



A LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WITH INTERNATIONAL REACH

DATE: March 12, 2012
TO: Kelly Madole, Chair
Faculty Senate
FROM: Mac McKerral, Chair
FWPRC
RE: FWPRC decisions

Kelly:

The FWPRC examined two issues that were passed onto to it in Fall 2011 from the previous academic year FWPRC.

- Policy on completion of the ABD degree: The committee found that a policy already exists in the faculty handbook and does not believe any changes need to be made at this time.
- University-level Promotion & Tenure Committee: Dr. Gordon Emslie, provost, suggested that faculty might want to consider creating a university level Promotion & Tenure Committee to review decisions made at the departmental level. The committee agreed that at this time there is no need to pursue such a committee.

Please see the attached documents related to these items.

The Spirit Makes the Master

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To Sec
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Excerpt from the 18th ed. of the Faculty Handbook regarding ABD

2. Faculty Members Appointed to Positions Requiring Doctoral Degree:

Before a faculty member working on the doctorate is appointed by WKU to a position requiring a doctorate, the faculty member's graduate advisor should send a letter to WKU stating the faculty member's progress and the probable date of completion of the doctoral degree. If the faculty member is hired before completing the degree, the original terms of employment should state that a review separate from the regular annual evaluation will be held during the fall semester of the second year at WKU (if the faculty member is still employed at the time) to determine progress toward completion of the degree. A final review concerning doctoral progress will be held on or before September 1st of the third year. If the degree is not completed by the end of the third year, the faculty member will not be rehired for a doctoral position for the fourth year. *part of letter of appointment*

Faculty members appointed to tenure-track positions requiring a doctoral degree and who hold a probationary term of appointment may be granted an extension of the maximum probationary period with no resulting change in employment obligations according to University policy. For more on extension of the probationary term, see Section V.B.4. of this Handbook and the University's Extension of the Probationary Period policy at the Academic Affairs policy site:

http://www.wku.edu/policies/academic_affairs.php

3. Completion of Doctorate:

Adjustments in salary are effective only twice a year for faculty completing a doctorate where it is a requirement for eligibility for tenure and promotion. They will only be made after the Office of Academic Affairs receives an official transcript evidencing conferral of the doctoral degree. Upon receipt of appropriate documentation, the faculty member will receive a salary adjustment as determined by Academic Affairs, which adjustment shall be a minimum of \$1,200.00 to be added to the salary base. In cases where the degree is completed between January 1 and August 15, the adjustment will be made effective or retroactive to July 1. In cases where the degree is completed between August 16, and December 31, the adjustment is made effective January 1.

FWP re unanimously Agreed that
Completion of ADB is Already covered
Adequately in the Handbook.

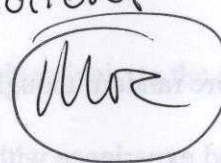
12/12/2011

(Signature)

FW PRC Unanimously Agreed not to
pursue this idea. Consensus is current
system works.

(2/12/2011)

College T&P Committee Feedback
College Level P+T Committee



GENERALLY FOR

In general I think there are mostly positive outcomes from having a college-level committee. My biggest concern would be that individual departments could still have their own, unique criteria for tenure and promotion. Psychology, for example, might want to set higher publication requirements for T&P than STE, and I think both departments should have the autonomy to do so. That said, the biggest advantage I see for having a college committee is as a check on possible personal biases (both for and against faculty going up for tenure and promotion) that work their way into the T&P process at the departmental level, but which may have relatively little to do with the individual's actual accomplishments. I don't anticipate problems like that in our department, but I know very well this sort of thing happens elsewhere and with different leadership or different faculty in the department someday, EALR wouldn't be immune either. For this reason alone, I tend to support the idea of a college committee, as long as minimum requirements can still be established at the department level.

As I understand it, the Provost's rationale for such a committee is to 1) provide an additional faculty voice in the T&P process--right now he gets two administrator recommendations (dean and dept. head) but only one faculty committee recommendation, and 2) provide a mechanism for ensuring that departments adhere to their own tenure and promotion standards. In other words, the college-level committee presumably would be assessing the candidate on the basis of departmental standards. With both of those goals in mind, I think it would be a good thing.

