

Guidelines on Performance Review of Tenured Faculty

Background

At its meeting on May 16, 1997, the Board of Governors adopted the recommendations in the report of the University of North Carolina Committee to Study Post-Tenure Review. A copy of that report is available at General Administration. Post-tenure review is defined in the report as "a comprehensive, formal, periodic evaluation of cumulative faculty performance, the prime purpose of which is to ensure faculty development and to promote faculty vitality" (p. 8).

The report asserts that review of the performance of tenured faculty in the University shall be "to support and encourage excellence among tenured faculty by:

1. recognizing and rewarding exemplary faculty performance,
2. providing for a clear plan and timetable for improvement of performance of faculty found deficient, and
3. for those whose performance remains deficient, providing for the imposition of appropriate sanctions, which may, in the most serious cases, include a recommendation for discharge" (p. 12).

The report also provides broad principles for carrying out such reviews but leaves room for each institution to develop the details of its own process within one year following the release of guidelines by General Administration. In keeping with Section 602 of *The Code*, the Board of Trustees of each constituent institution shall adopt the policies and regulations governing performance reviews of tenured faculty. Institutional policies and procedures will also be approved by the Board of Governors and should be included in all appropriate documents of the constituent institutions.

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The report further specifies that "developing a system of post-tenure review will require reexamination of the effectiveness of current faculty personnel policies as well as planning and program review policies" (p. 13). Initiation of these performance reviews in the University of North Carolina provides constituent institutions with an opportunity to create a policy that examines individual faculty contributions to departmental, school/college, and university goals as well as to the academic programs in which faculty teach. Thoughtful attention to the ways in which post-tenure review can promote faculty vitality across their careers will assure that such reviews lead to increased effectiveness within the university.

Guidelines to assist in formulating institutional policy concerning performance reviews of

tenured faculty are set out below. Guidelines adopted in June 1997 were used by constituent institutions to develop their post-tenure review policies. Revision of the guidelines was deemed necessary because of the substantial discrepancies in post-tenure review outcomes noted among constituent institutions over a period of years. A review of constituent institution policies identified practices at some institutions that constrained the rigorous application of post-tenure review as intended by the Board of Governors.

Guidelines

The following guidelines shall be observed in developing institutional policies and procedures for post-tenure review:

1. Institutions shall review their policies and procedures for implementing post-tenure review and revise them as necessary to conform with the following amended guidelines. Proposed revised policies must be submitted to General Administration for approval no later than December 1, 2007. Implementation of revised policies will be effective upon approval by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.
2. Institutional policy statements shall show the relationship between the annual performance review of tenured faculty and the post-tenure review. Annual performance reviews, however, are not a substitute for the "comprehensive, periodic, cumulative review" required by the Board of Governors. Positive annual reviews alone cannot be used to justify a positive cumulative review or avoid a negative cumulative review.
3. Institutional reviews shall provide for the evaluation of all aspects of the professional performance of faculty whose primary responsibilities are teaching, and/or research, and/or service. If faculty responsibilities are primarily only in one or two of these areas, post-tenure review and resulting recommendations should take this allocation of responsibilities into account.
4. Institutional policies shall assure that faculty performance will be examined relative to the mission of the institution, college, and program.
5. Institutional policies shall assure that each tenured faculty member undergoes a cumulative review no less frequently than every five years. (Note: a review undertaken to grant tenure or to decide on promotion qualifies as such a cumulative review.)
6. Institutional policies shall explicitly involve peers in the review process. A peer review committee for a department or academic unit will be elected by the tenured faculty in that unit. The faculty member being reviewed will not have the option of selecting members of the peer review committee. The department chair or academic unit head must consult with the peer review committee. Post-tenure review outcomes in an academic unit must be shared at the next administrative level (such as dean) for information and consultation.

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7. Institutional policies shall assure that there is written feedback to the faculty member being reviewed as well as a mechanism for faculty response to the evaluation. As intended by the Board of Governors, this feedback should include recognition and rewards as feasible for exemplary performance. A negative review must include specific descriptions of shortcomings as they relate to the faculty member's assigned duties. Faculty response to a negative review will also be shared at the next highest administrative level.
8. Institutional policies shall be in compliance with the criteria and procedures for due process and for discharge or other disciplinary action established in Chapter VI of *The Code* of the University.
9. Institutional policies shall require individual development or career plans for all faculty receiving less than satisfactory ratings in the cumulative review. These plans must include specific steps designed to lead to improvement, a specified time line in which improvement is expected to occur, and a clear statement of consequences should improvement not occur within the designated time line. The use of mentoring peers is encouraged, and progress meetings with the department chair or academic unit head must occur on at least a semi-annual basis. If duties are modified as a result of a less than satisfactory rating, then the development plan should so indicate and take into account the new allocation of responsibilities.
10. As policies are developed, institutions shall consider resource implications of a meaningful performance review system, identifying in advance the sources of support for the process and its outcomes.

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