

To: Lorin Baumhover, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

From: Taskforce on Promotion and Tenure (Unal Boya, Tony Carey, Jill Ehnenn, Holly Hirst, Glenda Treadaway (Chair), Jim Young)

Date: April 29, 2011

Re: Final committee report and recommendations

Enclosed are the finding of the Taskforce on Promotion and Tenure.

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## I. INTRODUCTION:

The taskforce on promotion and tenure met approximately every two weeks throughout academic year 2010-2011, with a final meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Our charge was to make recommendations about the following:

- to streamline and standardize P&T application procedures while preserving complete department autonomy over requirements specific to the discipline
- to combine applications for P&T with applications for Graduate Faculty status
- to consider whether external letters should be required for tenure and/or promotion and, if so, how those letters should be collected
- to consider whether college-level P&T committees should be established throughout the university, and, if so, what would be the composition of , responsibilities of, and procedures concerning those committees

Our recommendations were made after examining two kinds of data: the policies of many other institutions, including our institutional peers and aspirational peers; and the results of the March 2011 Faculty Senate survey of faculty opinion regarding policies affecting tenure-track faculty. The decisions of the taskforce were mostly unanimous.

## II. RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY:

The recommendations of the taskforce fall into two distinct categories:

**Stage One: Two recommendations that do not change the existing P&T process** (first two charges)

- Implement the use of a university-wide P&T portfolio template (see Appendix A)
- Implement the use of university-wide forms: standard DPC ballots for P&T voting to be compiled into a standard summary DPC vote form; and a standard letter format for Chair and Dean reporting of P&T recommendations. These forms would require that the recommending parties justify their decisions with evidence from the candidate portfolio vis-à-vis the departmental P&T guidelines. (see Appendices B, C, D, and E)

It is the opinion of the taskforce that these measures could be implemented fairly quickly after discussion with Deans, Chairs and approval of the Faculty Senate. These recommendations will require some revision of Section 4 of the *Faculty Handbook* especially revision of 4.1.4.1.6. regarding recording of DPC votes. For more detail about these two recommendations, see Section III.

**Stage Two: Two recommendations that significantly change the existing P&T process** (last two charges)

- Add a university-wide requirement of external letters for promotion (see Appendix F)
- Add a university-wide requirement that each college or school establish a College P&T committee that will examine candidate's application for P&T and the recommendations of the DPC and department Chair prior to these materials going to the College Dean. (see Appendix G)

It is the opinion of the taskforce that since these two measures represent a significant change from what Appalachian presently requires for P&T, and since the Faculty Senate survey indicates there is a wide division of faculty opinion on these subjects, especially the college-wide P&T committees, that smooth adaptation of these changes will require robust and repeated discussion with the faculty, willingness to modify the proposal, and discussion with Deans, Chairs, and approval of the Faculty Senate. These recommendations will require revision of Section 4 of the *Faculty Handbook* as well as revision of the *Faculty Handbook Constitution* Article II. For more detail about these recommendations, see Section IV.

**The taskforce asserts that all four recommended changes would improve accountability and clarity in the P&T process, as well as ensure a more impartial and substantial review process that results in improved adherence to departmental guidelines.** Additionally, recommendations 3 and 4 would bring Appalachian more in line with common P&T practices among our peers and institutional peers.

We recommend that the first set of recommendations (template and forms) be implemented as soon as possible, and the second set (university requirement for external letters and college-wide P&T committees) as soon as feasible after more vetting with the deans, chairs, and faculty. Even

if the administration decides not to go ahead with external letters and/or college-wide P&T committees at this time, the taskforce believes that implementing the portfolio template recommendation reporting forms will result in a marked improvement of our current P&T process.

III. DETAILED STAGE ONE RECOMMENDATIONS:  
P&T Portfolio Template and DPC, Chair and Dean Forms

III. A. The taskforce recommends that **all faculty shall use a standard portfolio template when applying for tenure and/or promotion**. The template also has a place for applications for faculty to indicate they are applying for graduate faculty concurrently with their application for tenure and/or promotion. The required contents of the P&T portfolio are outlined in Appendix A.

