

6.5 Expectations of Department Heads, DPTs, and UPT

GOVERNING POLICIES

Section 8, Faculty Handbook – Promotion and Tenure

A. Expectations of Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committees (DPTs)

The DPT plays a critical role in the process for evaluating candidates. Specific expectations for the DPT, in addition to the duties stated in the Faculty Handbook and the Procedures Manual, can improve clarity, transparency, and consistency in DPT operations across campus. As DPT evaluations are based largely on a collection of individual opinions, it may be difficult to ensure consistency in DPT decisions. Thus, it is recommended that DPTs take on a more active, regular role in advising faculty members seeking P&T, as this would provide greater clarity of expectations for individual faculty members.

- The DPT should define commonly held discipline-specific criteria for successful candidates comparable to criteria at peer and aspirational peer programs, and these guidelines should be shared with the department and provided to all faculty after approval from the DH and Dean. The DPT's evaluation and eventual recommendation should define these criteria, and be consistent with them.
- P&T evaluations and discussions may have a serious impact on the morale of the faculty member being evaluated, and also on the morale of the entire department. Thus, the DPT should consider wording its recommendation letters carefully: they should be factual and, if appropriate, contain objective and clear evaluations of candidate qualifications relative to P&T expectations.
- DPTs should develop plans for mentoring and providing feedback to untenured colleagues on the tenure-track. At a minimum, the Chair of the DPT should meet at least once per year with each tenure-track faculty member to discuss progress toward tenure and/or promotion and to provide recommendations and feedback.

B. Expectations of the Department Head (DH)

The DH plays an important role in the P&T process through several activities: providing regular mentoring of untenured faculty members; monitoring the process from package submission to recommendation to the UPT; selecting external letter writers and request input; and providing an evaluation of the candidate that may include relevant information not considered by the DPT.

- The DH should ensure that external letters are provided in a timely fashion. Selection of letter writers should follow the language in the Faculty Handbook and the Procedures Manual.
- The DH recommendation must be comprehensive, addressing all criteria defined for P&T. They must be supportable by the evidence presented in the dossier, external reference letters, and/or the DPT recommendation. In addition, the DH letter should also clarify the discipline-specific norms and expectations.
- The DH is in a unique position with regard to P&T because they interact with all faculty members in a manner that is not typical for faculty-faculty interactions, and is also responsible for implementing

important departmental/portfolio/University initiatives or requirements for which a majority of faculty members in the Department may not be knowledgeable. Thus, the DH recommendation should address any considerations not addressed by the DPT, such as special contributions toward important departmental, portfolio, or University goals, participation in interdisciplinary programs, or other information deemed relevant.

- In each annual evaluation, the DH should clearly assess progress towards P&T. This assessment must be based on a compilation of previous years' efforts and outcomes.
- The DH should meet at least once per year with untenured tenure-track faculty members, in addition to the annual evaluation, to discuss progress toward P&T. The DH should provide recommendations and feedback to the faculty member at each meeting about how to proceed towards successful promotion, and talk through the departmental guidelines developed by the DPT and approved by the DH and Dean.

C. Expectations of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee (UPT)

The Faculty Handbook currently defines the function and responsibility of the UPT in Sections 8 and 12.8.1, but the Faculty Senate has proposed to the Handbook committee a more detailed articulation of UPT responsibilities and processes. Once this has been addressed by the Handbook Committee, the Faculty Senate should update this paragraph to delineate expectations for UPT not otherwise addressed in the Handbook.

D. Expectations of the Deans

The Faculty Handbook currently defines the function and responsibility of the Dean in Section 8.1.6. The Dean should also approve all departmental P&T guidelines noted in sections above before circulation to departmental faculty.

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