[1]College of Education
Oklahoma State University

Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Guidelines

I. PREAMBLE

Awarding reappointment, promotion, and tenure is an immensely important decision both for the faculty member and for the long-term academic quality of the College of Education (COE) and Oklahoma State University (OSU). The processes for reappointment, promotion, and tenure must be fair, rigorous, and discipline-appropriate if the COE and the university are to attract, retain, and recognize excellent faculty. In considering reappointment, promotion, and tenure, the COE seeks to apply the highest standards with respect to professional achievement in the areas of teaching/instruction, research/creative work[1], and outreach/extension/service. Academic reappointment, promotion, and tenure are awarded to faculty members making continuing contributions in these three areas. While each reappointment, promotion, and tenure decision is evaluated on its own merits, similar academic unit (School) standards and procedures apply to all COE faculty.

The COE has a responsibility to employ well-prepared and experienced faculty and to assist them in developing their talents by promoting a community of professional scholars. Further, the COE has a responsibility to sustain an educational environment that protects the rights of faculty, supports academic freedom, and assures a due process uniformly across all COE Schools. The preservation of academic quality requires that all faculty members recommended for reappointment, promotion, and tenure clearly satisfy the general guidelines for due process stated here as well as the specific guidelines stated in each School RPT document.

II. UNIVERSITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) Guidelines of the COE function to advance the overall mission of the university (See OSU Policy and Procedures 2-0110). The COE guidelines in regard to reappointment, promotion, and tenure must be subordinate to and congruent with the existing OSU policies and procedures related to faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure. These policies and procedures include OSU Policy and Procedures 2-

[1]The terms research and creative work refer to scholarship and are used interchangeably throughout this document and are defined more specifically within each school. The terms teaching and instruction are used interchangeably throughout this document and are defined more specifically within each school.

0902, those found in the OSU Faculty Handbook, such as 1.3.10 regarding "Extensions of Appointment and Probationary Periods", and for non-tenure track clinical faculty, OSU Policy and Procedures 2-0903.

All faculty members pursuing tenure and/or promotion are expected to define how their teaching/instruction, scholarly research/creative work, and outreach/extension/service accomplishments align with the COE and university missions and priorities. Given the importance of the university, COE, and school RPT guidelines, all faculty candidates must become knowledgeable of these documents, so their applications for reappointment, promotion, and tenure are decisively reviewed and recommended within the parameters of these guidelines.

Therefore, the purpose of this document is to set forth faculty guidelines for reappointment, promotion, and tenure in the COE at OSU. The COE RPT guidelines are intended to:

1. Comply with OSU's requirements that each academic unit (School) has its own reappointment, promotion and tenure policy;
2. Provide clear and precise guidelines that are readily available to all COE faculty;
3. Assure that procedures for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion have been carried out in a fair and equitable manner for all COE faculty candidates.

III. COE PROFESSORIAL RANKS

Each COE school may define each professorial rank using criteria that exceed those of the COE and OSU. Regardless, the COE definitions for each professorial rank are as follows:

Beginning Assistant Professor

A newly hired, faculty member entering the profession focuses on developing solid, career aspirations and a course for personally attaining these established academic goals. Most COE faculty members receive a reduced teaching load during their first two years to provide the opportunity to develop a strong research/scholarship agenda and to focus on their teaching responsibilities. While important, professional service contributions receive less emphasis as the beginning assistant professor establishes scholarship and teaching competencies.

Continuing Assistant Professor

Continuing assistant professors (post-reappointment) demonstrate a capacity to publish refereed research, seek external funds to support their scholarship, and establish and build networks—including professional presentations at regional/state/national/international conferences and various levels of interdisciplinary collaboration with their peer scholars. Effective teaching and attention to evaluative feedback to improve their teaching competencies is evident. Increased participation in program/school/college/university committee work is expected as well.

Associate Professor

Evidence of emerging stature as a national or international authority within their academic discipline is part of associate professors' records. The role of the COE associate professor is characterized by continued emphasis on competent and effective teaching as well as the continued development of a sustained pattern of inquiry and publication in refereed journals and other research/creative activities that demonstrate contributions to their academic disciplines. In addition, associate professors will exhibit increased contributions in professional service at the program/school/college/university as well as state/regional/national/ international levels.

