



**POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 245**

**TO:** All Faculty  
**FROM:** Charles W. Steger *WSS*  
**DATE:** October 12, 2007  
**SUBJECT:** Composition of Committees for Promotion and Tenure Evaluation

**Approved by Faculty Senate:** February 20, 2007  
**Approved by Commission on Faculty Affairs:** February 23, 2007  
**Approved by University Council:** April 30, 2007  
**Approved by the President:** April 30, 2007  
**Approved by Board of Visitors:** June 4, 2007  
**Effective:** Fall 2008

The Board of Visitors approved a resolution regarding the composition of committees for promotion and tenure evaluation.

Following is the text of that resolution.

**WHEREAS**, promotion and tenure decisions are among the most important decisions made at universities, and they are fundamentally the responsibility of the faculty; and

**WHEREAS**, under current policy, colleges have established a variety of committee membership structures and protocols, with significant variation in the extent of administrative involvement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission on Faculty Affairs proposes the following principles to govern the review of promotion and tenure cases:

- Participants in the promotion and tenure process only vote once on a case; each level of the review should be as independent as possible from the others.

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- In order to maximize departmental flexibility, departments determine who is eligible to serve on their P&T committees at all levels;
- Rules governing eligibility and selection of college committee members and the committee chair, and operating guidelines for the committee's deliberations must be documented in written college policies, formally approved by the faculty.

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that section 2.8.4 of the Faculty handbook be revised to reflect these principles in the formation and functioning of department and college-level promotion and tenure committees, and sections of the handbook describing departmental and university-level committees will also be made consistent with these principles.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that colleges will adopt the new procedures for cases considered during 2008-09 and thereafter, giving college governance bodies adequate time to revise their college guidelines and procedures over the coming year.

#### **2.8.4 Evaluation Procedures for Promotion and Tenure (excerpt only)**

Faculty members being considered for either promotion or the awarding of tenure will have their dossiers reviewed at as many as three levels: by a departmental committee and the head or chair; by a college committee and the dean; and by a university committee and the provost. Although some participants in the review process may serve at more than one level, for example a departmental committee member may also serve on the college committee, participants may only vote once on a case.

##### **2.8.4.1 Departmental Evaluation (excerpt only)**

University Council has approved guidelines on recommendation of the Commission on Faculty Affairs for the careful consideration by colleges and departments in the composition and method of selection of departmental promotion and tenure committees. They are presented as guidelines in the recognition that some flexibility is necessary to accommodate the diversity in size, structure, and composition of departments and in the desire to preserve some degree of department and college autonomy in such matters.

The guidelines are:

**Composition and Size:**

Individual departments must develop and publish written policies to guide their promotion and tenure review processes, including the rules governing eligibility and selection of committee members. Individual departments determine who is eligible to serve on committees from among tenured faculty members. A balance between adequate representation and effectiveness of operation as a committee suggests that a size between four to seven members is most appropriate.

**Method of selection:** Some significant elements of faculty choice must be a part of the selection procedure. Some possibilities are the following:

- a combination of elected and appointed representatives;
- an elected slate significantly larger than the committee size, allowing the department head or chair to appoint the committee from the slate;
- a committee elected by the faculty.

**Role of the department head or chair:** Given their responsibility to make a separate and independent recommendation on each case, department heads or chairs may not vote as members of committees or chair them. Department heads or chairs may convene committees and may discuss each candidate with committees as appropriate. However, it is recommended that committees discuss the merits of the candidates and frame their recommendations without heads or chairs in attendance.

2.8.4.2 College Evaluation (excerpts)

The following further guidelines on formation and procedures of the college-level evaluation have been approved by the University Council on recommendation of the Commission on Faculty Affairs:

**Committee Composition:**

Rules governing eligibility and selection of college committee members and the committee chair, and operating guidelines for the committee's deliberations must be documented in written college policies, formally approved by the faculty.

1. Individual colleges determine who is eligible to serve on committees from among tenured faculty members.
2. The college committee may include department heads, chairs or department-level promotion and tenure committee members. However none of these members may vote on cases from their departments since each has already had an opportunity to vote or make a recommendation on those candidates.

3. As far as possible, each department within the college should be represented on the committee.
4. Some significant element of faculty choice must be part of the committee selection procedure.
  - election by the college faculty
  - appointment by an elected college executive committee
  - a combination of elected and appointed (by the dean or college executive committee) representatives, or
  - an elected slate significantly larger than the required committee size, thus allowing the dean or executive committee to appoint the committee from the elected slate
5. The dean may appoint up to three tenured faculty members to serve on the college committee in order to assure appropriate representation of disciplines or very large departments, participation by members of underrepresented groups, or other critical considerations to help assure fairness of the process in both fact and perception. Appointments by the dean may not constitute more than a third of the committee's total membership.
6. If department heads or chairs serve on college committees, their total number must be less than that of other faculty members.
7. Committee appointments should be staggered to assure continuity from one year's deliberation to the next. If possible, members should not serve more than two successive terms.
8. Selection of the committee chair shall be determined in accordance with college policies, approved by the faculty.
9. The dean may be present at college committee deliberations and serve in an advisory capacity to the committee to assure compliance with college and university procedures and fairness and equity of treatment of candidates. The dean does not vote on committee recommendations, but provides a separate recommendation to the provost.
10. Faculty members appointed to serve on the university-level promotion and tenure committee are encouraged to observe college-level deliberations to better prepare for their roles, but should not participate or attempt to influence college-level recommendations.

**Committee Procedures and Recommendations:**

The college committee may ask the department head or chair, the candidate, and/or a representative(s) of the department committee to appear before the college committee to present additional information or clarification of recommendations.

The committee shall make a recommendation on each candidate to the dean and prepare a letter summarizing its evaluation to forward with the dossier. A record of the committee's vote is documented and forwarded to the dean.

**Review and Recommendations by the Dean:**

The dean sends forward to the provost the full dossier of every candidate for whom there is a positive recommendation from either the college committee or the dean, or both. The dean prepares a separate letter of recommendation to be forwarded with the dossier. Whenever the dean does not concur with the committee's recommendation, the committee will be so notified.

The dossiers that the dean sends to the provost will be accompanied by a statement describing the formation and procedures of the college committee and a summary of the number of candidates considered by the committee in each category. The division of the vote at both the departmental and college level is conveyed to the university level committee and provost, but must otherwise remain confidential.

If a positive department recommendation is rejected by both the college committee and the dean of the college, the normal process of review is concluded and the dossier is not sent forward to the provost. The dean will inform the department head or chair of the rejection and the department head or chair will so notify the departmental committee and the faculty member. In that case, the faculty member is informed in writing of the specific reasons for the decision and notified of appeal options outlined in section 2.8.5.

**2.8.4.3 University Evaluation (excerpt only)**

2. All members of the committee hold voting privileges. Regardless of the size of the committee, the faculty must always have at least a majority of the potential votes. Consistent with the principle that participants at all levels of the promotion and tenure review process vote only once on an individual case, deans will not vote on cases from their own college. Similarly, faculty members serving on the university committee do not vote on any case they previously voted on, should this circumstance occur.