meetings, the department chair shall inform personnel committees about the specific number of years of prior service that have been granted to the faculty member under review.

At college level meetings, the departmental representative shall inform personnel committees about the specific number of years of prior service that have been granted to the faculty member under review.

All personnel committee shall consult departmental criteria when reviewing an e-dossier that includes work that is not accomplished during the faculty member's employment at Austin Peay State University. As described in the section Application of Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure and of Work Accomplished at APSU, only work in Area 2 shall be considered for years toward tenure.

### **Irregularities in Research, Scholarship, and/or Creative Activities**

If the activities of a faculty member in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities appear irregular to the departmental personnel review committee, that committee shall have the right to request the faculty member to provide copies of correspondence, documents, and materials related to the faculty member's publications and/or scholarly/creative activities. The faculty member shall act on that request and must furnish the required information as expeditiously as possible before the committee votes on that faculty member's e-dossier.

However, if questions of misconduct in research or other creative activities arise at committee levels higher than the departmental level, these committees and/or supervisors (the Dean, Provost, and/or President) may ask for and consider additional information that may be forwarded with the e-dossier. If the allegations are substantiated through the University's due process procedures, this additional information shall become part of the faculty member's permanent personnel file in Academic Affairs. Faculty are advised to read [Policy 2:019](#) (Misconduct in Research and Other Creative Activities) for more information.

Sole authorship is universally understood to mean one person writing original work. Faculty are reminded that only materials that have been accepted for publication by a reputable journal or

recognized press in the author's area of expertise should be included as "publications" in the e-dossier.

For co-authored or multi-authored publications submitted to peer-reviewed journals or recognized publishers, the authors must indicate, as precisely as possible, their level of contribution to the published work. Their level of contribution may be determined by (a) highlighting their part of the work; (b) a letter from the senior or primary author describing the levels of each of the other faculty members' levels of contribution to the work; and/or (c) a clear narrative explanation with documentation of the faculty member's specific contributions.

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Professional Contributions and Activities

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Criteria for Assessing the Long-Term Staffing Needs

See [Policy 1:025](#) for Changes in Tenure/Tenure-track Status:

- A. Non-renewal of Probationary Tenure-Track
- B. Transfer of Tenure
- C. Expiration of Tenure
- D. Relinquishment of Tenure
- E. Termination of Tenure for Reasons of Financial Exigency
- F. Termination of Tenure for Curricular Reasons
- G. Procedures for Termination of Tenure
- H. Termination for Adequate Cause
- I. Procedures for Termination for Adequate Cause

## **Recusals**

Faculty members shall recuse themselves from participating and voting on personnel actions when the faculty member is currently involved in a legal situation with the faculty member under review; is currently involved in a complaint or grievance with the faculty member under review; has a family relationship with the faculty member under review; and other situations that will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Faculty should consult APSU's Nepotism [Policy 5:035](#) for the definition of and clarification concerning "family members." It shall be the responsibility of the presiding officer to notify the Office of Academic Affairs and the faculty member's department chair when a faculty member attends the RTP meeting and refuses to cast any vote at all when a recusal issue is not the reason.

## **Directions for Convening RTP Meetings**

Departmental level personnel committee meetings shall be convened by the department chair/director in a timely fashion. When a department chair is being reviewed for retention, tenure, or promotion, the personnel meeting shall be convened by the presiding officer who has been elected by the department review committee in advance of the meeting.

When chairs convene personnel meetings to vote on multiple actions, they are encouraged to review first the promotions to full professor, followed by reviewing tenure candidates, and finally reviewing retention candidates. Because the personnel review process should occur in an environment that affords the most open and least stifling atmosphere for discussion, examining the candidates in the order described above will provide the greatest level of free speech and openness.

College level personnel committee meetings shall be convened by the college Dean in a timely fashion. Associate Deans shall not serve on or preside over college-level RTP committees.

### **Selection and Role of the Presiding Officer in RTP Meetings**

All personnel committees will select a presiding officer, who shall be a voting member of the committee. Ideally selection of the presiding officer should occur in the Spring Semester prior to e-dossiers closing to allow for appropriate creation of e-dossiers and the workflow. At a minimum, selection should occur in advance of the meeting.

The presiding officer shall manage the meeting. The presiding officer will select a committee member to take notes to provide a summary statement reflecting the strengths and weaknesses noted during the review of each e-dossier. These notes can be used as reference material for the written report.

At the departmental level the Chair/Director may participate in the discussion. If the committee wishes to discuss a candidate without the presence of the chair, the presiding officer should set aside a time period in which the departmental committee can discuss the candidate freely without the presence of the chair. The department chair may be recalled to the room at any time during the process if the committee wishes further input. The chair must leave the room when it is time to cast final ballots.

At the college level the Dean may participate in the discussion and members of the committee may solicit documented information from the Dean or other persons from the college who are not members of the committee (for example, the departmental chair/director, departmental representative or others from the department of the faculty member under review). Prior to the college committee members casting their final votes, the presiding officer should set aside time for the college committee to discuss the candidate freely without the presence of the Dean. The Dean must leave the room when it is time to cast final ballots.

