

PROMOTION AND TENURE PEER REVIEW PROCEDURES

Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences The Altoona College of The Pennsylvania State University

Procedures for implementing the University's policy on promotion and tenure are described in the Administrative Guidelines for HR-23: Promotion and Tenure Procedures and Regulations (<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr23.html>). Specific procedures for the Altoona College are described in Promotion and Tenure Review Procedures of the Altoona College, The Pennsylvania State University (<http://www.aa.psu.edu/academic/proten/Ptproc.htm>). The following further specifies procedures for the division level of review in the Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the Altoona College of the Pennsylvania State University, but does not supersede University-wide guidelines or Altoona College guidelines. Much of what follows repeats general University and Altoona College guidelines as the context for describing Division procedures, but Division faculty members should inform themselves about all three documents.

PREPARATION FOR THE REVIEW PROCESS

Frequency of tenure reviews. All provisional faculty must be reviewed according to University policy during the second, fourth, and sixth years following entry to a tenure-eligible position. Special reviews for the third or fifth year may be recommended by any review level during a second or fourth year review and initiated by the appropriate chancellor or dean at his or her discretion.

Promotion reviews. A faculty member will be reviewed for promotion only after being nominated by an appropriate academic administrator (division head, department head, or dean) of the University, or by the candidate's division or department peer review committee after consultation with the appropriate academic administrator.

Preparation of the dossier. For all Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences faculty members seeking tenure and/or promotion, regardless of whether they retain or seek tenure in the Altoona College or in a college at the University Park Campus, the Division Head has the responsibility for preparing, in consultation with the candidate, the dossier documenting the candidate's teaching effectiveness, research and creative accomplishments, and service. Candidates shall assist in supplying relevant information for their dossiers. It is ultimately the responsibility of the appropriate chancellor or dean to ensure that each dossier follows the proper format and is accurate and complete.

Evaluation of teaching effectiveness shall be based on both student and peer rating information about the quality of the teaching. Student ratings shall be obtained using the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) in accordance with the University Administrative Guidelines for HR-23. The Division Head in consultation with the

candidate will supplement this survey by other forms of student evaluation such as student comments on course evaluation questionnaires and letters solicited by the Division Head from former students (see Appendix, Section 2). For promotion and tenure reviews, the peer evaluation shall be performed by the members of the Peer Review of Teaching committee, including those appointed by the Division Head to ensure appropriate disciplinary representation, as described in the Appendix.

Evidence of research and creative accomplishments will be provided through information about these activities from the candidate and through external letters of assessment. For all promotion and final (normally the sixth-year) tenure reviews for candidates holding or seeking tenure in the Altoona College, the Division Head, in consultation with appropriate department and/or division heads at other Penn State locations, will submit four names of possible external reviewers to the Chancellor of the Altoona College, and the Division Head will ask the candidate to submit four names of possible external reviewers to the Chancellor. The Chancellor will review these submissions for appropriateness, select six external reviewers from them, and solicit letters from these six external reviewers. The Chancellor may solicit additional reviewers at his or her discretion. Dossiers must include a minimum of four letters from individuals of a rank higher than that of the candidate and in a position to make informed judgments about the candidate's work, especially, but not limited to, the candidate's research and creative accomplishments. In addition, at the request of the candidate or the division peer review committee, the Division Head, in consultation with the Chancellor, shall solicit written evaluations, to be placed in the non-confidential section of the dossier, of the candidate's research and creative accomplishments from expert peers in the candidate's discipline from within the University.

For all promotion and sixth year tenure reviews for candidates retaining or seeking tenure in a department and college at the University Park Campus, the dean of the candidate's tenure college will obtain the external letters of review following that college's procedures.

