

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee
From: Daniel Brewster, Faculty Welfare Committee Chair
Date: February 24, 2025
Re: University Procedures for Promotion and Tenure Feedback Report

Overview

- 54 faculty responded to survey
 - Survey was open for approximately 6 weeks
 - 29 yes, would vote to approve
 - 25 no, would vote against approval
 - Several of the 54 respondents found 6 weeks too short a time to review the document
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- **Section II A (Clarification in Appendix)**
 - Define "negative evaluation"
 - If the verbiage is meant to define satisfactory or unsatisfactory, language must be continuous. This has been used at multiple locations with no specification. Recommendation made is not cohesive in the same paragraph. Page 5 last paragraph needs to specify the over all performance vs individual area performance - satisfactory or unsatisfactory
 - **ACTION: REMOVE THE WORD NEGATIVE and just note "evaluation"**
- **Section II A 4 (College differences, research the meaning of this section) ***page one**
 - An Associate/Full Professor could be considered for promotion and/or salary enhancements if a memorandum of understanding was developed and was subsequently in place for at least five full academic years prior to consideration." (p. 5)
 - Why is a memo needed for salary enhancement? (Review letters will likely document the ability to request promotion from Associate to Full.) I remember when the salary enhancement policy was implemented. It is a policy that lets faculty get a significant bump (to help counter salary compression), 2 – 3 times after being promoted to professor.
 - e.g., me: About 4 years ago, I earned "super professor" thing and got a bump. I should be eligible soon for the second bump. But, I do not have a memo stating I can go up for the second bump (unless this was stated in the letter advising me about getting the first bump). This new P&T document would require me to wait 10 years for that bump?
 - **NO ACTION NEEDED: Workload Plan is an example. You would not have to wait 10 years before being eligible to apply for your second salary enhancement. There does not need to be a separate memo stating year of eligibility. When a faculty member is approved for their first salary enhancement, the letter of notification states when they are eligible to apply for a second salary enhancement. Similarly,**

the letter of promotion from Associate Professor to Professor states when the person will become eligible to apply for the first salary enhancement.

- **Section III A (Suggested evaluation) *** page 2**
 - I submitted the following comment regarding the requirement to obtain a single peer evaluation of teaching to be promoted in November 2022.
 - This requirement still appears in the revised document in Section III.A. and warrants attention in my opinion. "Although I agree with the purpose of requiring peer evaluations of teaching to provide a more holistic appraisal of teaching, it will take a good bit of effort for units to do it in a meaningful way. Evaluators would need to be trained within each unit to rate teaching reliably and have the appropriate unit-specific knowledge to evaluate whether the content is accurate and appropriate for the designated level of course. Without evidence of interrater reliability, this procedure is bound to be affected by the same type of biases evident in SEIs. I am interested in learning if any incremental validity exists to support adding such a labor-intensive process to the current evaluation system; that is, does having a single peer observation of a single class period over a 5-6 year period of time contribute any meaningful information to the evaluation of a faculty member's teaching? I could not locate this type of data in the literature, but it seems to me that information learned by adding this one piece of data to a faculty file would not contribute much to evaluating a record of teaching. This proposed requirement also seems to suggest that evaluation of teaching quality is equivalent to lecture quality when we know that much of teaching quality involves developing positive student-teacher interactions and work that occurs outside of the classroom."
 - **NO ACTION NEEDED: PEER EVALUATIONS ARE ORGANIZED BY INDIVIDUAL UNITS AND CAN BE SUPPORTED BY THE TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER**
- **Section III Article A: (language) ***page 4**
 - "At least one peer evaluation prior to the mid-tenure/promotion review" Why include the prior to statement?
 - Why not just one (at any time during the probationary period)?
 - **NO ACTION NEEDED: To ensure the faculty member is on track and has time to correct any issues. While faculty members must provide evidence of the quality of their teaching, my position would be to outline possible examples/methods but to leave the specifics of those to College and/or Department/School guidelines so that the specific practices will be most**

relevant for each unit and that unit faculty will work to develop those together.

- **Section III Article B:**

- "...Units must establish protocols for crediting co-authored work and faculty must document their specific contributions to these types of work. Faculty are encouraged to highlight multi/trans/inter-disciplinary research, understanding that not all research fits into traditional disciplines."
- While I do not mind asking faculty to "document their specific contributions to these types of work." I would prefer if it read, "Faculty **may** document their specific..." e.g., a person may be last author and have done most of the writing. That is important to state. **ACTION NEEDED: the word "may" has proven problematic. If a requirement then other language must be used.**
- I am not at all comfortable with requiring units to develop protocols for crediting co-authored work.
- **NO ACTION NEEDED: Units must develop criteria for evaluating research, teaching, and service.**
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1 article credit	1 st author, 2 nd author,	
.75 article credit	3 rd author, 4 th author	what if all contributed equally to the paper, then 1 article credit?
.5 article credit	5 or more authors = contribution	

1. How would such guidelines be balanced with other criteria of credit?

- a. The point of the FEC is for colleagues to review the file and decide a rating.

