

Discussion of changes in the policy from the March Senate meeting proposal

The ad hoc promotion and tenure committee carefully considered the comments at the forum, the Senate meeting and comments sent by individual faculty. The main issues of concern included the composition of the appeals committee, time towards tenure, no summary letter being required, de facto tenure changes and the fact that internal letters are open but external letters are closed. We revised the composition of the appeals committee to include no voting members from the original P&T committee (9). We clarified that we were referring to going up early towards tenure (4). We now propose a requirement for a departmental summary and college committee (if there is one) letter (6a).

We discussed at length the openness of outside letters versus internal letters. The committee believes quality outside letters are essential to the process; they provide unbiased feedback on the national standing of the candidate in his/her field. Although we endorse a transparent internal letter writing process as possible, we acknowledge that we must respect the norms of external referees. Therefore, we endorse leaving external letters closed (or open only if that is the desire of the external referee.) However, we expect internal letters that are available to the candidate will include important information from these letters, so the candidate will have a chance to rebut any important information that may impact the tenure decision. We adhere to our belief that the process should be as transparent as possible including all internal letters. Faculty do not need to write individual letters if they do not want their name attached to the opinion. Summary letters should include all discussion in the faculty meeting so each opinion can be heard by all considering the candidate. However, these individual opinions will be recorded without attribution in the summary letter. If individuals want to write individual letters, they are welcome to write the letters, but these will be available to the candidate.