THE DIVISION LEVEL OF REVIEW FOR FACULTY HOLDING OR SEEKING TENURE IN THE ALTOONA COLLEGE

For Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences faculty members holding or seeking tenure in the Altoona College, the first-level review for tenure and/or promotion takes place in the Division. The Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences Promotion and Tenure Policy outlines the criteria, expectations, and standards for tenure and promotion by which candidates will be evaluated. The Division Promotion and Tenure Peer Review Committees will conduct promotion and tenure reviews for faculty in the Division based on the dossiers prepared by the candidates' division heads.

(For Division faculty members retaining or seeking tenure in a University Park College, the first-level review for tenure and/or promotion is conducted by the Altoona College Promotion and Tenure Review Committees and by the Chancellor of the Altoona

College. Candidates should refer to the Promotion and Tenure Review Policy of the Altoona College for criteria, expectations, and standards and to the Promotion and Tenure Review Procedures of the Altoona College for procedures. Such candidates should also familiarize themselves with the criteria and procedures of the University Park department and college where they retain or seek tenure.)

DIVISION PROMOTION AND TENURE PEER REVIEW COMMITTEES

Eligibility for serving on the committees. Division promotion and tenure peer reviews shall be conducted by faculty members in the Division whenever possible. Committee members must be tenured either in the Altoona College or in another college within Penn State. No faculty member may serve on more than one level of review of any given candidate during a particular review cycle.

Size and composition of the committees. For the purpose of these procedures, the eight disciplines in the Division are: biology, biochemistry and molecular biology, chemistry, geography, geoscience, mathematics, physics, and statistics. These eight disciplines are grouped as follows: the Life Sciences Group (consisting of biology and biochemistry/molecular biology), the Physical Sciences Group (consisting of chemistry, geography, geoscience, and physics), and the Mathematical Sciences Group (consisting of mathematics and statistics).

Every tenured and tenure-eligible faculty member in the Division will be appointed to one of the eight disciplines (biology, biochemistry and molecular biology, chemistry, geography, geoscience, mathematics, physics, and statistics) at the time he or she is hired. Subsequent changes to this appointment may only occur with the written approval of the Chancellor. Candidates will be reviewed by the divisional promotion and tenure committee of the Group which contains their discipline.

There will be three overlapping promotion and tenure review committees in the Division; one for each Group. Each committee will contain the same three “core” members representing the Life Science Group, the Physical Sciences Group, and the Mathematical Sciences Group. The three core members will be elected by a division-wide vote, and each core member will chair the promotion and tenure committee for his or her Group. Additional “non-core” members will be elected to each of the three committees by the members of each Group, or appointed by the Division Head if necessary, in order to create five member promotion and tenure committees with appropriate disciplinary representation. The term of service for elected core members shall be two years, and the term of service for all other members shall be one year.

PROCEDURE FOR CREATING THE THREE OVERLAPPING COMMITTEES

Overview. For every review cycle the “core group” will be elected first through a division-wide election. After the core group is established, there will be elections within each Group in order to secure “non-core” members from each discipline that has a

candidate under review. If these elections fail to secure a member from a discipline that has a candidate under review, then the Division Head will appoint a disciplinary representative (possibly from other units within the University, subject to the approval of the Provost). Appointed disciplinary representatives will vote only on the candidates in the discipline they are appointed to represent. If additional members are needed in order to create committees with five members, then there will be elections within each Group for at-large members. If the elections for at-large members within a Group fail to produce a five member promotion and tenure committee, then there will be a division-wide call for nominations to serve as at-large members on the Group's promotion and tenure committee. Even though the nominees may be from outside the Group, only the tenured and tenure-eligible members of the Group are eligible to vote on the at-large nominees for their Group's promotion and tenure committee. If the above procedures fail to produce a five member promotion and tenure committee for a Group, then the Division Head will appoint additional members as necessary to create a five member committee (possibly from other units within the University, subject to the approval of the Provost).

All balloting will be conducted using approval voting, where voters are allowed to vote for as few or as many nominees as they want.