The process of considering a COE faculty member for promotion to associate professor and tenure must commence no later than the beginning of the sixth year of tenure-eligible employment and be completed before the end of the six-year probationary period. Determination of the maximum probationary period begins upon the faculty member's initial appointment to a tenure-track rank calculated from the month and calendar year in which the appointment was initially made.

Professor

The rank of professor can be earned only by the COE faculty member who has demonstrated a high level of continued growth in and has a cumulative record of substantial, peer-reviewed publications and/or peer-reviewed creative activities, engagement in seeking external support for scholarly research (when appropriate for the field of study), teaching excellence and professional service/community engagement contributions. While differential levels of performance in each of these areas may be evident, COE faculty candidates' academic achievement and professional reputations should be superior and should have resulted in national recognition.

Clinical or Research Faculty

COE faculty members hired for clinical- or research-faculty positions serve as clinical instructors, clinical or research assistant professors, clinical or research associate professors, or clinical or research professors (depending on their highest, academic degree and their level of experience). Clinical or research faculty who choose to work toward promotion will follow the appropriate RPT guidelines for their appointment.

IV. COE GUIDELINES FOR REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, AND TENURE

RESEARCH/CREATIVE WORK

As determined by each COE school, research/creative work is a function that serves to advance the discipline through the development, refinement, and application of knowledge. COE faculty may provide evidence of scholarly activities in a variety of mechanisms appropriate to the discipline and based on their initial appointment letter. Consideration will be given not only to what has been accomplished but also to the promise of future scholarly achievement.

TEACHING/INSTRUCTION

As with scholarship, the qualities of teaching and future potential as a teacher are major factors affecting the decision to grant promotion and tenure to a COE faculty member. The effectiveness in teaching is reflected by student learning and improvements in the overall learning environment including the development and enhancement of the curriculum. Teaching includes not only instruction but also advising and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students. The nature of teaching may be defined differently among the COE schools. Nonetheless, given OSU's commitment to excellence in teaching, the overall quality of faculty candidates' teaching will be fully considered in all promotion and tenure decisions.

OUTREACH/EXTENSION/SERVICE

As determined by each COE school, faculty members are expected to make professional contributions through outreach/extension/service to their discipline, school, college, university and community. Faculty contributions to professional service are necessary for sustaining and advancing the teaching and scholarship mission of the COE. These professional service commitments begin during faculty members' first year. The extent of these professional outreach/extension/service responsibilities will change over the course of the faculty member's academic career.

Promotion in rank recognizes exemplary performance of a faculty member. Recommendations for promotion and tenure originate with each COE school. Each school will develop and maintain written procedures to be used in promotion and tenure considerations. Each school will also develop and maintain specific written standards for promotion to each professorial rank. Each school's academic standards regarding RPT must have the approval of the COE Dean and the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).

The evaluation process must be based on a comprehensive assessment of the COE candidate's record of research/creative work, teaching/instruction, and outreach/extension/service since initial appointment or since the last promotion. This assessment should take into account the quality of outcomes as well as their quantity; it should also acknowledge the creativity of faculty work and the impact of the faculty member's work on students, on the field(s) in which the faculty member works, and on others the university serves. Interdisciplinary work, public scholarship and engagement, international accomplishments and initiatives, technology transfer initiatives, and other special kinds of professional activity by each COE candidate should be considered when appropriate. The relative importance of these criteria may vary among the different COE schools; therefore, criteria against which individual COE faculty members are judged must reflect varying assignments and must align with the work assignment specified in their annual appraisal and development (A&D) documents.

Since the primary responsibility for establishing the criteria for promotion and tenure rests with each COE school, each school must have an RPT document that clearly specifies:

1. the indices and standards that will be used to determine whether COE faculty candidates meet the requirements for reappointment;

2. the indices and standards that will be used to determine whether COE faculty candidates meet the requirements for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor;
3. the indices and standards that will be used to determine whether COE faculty candidates meet requirements for promotion to professor; and
4. the goals and expectations to be used in evaluating faculty performance in annual appraisal and developments.

In addition, the standards established by each COE school will define the criteria of research/ creative work, teaching/instruction, and outreach/extension/service in ways that reflect the school and its mission and must delineate the tangible evidence that the faculty member must provide to document, not simply the attainment of minimal accomplishments, but an appropriate record of sustained excellence.

