

# Operating Procedures for Granting Academic Tenure and Promotion

These procedures supplement the policy on [Academic Tenure and Promotion \(I.B.2\)](#). Refer to the policy for contact information and applicable definitions. For policy and procedures governing clinical faculty, please see the policy on [Clinical/Professional Faculty Appointment and Promotion \(VI.F.10\)](#) and for rules governing research faculty, see the policy on [Research Faculty Appointment and Promotion \(VI.F.8\)](#).

Effective date: November 15, 2022

## Procedures

I.

### I. Nominations

- A. Prior to the beginning of the academic year, the chair of the Primary Committee or VCAA, as the case may be, publishes a timetable setting forth the dates of the committee meetings and suitable deadlines for faculty members to update their files and to receive and react to the appropriate segments of a nomination for Tenure and/or promotion. The chair convenes the Primary Committee at the beginning of each academic year.
- B. Faculty members who are in the penultimate year of their Probationary Period are automatically nominated for Tenure and promotion and voted on by the Primary Committee, unless the faculty member specifically requests otherwise in writing at any step in the process. Prior to the penultimate year, faculty members may be nominated for Tenure and promotion by any member of the Primary Committee. Those whose nominations are seconded will be voted on by the committee. Review of candidates in the final year of their Probationary Period requires prior approval by the Provost or VCAA, as the case may be. An example for granting this request is evidence of significant productivity during the penultimate year, as documented by the department head and dean.
- C. Faculty members with Tenure who are not nominated by a member of the Primary Committee and have not been considered for promotion during the previous three years, but consider themselves ready for promotion, may nominate themselves and have their case for promotion considered by the Primary Committee.
- D. It is possible that a faculty member received an extension of his/her Probationary Period by virtue of the procedures outlined in Section V of

these procedures. Under these circumstances, the criteria for Tenure and promotion are the same in terms of both quantity and quality; committees may not impose additional requirements on candidates with extensions when compared to those without extensions. When applicable or appropriate, this language will be included in the request for an external review letter.

## **II. Review, Voting and Approval**

- A. Throughout the entire review process, Primary, Area and Campus Promotions Committee members respond to each Tenure or promotion nomination as individuals, interpreting achievements described in the nomination documents in light of standards appropriate for the nominee's discipline and the applicable campus's Criteria for Tenure and Promotion. In the course of these evaluations, open and candid discussions are a critical element to informing each committee member of the candidate's accomplishments. The confidentiality of remarks made at such meetings should, therefore, be carefully preserved and restricted to those within the promotions process to allow for full, fair and free discussion of the merits of the case. Nothing in this provision of confidentiality allows participants in primary or other promotion committees to engage in illegal, unethical or inappropriate behavior with impunity.
- B. Attendance requirements and the specific rules governing the meaning of participation for the members of the Primary, Area and Campus Promotions Committees are determined by the committee chair or an academic officer with authority commensurate with or higher than the committee level, in consultation with committee members. Committee members who have a Conflict of Interest with a particular candidate must recuse themselves from all discussion and deliberations of a candidate's case. All eligible members participating in Primary or Area Committee deliberations are required to participate in all substantive discussions of a candidate's record and to submit a ballot on all candidates. Eligible members of all committees must be present to submit a ballot. Recusals, blank ballots and otherwise un-submitted ballots are not counted as votes.
- C. Each nomination is first considered and discussed by the Primary Committee, after which, members cast a written ballot for the individual candidate. The result of the ballot is recorded on the Nomination for Promotion form. In addition to providing for a "yes" or "no" vote, the ballot provides an opportunity to show reasons for the vote, with space allocated for comments and/or explanations. The reasons for all votes are expected to be provided, but this is especially important in the case of negative votes since comments can be the basis for feedback for faculty improvement. Unless otherwise noted in the campus committee structure, the chair of the committee does not cast a vote. Rather, her/his recommendation appears separate from the Primary Committee's recommendation on the Nomination for Promotion form.