Only faculty with rank higher than that of the candidate may vote during promotion decisions, and a minimum of three voting members is required. For each candidate under review there must be at least one committee member from that candidate's discipline who is eligible to vote.

If the committee selection process fails to secure a committee with five members, or with at least three voting members for each candidate under review, or suitable representation for one or more of the disciplines under review, the Division Head shall inform the faculty and appoint up to two additional eligible senior faculty (possibly from other units within the University, subject to the approval of the Provost).

Step 1: Establishing the core group. For each of those Groups for which there is no continuing member there will be a division-wide election to elect a core member from the Group. The members of the core group will be on all three promotion and tenure committees in the Division and chair the promotion and tenure committees for their respective Groups. The term of service for elected core members shall be two years. Elected core members should hold rank higher than that of all the candidates under review for the upcoming academic year.

For the core group ballot the Division Head will solicit nominations from all tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Division of tenured faculty who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Division except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The core group ballot will group the nominees into the three Groups (Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Mathematical Sciences), and each nominee will be included in exactly one of the three Groups. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees in each Group as they want. The nominee in each Group who receives

the greatest number of votes will be the core member from that Group. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote.

Step 2: Selecting disciplinary representatives. After the core group is established there will be elections within each Group to elect disciplinary representatives for the disciplines, other than the core members' disciplines, that have a candidate under review. Core group members also serve as disciplinary representatives, and thus there is no need to elect additional disciplinary representatives for the disciplines represented by the members of the core group.

For the disciplinary representative ballot the Division Head will solicit nominations from all tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Group of tenured faculty in the disciplines (other than the core members') that have a candidate under review who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Group except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The disciplinary ballot will group the nominees by discipline, and each nominee on the ballot will be included in exactly one discipline. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees in each discipline as they want. The nominee in each discipline who receives the greatest number of votes will be the disciplinary representative on the Group's promotion and tenure committee. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote.

If an election fails to secure a member from a discipline that has a candidate under review, then the Division Head will appoint a disciplinary representative (possibly from other units within the University, subject to the approval of the Provost) to that Group's promotion and tenure committee.

Step 3: Electing at-large members within a Group. If there are fewer than five elected members on a Group's promotion and tenure committee, then there will be an election within the Group for at-large members to bring the number of elected committee members to five. At-large members will vote only on the candidates who have fewer than five elected and appointed disciplinary representatives who are eligible to vote. If there are no candidates for the at-large members to vote on, then it is not necessary to elect at-large members.

For the in-group at-large ballot the Division Head will solicit nominations from all tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Group of the faculty in the Group who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Group except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The in-group at-large ballot will list the nominees without regard to discipline and indicate how many seats on the Group's promotion and tenure committee need to be filled. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees as they want. The nominees with the most votes will be at-large members on the Group's promotion and tenure committee. The Division Head will

resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote. Enough at-large members will be elected to bring the committee to five members.

Step 4: Electing at-large members from outside a Group. If there are fewer than five elected members on a Group's promotion and tenure committee after Steps 1-3 have been completed, then there will be an election for at-large members from the Division to bring the number of elected committee members to five. At-large members will vote only on the candidates who have fewer than five elected and appointed disciplinary representatives eligible to vote. If there are no candidates for the at-large members to vote on, then it is not necessary to elect at-large members.

For the outside-the-group at-large ballot the Division Head will solicit nominations from all tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Division of all the faculty in the Division who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty in the Group except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The outside-the-group at-large ballot will list the nominees without regard to discipline or Group and indicate how many seats on the Group's promotion and tenure committee need to be filled. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees as they want. The nominees with the most votes will be at-large members on the Group's promotion and tenure committee. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote. Enough at-large members will be elected to bring the committee to five members.

Additional rule for when there is only one nominee for a position. If a ballot contains only one nominee for a particular position, then that nominee must receive a 25% approval vote of the people eligible to vote in order to be elected.