GENERAL AGAINST

So long as such a group were to respect the tenure and promotion criteria of the unit that an individual is employed, this probably would not be too disruptive. One danger is that differences between tenure and promotion benchmarks across departments would have to be discussed so that a more collective set of criteria are developed. For instance, being research productive, presenting data at national research conferences, and publishing in peer reviewed journals are all part of Psychology's tenure and promotion criteria. This means that Psych faculty are mindful of where they stand research-wise at all times. Is this a concern for Counseling? For Teacher Ed? If it isn't, then the Psych rep from the college on such a committee might be perceived as being hard on faculty from other departments. In actuality, they aren't... they are just using a different set of standards to judge faculty.

I've been on this type of committee at three institutions. Mixed reviews. Adds time to the process (Months in my experience.). It does not really add a safeguard to the process for the faculty member. It does provide an internal evaluation external to a department that may have an alternate view of what is needed to be promoted and tenured. In many cases, a more stringent set of standards. If the committee is used in an appeal process and has persons external to the college, the rigor can really increase. These committees can be ignored just like the products of any other committee. At least they can add to the illusion of faculty governance. If the college culture around the committee becomes rubber stamp then it really adds nothing to the process.

1105/51/51
I have more random thoughts. Let me know if you want to hear them.

I had a bad experience with this at another institution. Review levels up the line appeared to agree with the department's evaluation regardless of circumstances. Two of us went up for full professor at the same time with practically identical CVs. I was a department head hired to "fix" some things in a department where both past DHs were full professors along with the recently deposited Dean (bad NCATE review), all who obviously still had some informal power within the department. I was going up in my second year having been given credit for four years as an Assoc. Prof prior to my arrival. The vote was positive but close. No rationale for the negative votes was offered when the vote was taken, even when the chair said he was going to state such on the form. Silence. The college committee was close also, citing "no teaching evals at this university" (despite glowing evals from previous university and the fact that I had bought out my teaching time the first year with a grant at the direction of the Dean - indicated in the documents) and "no university-wide committee service" (I had been there one year, duh). Incidentally, the other person flew by with a unanimous vote at all levels. The Dean told me that faculty are generally not supportive of administrators in the T/P process; maybe that had something to do with it - maybe not. I think faculty up the line were simply supporting what happened at the departmental level.

More bureaucracy - greater input for faculty on a final administrative decision - may be more difficult for a Provost to overturn another layer of support/denial for someone. Backbreaker of a committee due to number of cases within a college - needs to be filled by senior level folk who are already pretty busy. We tend to be moving from a teaching/service institution toward a research institution and not progressing equally across units - some units in our college are more service oriented (schools) and some are not (more research driven) - what happens on a college committee when these groups with mixed definitions/standards of "productivity" clash?

My initial reaction is that I think it is not a good idea. I cannot see a case where the college-level committee would have more information about the candidate than the departmental committee. While it could add a "college stamp" to the promotion/tenure process, I fear that the committee will, in the end, act as a rubber stamp, which is not a productive use of time and only adds to the anxiety faced by the applicant. Further, the different criteria necessary to gain tenure/promotion across the departments in the college will present problems. There are some departments that consistently reward lower levels of performance than we do (but, then, maybe that would be good to have our folks evaluated by them), and I think I would struggle to adequately and appropriately evaluate candidates from those departments.

Given that it seems highly unlikely that a college-level committee would over-ride the department's "no P or T" decision, the college-level committee stands to introduce additional politics into the process. Implications would be many. I can't figure out how this would reduce anyone's workload. I don't see any pro's, but maybe I'm missing something.

I personally think a college-level review would be less relevant than an outside review by a person or persons who are familiar with the candidate's area of expertise (research, especially). What exactly could a college committee add to the review that the dept level committee can't

12/12/2011
Unanimously Agree Not To
this Idea. Consensus is current
provide? An outside reviewer could provide commentary that speaks objectively to the merits of the candidate's work.

It seems like this would just take more of the decision out of the hands of the department, which is problematic as each department has its own criteria for P&T. On the other hand, if the college committee is a "rubber stamp" for the departments, then it is a waste of faculty time.

For tenure and promotion, Psychology, for example, might want to set higher publication requirements for T&P than S TE, and I think both departments should have the autonomy to do so. That said, the biggest advantage I see for having a college committee is as a check on possible personal biases (both for and against faculty going up for tenure and promotion) that work their way into the T&P process at the departmental level, but which may have relatively little to do with the individual's actual accomplishments. I don't anticipate problems like that in our department, but I know very well this sort of thing happens elsewhere and with different leadership or different faculty in the department someday. HALK wouldn't be immune either. For that reason alone, I tend to support the idea of a college committee, as long as minimum requirements can still be established at the department level.

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