- D. Those candidates who receive a simple majority vote are sent forward to the Area Committee for review, unless the candidate chooses to withdraw his/her candidacy at this stage. In addition, the chair of the Primary Committee may endorse a candidate who does not receive the majority vote and send forward the nomination with his/her statement providing a rationale for the divergence from the Primary Committee. The Area Committee follows the same process as the Primary Committee described in II.C above.
- E. Those candidates who receive a simple majority vote of the Area Committee are forwarded to the Campus Promotions Committee along with documentation of whether and why the candidate also has the chair's endorsement. The chair also may endorse and/or send forward those candidates who do not receive a majority of the Area Committee with a statement including the rationale for sending the case forward.
- F. The Campus Promotions Committee reviews the recommendations of the Primary and Area Committees. Each nomination is considered individually and voted on by written ballot. All candidates who receive the supporting vote of a simple majority of the Campus Promotions Committee will be recommended to the next level as outlined below. The chair of the Campus Promotions Committee will include his/her endorsement and comments, where appropriate, on the Nomination for Promotion form. In cases where the candidate's recommendation for Tenure and/or promotion was supported by at least two-thirds of the Area Committee, but is not approved by the Campus Promotions Committee, the candidate's dean or department head/chair may request from the Campus Promotions Committee chair a written explanation for non-approval.
1. On the West Lafayette campus, Nomination for Promotion forms are forwarded to the Provost, who reviews, includes his/her recommendation, and forwards recommendations to the President.
  2. On Regional Campuses, the Nomination for Promotion form is transmitted to the Chancellor, who reviews, includes his/her recommendations, and forwards recommendations to the Provost. The Provost reviews, includes his/her recommendation and forwards his/her recommendations to the President.

Upon receipt of the Nomination for Promotion form, the President makes his/her recommendation to the Board of Trustees for final action.

- G. Faculty members will be advised of their promotion progress within 10 business days by their department head/chair after the Primary Committee review and by their dean after the Area and Campus Promotions Committee reviews. The reasons for negative decisions will be conveyed to the faculty member within this same time frame. Official notice will be sent to Tenured and/or promoted faculty members after the President and the Board of Trustees approve the recommendations.

- H. Tenure without promotion is generally only considered under exceptional circumstances. It requires endorsement by both the Primary and Area Committees, a recommendation by the candidate's dean and approval by the Provost or Chancellor, as the case may be.
- I. **Out**-of-cycle promotions are uncommon and follow an expedited version of the process outlined in D-G above, in consultation with the vice provost for faculty affairs.
- J. The process outlined in D-G above does not cover new faculty appointments that include the awarding of Tenure with an offer of employment. Immediate Tenure requires an endorsement by either the Primary or Area Committee, a recommendation by the dean, approval by the Chancellor (as applicable) and approval by the Provost.
- K. Faculty with joint appointments participate in Tenure and promotion proceedings in the department listed as their Tenure home.

### **III. Tenure Effective Dates**

- A. For Tenure requests within the normal promotion timeline, Tenure is effective with the start of the next academic year following approval. If Tenure is requested and approved outside of the normal promotion timeline, it will be effective with the start of the semester following approval. For example, Tenure approvals in the fall semester will be effective the following spring semester. Spring semester approvals will be effective with the start of the next academic year for academic-year faculty and the start of the next fiscal year for fiscal-year faculty. Approvals in the summer will be effective at the beginning of the next academic year for both academic-year and fiscal-year faculty.
- B. In cases where Tenure is awarded with an offer of employment, Tenure is effective with the start date of the contract.

### **IV. Documentation**

- A. Nomination for Promotion form (President's Office form 36)

A Nomination for Promotion form must be completed for all faculty members as described below.

1. All Tenure-track faculty members in the penultimate year of their Probationary Period, regardless of the vote at the Primary or Area Committees and even if the faculty member has chosen not to be reviewed.
2. Faculty members who are nominated for Tenure and receive a majority affirmative vote from the Primary Committee, regardless of their year in rank.
3. Faculty members who are nominated for promotion to associate professor or professor and receive a majority affirmative vote from the Area Committee, regardless of their year in rank.

## B. Supporting Documents

1. Supporting documents are not required with the Nomination for Promotion form if the faculty member is in the penultimate year of his/her Probationary Period and has chosen not to be considered for promotion.
2. Each campus must determine and clearly disseminate in writing expectations for letters of assessment that are to be included in a candidate's documentation for Tenure and promotion. The campus may allow each college/school to set these expectations. Minimally, the expectations must include the number of letters, internal versus external referees and the acceptability of the nature of referees' relationships with the candidate (e.g., collaborators, co-authors, former mentors). The Candidate has the opportunity to suggest letter writers and to identify those letter writers who should not be asked.

