

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POLICY STUDIES PROMOTION AND TENURE CRITERIA**

This policy sets forth the promotion and tenure criteria for faculty members within the Department of Education Policy Studies. It is consistent with and supplemental to the College of Education Promotion and Tenure Criteria Guidelines, University Policy AC-23, and the current Administrative Guidelines for the conduct of the University promotion and tenure review process. In particular, University and College policies and guidelines for promotion and tenure include required actions that are not reiterated in this document but should be understood to apply to candidates in the department.

### **I. Department Committee on Promotion and Tenure**

- a) The Department Committee will be selected from the tenured faculty members in the department, with each Program having at least one member on the committee.
- b) The Chair of the Committee will be a tenured full professor, appointed by the Department Head. Co-chairs may also serve as needed, with the second chair selected by the Committee in consultation with the Department Head. The chair or co-chair should not serve more than two consecutive terms, except with the endorsement of the Department Head and two-thirds vote of the tenured full professors in EPS.
- c) Program members generally serve three-year terms with at least one member being retained each year. Program faculty may nominate eligible individuals to replace members through procedures specified by each program.

### **II. Committee Function**

- a) The Committee has the responsibility for providing to the Department Head a comprehensive written review of the candidate's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Teaching); Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments (Research); and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession (Service). The standards and procedures articulated here, consistent with College and University guidelines, should be followed in making a summative evaluation of the candidate and a recommendation for or against promotion and tenure.
- b) The Committee must conclude their review for each candidate by the date established by the Department Head.
- c) Each case should be evaluated on its own merit and not relative to others who the department may be reviewing at the same time.
- d) The assessments of the department committee should be guided by the materials in the dossier and supplemental materials, including the evaluations of external reviewers, peer observations, and student feedback. Committee members should use their knowledge of the department and candidate's program to inform their assessment of the case. Questions about the completeness of dossier and supplemental materials, or any potential errors in information reported by the candidate, should be directed to the Department Head.
- e) The categories of Teaching, Research, and Service should each be evaluated by the Committee as either excellent, very good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory

carries a negative connotation; satisfactory conveys a neutral evaluation<sup>1</sup>; very good, a positive one; and excellent, a highly positive evaluation. If a satisfactory evaluation is given, the committee should show that positive aspects outweigh the negative aspects.

- f) The Committee's letter should justify its ratings in substantive detail. Issues such as errors in formatting, misplaced items in the dossier, or minor deviations from policy in an otherwise good faith effort to construct the dossier should not result in a downgraded assessment by the Committee. The Committee letter should also include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses in the dossier to help higher levels of review understand the basis for the Committee's conclusions.
- g) In rare occasions, the committee may encounter a unique circumstance not anticipated by existing criteria. The Committee should explain any judgments that require exceptions to Department, College, or University criteria.
- h) The Committee must conduct a ballot vote for promotion and tenure and record the vote in the letter to the Department Head. If the vote is not unanimous, the letter must include explanations of the reasons for the divergent vote.

### **III. Department Head Review**

- a) The Department Head conducts an independent written assessment of the candidate informed by the evaluation of the Department Committee. The assessment and the Department Committee's letter will be sent to the Dean to initiate the College-level review.
- b) The Department Head should review the Committee's evaluation of the candidate's teaching, research and service. The Committee's decision in each area should either be endorsed by the Department Head, or provide a justification for why a different decision is more appropriate.
- c) Objective errors in the committee's summary of the case, whether they affect the decision or not, should be identified and corrected by the Department Head.
- d) The Department Head may identify aspects of the case not emphasized by the Committee or provide additional confirmation of details in the dossier and supplemental materials. This should be done both to inform the College-level review and to document department decisions regarding the candidate's teaching, research and service made during the years under review that should be noted in future reviews.
- e) After the candidate's dossier, supplemental materials, and department letters are sent to the Dean, the Department Head may inform the candidate that the department-level review is complete.

### **IV. Confidentiality**

- a) The importance of confidentiality is emphasized throughout the promotion and tenure process. The purpose of confidentiality is to protect the privacy of the candidate. Committee members are not permitted to discuss details of the deliberations or votes with the candidate or other faculty.
- b) Confidentiality does not imply secrecy with respect to the process. Committee members may provide public feedback to the department head or the department as a whole about the process, and make recommendations for changing the process in future cycles.

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<sup>1</sup> In reviews conducted prior to the adoption of these guidelines, Satisfactory conveyed a positive evaluation.

- c) Candidates should respect the confidentiality requirements of those involved in the promotion and tenure process. Responses to decisions or other commentary and critique should follow the process for revision of Department criteria in this policy or the established University appeal processes.
- d) After each cycle of the promotion or tenure process (i.e., 2<sup>nd</sup> year review, 4<sup>th</sup> year review, tenure review, promotion to full), candidates may share their dossier and letters with individual colleagues in the department to seek feedback for improvement or to help those earlier in the cycle better understand standards and procedures.
- e) To ensure transparency in the process, the Committee will be charged by the Department Head and a summary of the charge statement will be distributed to all faculty. Any deviations or modifications from the charge must be noted in the Committee letter to the Department Head.