NO ACTION NEEDED: Agreed

- b. More and more co-authored work is what is happening. What would a protocol look like and how would it be integrated with evaluation of quality of the work, length, importance, type of scholarship (book chapter vs. peer reviewed journal article)...

- i. I suggest deleting "Units must establish protocols of crediting co-authored work." **NO ACTION NEEDED: Agreed**

- c. Adding edicts adds additional burdens of documentation to faculty and to colleagues/chair when reading faculty evaluation files. How long do we want to spend producing and reviewing files? **NO ACTION NEEDED: While the concept of documentation is necessary across the board, specifics must be determined more locally. Clear guidelines generally simplify the documentation and reviewing processes – and reduce likelihood of arbitrary and capricious ratings.**

2. Section V

- a. “A personnel action is required each year for each faculty member subsequent to the annual review, mid-promotion review, or promotion and/or tenure review. Such personnel actions include but may not be limited to continuation at current rank, continuation with promotion in rank, continuation with tenure awarded, continuation with promotion in rank and tenure awarded, or non-continuation ~~annual review, reappointment, mid-promotion and/or tenure review promotion, tenure, or non-continuation.~~
 - i. “continuation with promotion in rank and tenure awarded” may be interpreted that one’s tenure could be revoked or rank reduced.
 1. What is the purpose of it?
 2. Why wouldn’t “continuation at current rank” be enough?
 3. **NO ACTION NEEDED: Each annual evaluation must include a recommendation for or against continuation (which means current rank), or for or against promotion in years in promotion is under consideration. The listing in that section was just outlining the full range of possibilities. Rank is never reduced through this process. Recommendations against continuation may lead to termination of employment—but not a separate revocation of tenure.**

• Section VI.

- Discretionary personnel actions remove the two year restriction: "A faculty member whose application for promotion is unsuccessful must wait at least two full years after the decision is rendered before submitting another application, unless a critical-year decision is required." Change to: "unsuccessful promotion can be submitted in any subsequent year for non tenure track, unless a critical year applied"
- **NO ACTION NEEDED: This is inadvisable. Time is needed to enhance the viability of subsequent application. Much comment has been made about how much time the entire P&T process consumes for individual faculty, FEC members, chairs, deans, University panel, and Provost office. Someone with a failed discretionary promotion case who did not improve could apply every**

year ad infinitum. Beyond the effort within our university, this would be problematic in exhausting the pool of external reviewers for a faculty member who may be applying/reapplying prematurely.

- **Section VIII: (Provost level not wanting to put guidelines on colleges. Connection to workload document). -Check with Office of the Provost - CH**
 - Criteria for "Limited Evidence" and "Unsatisfactory" Ratings. Clarify the criteria for "limited evidence" and "Unsatisfactory" ratings. Vague terms risk arbitrary evaluations. Clear, measurable criteria are necessary for fairness, academic freedom, and to help faculty address concerns effectively.
 - *Need to do search to find where they are referencing this; this is not the right section.*
 - **ACTION POSSIBLY NEEDED. Agreed about vague terminology. Specific criteria for ratings (Unsatisfactory through Excellent) will be expected within Department/School or College level guidelines.**
- **Section IX B 4 (Service Track faculty)**
 - Remove repeated sentence. In both paragraph 5 and 6 it says, "Academic units must set criteria for promotion to full professor that are more rigorous than the criteria for promotion to associate professor."
 - **ACTION NEEDED: Remove sentence**
- **Section IX: (BOG rules)**
 - Annual Evaluations for Full Professors. Annual evaluations for Full Professors are unnecessary and should be replaced with reviews every 3–5 years unless performance concerns arise. Annual evaluations consume significant time that could be better spent on research and service.
 - **NO ACTION NEEDED: Required under BOG Rule 4.2 Section. 7. Cannot make this change within P&T revision process. Requires separate action. Attempting to change with the BOG may prompt further consideration on their part that could lead to adverse consequences. Also: merit raises when available and salary enhancements are dependent upon evaluations. Lack of timely feedback may limit faculty due process; institutions with interval (e.g. 5-year) based post-tenure review often have this tied to revocation of tenure/termination of employment (and more legislatures are leaning in that direction). I wouldn't wish to see someone receive no feedback for 5 years, no warning/opportunity to improve, then lose their job or have tenure revoked.**
- **Section XI. (Reach out to provost office)**
 - Changing Areas of Significant Contribution
 - While I understand the general concept and application of time-in-track in order to evaluate faculty for promotion, the continued requirement that, "The faculty member must work under the modified mission area for a minimum of five (5) years after the approval of the request before the

individual could be considered for promotion using the modified mission areas..." can be deeply detrimental to the faculty member and the institution. The entire purpose of allowing such a change, as stated in that second paragraph of this section, is to "assist the department or the college in achieving its mission and goals..." Such a change is thus purposed to benefit the institution and, consequently and ethically, should not cause any delay to the faculty member's further promotion.

