

Implementation of Periodic Post Tenure Review at the University of Tennessee

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On March 23, 2018 the UT Board of Trustees approved the following policy:

Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review

The Board of Trustees recognizes and affirms the importance of tenure in protecting academic freedom and thus promoting the University's principal mission of discovery and dissemination of truth through teaching, research, and service. The Board also recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to students, parents, and all citizens of Tennessee to ensure that faculty members effectively serve the needs of students and the University throughout their careers. Therefore, the President shall establish, with Board approval, procedures for each campus under which every tenured faculty member shall receive a comprehensive performance review no less often than every six years. As a minimum, the procedures for this periodic review shall: (1) provide for a peer review committee internal to the campus composed of tenured faculty members at the same or higher academic rank as the faculty member being reviewed, some of whom hold appointments in the same department as the faculty member being reviewed and some of whom do not; (2) provide for external reviews to be solicited when deemed necessary by the peer review committee or the dean; and (3) provide for appropriate staggering of reviews to avoid excessive administrative burden at any given time.

Context: Based on the small number of faculty who receive rankings below "meet expectations" through Annual Planning and Performance Reviews (APPR), the UT Board of Trustees believes that annual rankings of faculty are not rigorous enough. In consultation with UT President Joe DiPietro, each campus is to develop a Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review process for approval at the June 2018 Board of Trustees meeting.

Need to Define the Problem: UT Vice-President Linda Martin will provide the Provosts and the University Faculty Council with the following information to assist in policy development:

- Historical data on APPR rankings by campus, college and academic unit showing the number of faculty assigned to each ranking category for the past six years.
- Data on the number of Cumulative Performance Reviews (CPR) that were initiated for each campus over this same period showing the number of faculty who (1) returned to productivity, (2) chose to retire or leave the university, or (3) resulted in termination.
- Examples of "best practices" of periodic post-tenure review policies from other universities.

Ensuring the Clarity and Consistency of Annual Performance and Planning Reviews

- Chief academic officers on each campus should complete an audit to confirm that all college and unit bylaws have appropriate performance criteria by academic rank.

- Each campus should establish an annual comprehensive department head training program with an emphasis on faculty evaluations.
- Evaluations of department heads should provide an opportunity for faculty to provide input into the effectiveness of the annual evaluations.

Composition and Time-line for the Campus-Level PPPR Policy Drafting Task Forces

The Chief Academic Officers and Faculty Senate President from each campus should convene a task force comprised of faculty and administrators to develop and propose a campus level policy with input from the Faculty Senates and academic deans. According to the resolution passed, campuses will need to complete the development of a PPPR policy by the November 2018 BOT meeting. As such, it will be advisable to start this process before the end of the spring term with work to be done over the summer.

Guiding Questions to Inform the New Policy

The PPPR Policy Drafting Task Forces should address the following questions when drafting a PPPR Policy:

- What materials should the review be based upon to ensure effective and efficient use of effort for the faculty member under review?
- What is the best size and composition of PPPR committees to ensure appropriate disciplinary expertise and effective use of faculty and administrative effort?
- What process will be used for the selection of faculty members conducting reviews?
- What form of evaluation should there be to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching?
- How does the policy address cases where the faculty member under review is determined to be performing at an overall ranking that is higher than the ones assigned through the APPR process?
- How does the policy address cases where the faculty member under review is determined to be performing at an overall ranking that is less than the ones assigned through the APPR process?
- When would a review involve the solicitation of reviewers from outside of the university?
- How will standard rights of appeal apply if a faculty member disagrees with the review committee's findings?
- How do the reviews ensure that there is clarity, consistency and candor in the APPR process?
- How do the reviews support improved performance by department heads as well as inform best practices in annual evaluations?
- How do the reviews provide both formative and summative input for the faculty member under review?
- As the reviews involve personnel information, what provisions are made to ensure the confidentiality of the reviews?
- Should the name of the PPPR system be changed to reflect a commitment to both formative and summative objectives? One option proposed has been Faculty Accomplishments and Accountability Reviews (FAAR).