DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
GUIDELINES FOR
FACULTY RETENTION, PROMOTION, TENURE
AND POST-TENURE REVIEW

The aims of the Department of Philosophy are to provide teaching of the highest possible quality for undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Utah, to encourage and sustain worthwhile research in the discipline by faculty members, graduate students, and undergraduates, and to provide appropriate professional service to the University and off-campus communities. Regular faculty members are appointed after advertised national searches, and their work is reviewed periodically to assist them in career development and to evaluate their contributions in teaching, research, and service. Reappointments, promotions, awards of tenure, and post-tenure reviews are governed by both University regulations and the following departmental procedures.

I. STANDARDS

TEACHING

All faculty members are expected to be skilled, effective, and committed teachers of both undergraduate and graduate students. The courses they present should be current in pedagogical technique and in relation to the professional literature, appropriate to the level of the offering in the curriculum, and responsive to the needs of students. Their expectations should be clearly defined in course descriptions and syllabi, and their grading of students’ work should be fair and unbiased. Each member of the faculty should contribute a variety of courses to the required curriculum, should assist in enriching the departmental offering with classes on specialized topics, and should share the department’s extracurricular instructional load by supervising directed readings and graduate research. We encourage teaching in interdepartmental and interdisciplinary programs, and contributions in these areas are considered in the evaluation of teaching.

RESEARCH

All members of the department are expected to engage in productive philosophical scholarship throughout their careers. Since the quality of published work is as important as its quantity, we employ no simple quantitative standard in evaluating scholarly productivity. Instead, we consider the professional status of the presses which publish our colleagues' books and monographs, the quality of the journals in which their articles appear, how manuscripts are evaluated or refereed, the standing of forums in which scholarly papers are presented, and the opinions of both external and internal readers concerning both published and unpublished work.

The items below are listed in the order of importance they are normally accorded in deliberations concerning retention, promotion, and tenure, as well as post-tenure reviews.

1) Published books or monographs, journal articles, edited books, and book or essay manuscripts accepted for publication.

2) Papers and lectures presented in professional forums, such as conventions, colloquia, and symposiums.

3) Journal editing.
4) Receipt of fellowships, grants, or visiting appointments.

5) Comments on papers at professional meetings, published book reviews, and popular lectures.

Other work relevant to the assessment of professional activity includes:

6) Completed but unpublished manuscripts, refereeing for journals or publishers, and grant proposals under consideration.

7) Office-holding and committee memberships in professional societies and honors and awards from such groups. (May also be considered under service.)

8) Research and writing in progress, workshop presentations.

In addition, review committees may consider:

9) Specialized training relevant to research interests or teaching.

10) Participation in professional conferences and discussion groups.

11) Contributions to the professional development of colleagues.

Items higher on this list generally count more heavily than those listed lower, but outstanding achievement in lower categories may offset lesser achievement in areas higher on the list. The quality of the work under review is the paramount consideration. Candidates for promotion to associate rank and tenure are normally expected to have published several articles in refereed journals or an appropriate monograph or book. Candidates for the rank of full professor are required to have established themselves as scholars with substantial publication records during their years as associates. All departmental reviews of scholarly activity include consideration of the coherence and overall progress of faculty members' research programs.

SERVICE

All members of the department are expected to carry fair shares of the service work required to support the teaching and research missions of the department and the university. They are also encouraged to contribute to the profession through scholarly associations and to the community with off-campus service requiring their scholarly knowledge and skills.

Service to the department, college, and university includes committee work, administrative appointments, teaching outside regularly assigned courses, and participation in special programs.

Service to the profession includes office-holding and committee service in professional societies. (This work may also be considered in connection with candidates' research.)

Service to the community includes, but is not limited to, work on off-campus committees, public discussions, radio and television appearances, lectures to community groups, and participation in civic projects.

II. APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS

In view of the many ways in which individuals may contribute to the work of the department, no general formula can determine what combination of achievements will meet our
requirements in every case. Nevertheless, the following guidelines describe appropriate applications for normal cases.

Retention decisions made early in a candidate's career assign substantial weight to scholarly potential, while decisions on tenure and promotion to the higher ranks emphasize actual accomplishment. People who are hired as instructors become eligible for promotion to assistant professorships by completing their doctorates. Thereafter, the standards listed above apply to the evaluation of both teaching and scholarship.

Acceptable performance in both teaching and research is required for retention, though relative strength in one area may offset some shortcomings in the other. Acceptable performance in teaching requires the successful presentation of an appropriate range of courses. In research, it entails continuous progress in appropriate scholarly activity. (See the standards listed above.)

The category of service ranks below teaching and research in assessing professional achievement, and excellence in service alone does not suffice for retention, promotion, or tenure. Nevertheless, it is very important for every member of the faculty to contribute to the administrative and community work of the department. An unsatisfactory rating in service is therefore an important negative consideration in faculty evaluations.