The presiding officer or their designee shall informally notify by email the candidate under review of the committee's recommendation (not the vote) no later than the close of the next business day.

Examples of email notifications to candidates following the personnel meeting:

“Dear Dr. A, the Department of Communication Promotion Committee met today and has recommended your promotion to Professor. Details will be in the written report in your e-dossier.”

“Dear Dr. B., the Department of Biology Retention Committee met today and has not recommended you for retention for a third year. Details will be in the written report in your e-dossier.”

The presiding officer shall ensure that draft versions of reports are prepared in a timely manner and available for comment and review by committee members before the final version is prepared and will enter the department report into the e-dossier. The presiding officer shall ensure that reports receive all appropriate signatures and move the e-dossier forward to the department chair/director in a manner consistent with the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

## **Option to have Presenters for e-Dossiers at the College Level**

Within two business days after e-dossiers become available, the Dean or the presiding officer may solicit committee members to volunteer to present candidates' e-dossiers in the personnel meetings when there are more than seven candidates for any one personnel committee to review. Then, by the third day after e-dossiers become available, the Dean or presiding officer will assign candidates to the volunteer presenters. In assigning presenters, the Dean or presiding officer must not assign members from a department to present the e-dossier of candidates from the same department or assign mentors to present their mentees to avoid advocacy and conflicts of interest.

All members must still review all e-dossiers; however, the assigned presenter will prepare to highlight the candidate's accomplishments relative to criteria for each area of evaluation—academic assignment, scholarly and creative achievement, and professional activity. The presenter must remain objective in presenting information from the candidate's e-dossier, but may take part in the ensuing discussion after completely laying out the information for each area of evaluation. To clarify the line between the committee member's role as presenter and the role as a member of the committee discussing the candidate, the presiding officer should ask for discussion of the e-dossier as presented for each area. The presenter may also volunteer to draft the report, or another committee member may volunteer.

### **e-Dossiers Deemed Incomplete**

An incomplete e-dossier is one that is missing one or more required materials as described in the Required Materials in your e-Dossier section of this document.

### **Unlocking an e-Dossier Deemed Incomplete at the Departmental Level**

Any e-dossier considered to be incomplete during the departmental review stage, prior to the committee vote, or which does not comply with the required content of the e-dossier, must be returned to the faculty member for timely revision and resubmission to the departmental committee prior to formal consideration by the departmental committee.

The request to unlock an e-dossier shall be made by the chair/director to the Dean of the college for approval in the form of an email providing the specific details and the rationale for unlocking the e-dossier. If the Dean approves the request, the Presiding Officer will unlock the e-dossier by sending the e-dossier back to the candidate. The e-dossier may be unlocked provided the department committee declares an e-dossier incomplete and affirms no vote has been taken; the committee may determine this via email, virtually, or in-person either during or in-advance of the meeting.

### **e-Dossier Deemed Incomplete After Departmental Level Vote**

Any e-dossier considered to be incomplete after the departmental committee has voted must follow the procedures and placement for Documents Not Ordinarily Part of e-Dossier Content Requirements.

### **Documents Not Ordinarily Part of e-Dossier Content Requirements**

Documents *not* ordinarily part of the e-dossier content requirements as stipulated in Policies 1:025, 2:066, or other standard review materials may be introduced at any personnel review meeting on the condition that such documents relate to the three areas under review. Faculty

members on a review committee wishing to introduce documentation at the personnel meeting must inform the chair (departmental level) or dean (college level) and supply the documents or copies thereof. These documents must be signed by the individual(s) who has/have authored/introduced the document(s).

**NOTE:** Written narrative comments by students that were completed as part of the normal faculty evaluation process are not to be shared with committee members during personnel meetings and are not to be used in any way as part of the personnel process.

However, no document may be introduced at a review meeting until the faculty member under review (a) has seen the documents or copies of documents; (b) has been informed in advance about such documentation as prescribed in the next paragraph; and (c) is assured that these documents have not been altered in any way.

The faculty member shall have the right to see the documents or copies of such documents and must be informed by the chair (departmental level) or dean (college level) that these documents may be introduced and discussed at least three (3) business days before the personnel meeting. All pertinent documents related to the situation must be included.

The chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) must provide written evidence of communication related to these documents. An official e-mail must be sent to the faculty member under review with “request a delivery receipt” and “request a read receipt” options. The faculty candidate must read the e-mail and acknowledge the receipt of the e-mail. All written communication between the faculty member and the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) must include a time and date stamp. Those who initiate these messages to the faculty member shall bring such communications to the personnel meeting.

**NOTE:** If a chair is under review and is the subject of the document, the Dean of that college shall fulfill the role normally assigned to the chair.

The faculty member under review shall be permitted to include one rebuttal to such documents. This rebuttal shall be in the form of a single document, limited to a narrative response no more than two pages in length. The faculty member’s rebuttal must be submitted prior to the personnel committee’s vote to include or exclude these documents from the e-dossier.

If any member of the committee or the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) wishes to introduce a document, and follows all procedures above, that document will then be given to the presiding officer, who will then present the nature of the document to the committee.

