

Task Force to Develop an Advisory Framework for a Review of Board of Trustee's Policy on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure

The Problem:

The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees Policy on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure was adopted in 1998 and has not been comprehensively reviewed since then. The section of the policy relative to the cumulative performance review of tenured faculty has been identified as complicated and difficult to implement. To ensure the University policy reflects current best practices relative to cumulative performance review, a thorough review, with recommendations for improvements, is needed.

Research Questions:

1. Does the Policy reflect best practices relative to post-tenure review?
2. Does the Policy reflect best practices relative to addressing unsatisfactory performance?
3. Does the Policy allow an appropriate level of campus-specific flexibility in practices?

Guiding Principles:

The UT Board of Trustees Policy on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure should:

- State the purpose clearly
- Use terms consistently
- Reflect best practices
- Recognize the differences in the missions of the various UT campuses
- Establish general policies and principles applicable to all campuses
- Ensure policies addressing unsatisfactory performance are clear and effective

Review Team Composition

Toby Boulet, Associate Professor, Mechanical, Aerospace and Biomedical Engineering, UTK, *Chair*

Vicky Gregg, Member of UT Board of Trustees

Susan Davidson, Professor, Nursing, UTC

Dan Pigg, Professor, English, UTM

Tom Samples, Professor, Plant Sciences, UTIA

Phyllis Ritchey, Associate Professor, Preventive Medicine, UTHSC

Valerie Rutledge, Dean, College of Health, Education & Professional Studies,
UTC

Susan Martin, Provost, UTK

Lori Gonzalez, Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs,
UTHSC

John Stier, Assistant Dean, CASNR, UTIA

Jeff Rogers, Professor, UTM

Staff Support

Katie High, Vice President, Academic Affairs & Student Success

Catherine Mizell, General Counsel

Lela Young, Associate General Counsel

Methodology:

Conduct a literature review and benchmarking study to identify best practices at Research Intensive Institutions, Regional Institutions, and Medical Institutions

- Include Post-Tenure Policies and Procedures
- Ascertain effectiveness of and satisfaction with such policy and procedures
- Recommend models of Post-Tenure review policies/procedures to UT
- Contract with Education Advisory Board to conduct the review and analysis
- Develop recommendations for revisions, if any, to the UT Policy on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure relative to post-tenure review

Timeline:

The Review Team members should be selected and notified by July 1, 2015.

The Review Team will begin its work in mid-September, 2015, and will submit recommendations to President DiPietro by May, 2016.