Faculty seeking tenure and/or promotion shall compile two items for their DPC and department chair: the P&T portfolio of approximately 35 pages plus CV; and a collection of artifacts/documentation appropriate to their discipline that are referenced in the CV and text of the portfolio. The DPC and chair shall use both items when evaluating the candidate for tenure and/or promotion. After departmental deliberations are completed, only the portfolio shall leave the department and go to the Dean's office. The collection of artifacts/documentation shall be stored in the department and available upon request during the remainder of the P&T process.

Our rationale is that this will streamline the process, reduce paperwork and reduce need to transport and store many binders/boxes per candidate in the Dean's offices. The standard template will increase the transparency of the process and make candidate portfolios as similar as possible without compromising the autonomy of departments to determine what the criteria should be for tenure and/or promotion in their discipline.

III.B. The taskforce recommends that **all DPCS shall use a standard ballot when voting on tenure and/or promotion deliberations.** The DPC ballot form is in Appendix B.

Each member of the DPC shall complete a university-wide standard secret ballot that, in addition to their vote, lists evidence why the candidate does or does not meet departmental criteria in each of the three areas of teaching, research and service, as per the department P&T criteria. Once the votes are collected and counted, the EOA for the DPC will type up a summary report of all DPC members' comments for each area, and will indicate the vote count. The report must be completed and approved by the DPC prior to the adjournment of the DPC meeting. The report will then be given to the chair to be put in the candidate's portfolio. All comments will remain anonymous.

The taskforce recommends that **all chairs shall use a standard letter form when reporting the DPC vote and their own recommendation on P&T to the college Dean.** The faculty member under review will receive a copy of the letter and a copy will be placed in the portfolio which is then sent to the Dean. The Chair letter form is in Appendix C.

The taskforce recommends that **all Deans shall use a standard letter form when reporting the DPC vote, the department chair recommendation, and their own recommendation on P&T to the Provost.** The faculty member under review and the chair will each receive a copy of the letter and a copy will be placed in the portfolio which is then sent to the Provost. The Dean letter form is in Appendix D.

Our rationale is that these forms and letters, which each require the recommending individual to outline the reason for their recommendation as per the candidate portfolio and department P&T document, will improve accountability and transparency in the decision-making process. The taskforce also believe these forms and letters, in their requisite detail, will decrease the incidence of decision making based upon personal biases (whether positive or negative).

It is important to note that the taskforce believes that implementing these standard ballots and letter forms may necessitate that departments re-examine their P&T documents and modify them to make them clearer and more specific. In cases where department P&T documents are very vague, neither DPCs, chairs, nor Deans will be able to adequately complete ballots or letters to the degree of specificity requested on the forms. The committee considers this an advantage rather than a drawback to implementing the standard ballots and letter forms, as clear and specific departmental P&T documents increase the transparency of the P&T process, decrease faculty anxiety about the process, and will prevent making decisions on the basis of personal characteristics in the absence of professional criteria.

#### IV. DETAILED STAGE TWO RECOMMENDATIONS:

##### University-wide requirement of External Letters and College-wide P&T Committees

**IV. A. The taskforce recommends that the university require candidates to obtain external letters in support of applications to Full Professor**, as is common at many other universities, nation-wide.

Our rationale is that the practice of obtaining external letters adds important information to the P&T portfolio about how the quality of the faculty member's scholarly and/or creative activity is perceived in the academy/field beyond Appalachian. This information would also be useful in the case of a split vote among DPC members, or a difference of opinion between DPC and chair.

The Faculty Senate survey of the tenured and tenure-track faculty indicated the following opinions about requiring external letters for promotion to Professor:

28.0% said no letter  
 10.1% said one letter  
 30.2% said two  
 25.8% said three  
 5.2% said four.

The taskforce voted to recommend **three letters** for promotion to Professor, thinking that three letters would better accommodate the possibility of a "rogue" letter.