## **V. Progress Toward Advancement to Tenure**

- a) Our department values a supportive environment for all faculty and we hire with the expectation that new faculty will achieve promotion and tenure on schedule. The Department Head will support candidates throughout their pre-tenure years, including advising candidates on compiling an adequate dossier, ensuring the candidate understands policies for tenure and promotion established by the College and University, and providing regular feedback on progress toward tenure.
- b) In the second and fourth year reviews of faculty, evidence should be presented of reasonable progress toward tenure. The second-year review should demonstrate the development of a research agenda that has progressed beyond the dissertation, effective instruction, and service primarily to the program. The fourth-year review should demonstrate a well-developed research agenda in one or more specializations, effective teaching and mentoring, and expanded service beyond the program.
- c) Contributions to the Penn State commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its forms should be evident as the candidate progresses toward tenure.
- d) Evidence supporting the candidate's success in teaching, research, and service may overlap. Decisions about how to classify specific information should be considered by the candidate in consultation with the Department Head and consistent with guidelines provided by the College and University. The candidate should also consider feedback provided by the Dean, Department and College committees in prior reviews.
- e) The Department Head will meet with each assistant professor on the tenure track during the spring semester prior to their review year to review the process and answer questions. A similar meeting will occur after the cycle is completed to review the process and help interpret the feedback and summary statements.

## **VI. Criteria for Tenure**

- a) The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
  - a. This category evaluates not just course instruction, but also the effectiveness of the candidate as student advisor and mentor
  - b. Contributions to the teaching and learning mission of the program should reflect the candidate's scholarly expertise and serve program and department needs.

- c. Evidence from multiple sources should demonstrate the candidate's dedication to supporting student learning.
  - d. The sub-category of classroom teaching requires multiple sources of feedback from students. SRTE scores do not provide a complete evaluation of teaching, and will not be considered as the primary indicator of teaching effectiveness.
  - e. Peer observation of teaching should occur regularly and can be conducted by any faculty member in the University (except the Department Head) at the request of either the candidate or Department Head. At least one peer observation per academic year should be conducted for the tenure review. Evaluations by co-instructors should be balanced by observations from faculty of equal or higher rank who are not co-instructors. . Peer evaluations from faculty outside the department are not necessary for consideration of tenure. There are no specific means or methods for the peer observation. Written summaries of the observations should be submitted to the candidate and the Department Head to ensure inclusion in the dossier.
  - f. Online courses reflect the contributions of many individuals. Evaluation of online teaching and interpretations of student feedback should focus on components of the course within the faculty member's control.
  - g. EPS does not count credit hours or the number of students in a course as measures of productivity for tenure. Co-teaching, as a valuable instructional practice, is evaluated using the same metrics as individually taught courses. However, candidates who co-teach should also demonstrate teaching effectiveness in individually taught courses.
  - h. Advising and mentoring of students can be assessed through indicators such as surveys of formal and informal advisees, independent study and graduate assistant supervision, dissertations completed, teaching or mentoring awards, and external recognition and success of graduates. Collaborating with students on research projects, presenting scholarly research at conferences, and co-authorship on publications can also be considered indicators of mentoring.
  - i. Advising and mentoring of students outside the program, including students outside the College or University, may be an additional component of the candidate's case for excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.
- b) The Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments
- a. The Scholarship of Research is a category that reveals the candidate's continued growth in their discipline. The trajectory of the candidate's research should demonstrate growing influence in at least one identifiable specialization.
  - b. The department values a variety of indicators of faculty productivity, publication quality, and the significance of a research agenda. The specific venue for publications and the format of those publications will depend on the scholarly focus of the candidate.
  - c. A record of substantial intellectual achievement is essential for consideration of tenure, demonstrated by involvement in a recognized and sustained line of research. There should be evidence of a consistent publication record and participation in professional activities.

- d. The candidate is responsible for providing evidence of publication quality and significance that are relevant to the discipline. Evidence may include awards or other forms of recognition of the research, grants received, scholarly citations; indicators of journal or publisher significance; journal impact factors; or utility of research to practitioners, policy-makers, or other defined groups.
  - e. Peer-reviewed and refereed publications, including law reviews when appropriate, are necessary components of the scholarship of research. Other publications and scholarly contributions will be viewed positively as evidence of the case for national or international significance of the candidate's work.
  - f. Single, first, and co-authored publications are valued. These publications must effectively demonstrate that the candidate is pursuing an independent line of research. Independence is not diminished by collaborations, nor does it require work done alone. We do not require percentage of effort to be noted for co-authored publications.
  - g. Evidence for the scholarship of research can be drawn from curricular development, research, and professional activities such as the following: new courses and course development, participation in professional conference and meetings, presentations of papers and speaking engagements, officership in professional organizations, and other activities in which there is use of the candidate's expertise.
  - h. The Department Committee will place emphasis on the evaluations of external reviewers, but the Committee will make its own determination of the rigor, relevance, effect, and originality of the candidate's research.
- c) Service and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession
- a. The category of Service represents the candidate's formal and informal contributions to the operation of the University, the development of the profession, and the well-being of society.
  - b. Evidence for service should be presented through a range of activities documented by the candidate, including committee membership, leadership positions, mentoring roles, and activities that reflect engagement in the university's values and strategic mission. Indicators of service also include the candidate's contributions to current policy debates via media citations, contributions of expertise to legislative or legal proceedings, invited essays, and other such efforts that inform policymakers and the community.
  - c. Evaluation of service to society may include examples of public outreach and applications of scholarship to address significant social, environmental, or economic issues.
  - d. It is incumbent upon the candidate to describe fully the informal service that comprises their role as an academic, including service in support of colleagues on the tenure-track, students navigating the Penn State environment, and specific contributions toward a positive culture writ large, especially those that reflect the University commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## **VII. Progress Towards Advancement to Professor**