It should be noted to external reviewers that, under Purdue University policies, their replies will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. The following statement should be included in all external review letter requests:

*Candidates may request a summary of all evaluations in their file; however, sources remain confidential. We cannot guarantee that at some future time a court or government agency will not require the disclosure of the source of confidential evaluations. Purdue University will endeavor to protect the identity of authors of letters of evaluations to the fullest extent allowable under law.*

3. The department/school head/chair is responsible for making sure candidates are aware of their right to review and augment the Nomination for Promotion form as outlined below and is responsible for communicating the timetable of relevant meetings to all candidates.
4. Candidates will be given the opportunity to help create and review their promotion documentation and may receive a copy of any document (with confidential department head/chair and dean's statements omitted), excluding letters, that will be submitted to the Primary, Area and/or Campus Promotions Committee(s). Prior to submission to the Primary Committee, it is the right of candidates to have included in their departmental file whatever the candidate chooses to add, including the candidate's own brief comments about teaching, research, creative activities, service or engagement. Candidates may choose to attach or append their comments to the promotion document.
5. Candidates may include a statement highlighting and explaining the contribution of their interdisciplinary activities. This statement may include the candidate's relative contribution to the projects

that are listed. Departments/schools may wish to ask for additional advisory input on the interdisciplinary accomplishments as appropriate. This may include review from both Purdue and non-Purdue faculty members.

6. Candidates may include statements about their role in collaborative work as well as supporting statements of work and responsibilities from collaborators. Collaborators may write outside letters as long as any relationship is named and as long as it is the policy of the department or school to admit such letters.
7. Documentation of research, teaching and engagement accomplishments will depend on the disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields in which the scholar works. Candidates should consult the campus Criteria for Tenure and Promotion as well as department and college guidelines to determine the standards for minimal levels of accomplishment and excellence in these fields on their campus.
8. The documentation for candidates for Tenure and/or promotion who remain in consideration beyond the Primary Committee level, should contain, if appropriate: basis of nomination, prior experience, teaching assignments and evaluations of performance, any curricular innovations or special activities which may have contributed to teaching effectiveness, research responsibilities and achievements, extension and engagement assignments and evaluation of performance, scholarly work in progress, publications, administrative and committee responsibilities, other pertinent activities (membership and positions held in professional societies, consultation, committee and public service, etc.), prospects for future development, comments and recommendations by the department head/chair, and a standard/minimum number of reference letters as established by the college/school for the applicable type of Tenure and/or promotion on that campus. Documentation should also report the vote of the Primary and Area Committees where applicable. The Provost, in consultation with the VCAA, will issue instructions for completing the Nomination for Promotion form.
9. Content may not be changed after submission of the promotion document for external letters apart from minor editorial corrections, typographical errors and the like. The department head/chair and/or dean may communicate additional accomplishments or updates that occur after submission of the document to the appropriate committee members on behalf of the candidate, for example by including the information on the Nomination for Promotion form.

## **V. Extensions of the Probationary Period**

- A. Purdue recognizes that faculty may encounter circumstances that interrupt or prevent progress toward professional and scholarly achievement. This is an especially critical issue for faculty working toward Tenure within a limited and specified timeframe. The process outlined below provides faculty the opportunity to seek an extension of the

Probationary Period when certain situations arise that slow, or hinder achieving Tenure.