The taskforce had mixed opinions about requiring external letters for promotion to Associate Professor, especially given faculty opinion on the subject:

38.2% said no letters  
 15.7% said one letter  
 26.6% said two  
 16.5% said three  
 3.0% said four

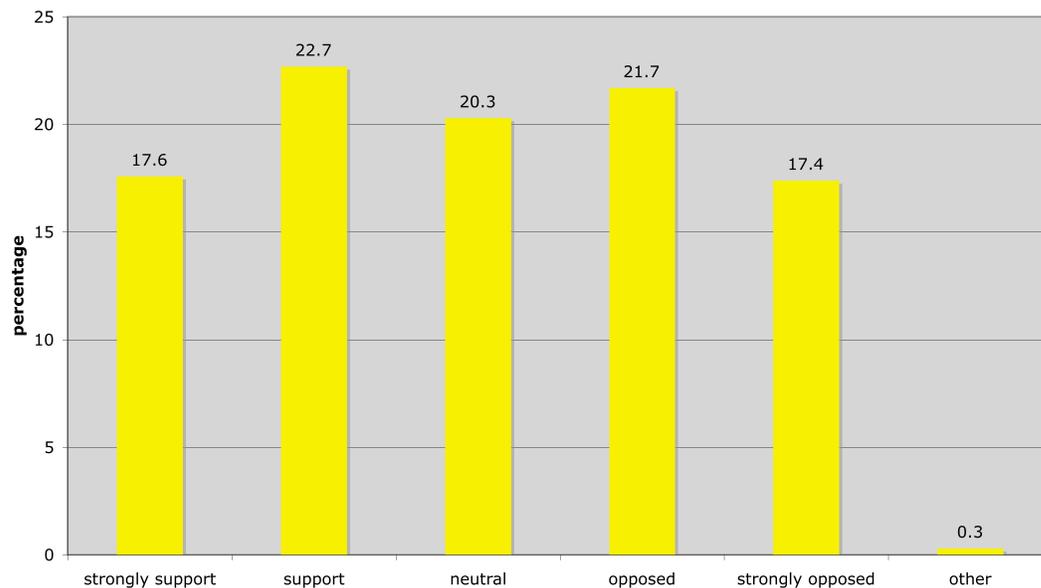
If the university decides to pursue external letters for promotion to Associate Professor, three letters would still best deflect the implications of a "rogue" letter; but the topic and number of external letters would have to be carefully discussed with the faculty.

Please see **Appendix F** for our recommended guidelines regarding requiring external letters in support of a candidate's application for Promotion.

**IV. B. The taskforce recommends that the university require each college/school to establish College-level Promotion and Tenure Committees**, as is common at many other universities, nation-wide. Our rationale is that the practice of College P&T committees helps the college Dean in several important ways: to ensure that department tenure and promotion expectations within the College/School are clear; to ensure that candidates for tenure and/or promotion are evaluated in a impartial and substantive manner; and to ensure that candidates are evaluated in accordance with departmental guidelines

The Faculty Senate survey of the tenured and tenure-track faculty indicated the following opinions about this requirement:

**Should the university institute college-level promotion and tenure committees ?**



Despite the mixed opinions in the survey, the taskforce believes that if the precise nature of what is intended were thoroughly discussed with faculty, and if the university takes the time to carefully vet the proposal with deans, chairs and the Faculty Senate, that establishing College P&T committees would improve the P&T process at Appalachian.

Please see **Appendix G** for our recommended guidelines regarding College Level Promotion and Tenure Committees

## **(Appendix A) University-wide Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Template**

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion shall compile a portfolio according to the outline below. All items must be present in the portfolio.

In addition to the Promotion and Tenure portfolio, candidates shall submit a complete file of artifacts/documentation to the departmental DPC, preferably in digital format but in other forms as appropriate. Artifacts may include books, articles, text of grants and/or works in progress, creative scholarly work, teaching evaluations, syllabi, sample student work, letters documenting service, etc. Artifacts will not be sent out of the department with the Promotion and Tenure Portfolio, but must be available for review upon request throughout the evaluation process. Since the Promotion and Tenure Portfolio will leave the department without artifacts, please be sure to discuss them in full in the portfolio (sections 4-6). At the end of the evaluation process, the portfolio and artifacts will be returned to the candidate.

**The candidate's promotion and tenure portfolio shall consist of the following and be placed in the portfolio in the following order:**

1. Cover letter
2. Summary One Page Vita (As required by UNC GA)
3. Candidate's vita, including evidence related to teaching, research/creative endeavors, and service. The organization of these entries is up to the candidate, but the outline should include education and experience; awards and honors; peer-reviewed/juried products (grant/contract funding, publications, presentations, exhibits, etc.); course development and teaching responsibilities and innovations; outreach and/or service to the department, college, school, university, and discipline.