If requested, the presiding officer will read the document aloud. The entire committee will then vote to determine the admissibility of this document within the committee’s deliberations. A simple majority vote shall determine the outcome. A secret ballot process (similar to that described in the Guidelines for Voting, Recommendations, and Reports section of this document) shall be used in order for the votes to remain anonymous. A tie vote is not a majority vote, and the document shall not be discussed. The chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) shall not be permitted to break a tie vote.

The presiding officer shall inform the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) in writing of the results of the committee members’ deliberations on documents that meet the



criteria for “not ordinarily part of e-dossier content requirements” and the decision whether or not to permit the inclusion of the document or parts thereof within the e-dossier of the faculty member under review. The presiding officer shall prepare a narrative rationale for the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level), which will include the numerical results of the vote on the document in question.

The faculty member shall be notified by the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) or presiding officer of the committee’s decision to include or exclude the documents from the e-dossier.

If the personnel committee votes to reject these documents, the documents, or related items (e.g., faculty member’s rebuttal) shall not be included within the e-dossier. Once the documents have been denied inclusion in the e-dossier at the departmental level, these documents may not be re-introduced at the college level. Similarly, once the documents have been denied inclusion in the e-dossier at the college level, these documents may not be re-introduced at the Provost’s level.

If the committee has voted to admit these documents, the reports of the review committee shall reference these documents and include clear narrative statements that (a) are specific and (b) demonstrate the importance of the document(s) to reviewers. The faculty member’s rebuttal shall also be included within the e-dossier. If the documents have been approved for inclusion at the departmental level, these documents may not be removed at the college level. If the documents have been approved for inclusion at the college level, these documents may not be removed at the Provost’s level.

When a personnel committee has voted not to include this material, but the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) chooses to include the same document or parts thereof, their report shall include substantive rationale and clear narrative statements that (a) are specific and (b) demonstrate the importance of this document(s) for reviewers beyond their level. The (departmental level)/dean (college level) shall include the original documents (which meet the criteria for “documents not ordinarily part of e-dossier content requirements”) in the e-dossier of the faculty member under review as described in the next section of this document, Placement of Documents Not Ordinarily Meeting e-Dossier Content Requirements.

When a chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) receives documented information (positive or negative) relating to the three areas of review on a faculty member that they intends to include within their report, the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) shall notify the respective personnel committee regarding such information according to the normal procedure for documents that meet the criteria for “not ordinarily part of e-dossier content requirements”. When a chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) receives a document that they wish to include in their report, but which has not been cleared by the respective personnel committee, at a very minimum, they shall let the candidate know and inform the personnel committee of their intentions.

In order to assist reviewers at the next level and beyond, the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) shall make a note in their report of the college review committee’s ruling on the document if they choose to include or refer to the document that has been voted not to be included in the candidate’s e-dossier by the review committee. Similarly, the chair (departmental level)/dean (college level) shall make a note in their report of the department review committee’s

ruling on the document if they choose to include or refer to a document that has been voted *to be included* in the candidate's e-dossier by the review committee.

**NOTE:** Exceptions may occur because of legal restrictions.

### **Placement of Documents Not Ordinarily Meeting e-Dossier Content Requirements**

The placement of documents in the e-dossier that meet the criteria for documents not ordinarily meeting e-dossier content requirements is determined by the level at which the document (s) is introduced (departmental level or college level). Also, the RTP Appeals Board may add such document(s) after identifying and objectively examining additional information as part of their duty as described in the RTP Appeals Board Objectives section. The Provost or the President may add documents if questions of misconduct arise in either Area I, Area II, or Area III.

At whichever level the document is introduced (department, chair, college, Dean, Provost, President, or the RTP Appeals Board), the document and the faculty member's rebuttal document shall be submitted along with the report in the e-dossier at the end of that chain. For example, if the document were introduced at the departmental level, the document shall be submitted with the chair's report.

To alert review committees that the faculty member's e-dossier contains these documents, the department chair/director or the Dean of the college shall write a simple statement of fact indicating that these documents are included within the faculty member's e-dossier. The chair or the Dean shall not provide any additional evaluative comments related to that statement.

This statement, which shall either be included in the e-dossier as an additional document from the chair or follow the signature line of the Dean and be set off from the rest of the report, may read something like this: "This e-dossier contains a document that meets the criteria for documents *not ordinarily meeting e-dossier content requirements*." If the item added was due to an e-dossier deemed incomplete, that additional language should be included.

### **Guidelines for Voting, Recommendations, and Reports**

The quorum of any departmental or college-level personnel committee is a simple majority of those faculty members eligible to vote. Faculty members who have recused themselves shall not participate in any personnel review meetings on the candidate in question. A recusal for conflict of interest is not a vote. At any level of review, if a faculty member is unable to attend a personnel meeting, has to leave a meeting early, or is late in attending because of extenuating circumstances, the faculty member shall make every effort to leave an absentee ballot (by voting *for, against*) in a sealed envelope entrusted to a colleague, which shall subsequently be handed over to the presiding officer of the personnel review committee.