- B. Deans and department heads/chairs have a responsibility to inform faculty of this process, especially upon recognition that a qualified faculty member's progress toward Tenure may be impeded by circumstances cited below. Faculty members are encouraged to discuss this process with their department heads/chair when qualifying circumstances arise or are anticipated.
- C. A one-year automatic approval will be granted for birth or adoption of a child, provided the faculty member submits a Request for Probationary Period Extension form to the Provost or VCAA, as the case may be, prior to the start of the penultimate year of his/her Probationary Period. This provision applies to either or both parents. Upon approval, the Provost will initiate a revised Appointment to the Faculty form (President's Office Form 19) that reflects the change to the end of the maximum Probationary Period. The Provost or VCAA distributes notification of the adjustment in the Probationary Period to the deans and department heads/chairs.
- D. When conditions and personal circumstances arise that substantially interfere with progress toward achieving Tenure, a faculty member may request that his/her Probationary Period be extended. Justifiable conditions for granting extensions include, but are not restricted to, severe illness or disability or the need to care for a family member, unanticipated destruction of research materials or assigned lab space or equipment, or unexpected obstacles to field research. Approval of the request is at the discretion of the Provost or VCAA, as the case may be. Verification that the conditions leading to the request occurred or continue to exist and that the faculty member demonstrated progress toward Tenure prior to the onset of the conditions will be made. Requests for extensions in these cases are to be made as soon after the conditions that precipitated the request as possible, but no later than the start of the penultimate year of the Probationary Period. The steps for initiation, review and approval are as follows:
  - 1. Except in the case of childbirth or adoption, the faculty member submits to the department head/chair a completed Request for Probationary Period Extension form.
  - 2. The department head/chair forwards it to the dean with their recommendation. The department head/chair and dean ascertain, to the best of their knowledge, that the conditions cited in the request are valid.
  - 3. If the dean approves the request, he/she forwards it to the Provost or VCAA, as the case may be.
  - 4. If the Provost/VCAA approves the request, he/she initiates a revised Appointment to the Faculty form to reflect the change to the end of the maximum Probationary Period.

5. Any faculty member who feels it necessary to appeal a decision may utilize established grievance procedures (see Section VII for more information).
- E. Ordinarily, approvals for extensions are for one year. However, Tenure-track faculty with part-time appointments may request an extension of the Probationary Period for up to three years following the steps above.
- F. A faculty member whose initial appointment is on a full-time basis and is adjusted to a part-time basis during the first three years of service to the University may request an extension equivalent to the Probationary Period for those who begin with a part-time appointment.
- G. Refer to Section I.D when considering faculty members for Tenure and promotion who have been granted an extension to their Probationary Period.

## **VI. Review of Negative Tenure and Promotion Decisions**

- A. Upon receipt of a negative Tenure or promotion decision, candidates may submit in writing to their dean a request for a written statement of the reasons for the decision. The candidate must submit his/her request within 15 business days of receiving the decision, and the dean must provide the written statement to the candidate within 15 business days of receiving the request. The written statement provided to the candidate should not contain confidential outside letters or confidential summary statements.
- B. Candidates who believe the decision was based on one or more of the reasons listed below may submit to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or VCAA, as the case may be, a written request for reconsideration. The request must be submitted within 20 business days of receiving the written statement of reasons, specify the grounds for the request and include any new material germane to the issue.
- C. Grounds for Requesting Reconsideration
  1. Evidence of grossly inadequate consideration of professional competence
  2. Evidence of judgments based on erroneous or misinterpreted information
- D. Within 20 business days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or VCAA, in consultation with the department/school head/chair and/or dean, will determine whether the request meets one of criteria outlined above and whether reasonable and adequate grounds support the candidate's allegations that the negative decision was improperly based. The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or VCAA will not make a determination on the merits of the candidate's suitability for Tenure or promotion.



- E. If the finding is that the negative decision was not improperly based, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or VCAA will report this in writing to the candidate and no further action is necessary.
- F. If the finding is that reasonable and adequate grounds support the candidate's allegations that the negative decision was improperly based, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or VCAA will recommend that the candidate's case be considered at the next level. Cases denied at the Primary Committee level will be considered by the Area Committee and cases denied at the Area Committee level will be considered by the Campus Promotions Committee.

## VII. Established Grievance Procedures

- A. Complaints of procedural fairness may be brought forward in accordance with the policy on [Faculty Grievances \(I.B.1\)](#).
- B. Complaints of discrimination may be brought forward in accordance with the policy on [Equal Opportunity, Equal Access and Affirmative Action \(III.C.2\)](#).

## History and Updates

January 1, 2016: Procedures established as separate document in support of the policy on Academic Tenure and Promotion (I.B.2). The requirements of this document supersede those outlined in section II of the Principles and Policies for Academic Freedom, Responsibilities, and Tenure, and Procedures for Termination for Cause (Executive Memorandum No. B-48).

January 7, 2022: Appendix A, which contained the promotion committee structures of each campus, was deleted. The committee structures of each campus are now accessed from links in the "Related Documents, Forms, and Tools" section of the Policy document (Academic Tenure and Promotion (I.B.2)).

November 15, 2022: Section II.J. was added, on out-of-cycle promotion.