(4-6 below should be no more than 18 pages and each section should be no less than two pages.)

4. Evidence of quality and effective teaching
  - a. A narrative statement describing the candidate's teaching philosophy and experience
  - b. A discussion of three particularly notable indicators
5. Evidence of quality research/creative activities
  - a. A narrative statement describing the candidate's plans for continuing research/creative activities and how these contribute to the discipline
  - b. A discussion of three particularly notable indicators
6. Evidence of contributions to the department/college/university and/or the profession through service or outreach
  - a. A narrative statement describing the candidate's commitment to service
  - b. A discussion of three particularly notable indicators

7. Letters of Support:
  - a. External – Three letters maximum following the Guidelines in Appendix F.
  - b. Internal – Two letters maximum for each category in the portfolio. More letters can be put in artifacts/documentation file. Candidates will be made aware of any letters submitted that were unsolicited by the candidate.
  
8. Copy of Annual Reviews by Chair
  
9. Graduate Faculty Membership (optional): If also requesting graduate faculty membership please submit as an **independent** packet: the graduate faculty membership form ([www.graduate.appstate.edu/facultystaff/](http://www.graduate.appstate.edu/facultystaff/)), a copy of your vita, and a letter summarizing evidence of engagement in **graduate** education and research during the last five years, including evidence of staying current in the discipline; and evidence of effective teaching and mentoring at the **graduate** level. These materials will be considered by the DPC in a separate vote at the same time as the P&T review. The graduate faculty membership application will be sent forward to the academic dean for approval, and then to the graduate dean for final action.
  
10. The DPC Summary Ballot with comments, compiled by the DPC EOA at the time of the DPC recommendation, will be added to the portfolio at the appropriate stage of the review. The Department Chair and the Dean will each write a letter with their recommended decision, and these will also be added to the portfolio at the appropriate stage of the review.

*Additional information may be added to portfolio when appropriate and/or necessary.*

**(Appendix B.) DPC Secret Ballot for promotion (all areas MUST be completed)**

Motion to approve \_\_\_\_\_ for Promotion to \_\_\_\_\_

1. Teaching:

- a. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

2. Scholarly/Creative Activity:

- a. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

3. Service:

- a. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

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Vote: to approve promotion    Yes    No

**(Appendix C.) DPC Secret Ballot for tenure (all areas MUST be completed)**

Motion to approve \_\_\_\_\_ for tenure.

1. Teaching:

- b. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

2. Scholarly/Creative Activity:

- b. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

3. Service:

- b. Provide evidence explaining why the candidate does or does not meet expectations per department P&T document.

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Vote: to approve tenure      Yes    No

**(Appendix D.) Sample Chair Letter for recommendation for tenure and/or promotion**

Date

To: Dean's Name and College Name

To: Faculty Member's Name and Department Name

From: Chair's Name and Department Name

RE: Promotion and/or Tenure for \_\_\_\_\_(Name of Faculty Member)

First Paragraph: Include DPC vote, date of DPC vote, name of the faculty member considered, promotion rank, and/or tenure statement granting or denying tenure at ASU. Summary statement concerning whether or not you concur or disagree with the DPC recommendations.

Second Paragraph: Include your assessment of teaching based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Third Paragraph: Include your assessment of research/creative activities based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Fourth Paragraph: Include your assessment of service based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Fifth Paragraph: Summary statement

**(Appendix E.) Sample Dean Letter for recommendation for tenure and/or promotion**

Date

To: Provost

To: Chair's Name and Department Name

To: Faculty Member's Name and Department Name

From: Dean's Name and College Name

RE: Promotion and/or Tenure for \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Faculty Member)

First Paragraph: Include Chair recommendation, DPC vote, date of DPC vote, name of the faculty member considered, promotion rank, and/or tenure statement granting or denying tenure at ASU. Summary statement concerning whether or not you concur or disagree with the chair and DPC recommendations.