Step 5: Appointment of additional members to the Committee by the Division Head. If the above selection process fails to secure a committee with five members, or with at least three voting members for each candidate under review, or suitable representation for one or more of the disciplines under review, the Division Head shall inform the faculty and appoint up to two additional eligible senior faculty (possibly from other units within the University, subject to the approval of the Provost).

The Division Head must complete the election and appointment of Committee members and report the results to the Division and to the Dean of the Altoona College by the end of March each Spring Semester.

Committee Chairs: Each Group's promotion and tenure committee will be chaired by the core member from the Group.

Evaluation of the dossier by the committees. The Division Head will make completed dossiers available to the committees and will call the initial meeting of each committee to review policies and procedures. The Division Head shall consult with the committees to

ensure that all members are well informed about each candidate's dossier and about the criteria and policies of the Division, the Altoona College, and the University. The Division Head shall serve as a resource person to the committees; however, the Division Head and the committees shall render independent judgments of the candidates being reviewed. The Division Head shall not be present during peer review discussions or when votes are being taken.

The review process for tenure and promotion is concerned with the academic and professional merits of particular candidates, judged in reference to all alternative candidates, including prospective faculty members. The peer review at the Division level will focus on professional and scholarly judgments of the individual's academic work within his or her discipline. In evaluating a candidate the committee members should seek the views of senior members of the candidate's Group. Moreover, the committee members may also seek out evaluations by expert peers at other institutions, as those evaluations may provide essential, helpful information.

After due deliberation and a vote, the committee will submit to the Division Head a letter of evaluation for each candidate addressing each criterion based on the evidence in the dossier. In particular, the Administrative Guidelines for HR-23 require the committees to make a judgment of the candidate's teaching effectiveness based on both peer and student reviews in terms of the following classification: excellent, very good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. When there is dissenting opinion among the voting committee members, the reasons for the dissent must be addressed in the letter. The letter must list the voting committee members, and must report the vote count of the committee. The chairs of the committees must sign the letters.

Evaluation of the dossier by the Division Head. After receiving the letter of evaluation of the Division Promotion and Tenure Peer Review Committee and placing it in the candidate's dossier, the Division Head shall prepare a letter of evaluation also addressing each criterion based on the evidence in the dossier and place it in the dossier. The Division Head shall submit the dossier to the Chancellor of the Altoona College for review by the Altoona College Promotion and Tenure Peer Review Committee.

Consultation in the review process. In accordance with University guidelines for HR-23, consultation must occur when the Division Head's recommendation differs from that of the Division Promotion and Tenure Peer Review Committee. Consultation should be initiated after the Committee review has been completed and its recommendation has been made in writing.

APPENDIX ON REVIEW OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS DIVISION OF MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL SCIENCES

1. Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness

- **Responsibilities of the Peer Review of Teaching Committee**

Peer review of teaching is a process in which an individual's disciplinary peers evaluate a full range of teaching activities including, but not limited to, the development of course materials, class assignments, grading, student research, and student mentoring.

Each member of the peer review of teaching committee will observe at least one class period and one lab period (if applicable) taught by the faculty member under review. In addition, committee members will review course materials such as class syllabi, examples of graded student work, and whatever additional information (including possibly a teaching portfolio) the faculty member makes available to the committee. The peer review of teaching committee will write one letter signed by all members of the committee. In the event that there is disagreement within the committee, the letter will include separate majority and minority opinions.

The peer review of teaching committee will also write a separate summary of student comments. Student comments will be collected using the procedures outlined in Section 2.

- **Procedures for Selecting a Peer Review of Teaching Committee**

The Division Head will ask the faculty member under review for a list of at least five peers whom the faculty member considers acceptable for his/her peer review of teaching committee. The list of acceptable faculty members can include any full-time faculty in the Division and/or full-time Penn State faculty from outside the Division/College who teach courses similar to those that the faculty member under review teaches. However, the list should include tenured faculty whose teaching assignment is similar to that of the faculty member under review, and if the faculty member under review teaches a significant number of credits/courses in a certain discipline, then at least one tenured faculty member from that discipline should be included on the list.

