The Advisory Committee on Tenure, Promotion and Third Year Review
Committee Report, 2015-2016
Chair: Irina Gigova
Date: April 29, 2016

This year the Advisory Committee consisted of the following five regular members:

- Claire Curtis, Professor, Political Science
- Irina Gigova, Associate Professor, History
- Genevieve Hay, Associate Professor, Teacher Education
- Mary Beth Heston, Professor, Theater and Dance
- Vijaya Vulava, Associate Professor, Geology and Environmental Geosciences

The dual representation of HSS on the committee was a result of a last minute replacement of the LCWA representative, Dr. Elizabeth Martinez-Gibson, Professor, Hispanic Studies, who withdrew due to new administrative duties. There were two returning members from the previous year, Irina Gigova and Genevieve Hay.

The Committee had one meeting in the fall of 2015 to address a policy question brought up in a motion by Senator Larry Krasnoff at the September 15, 2015 meeting of the Faculty Senate. We submitted our feedback at the November 3, 2015 Senate meeting.

We began our review of candidates for tenure and promotion on December 18, 2015 and completed all deliberations on February 12, 2016. During this period, we ordinarily met twice a week and discussed 3-4 candidates at each meeting. Our sessions typically lasted 2-3 hours, with some of the more challenging cases demanding additional time. We reviewed 38 cases altogether:

- 2 Third-Year Review
- 2 Promotion to Librarian III
- 21 Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor
- 13 Promotion to Full Professor

Eight of these cases necessitated the inclusion of four of the five alternate members of the Committee:

- Anne Gutshall, Associate Professor, Teacher Education
- Dinesh Sarvate, Professor, Mathematics
- Allan Strand, Professor, Biology
- Henry Xie, Associate Professor, Management and Marketing

The chair of the Advisory Committee made a decision not to invite Dr. Amanda Ruth-McSwain, Associate Professor in Communications, due to the overrepresentation of HSS on the panel. This year was also unusual in that we did not review any candidates for Instructor and Senior Instructor due to a change approved the previous year that extended the review period for instructors from five to seven years.

Finally, this is the second year in a row that no representative of Academic Affairs was present at the Committee’s deliberations. Provost Brian McGee once again conducted his own independent review. The Advisory Committee had a debriefing session with the Provost on April 1, 2016, after the completion of the tenure and review process, to exchange notes and suggestions for improvements.

This was the first year of entirely online submission of packets for tenure and promotion. The gradual, multiyear transition to online packets assured that the Advisory Committee encountered few problems accessing the candidates’ files. The availability of remote (off-campus) access to SharePoint facilitated
the timely review of the packets. The Advisory Committee is grateful for the technical assistance provided by the Office of Academic Affairs, in particular its Director of Technical Services Saundra Hall and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Deanna Caveny-Noecker. Included below are a few general observations the Committee would like to share with the campus community.

1. **Formatting of online packets**: The detailed formatting instructions in the 2015 [Joint Memo](#) and subsequent formatting workshops contributed to consistency and uniformity in the packets’ preparations. Only a few files revealed problems (such as improper organization or filing of evidence, excessive length of files, and use of formats other than PDF) that we hope to be avoided in the future. The Advisory Committee submitted specific feedback to Academic Affairs at the April 1, 2016 meeting with the Provost.

2. **Recent graduate surveys**: Following the adoption of a new policy in 2015 that urged Chairs of Department Evaluation Panels to solicit at least twenty responses, the Advisory Committee was pleased with the number of returns in the 2015-2016 review year. We recommend the adoption of a uniform institutional approach to processing and presenting the raw data of returned surveys. There was a general agreement that summaries of comments and rankings were of greater benefit than the inclusion of individual survey responses. Such summaries also have the value of preserving student confidentiality and anonymity.

3. **Written evaluations**: The committee would like to emphasize the importance of careful written evaluations of faculty. We urge department chairs to be mindful in their annual evaluations of research collaborations and research in progress. In addition, as a growing number of faculty teach across programs and schools, their classroom performance outside their home department needs to be evaluated just as rigorously. We remind deans of the value of regular annual evaluations of department chairs that comment on all areas of: administrative work, service, research and teaching. We also join previous committees in emphasizing the value of substantive colleague letters for a smooth tenure and promotion process.

4. **Department expectations**: Finally, we urge departments with additional expectations, practices and policies referred to in colleague letters or annual evaluations to have them approved by Academic Affairs. These expectations may be about service, research or teaching.

The Advisory Committee concluded its formal duties by co-organizing with Academic Affairs an Informational Session on April 20 for faculty, department chairs and deans regarding the next year’s tenure and promotion process. The PowerPoint from that meeting will be made available on the Academic Affair’s website.

Finally, in April 2016, an question was brought up to the attention of the Advisory Committee regarding the lack of clarity in the Faculty Administration Manual on the issue of research and professional work done during a period of unpaid leave of absence. In particular, we were asked to advise whether a faculty member who served as a visiting professor at a different institution while still in rank at the College could include the publications, exhibits or performances done at the time as part of his or her overall research and professional record during the next post-tenure or promotion review. The current language in the FAM (Section X.A.2, pp. 169-170) is essentially silent in regards to expectations for tenured Associate Professors. Both the regular and alternate members of the Advisory Committee weighed on this question and concluded that a clear policy that applies to the entire institution would benefit individual faculty, chairs and departments and assist the deliberations of future iterations of the Advisory Committee.