Second Paragraph: Include your assessment of teaching based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Third Paragraph: Include your assessment of research/creative activities based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Fourth Paragraph: Include your assessment of service based on departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

Fifth Paragraph: Summary statement

**(Appendix F) University Guidelines for External Letters of Review for Promotion**

Faculty portfolios for promotion to Professor (Committee was split on whether or not to include the requirement of external letters for promotion to Associate Professor. Needs to be discussed with campus community.) shall contain three letters from reviewers outside Appalachian, attesting to the quality of the candidate's scholarship and/or other contributions to the discipline and/or academy.

1. The candidate for promotion will give their DPC and Department Chair a list of 4-6 potential external reviewers. The list should indicate the candidate's relationship (if any) to the reviewers.
2. The DPC chooses names from that list
3. The Chair will contact the reviewer and provide necessary information such as candidate vita, departmental P&T documents, etc.

## **(Appendix G) University Guidelines for College Level Promotion & Tenure Committees**

Each College or School shall establish a College-level Promotion & Tenure Committee in order to assist the Dean with the following important tasks: to ensure that department tenure and promotion expectations within the College/School are clear; to ensure that candidates for tenure and/or promotion are evaluated in an impartial and substantive manner; and to ensure that candidates are evaluated in accordance with departmental guidelines.

### **I. Committee Membership**

- All tenured faculty in the college will be eligible to serve on that college's P&T committee.
- College P&T committees will consist of a minimum of five representatives, each from a different unit. Committee members should represent, as broadly as possible, all divisions and academic areas of that college and where practical, have one representative and one alternate from each unit. The tenure-track faculty in each college shall vote to approve the college's P&T committee structure and any changes to that structure.
- Colleges and schools comprised of one unit can choose to use DPC as the college committee.
- Each representative to the college P&T committee shall have an alternate from the same unit.
- Due to the purview of committee, only tenure-track faculty shall elect the committee membership.
- The Committee Chair will be elected from among the committee members at the first meeting of the academic year. The Committee Chair is a voting member of the committee.
- Members will have staggered three-year terms; no member will serve consecutive terms.
- Members going through promotion shall recuse themselves for the year and their alternate will serve instead.
- These procedures are to be followed except in cases where unit structure or faculty composition does not allow.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

- Recommend to the Dean
- Review P&T documents from each department in the college when department guidelines are changed or review every three years for information and consideration of possible recommended changes to ensure clarity.
- Committee will review all P&T portfolios for that year and make sure appropriate procedures have been followed for each candidate, including:
  - The candidate's P&T portfolio follows the University template
  - DPC and chair recommendations are appropriately reported
  - The candidate's portfolio has been evaluated by DPC and chair in accordance with departmental P&T guidelines
- All committee deliberations regarding candidates and candidate portfolios, including discussion of the DPC and chair evaluations of the candidate, will be confidential.

### **III. Committee Actions requiring majority vote**

- If the P&T portfolio does not follow the University template, then it shall be returned to the department to be corrected and reconsidered within the current P&T cycle.
- If the DPC and chair recommendations do not follow the appropriate reporting formats, they will be sent back to be corrected.
- If an error is found that significantly compromises an unbiased, just, and substantive evaluation of the candidate, then the college P&T committee will request additional information or clarification from the candidate and/or unit.
- If an error is found that the committee deems harmless because it has no substantive impact on the candidate's application for P&T, the committee may proceed to step IV and make a recommendation about the candidate's application.

### **IV. Committee Final Recommendations and Report to College Dean**

- Voting on final recommendations will be done by secret ballot. Motions must be stated in the affirmative and require a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass.
- The committee will vote on whether procedures and guidelines were followed. The outcome of the vote and the vote count will be stated in the committee's report to the Dean. If the committee votes that procedures and guidelines were not followed, the report to the Dean will include a discussion of the irregularities.
- The committee will vote to recommend tenure and/or promotion. The outcome of the vote and the vote count will be stated in the committee report to the Dean.
- In the case of the committee disagreeing with the DPC, chair, or both, the committee report to the Dean will provide an explanation that references evidence from the candidate's portfolio, department P&T guidelines, and/or any other pertinent information (*report requires 2/3 approval*).
- The recommendation and report shall be sent to the candidate and included in the candidate's P&T portfolio. The portfolio will then be sent to the Dean.