The Division Head will form a three-person peer review of teaching committee from people on the list supplied by the faculty member under review, provided that the list includes tenured faculty as specified in the preceding paragraph. If fewer than three of the people on the list are willing and able to serve or the list does not satisfy the criteria in the preceding paragraph, then the Division Head will ask the faculty member under review to extend the list or appoint additional members to the committee as necessary.

- **Additional Reviews of Teaching Effectiveness**

The Division Head in consultation with the candidate may arrange for additional evaluators to observe and provide written assessments of a candidate's teaching effectiveness for placement in the candidate's dossier.

2. Procedures for Collecting Student Comments

Student comments may be collected using any combination of the following.

- **Written student comments collected with the SRTEs.**

Any combination of the division-approved forms for written student comments may be handed out at the same time the SRTEs are administered (see Section 4). The forms with written student comments will be collected separately from the SRTE forms and will be delivered to the office of the Division Head. The forms will be scanned electronically and forwarded to the faculty member's peer review of teaching committee.

- **Letters from students who have completed a course taught by the faculty member.**

At the request of the faculty member under review, the Division Head will solicit letters from a random sample of students who have completed courses taught by the faculty member during the previous two years. The Division Head will work with the faculty member to ensure that letters are solicited from a wide range of students. The student letters will be forwarded to the faculty member's peer review of teaching committee together with the grades of the students who wrote the letters.

- **Formal interviews with students at the end of the semester.**

At the request of the faculty member under review, the division head and the peer review of teaching committee may arrange for formal interviews with students at the end of the semester.

3. Timeline for Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness

- **Spring Review (e.g., 4th year, 6th year, and later reviews)**

Before the end of the 8th week of the fall semester the Division Head will solicit the names of those peers whom the faculty member considers acceptable for the peer review committee. At this time, the Division Head will also ask the faculty member what procedure he or she wishes to use to collect student comments.

The Division Head will form the peer review committee by the end of the 10th week of the fall semester. The committee will complete its work and submit its letter and summary of student comments within 4 weeks of the end of the spring semester.

- **Fall Review (e.g., 2nd year, and post-tenure reviews)**

Before the end of the 8th week of the previous spring semester the Division Head will solicit the names of those peers whom the faculty member considers acceptable for the

peer review committee. At this time, the Division Head will also ask the faculty member what procedure he or she wishes to use to collect student comments.

The Division Head will form the peer review committee by the end of the 10th week of the spring semester.

The committee will complete its work and submit its letter and summary of student comments within 4 weeks of the end of the fall semester.

4. Division-Approved Forms for Collecting Student Comments

The following forms have been approved by the Division for collecting written student comments.

Student Evaluation of Learning Experience
Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Penn State Altoona

Professor _____ Course/s _____
Course Semester

In answering the questions below, please discuss specific aspects of the course with this professor, such as the syllabus, assignments, teaching style, classroom environment, etc. Feel free to use the back of this sheet.

1. Why did you take this course? (e.g. required for major, elective, etc.)

2. What did you like about the way the course was taught?

3. What did you not like about the way the course was taught?

4. Include any additional comments.
(You may use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

Student Evaluation of Learning Experience
Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Penn State Altoona

Professor _____ Course/s _____
Course Semester

In answering the questions below, please discuss specific aspects of the course with this professor, such as the syllabus, assignments, teaching style, classroom environment, etc. Feel free to use the back of this sheet.

1. Why did you take this course? (e.g. required for major, elective, etc.)

2. What did you like about the way the course was taught?

3. What did you not like about the way the course was taught?

[4. Additional questions may be inserted by the faculty member here.]

5. Include any additional comments.
(You may use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

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