- This may be particularly true for Associate Professors of any track who agree to take on administrative service (Article A). While this provision requires a minimum of three years in the position to be considered for promotion, which is better than the five years generally required for other track/focus changes, this may still well negatively impact a faculty member's timeline to promotion.
 - If, as an example, such a faculty is three years into his/her/their time as an Associate Professor and is asked to step into a program director, interim or permanent chair or interim or permanent assistant/associate dean role, this would add at least a year until that individual could be considered for promotion. There are real professional, personal, and financial penalties to that individual for taking on such a service to the unit and university.
 - Such circumstances and willingness to serve should never be penalized by the institution in any fashion. They should be honored, at minimum, if not rewarded. It seems clear, and it is reasonable, that the purpose to this "time-in-rank" or "time-in-track" principle is provide sufficient evidence of on-going productivity and contribution.
 - Could this not, however, be measured in the aggregate of contributions across the various efforts, assignments, roles, and responsibilities, all of which are in service to the institution? This has deeply impacted me and is an area to which I am particularly sensitive.
 - **NO ACTION NEEDED: There should normally be at least 5 years between promotions – and there should be sufficient time within each area to allow for appropriate evaluation. Faculty colleagues should be able to make reasonable judgments during the evaluation process. This may however require more nuanced read of external evaluations when the areas of significant contribution have changed.**

- **Section XI. (Check with Provost)**

- If we ask someone who is excelling to change areas of significant contributions to benefit the University, it seems counterintuitive that they would have to wait 5 years if past mid duration in promotion. Of course, if they went up earlier the language could state that the chair and faculty agree to such up front. XII. The

first paragraph implies we will seek external input for faculty who have teaching as a significant contribution area. This is not consistent with the current version.

- **NO ACTION NEEDED: Area changes occur infrequently yet seem to draw outside attention within document revisions. If this is a significant concern, might it be helpful for us to engage with a group of faculty in this position, and their deans, to better identify issues and propose solutions.**

- **Section XII: (Check with Provost, what is the review area if emphasis is teaching)**
 - Potomac State College faculty should not be required to take part in the external review process. PSC faculty are primarily teaching faculty (15 or more contact hours each semester and extremely underpaid). It would also be challenging to find faculty at other 2-year colleges willing to conduct the external reviews. External reviews make sense for faculty engaged in research, actively publishing in journals, etc. at WVU Tech and Morgantown campus.
 - **ACTION NEEDED: There has been inconsistency between the University document (which we state applies to everyone) and the regional campus level documents. We have not required external reviews for PSC and are not intending to do so. This relates to my previous comment about differential missions and a solution for clarifying applicable documents.**
 - From current University guidelines: West Virginia University (“University”) at Morgantown is the state's comprehensive, doctoral degree granting, land-grant institution. Other members of the WVU system—including Potomac State College, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, and Charleston and Eastern Divisions of the Health Sciences Center—help achieve the University’s tripartite mission of teaching, research and service. The integrated divisional campuses in Keyser and Beckley address the mission areas in ways appropriate to their campuses.
 - **Draft modification: West Virginia University is the state's comprehensive, doctoral degree granting, land-grant institution. The WVU system includes several members, each of which contribute in distinct and differentiated ways to our overall mission of teaching, research, and service: Morgantown’s Main Campus including the Health Sciences Center (Morgantown, Charleston and Eastern Divisions), Potomac State College (Keyser), WVU Institute of Technology (Beckley), and West Virginia University Extension. The approved Procedures for Faculty Appointment, Annual Evaluation, and Tenure for each member of the WVU system reflect guidelines consistent with their differentiated mission foci. -To Provost**
 - **Section XII. (see above)**
 - Workloads of tenured faculty on branch campuses are more similar to the workload of teaching-track faculty in Morgantown. As such, external evaluations will be burdensome and likely would not provide useful feedback. I strongly believe that "faculty on branch campuses" should be mentioned in the second paragraph of Section XII.

- **Section XII (see above)**
 - I think the second paragraph in Section XII should be changed to "Teaching, service, clinical, library track faculty, and faculty on branch campuses seeking promotion to any rank are not required to seek external reviews."
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- "Offer letter" should be changed to Letter of Appointment since the latter is the term used in faculty searches/hiring. **ACTION NEEDED: Change to "Letter of appointment" throughout the document.** CH to change