- a) The rank of Professor represents the candidate's genuine distinction in teaching, research and service.
- b) The candidate should continue to advance the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through their teaching, research and service.
- c) Advancement to professor may be considered at any point after tenure is achieved. Candidates for advancement to professor should consult with the Department Head and other professors in the department to assess when to submit their case. At minimum promotion should be evaluated by the Department Head five years after tenure has been awarded, and every subsequent year after.
- d) Faculty who wish to be considered for advancement to professor may be asked by the Department Head to delay consideration for no more than two years. The faculty member may appeal to the full professors on the Department Committee to consider advancement without the Department Head's recommendation. The Department Head's justification for delay should be weighed against the candidate's argument for promotion consideration. A majority vote by ballot of the full professors on the Department Committee will allow the candidate to move forward with a review.
- e) Upon request by the faculty member, or on successful appeal to the Department Committee, the Department Head will recommend faculty for advancement and inform the Dean.
- f) Decisions regarding advancement to full professor, including resolution of any appeals, must be concluded by the last day of the Spring semester, or at an earlier date if required by the Dean.

### **VIII. Criteria for Advancement to Professor**

- a) The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
  - a. All criteria and indicators referenced as criteria for tenure will apply
  - b. At least three recent peer observations from faculty at equal or higher rank should be conducted post-tenure for the promotion review. Peer evaluation of teaching should include assessments from faculty outside of the Department. Evidence of prominent contributions to the program curriculum should be reflected in the dossier and supplemental materials.
  - c. Candidate should have extensive records of service on dissertations as chair and member as well as other evidence of mentoring and facilitating the academic achievements of students.
  - d. Candidates should have extensive records of student mentorship, including evidence that students have had career success.
- b) The Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments
  - a. All criteria and indicators referenced as criteria for tenure will apply.
  - b. Scholarship is a category that reveals the candidate's continued growth in his/her discipline. The expectation is that the candidate will have clear evidence of their national and/or international stature as a scholar in one or more specializations.

- c. In general, the quality of the scholarship is more important than quantity, although quantity is necessary to provide evidence of an influential and generative scholarly record. The candidate's record should be supported by a consistent record of scholarly publications such as peer-reviewed journal articles or law reviews, books, monographs, reports for national or international agencies, and papers delivered at national professional meetings.
  - d. It is incumbent on the candidate to explain their research in terms of its significance to the discipline and to provide evidence that it has made a difference in the progression of a specific field of study. Research excellence can be evidenced by a line of funded or unfunded research.
  - e. It must be clear that the candidate's scholarship is recognized and valued by leading scholars in other educational institutions, relevant government and non-government agencies, and/or policy-making bodies. Evidence may be provided by external letters solicited by the Dean, informed by the judgment of the Department Committee.
- c) Service and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession
- a. All criteria and indicators referenced as criteria for tenure will apply.
  - b. It is incumbent upon the candidate to establish a firm body of evidence that service to the university, society, and their profession are significant and sustained.
  - c. Service to the University should include leadership roles within the department and College, typically including committee leadership and active engagement in shared governance. The candidate should also provide evidence of significant mentorship of assistant professors, including supporting their advancement to associate professor.
  - d. Service to the profession should include leadership roles within scholarly associations, and/or supporting the ways in which the discipline engages with the broader academic community.
  - e. Service to society should include evidence that the candidate has engaged in problems of policy and practice, and/or contributed to the improvement of society through their scholarship.
  - f. Candidates should demonstrate their specific contributions toward a positive culture writ large, especially those that reflect the University commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

#### VIII. Procedure for Revising Criteria

- a) The criteria for promotion and tenure in the Department will be reviewed annually by the Department Committee after all candidates have been reviewed. Any faculty member may also provide feedback on the criteria or process to the Department Committee at the conclusion of the promotion and tenure process by requesting time on the agenda at an upcoming committee meeting. Based on this feedback and its own review, the Department Committee will provide the Department Head with its recommendations for changes to the criteria.

- b) The Department Head may initiate changes to the criteria independently or based on the Department Committee recommendations.
- c) The criteria and any proposed changes will be reviewed in executive session by the full department at the first meeting of the fall semester.
- d) Changes must be approved by a ballot vote of two-thirds majority of all tenure-line full-time faculty plus two-thirds majority of the tenured full professors.

Approved by a majority vote of the EPS full-time tenure-line faculty, September 6, 2019