

MEMORANDUM

October 19, 2006

TO: Dr. Darrell Mullins, President, Faculty Senate
FROM: Dr. Connie Richards, Associate Dean, FSLA
SUBJ: Proposed changes to *Faculty Handbook*

The current *SU Faculty Handbook* is problematic in two areas; (1) the Tenure Review Committee's annual evaluation of tenure-track faculty, and (2) the timeline for Post-Tenure Review. The former does not coordinate the annual chair's evaluation and the annual departmental Tenure Review Committee's evaluation of tenure-track faculty. The annual evaluation form, however, requires comments and signatures of both the department chair and the chair of the Tenure Review Committee. On the second matter, the Post-Tenure Review guidelines indicate that a candidate's materials are due to the departmental Post-Tenure Review Committee by February 1 and that a departmental decision will be reached by "the same deadline as the annual review" (34) which, indicated elsewhere in the *Handbook*, is also February 1. If the deadline for the annual evaluation is changed, the post-tenure review problem will be solved; therefore, I will address the Tenure Review Committee process only, since it is more problematic.

As described in the *Handbook*, the department chair is required to submit a copy of a tenure-track faculty's annual evaluation to the departmental Tenure Review Committee "for its consideration the following year" (*Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 2, E.4.a.). The Fulton Chairs believe that the two reviews should be in sync and represent a review of tenure-track faculty performance during one calendar year.

Additionally, the *Faculty Handbook* currently states that "The annual review process begins with submission by tenure-track faculty to the Departmental Tenure Review Committee of information regarding his or her performance during the previous two semesters with respect to the tenure criteria "(E.4.b.). The "two previous semesters" causes confusion as to whether the Tenure Review Committee comes into play following one complete academic year ("previous two semesters"), putting the Tenure Review Committee on a May to May cycle and the chair on a calendar year cycle. A question has even arisen as to whether the current language means the Tenure Review Committee begins its review of untenured faculty in the second rather than the first year.

The following proposed changes are intended to clarify the process and to limit tenure-track faculty's annual evaluations by the chair and the Tenure Review Committee to the same time period.

I. Proposed changes to "Responsibilities and Structure of Departmental Tenure Review Committees" section:

Current:

E.3.a.2. “Conduct annual progress reviews of all faculty in tenure line positions and meet with these faculty to discuss their progress toward tenure. These reviews will produce written reports advising each candidate of his or her progress in achieving the performance expected of a tenured faculty member, offering constructive suggestions where appropriate. Copies of these reports will be made available to the candidate and the department chair and the dean. A copy will be preserved by the Tenure Review Committee.”

Proposed:

E.3.a.2: Conduct annual progress reviews of all faculty in tenure line positions **prior to the annual evaluation** and meet with these faculty to discuss their progress towards tenure. **Items reviewed will include, but not be limited to, materials submitted by the untenured faculty member and the chair’s annual evaluation for the time under consideration (normally two semesters during one calendar year but one semester for tenure track faculty in their first year).** The Committee will produce a written report advising each candidate of his or her progress in achieving the performance expected of a tenured faculty member, offering constructive suggestions where appropriate. Copies of these reports will be made available to the candidate and the department chair and the dean. A copy will be preserved by the Tenure Review Committee.

II. Proposed changes to “Annual Review Procedures” section:

Current:

E.4.a. “To prepare for future tenure decision, the department chairperson is to prepare a realistic and candid written evaluation annually for each tenure-track faculty member concerning his or her progress toward tenure. A copy of the chairperson’s evaluation will be forwarded to the faculty member and the dean. A copy will also be forwarded to the Departmental Tenure Review Committee for its consideration the following year. The department chairperson will also meet annually with each tenure-track faculty member to discuss this evaluation along with that of the departmental committee. This is not a merit evaluation; its purpose is to provide the faculty member with a realistic appraisal of work to date and prospects for the future.”

Proposed:

E.4.a. To prepare for future tenure decision, the department chairperson is to prepare a realistic and candid written evaluation annually for each tenure-track faculty member concerning his or her progress toward tenure. **A copy of the chairperson’s evaluation will be forwarded to the Departmental Tenure Review Committee at least two weeks prior to the annual review deadline.** Copies will also be forwarded to the faculty member and the dean. The department chairperson will also meet annually with each tenure-track faculty member to discuss this evaluation along with that of the departmental

committee. This is not a merit evaluation; its purpose is to provide the faculty member with a realistic appraisal of work to date and prospects for the future.

Current:

E.4.b. “The annual review process begins with submission by tenure-track faculty to the Departmental Tenure Review Committee of information provided by tenure-track faculty along with previous year’s annual progress reviews.”

Proposed:

E.4.b. The annual review process begins **after fall semester** with submission by tenure-track faculty to the Departmental Tenure Review Committee of information regarding his or her performance **the previous calendar year** with respect to the tenure criteria. **Tenure-track faculty in their first year will submit materials for the previous semester only.**

Current:

E.4.c. All members of the Departmental Tenure Review Committee will thoroughly examine the information provided by tenure-track faculty along with previous year’s annual progress reviews.

Proposed:

E.4.c. All members of the Department Tenure Review Committee will thoroughly examine the information provided by tenure-track faculty along **with the chair’s evaluation for the calendar year.**

Current:

E.4.d. When the Committee has concluded its examination of the faculty member’s performance, it will prepare a report to the faculty member. That report will express the Committee’s candid assessment of the faculty member’s success in satisfying tenure requirements and offer recommendations, where appropriate, of how the faculty member might better satisfy those requirements.

Proposed:

E.4.d. When the Committee has concluded its examination of the faculty member’s performance, **it will meet with the faculty member to discuss progress towards tenure. The Committee will also produce a written report expressing the** Committee’s candid assessment of the faculty member’s success in satisfying tenure requirements and offer recommendations, where appropriate, of how the faculty member might better satisfy those requirements. **The Committee chair will indicate the**

Committee's assessment of the faculty member's progress towards tenure on the annual evaluation form.