As stated in [Policy 2:052](#) [Academic Freedom and Responsibility], "the right to academic freedom imposes upon the faculty an equal obligation to take appropriate professional action against faculty members who are derelict in discharging their professional responsibilities. The faculty member has an obligation to participate in tenure and promotion review of colleagues as specified in university policy." It shall be acceptable for faculty members to change their position on a candidate and present a substitute vote, replacing an original vote that has

previously been submitted, so long as the official final vote is presented to the committee before the presiding officer counts and records the official votes at the meeting.

The vote may proceed if all the votes counted at the time of voting (including votes from those members physically present as well as absentee ballot votes from faculty) constitute a simple majority. However, any action taken with less than a simple majority of eligible faculty present and voting (and which includes absentee ballots) will be invalid, with a new vote to be conducted at a rescheduled meeting in a timely manner.

As the time for voting approaches, the chair/director or dean will leave the room. Further discussion may ensue. A vote then will be held by secret ballot and the results recorded by the presiding officer. To preserve the integrity of the secret ballot process, standardized ballots and identical writing instruments shall be provided to the committee.

Confirmation of the writers for any majority or minority report shall be determined within 24 business hours of the completion of the vote. See the section Majority and Minority Reports for eligibility/assignment of writers and instructions for writing.

The department chair shall write an independent review after the departmental committee has made a recommendation and submit this report, which includes a separate recommendation for the faculty member under review, in the faculty members e-dossier. The Chair is not obligated to be guided by the departmental committees' reports or their votes.

In extraordinary circumstances, the departmental committee may be permitted to take a re-vote before the e-dossier moves forward. The departmental committee cannot re-vote unless authorized in writing by the Provost.

Recommendations once forwarded from the department to the next level cannot be rescinded unless authorized in writing by the Provost.

After the college committee acts on a faculty member's dossier and forwards it to the next level, the college action cannot be rescinded, unless authorized in writing by the Provost.

The college Dean shall write an evaluation and make a recommendation for the faculty member under review and submit this in the faculty members e-dossier. The college Dean shall inform, in writing, the faculty member under review of the decanal recommendation. After the college Dean makes a recommendation regarding the faculty member under review and forwards it to the next level, the college Dean's action cannot be rescinded, unless authorized in writing by the Provost.

### **Tie Vote**

At any level in the retention, tenure, or promotion process, a tie vote or even-split vote (for example, 3 votes to retain, 3 votes not to retain a candidate) shall be seen as a negative action. In the event of a tie vote, two (2) minority reports will be written and must be included in the faculty member's e-dossier before it is forwarded to the next level in the personnel process. See the section Majority and Minority Reports for eligibility/assignment of writers and instructions for writing.

A tie vote at the departmental level accompanied by a negative vote from the chair would permit a faculty member to write the optional two-page written response. Similarly, a tie vote at the

college level accompanied by a negative vote from the dean would permit a faculty member to write the optional two-page written response.

### **Majority and Minority Reports**

For each faculty member under review, there can be no more than one majority and one minority report generated at any level, unless there is a tie vote, in which case two minority reports shall be written and no majority report shall be written. Minority reports are optional, except in the tie vote case. All reports must be included in the candidate's e-dossier.

Faculty members who did not hear the discussion on candidates because they did not attend or stay for the full duration of the meeting are not permitted to write or provide input on majority or minority reports.

A member of the committee voting with the majority shall be selected to write the evaluation of the faculty member for the committee. The majority report shall include substantive and clear narrative statements. The majority report must contain, at a minimum, information pertinent to all three areas of review and reflect the information discussed in the meeting or relevant material which is in the faculty member's e-dossier. A member of the committee voting with the minority may write, alone or in collaboration with other members in the minority, a minority report, which must be included in the faculty member's e-dossier along with the committee's recommendation. When two minority reports are needed, two individuals—one voting for and one voting against—must come forward to write the required minority reports.

Majority and minority reports that are written following a review meeting may contain information discussed at the meeting as well as information freely available within the faculty member's e-dossier. Extraneous elements and hearsay are not permitted within majority or minority reports. If the material is important enough to appear within a candidate's majority or minority report, it should be discussed openly within the personnel meeting.

Any majority or minority reports should, at a minimum, contain sufficient information for review committees at all levels to make a reasonably sound assessment of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. The language for each section under review on RTP reports shall include more than a single line of text. For example, a sentence such as "Faculty Jane Doe is performing satisfactorily in Area 1" with no other accompanying information is not permitted as an assessment statement for Area 1.

Minority reports may contain positive or negative information or a combination of positive and negative information. Negative information shall be supported by some sense of the reasons for their inclusion in the report. If the faculty member is known to be an ineffective advisor, a few additional sentences explaining this position will be helpful.

In the case of a tie vote when two minority reports are required, those reports must contain distinct comments; one may not be a copy of the other.

Minority reports must discuss all three areas of review and must be turned in for the candidate to read at the same time as majority reports. Minority reports cannot be written a week or several days after a candidate has seen a majority report.

When there is disagreement about the content of any report (majority and/or minority) circulated for comment and review, the personnel committee reviewers should attempt to work out differences among themselves and write a report (or reports) that is/are generally acceptable to the committee. In cases in which differences cannot be worked out, the report(s) should reflect the disagreements.

