Office Focused on Faculty Affairs

“Back to State” Information for Faculty

For current information on University-wide news and actions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and preparations for returning to on-campus work and learning in Fall 2020, visit the “Back to State” webpage, which includes regularly updated answers to extensive FAQs.

Also, visit the new faculty-specific “Back to State” resources page, read the latest University news stories, and review the “News for Faculty” update emails sent to you each week on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Kathleen Breschek, a former Department Head in the College of Education and Professor of Education in Counseling Psychology, is the University’s Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs works closely with the Executive Vice President and Provost in areas including faculty development, leadership training, promotion and tenure, executive searches and reviews, and other issues related to academic personnel and their concerns. The Vice Provost also serves as the Provost’s contact person for the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the academic arm of the Big Ten Conference, and the University Faculty Senate issues relating to faculty affairs, and is the liaison for the Provost and President to University deans and chancellors.
Key Topics: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure

Evaluations:
- Penn State Policy AC40
- Everyone is reviewed annually

Promotion and Tenure:
- Penn State Policies AC21 and AC23
- Many considerations beyond policies
Annual Evaluations: Policy AC40

Highlights of Policy AC40 (policy.psu.edu – Academic section):

• All full-time faculty reviewed annually; also five-year “extended reviews” for tenured faculty
• Evaluations conducted at “local level” (coordinated by deans or chancellors and handled by department or division heads, or directors of academic affairs)
• Important opportunities for faculty to receive regular feedback, reflect on performance, identify growth areas
Promotion and Tenure Policies

Promotion:

Policy AC21: Definition of Academic Ranks

Promotion and Tenure:

Policy AC23: Promotion and Tenure Procedures and Regulations
Policy AC21: Definition of Academic Ranks

Highlights of Policy AC21 (policy.psu.edu – “Academic” section)

• Provides guidance on qualifications necessary for appointment or promotion to various academic ranks
• Describes all ranks, including those of tenure-line and non-tenure-line faculty
• Recently updated to standardize titles for non-tenure-line faculty
Promotion Procedures for NTL Faculty

- While each college has its own guidelines and criteria, all units shall operate under the following University assumptions.

- Positions above the first rank are designed to be promotion opportunities, with a recommended period of at least five years in rank before consideration before promotion. Reviews for promotions should be conducted solely with regard to merit of the candidate.

- Reviews for promotion shall be conducted by Non-Tenure-Line Promotion Review Committees for a college/campus.

- All promotions should be accompanied by a promotion raise and successful candidates should be considered for a multi-year contract.
Promotion procedures consist of recommendations by

- Campus/department faculty committee
- Director of academic affairs or department/division head
- Approval of the campus chancellor/dean.
Promotion for NTL Faculty in 2018-2019

- Of the 182 non-tenure line promotion dossiers put forward for review at University Park and the Commonwealth Campuses, 162 (89%) received a promotion.

- Of those 162 promotions, 41 were promoted to assistant professor, 98 were promoted to associate professor, and 23 were promoted to professor.

- Per AC-21, faculty members who are promoted shall be considered for a multi-year contract and those promoted to the third rank shall be considered for the longest length of contract available to NTL faculty. Of the 162 who were promoted, 142 (88%) hold a multi-year contract. This represents 78% of assistant professors, 91% of associate professors, and 91% of professors.
Promotion and Tenure: Policy AC23

Highlights of Policy AC23 (policy.psu.edu – “Academic” section):

- Provides guidance on determining the criteria, procedures, and conditions of the review of University academic personnel and for the awarding of promotion and tenure
- Substantive policy warrants thorough individual review; also should see related documents on website: P&T Administrative Guidelines and P&T FAQ
Promotion and Tenure: Three Levels of Review

• **Level One: Department/Campus** – Most familiar with candidate’s discipline and standards

• **Level Two: College** – Evaluates using a specific college’s criteria and expectations

• **Level Three: University** – Focused on ensuring compliance with college and institutional standards and consistency of excellence across Penn State
Promotion and Tenure Criteria

Key areas of evaluation and assessment:

- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL)
- Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments
- Service and scholarship of service to the University, society, and one’s profession
- **Important:** 2020-2021 Administrative Guidelines for Policy AC23 are on the VPFA website -- more than 60 pages of information and forms related to all of these areas, including an appendix on dossier sections and format.
Promotion and Tenure: Additional, Periodic Reviews

Pre-Tenure Reviews in 2nd and 4th Years:
• Developmental and evalulative processes
• Can be denied either year
• If improvement opportunities are noted, a plan is developed to focus on those areas

6th Year Tenure Review:
• 95 cases in 2019-2020; 95 of those earned tenure
The University Promotion and Tenure Review Committee reviewed 167 cases during the past academic year. All but one included a positive recommendation by the submitting dean. The Committee recommended 167 cases, and the President approved 167 cases.

Dossiers for promotion to the rank of professor, librarian, and research professor for 72 candidates were forwarded by deans to the Committee, with 72 including positive recommendations by the submitting deans. One of the 72 cases had an accompanying tenure recommendation. The President approved 72 cases.

Dossiers for promotion to the rank of associate professor, associate librarian, and associate research professor for 88 candidates were forwarded by deans to the Committee. Eighty-seven cases had positive recommendations by the submitting deans, and 86 of them included tenure recommendations. The Committee recommended 88 cases, and the President approved 88 cases.
Tips and Takeaways

• Understand policies at all levels
• Pay attention to details of performance review letters
• Consult with colleagues and mentors
• Establish independence as a scholar
• Take advantage of available resources
• Have a strategy
Thank You.
Questions or Comments?

vpfa.psu.edu