How the school's standards apply to a specific faculty member's duties should be made clear at the time of appointment and reviewed in the annual A&D process. Adjustments in the workload expectations for faculty members may occur over time in keeping with changing institutional and personal priorities, but these must be discussed and documented in annual A&D reviews, which are signed by the faculty member, school head, and dean.

V. COE REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, AND TENURE FACULTY COMMITTEES

School Personnel Committee

The composition of the school personnel committee and identification of those faculty members eligible to vote on personnel actions shall be specified in each school's RPT guidelines. These guidelines shall address the following:

- Voting faculty members are required to be at the same level as, or above, that being sought by the faculty candidate.
- If a school cannot complete its personnel committee with voting faculty of appropriate rank from within the school, members of the committee in consultation with the school head will solicit faculty from the other schools or similar departments/disciplines at the university to assist the personnel committee with its review and recommendation.
- The faculty members who will serve on the COE RPT committee may serve in a limited role on their school personnel committees in this manner:
    - serve as ex-officio, nonvoting member;
    - review the documentation file and participate in the discussions; but,
    - cannot draft letters, obtain external reviewers, vote, or serve as a chair.
- Faculty members applying for reappointment, promotion, or tenure may not serve on their school personnel committees in the year of their application.

College of Education RPT Committee

The COE must have a college-level, RPT committee that will be convened by the dean or dean designee. The composition of the COE RPT committee will be the following:

- The committee shall consist of members of its tenured faculty elected by its tenured and tenure-track faculty. Committee members voting on a personnel action under consideration must be at the same rank as, or above, that being sought by the COE faculty candidate.
- The COE RPT committee will include two representatives from each COE school.
    - At least one from each school will be a full professor, so that s/he may vote on actions regarding full professors.
    - Each school will annually elect a representative to serve a two-year term. In the event of a vacancy, a replacement representative will be elected by that school's faculty to serve the remainder of the term.
- COE faculty members applying for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure may not serve on the COE RPT committee in the year of their applications.

The chair of the COE RPT committee will be elected by the membership of the COE RPT committee and rotated among the schools.

The primary responsibilities of the college RPT committee will be to ensure that fairness and consistency has been maintained within the review process at the school personnel committee level and the school head level. The college RPT committee may examine such documents as: (1) the documentation file provided by the faculty candidate, (2) the academic standards that have been adopted by the faculty candidate's school, and (3) the statements of recommendation provided by the schools' personnel committees and school heads for fairness in procedure and review at the school level and consistency within the COE.

A quality review of the faculty candidate's documentation file will occur if: (1) there is a split decision (one approval and one denial at the school personnel committee and the school head levels); or (2) the faculty candidate formally requests a quality review of his or her documentation file by the college RPT committee before the documentation file is forwarded to the COE dean (the request must be submitted to the COE RPT committee chair in writing). For a quality review, the college RPT committee will review the documentation provided by the faculty candidate and provide a professional recommendation to the COE dean regarding the qualifications of the candidate for reappointment, promotion, and tenure.

The COE RPT committee will provide a written recommendation to the COE dean that indicates whether the personnel action being considered is supported. If there is a divergence of opinion within the committee, both majority and minority opinions shall be indicated within a single recommendation letter.

College-level, RPT policies must be approved by a vote of all tenured and tenure-track faculty within the COE, by the COE dean, and by the VPAA.

Regarding the COE reappointment, promotion, and tenure process, the order of the formal review process is as follows:

1. School personnel committee
2. School head
3. COE RPT committee
4. COE dean
5. Submission of documentation file(s) to the VPAA.

VI. COE RPT TIMELINE

To meet OSU's timeline for the RPT process (OSU Policy and Procedure 2-0902, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Process for Ranked Faculty), the COE reappointment, promotion, and tenure-review process begins in May. The essential responsibility of meeting all of the reappointment, promotion, and tenure deadlines rests with the COE faculty candidate; therefore, significant procedural activity on behalf of the candidate must occur prior to the official submission of the faculty candidate's documentation file on or before January 15 of the following year.

May 15 (no later than)
The tenured and tenure-track faculty of each school will select its personnel committee and chair no later than May 15 for the next academic year and also select its representative to the COE RPT committee who will serve for the next two years. On or before May 15, the dean or dean designee will convene the COE RPT committee, and the committee will elect its chair.