### **Who Signs Reports?**

Digital signatures will be used to sign all reports. All faculty members who **voted** on a candidate for retention, tenure, or promotion to Professor are required to digitally sign all reports (both the majority report and the minority report(s), if any), regardless of whether they attended the personnel meeting. Signing these reports simply indicates that the faculty members have read the reports; signing does not necessarily indicate agreement or disagreement with the contents of these reports. Non-voting departmental representatives who were present at the college meeting during the vote shall be required to digitally sign all reports as well. However, faculty members who recused themselves from voting on a faculty member's e-dossier shall not sign any reports.

Committee members shall digitally sign all reports in a timely manner consistent with the deadlines listed on the APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

### **The RTP Appeals Board**

#### **Overview and Objectives of University RTP Appeals Board**

The responsibility of the University Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Appeals Board (RTP Appeals Board) is to review appeals of faculty members who have received negative recommendations concerning their applications for retention, tenure, or promotion to Professor. Please refer to the full description of the University RTP Appeals Board Charge on the University Standing Committees webpage.

#### **RTP APPEALS BOARD OBJECTIVES**

In the discharge of their duties, the Appeals Board shall:

- review appeals of faculty members who have received negative recommendations
- conduct the review with objectivity, accuracy, neutrality, and integrity
- safeguard individual faculty members from arbitrary decision making
- protect the academic freedom of individual faculty members
- identify and objectively examine additional information germane to the appeal
- investigate inconsistencies and irregularities within the RTP process
- avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest

#### **Faculty Members' Right to Appear Before the Board**

A faculty member under review shall have the right to appear before the RTP Appeals Board or the Appeals Board may request the faculty member to appear in person. Appearing in person shall be at the discretion of the faculty candidate. The candidate may be permitted to speak for up

to 30 minutes. The Appeals Board may extend the candidate's speaking time at its discretion. The candidate is only allowed to speak on information germane to their appeal.

### **Examining Any Additional Information Germane to the Appeal**

The Appeals Board shall identify and examine any additional information it needs, consistent with university policies and procedures, to make its recommendation and shall gather objective information specific to the case from the candidate, the department, the administration, and external sources, as appropriate. All persons contacted by the Appeals Board as part of its investigation are encouraged to cooperate fully. Information requested by the Appeals Board that is consistent with university policies and procedures shall be provided in a timely manner and shall be kept confidential to the RTP process. Further investigations, if any, must occur *before* the Appeals Board members cast their vote. *No additional investigation is permitted after the votes are cast by the members of the Appeals Board.*

### **Composition and Selection of University RTP Appeals Board**

The University RTP Appeals Board, which is constituted during the fall semester by dates prescribed on the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions shall be composed of the following:

- Two (2) tenured full professors elected from each college (from different departments within the college) who are eligible to serve on the college promotion committees, but who are not currently serving on those committees;
- one (1) University faculty member designated by the Provost;
- one (1) University faculty member designated by the Faculty Senate.

Even though it is not possible to know in advance which faculty members may file appeals, a single University RTP Appeals Board shall be convened each year. This appeals board will meet to deliberate on any appeals as prescribed in the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions. The members on the Appeals Board representing each of the colleges shall be tenured Professors who must be elected by that college's faculty according to established procedures at the University.

The Chair of the Appeals Board shall be a non-voting member, a college Dean, appointed by the President. The Dean of the College of the faculty member making an appeal shall not serve as Chair of the University RTP Appeals Board for that appeal. In these cases, the committee members shall elect a temporary chair for that particular faculty member's appeal. Reports from the University RTP Appeals Board shall document the recusal of the specific faculty member and/or Dean should this circumstance arise.

To protect the integrity of the appeals process, it is vital that neutrality be an important component of the University RTP Appeals Board and that a real or perceived conflict of interest be avoided. Faculty members who have previously served and voted on any personnel committee on a colleague for retention, tenure, or promotion *shall* be permitted to serve as a member of the University RTP Appeals Board to examine a retention, tenure, or promotion appeal that may be filed subsequently by that colleague in the same retention/tenure/promotion review cycle.

However, that faculty member shall *not* be permitted to actively participate in the deliberations and is required to leave the meeting room. If an appeal is made by a faculty member from a college under a Dean that has been appointed to serve as Chair of the University RTP Appeals

Board, then this Dean shall also *not* be permitted to actively participate in the deliberations and is also required to leave the room using the procedure noted above.

All University RTP Appeals Board members who voted on a candidate's retention, tenure, or promotion appeal to the Appeals Board are required to sign the report. However, Appeals Board members who were absent and did not vote or recused themselves from voting on a faculty member's e-dossier shall not sign the report of the Appeals Board.

Any necessary adjustments in membership to this board and the subsequent eligibility to vote (based on the college of the faculty member making the appeal) shall be the responsibility of the President or their designee.

### **Steps in the Process for Filing an Appeal with the RTP Appeals Board**

Appeals shall be filed by the deadline outlined in the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions. The appeal shall be filed via email with the Provost, copying the Senior Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (SVP/AVPAA), who will forward the appeal to the University RTP Appeals Board. All paperwork associated with the electronic appeal must be converted to PDF files and included within the e-dossier of the faculty member making the appeal before the e-dossier moves to the next level.

At a minimum, the documents that should be included in the e-dossier are as follows: (a) the appeal letter (b) any supporting documents (c) the recommendation of the University RTP Appeals Board. The faculty member's e-dossier will need to be unlocked to include the documents related to the appeal. The Chair of the University RTP Appeals Board shall provide a written recommendation to the Provost and copy the faculty member making the appeal. The report from the Chair of the Appeals Board shall include substantive rationale and clear narrative statements that (a) are specific and (b) demonstrate the importance of this document(s) for reviewers beyond the level of the Appeals Board. The Provost or their designee shall have the responsibility for unlocking an e-dossier to upload appeals documents of faculty members appealing retention, tenure, or promotion decisions.

### **FORMAL APPEALS AND INFORMAL OPTIONAL WRITTEN RESPONSES**

A formal appeal is one that is made by the faculty member under review to the University RTP Appeals Board. There are no page limit restrictions for the formal appeal.

An informal response is one that is made by the faculty member under review to **any** negative recommendations at the departmental level for retention years 3, 5, 6, tenure year, or for promotion to Professor. Candidates seeking retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor may also write an informal response at the college level when the college committee and dean recommendations are negative. These responses are limited to two pages and are addressed to the next level of review.

In retention years 3, 5, and 6, the Dean makes the final decision in the review. Therefore, in retention years 3, 5, and 6, there is no opportunity for an informal response to a negative decision from the Dean. The candidate, in these cases, may file a formal appeal with the University RTP Appeals Board after a negative decision from the Dean.

However, in retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor, the Provost makes the decision, so the candidate may write an informal response to the negative recommendations of the college committee and the Dean. If the Provost's decision is negative, the candidate may file a formal appeal with the University RTP Appeals Board.

## GUIDELINES FOR INFORMAL OPTIONAL WRITTEN RESPONSES

### Definition

Recommendation: The department committee's report is a recommendation; the chair's report is a recommendation; the College Committee's report is a recommendation. However, depending upon the year of review the Dean's report may be either a recommendation or a final decision. See APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

- 1) Are faculty permitted to write an Informal Optional Written Response after receiving one negative action? YES.

In the interest of fairness, a faculty member under review is permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to any negative recommendations at the departmental level for retention years 3, 5, 6, tenure year, or for promotion to Professor. Candidates seeking retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor are also permitted to write an Informal Optional Written Response at the college level when either the college committee's or the dean's recommendation is negative. These responses are limited to two pages and are addressed to the next level of review.

- 2) Can a faculty member use an Informal Optional Written Response to address individual "negative" evaluative comments within a positive majority report? NO.

Occasionally, a positive majority report at the departmental or college level might contain evaluative comments or opinions related to the three areas of review that might be perceived by the faculty member under review as being negative. Faculty members are not permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to each and every "negative" opinion expressed within a majority report. For example, members of a review committee often have differing opinions about the **quality** of a published article in Area Two (2). In these cases, the faculty member may respond to those opinions or comments within a formal appeal.

- 3) What are the steps for rectifying any substantive inaccurate information using the Informal Optional Written Response?

Occasionally, personnel reports produced by a departmental committee, a chair, a college committee, or a dean may contain substantive inaccurate information about the faculty member under review.

Examples of substantive inaccurate information might include the following, but are not limited to these scenarios: a) a report might state that the faculty member presented at four (4) conferences in the current cycle, when in fact the e-dossier documents establish



that the faculty member presented papers only at two (2) conferences OR b) the report says the faculty member participated in a professional association when in fact the faculty member served as the president of the professional association. When faculty are unsure as to what might constitute a substantive error, the faculty member should consult a mentor or a senior faculty member who is within the review process.

In situations such as the ones described above, the faculty member under review shall be permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to rectify the inaccurate information. This Informal Optional Written Response cannot introduce anything new that has not already been included in the original e-dossier. Faculty are urged to use the Informal Optional Written Response **sparingly**. The faculty member under review shall be permitted to write an Informal Optional Written Response to rectify all instances of substantive inaccurate information in **any** majority or minority report. In order for the Informal Optional Written Response to be included in the e-dossier for the next level of review, the faculty member shall contact the Office of Academic Affairs.

**Q.** What are some of the guidelines for a formal appeal to the University RTP Appeals Board?

- Faculty members may submit a formal appeal to the University RTP Appeals Board during retention for Years 3, 5, and 6 when the decision of the Dean is negative. Follow the APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions for deadlines.
- Faculty members may submit a formal appeal to the University RTP Appeals Board during retention for Year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor when the decision of the Provost is negative. Follow the APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions for deadlines.
  - Recommendations from the University RTP Appeals Board in Year 4 and in the Tenure Year will go to the President. However, in the Tenure Year, the faculty member also has the opportunity to appeal a negative decision by the President to the APSU Board of Trustees.
  - Unless the application is withdrawn recommendations from the Appeals Board in Promotion to Professor will go to the President. Promotion decisions stop with the President. Faculty may not appeal promotion decisions to the APSU Board of Trustees.