June 1 (no later than)
On or before June 1st, school heads provide written notification to candidates of mandatory actions and stipulate that candidates should begin preparing their partial documentation files (list of materials provided by school personnel committee) and their lists of potential external reviewers, if action requires external review. For non-mandatory personnel actions, the COE faculty member must provide written notice to the school personnel committee chairperson and the school head that s/he is planning to be considered for promotion and/or tenure.

June 15 (no later than)
Candidates for promotion (except clinical faculty who do not need external reviews for promotion) and/or tenure actions should submit a list of potential external reviewers to the school personnel committee chair. This list should include the contact information and a brief description of each external reviewer's relevant credentials.

June 30 (no later than)

The school personnel committee will finalize the list of external reviewers to solicit for each candidate, and the chair of the school personnel committee will submit this list to the school head. The school head should send out a letter of invitation to each identified external reviewer. The letter of invitation should include when the external reviewer can expect to receive the partial documentation file and a copy of the school's RPT document. The letter should also specify the date (suggested to be no later than November 1st) when the external review letter should be submitted and should ask the external reviewer clearly to specify his/her relationship to the candidate.

Note: The documentation file for COE faculty candidates being considered for tenure and/or promotion should include a minimum of three letters from external reviewers that the school personnel committee has requested for the purpose of evaluating the candidates' accomplishments and potentials within the guidelines of the school's RPT document. Schools may require additional external appraisals when appropriate or desirable for their respective disciplines.

External evaluators should be leading scholars in candidates' disciplines and especially knowledgeable about candidates' areas of expertise. The three required external reviews must be obtained from individuals with no direct professional or personal interest in the advancement of the candidates' careers (they should not be former advisors or mentors and generally should not be co-authors or co-investigators on previous work). All solicited, external review letters received before the deadline must be included in the candidates' documentation files.

In determining who are selected as external reviewers, the COE faculty candidate should be asked to provide a slate of names; the school head and the school personnel committee should also provide names; and from these two lists a group of at least three should be selected in a fair and objective manner for contact. The faculty candidate may also specify the names of persons who should not be considered as possible reviewers provided s/he specifies valid personal or professional reasons for the exclusion. The school head and personnel committee (chair) should keep written documentation of external reviewers who were contacted, including refusals, and make this list available to the personnel committee and the COE RPT committee upon request.

A copy of the letter that is sent to external reviewers shall be provided to the COE faculty candidate and included in the documentation file. The candidate may waive the right to access outside reviews. Such waivers shall not be assumed, implied, or coerced and must be executed in writing prior to solicitation of outside reviews. The scope of the waiver shall be clearly indicated in writing prior to solicitation of outside reviews. A copy of the executed waiver shall become a part of the candidate's documentation file. Any letter soliciting an outside review shall inform the potential reviewer of the extent to which the contents of the review will be known to the faculty candidate.

August 15 (no later than)

By August 15, each COE faculty candidate seeking promotion and/or tenure or promotion (Professor) must submit to his/her school personnel committee a file of academic materials (partial documentation file) that will be sent to the external reviewers.

September 1 (no later than)
The school head must have sent out all materials to external reviewers.

September 15 (no later than)
The school personnel committee/committee chair notifies faculty members no later than September 15 that they have until January 15 at 5:00 p.m.to assemble and submit complete materials for a full review. At this time (September 15), the school personnel committee/committee chair also provides the requirements for the complete documentation file to include at least the minimum items indicated in the university RPT document.

January 15 (no later than)
By January 15 faculty candidates must sign the RPT form that states they have been given the opportunity to review all of the academic materials contained in their documentation file and that their documentation file is complete. Committee review and deliberations about the recommendation on faculty candidates will not begin until their documentation files have been certified by each faculty candidate. Therefore, the recommendation letters from the school personnel committee, school head, COE RPT committee, and dean *are not* included in the documentation file at this point in the process.

Note: Deadline dates are approximate and will be used unless a change occurs in the university calendar of events. If a deadline date falls on a holiday or weekend, the effective date shall be the next working day.

January 31st (no later than)
The school personnel committee makes its recommendation regarding each faculty candidate to the school head after extensive evaluation of each candidate's contributions in the three areas of teaching/instruction, research/creative work, and outreach/extension/service, as appropriate. The school personnel committee shall prepare a Statement of Recommendation regarding reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure for each faculty member. This statement must be added to each candidate's RPT documentation file prior to review by the school head. Additionally, a copy of the school personnel committee's Statement of Recommendation shall be given to each faculty member in a confidential manner, within five working days, after the recommendation is finalized.