Each faculty member shall have only one-time access to the University RTP Appeals Board during any one review action within a cycle. For example, a faculty member may not access the University RTP Appeals Board twice for a negative retention, tenure, or promotion decision. All actions related to appeals shall follow the timetable guidelines prescribed in the Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

## **CALCULATING THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

### **Approved Leave of Absence**

A period of approved leave of absence shall be excluded from the requisite period for completion of the probationary period unless the Provost of the University specified in writing prior to the leave of absence that it shall be included in the probationary period.

However, articles that are published (online or in print) during the “leave of absence” period shall be accepted as items in Area 2 (Scholarly and Creative Achievement) during the probationary period. For example, if the faculty member receives notice of an acceptance of an article (submitted at a previous time) during the “leave of absence” period or receives notice of an invitation to submit a scholarly essay to a journal, the faculty member may count this as part of their publication achievements in Area 2.

When there is disagreement as to the admissibility of scholarly/creative activity in Area 2 during a “leave of absence” period, the faculty member shall consult with their Chair, Dean, and Provost to resolve the situation. This provision applies to tenure-track faculty only.

Leaves of absence may not be granted retroactively. A faculty member may apply for a maximum of two (2) extensions in one-year increments so long as the total probationary period does not exceed six years. Requests for a second extension follow the same procedure and are subject to the same considerations as the original extension.

### **Stopping the Tenure Clock**

A faculty member in a tenure track appointment may request to “stop the clock” during their probationary period when circumstances exist that interrupt the faculty member’s normal progress toward building a case for tenure. Discretion for stopping the tenure clock rests on the institution and also requires supervisory approval. In such cases, the faculty member may request to “stop the tenure clock” for one-year if they demonstrate that circumstances reasonably warrant such interruption.

Reasons for approving a request to “stop the clock” will typically be related to a personal or family situation requiring attention and commitment that consumes the time and energy normally addressed to faculty duties and professional development. Examples may include, but are not limited to, childbirth or adoption, care of dependents, medical conditions or obligations, physical disasters or disruptions, or similar circumstances that require a fundamental alteration of one’s professional life. The intent of this policy is to serve the best interests of the University while providing neither preference to, nor adverse effect on, a faculty member’s process of developing a case for tenure. Once approved, the “stop the clock” year is not counted in the probationary period accrual.

However, articles that are published (online or in print) during the “stop the clock” year shall be accepted as items in Area 2 (Scholarly and Creative Achievement) during the probationary period. For example, if the faculty member receives notice of an acceptance of an article (submitted at a previous time) during the “stop the clock” year or receives notice of an invitation to submit a scholarly essay to a journal, the faculty member may count this as part of their publication achievements in Area 2. When there is disagreement as to the admissibility of scholarly/creative activity in Area 2 during a “stop the clock” year, the faculty member shall consult with their Chair, Dean, and Provost to resolve the situation. This provision applies to tenure-track faculty only.

### **Clarification of evaluation procedures during leaves of absence and stopped tenure clocks**

APSU further clarifies evaluation procedures during probationary period approved leaves of absence and periods of stopped tenure clocks.

There are two methods for extending the probationary period. The first (Outlined in Approved Leave of Absence above) occurs when a faculty member is on an approved leave of absence.

Unless otherwise specified in writing by the Provost, such a leave of absence automatically extends the probationary period by one year. At APSU, the minimum leave of absence to apply under this policy is twenty (20) weeks in a given nine (9) month academic year as defined by faculty contract. The second method for extending the probationary period is Stopping the Tenure Clock, (Outlined in Stopping the Tenure Clock). Stopping the tenure clock is for situations that do not prevent a faculty member from fulfilling teaching, advising, and administrative duties. The faculty member must specifically request in writing to the Provost that the tenure clock be stopped. A request to stop the clock must be submitted no later than sixty (60) business days before the e-dossier is due. The phrase “building a case for tenure” is herein defined as referring to the accumulation of job-related accomplishments during the relevant performance review period. This is distinguished from the actual preparation of an e-dossier which is the assembly and presentation of evidence that accomplishments have occurred over the course of a performance review period.

The time period to which the “stop the clock” option is applied is the performance review period within which the request is made. The “stop the clock” option is only open to individuals who have not been able to make normal progress toward “building a case for tenure” as defined above. It is not open to an individual who has been unable to prepare an e-dossier, i.e., evidence of accomplishment, by the date stipulated in the governing Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REVISION OF DEPARTMENTAL RTP CRITERIA**

Departments shall review and may consider revisions to their Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) criteria every 6 years. The current criteria, revised in Fall 2022, took effect in academic year 2023-24. Departments wishing to make any substantive changes within the six-year period must obtain written permission from the Provost. The Provost shall establish the timetable for the revision of departmental criteria. Procedures for this revision are as follows:

- a. Departments are encouraged to carefully review the criteria that they presently have and use APSU [Policies 1:025](#) Policy on Academic Tenure, [2:063](#) Policy on Academic Promotion and this RTP Procedures and Guidelines document to inform their discussions.
- b. Each department will establish a criteria-review committee. The committee will include members from all tenure-track and tenured ranks within a department. The review committee will review the criteria, propose changes, and discuss the revised criteria with the department.
- c. The review committee may incorporate suggested changes to the RTP criteria and forward the proposal in writing with brief rationales for those changes to the dean. The dean will review the proposed changes and make suggestions with brief rationales to the departmental criteria review committee.
- d. The review committee shall reconvene and consider the dean’s suggestions and may choose to modify the RTP criteria. Then, the review committee will prepare a final revision of the RTP criteria and present it to the department. All tenured and tenure- track faculty members of the department will vote on the proposed changes. For the proposal to move forward, a simple majority of the voting members must

approve the proposed changes. If the vote fails, the review committee will reconvene and consider faculty members' suggestions and may choose to modify the RTP criteria to bring to the faculty members for a second vote. The chair will cast an independent vote. The approved proposal and vote tally shall be forwarded to the department's dean.

- e. The department's proposed RTP criteria will be reviewed and voted on by the College Promotion Committee, chaired by the dean. The dean and college promotion committee will send to the Provost the department's proposed changes (including any college-level or decanal comments) and votes of the College Promotion Committee and of the dean. The dean will forward the results of Dean's vote and College Promotion Committee's votes to the department chair for dissemination to all faculty members within the department.
- f. The Provost shall review each department's proposed RTP changes. The Provost may make suggestions in writing with brief rationales and send them back to the department chair, with a copy to the dean. The chair shall inform the department of the Provost's comments. The department review criteria committee will reconvene and consider the Provost's suggestions. The Provost may meet with the department to discuss revisions. The review criteria committee will prepare its final proposed criteria and send them to the Provost.
- g. After consultation with the dean, chair, and department criteria review committee, the Provost will approve final departmental criteria.
- h. Changes to a department's RTP criteria will take effect the following academic year. Faculty members who believe that the newly adopted criteria will negatively affect future retention or tenure actions may appeal their case to the Provost. The timeline shall be set by the provost.
- i. College Committees are not permitted to reinterpret and/or redefine departmental RTP criteria.

## **CAVEATS**

- 1. Any department, division, or unit that does not fit within the evaluative framework presented above will have its process designated by the Provost but must be consistent with the spirit of the above-described process.
- 2. When a catastrophic event such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or other event disrupts normal campus operations, forcing campus operations to remote mode, the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion process will use the procedures outlined in Appendix B, Virtual RTP Process Training Guide.

## LINKS

APSU Policy 5:020	Leave Policies <a href="https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=184">https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=184</a>
APSU Policy 1:025	Policy on Academic Tenure <a href="https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=29">https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=29</a>
APSU Policy 2:063	Policy on Academic Promotion <a href="https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=253">https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=253</a>
APSU Policy 2:052	Academic Freedom and Responsibility <a href="https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=114">https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=114</a>
APSU Policy 2:066	Faculty Discipline and Performance Improvement Policy <a href="https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=365">https://apsu.navexone.com/content/docview/?docid=365</a>
APSU e-Dossier Website	<a href="https://www.apsu.edu/academic-affairs/faculty/rtp/edossier.php">https://www.apsu.edu/academic-affairs/faculty/rtp/edossier.php</a>
APSU QEP	<a href="https://www.apsu.edu/qep/index.php">https://www.apsu.edu/qep/index.php</a>

## APPENDIX A

**Example Chart:**  
**Fall 2023 Tenure-Track Start as Assistant Professor**  
 (Faculty with 2 Years of Prior Service Toward Tenure)

	<b>AY 2023-2024 (Fall-Spring)</b>	<b>AY 2024-2025 (Fall-Spring)</b>	<b>AY 2025-2026 (Fall-Spring)</b>	<b>AY 2026-2027 (Fall-Spring)</b>
<b>Faculty Year for RTP Purposes (for faculty with 2 years of prior service)</b>	First year Faculty considered as 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Faculty for RTP process	4 <sup>th</sup> Year Faculty for RTP process	5 <sup>th</sup> Year Faculty for RTP process	6 <sup>th</sup> Year Faculty for RTP process
<b>Dossier Due</b>	NA	Sept 2024 For 5 <sup>th</sup> Year Retention	Sept 2025 For 6 <sup>th</sup> Year Retention	Sept 2026 For Tenure & Promotion to Associate Professor

**Note:** Faculty starting in a Spring semester will follow the cohort of faculty starting in the previous fall term. For further clarification contact the Chair of the Faculty RTP Policy Committee.

## **APPENDIX B**

**Virtual RTP Process Training Guide - <https://www.apsu.edu/academic-affairs/faculty/rtp/Appendix B Virtual RTP Process Training Guide.pdf>**

### **Revision Dates**

**APSU RTP P&G --Rev: April 1, 2024**

APSU RTP P&G --Rev: April 27, 2023

APSU RTP P&G – Rev: February 17, 2023

APSU RTP P&G – Rev: August 10, 2022

APSU Tenure P&G – Rev: May 7, 2021

APSU Tenure P&G – Rev: January 27, 2021

APSU Tenure P&G – Rev: April 30, 2020

APSU Tenure P&G – Rev.: June 3, 2019

APSU Tenure P&G – Rev.: April 27, 2018

APSU Tenure P&G – Issued: July 12, 2016