*Note: Candidates will be provided an opportunity to respond to **each** negative Statement of Recommendation and to have that response added to his/her RPT packet. The candidate will have three working days following receipt of the statement noting denial of the proposed action to formulate a response no longer than 1,000 words. The candidate will submit his/her response*

to the next higher review level; i.e., if the Statement noting denial is received from the school head, the response will be submitted to the dean's office within three, working days.

At each review level, all reasonable efforts will be made to notify the faculty member, in a confidential manner, of the Statement of Recommendation. However, if the faculty member is not readily available due to current assignment or is unwilling to accept sensitive documents sent via U.S. mail, the opportunity to respond to a negative Statement of Recommendation is lost. The faculty member should bear the responsibility of keeping his/her department head informed of his/her whereabouts during this critical review process.

February 15 (on or before)
The school head's Statement of Recommendation to the COE dean must address how the faculty member has or has not satisfied each applicable school academic standard/criteria for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure. The statement must detail whether or not the performance of the faculty member adequately fulfills the published, academic, school, college, and university standards for the proposed personnel action. The school head's statement must be added to the candidate's RPT documentation file prior to review by the college-level committee and the dean. If the school head is unable to act in accord with the school personnel committee's recommendation, the reasons shall be communicated in writing to the COE RPT committee.

A copy of the school head's Statement of Recommendation shall be given to the COE faculty candidate in a confidential manner within five working days after the school head's recommendation has been finalized.

March 1 (on or before)
The COE RPT committee is charged with assuring that procedures for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion have been carried out in a fair and equitable manner for all COE faculty candidates and determining whether the school's evaluation of each candidate has been rigorous, consistent, and based on the school's written academic standards/criteria, and, if applicable, a quality as specified in the COE RPT guidelines. The chair of the COE RPT committee will record the committee's recommendation on the RPT Summary of Recommendations form along with his/her signature.

In the circumstance where there is a split decision or an appeal (see Section V, College of Education RPT Committee), the COE RPT committee will generate a statement of recommendation. A copy of the COE RPT committee's Statement of Recommendation is to be added to the faculty candidate's RPT documentation file prior to review by the COE Dean. This statement shall be given to the faculty candidate in a confidential manner, normally within five working days, after the recommendation is finalized and signed by the chair of the COE RPT committee.

March 14 (on or before)

The COE dean, after reviewing all materials and other recommendations, submits a Statement of Recommendation to the VPAA. The COE dean shall make a professional assessment regarding whether (1) the school's evaluation of each candidate has been rigorous, consistent, and based on the school's written academic standards/criteria, (2) the faculty candidate's documentation file adequately supports the recommendations provided at each level of review, and (3) the action recommended by the school personnel committee, the school head, and the COE RPT committee is warranted.

The COE dean's Statement of Recommendation will be added to the faculty candidate's documentation file and forwarded to the VPAA. A copy of the COE dean's Statement of Recommendation shall be given to the faculty candidate in a confidential manner, normally within five working days, after the recommendation is finalized and signed by the COE dean.

On or About March 15–May 31

The documentation files of all COE faculty candidates under review are to be submitted to the Office of the VPAA. In the review process, the VPAA may seek counsel from the university-wide Faculty Committee and others as deemed appropriate. Written input from the university-wide Faculty Committee and/or the individual administrators consulted will become a part of the respective candidate's documentation file, and will be considered by the VPAA in final deliberations.

A copy of the VPAA's Statement of Recommendation shall be given to the COE faculty candidate in a confidential manner, normally within five working days, after the recommendation is finalized. If the VPAA's recommendation is negative and differs from that of the dean, the VPAA is responsible for communicating in writing to the COE dean, school head, and COE faculty candidate the reasons for the disagreement.

On or About June 1–30

Final institutional review of the personnel actions submitted by the VPAA may be conducted by the President. A list of actions is then developed which university administration recommends to the Board of Regents for final action. Reappointments, promotions, and confirmation of tenure must be approved by the governing Board of Regents except as authorized by Board of Regents' policies. Normally, recommendations are submitted to the Board of Regents for consideration during a June meeting. When approved, the Board specifies the date on which the reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure will become effective.

Approved by COE tenure-track and tenured Faculty vote on April 6, 2016