LENGTH OF TIME IN RANK

A person appointed at the rank of instructor without a doctoral degree is expected to complete the requirements for that degree within the first two years of the appointment, whereupon he or she becomes eligible for promotion to assistant professor.

The standard length of time in the rank of assistant professor is seven years.

The standard length of time in the rank of associate professor is five years.

Faculty members are normally considered for promotion during the last year of their standard times in rank. Within the limits set by university regulations, however, they are considered for promotion and/or tenure whenever they request such reviews or if the personnel committee, recognizing outstanding achievement, recommends their consideration. Also, within the limits set by university regulations, faculty members may decline to be considered.

III. PROCEDURES

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Each year the chair of the department appoints a personnel committee to assemble the files and summarize the information required for retention, promotion, and tenure decisions by the RPT advisory committee and the chair, and to conduct post-tenure reviews. The four members of this committee are as representative as possible of the academic ranks, including non-tenured ranks, and the various specialty fields in the department. In normal circumstances, two members are replaced each year. Because the chair of the department is required to write independent evaluations in formal and post-tenure reviews, he or she does not serve on the personnel committee.
The duties of the personnel committee are:

1) To assemble the documents required for retention, promotion and tenure decisions, and to write detailed summaries of the collected information for the department RPT advisory committee. Completed files are to be made available for review by the faculty of the department two weeks before the scheduled meeting of the advisory committee. Candidates for retention, promotion, and tenure are invited and encouraged to examine all of the contents of these files except letters elicited in confidence from reviews after the candidates have waived their rights to access.

2) To decide whether informal review of a candidate should be made formal. (See "Formal and Informal Reviews" below.) This determination is normally made during the spring quarter preceding the required review.

3) To recommend, on the basis of outstanding performance, consideration of promotion and/or tenure for faculty members with fewer than standard years in rank, who have not applied for promotion or tenure.

4) To conduct periodic post-tenure reviews of regular faculty members as required by university regulations. These reviews involve the collection of appropriate information concerning teaching, research, and service, the evaluation of that information by the committee, and the presentation of a report to the chair of the department.

The department RPT advisory committee, whose membership is defined by university regulations, uses information gathered by the personnel committee as the basis for its deliberations and recommendations.

TYPES OF INFORMATION

As they are needed for the various informal, formal and post-tenure reviews, the following types of information are collected and, where appropriate, summarized by the Personnel Committee:

GENERAL

A current and complete vita of the person being reviewed. A brief (1-2 pages) personal statement from the person being reviewed. It should describe the current work and plans of its author in regard to both teaching and research, and, when relevant, service.

TEACHING

Course descriptions, syllabi, and handouts provided by the instructor.
Course evaluations completed by students.
Sample examinations, essays, or journals indicating student achievements.
Reports from colleagues who have visited classes taught by the person being reviewed.
Comments from exit interviews with graduating students.
Student advisory committee recommendations as required by university regulations. (The student advisory committee is asked to make its reviews as thorough as possible and to provide reports which make the reasons for its recommendations as specific and clear as possible.)

RESEARCH

All the written and professional work, published and unpublished, of the person being reviewed. Manuscripts in progress may be included in the file or withheld at the option of the person being reviewed. Comments and evaluations by colleagues, both internal and external, concerning the quality of the written work and the coherence and appropriateness of the general scholarly program under review.

External evaluations, when these are required for formal reviews. Each candidate for formal review is asked to submit a list of qualified peer evaluators for his or her work. The personnel committee also compiles a list of potential readers, inviting suggestions from the department faculty and chair as needed. Care is taken to ensure that these evaluators are well-established scholars in the candidate's general area of expertise, but not close associates, such as dissertation advisors or coauthors of the candidate's work. The committee's list and the candidate's list are combined, and the candidate is invited to remove any names he or she prefers to delete. The committee then chooses three candidates from the edited list, not revealing their names to the candidate unless he or she has reserved the right to read the otherwise confidential evaluations. Reviewers are informed whether or not each candidate has waived his or her right of access. They are sent representative samples of the candidate's work and asked to evaluate the work according to current professional standards in the relevant subfield. They are not invited to express overall judgments of the candidate's fitness for retention, tenure, or promotion.

SERVICE

Candidate's files should include specific information about service activities when the nature and extent of these efforts are not likely to be obvious to colleagues reading their vitae and personal statements.

TIMELINE FOR REVIEWS

1) The process of gathering information for formal reviews must be started as early as possible in the spring semester preceding the semester in which the reviews are to be conducted. Candidates for optional promotions are therefore asked to notify the department chair of their intent to apply for consideration during that period so that the department chair can convey their names, along with those of people whose reviews are required to be formal, to the chair of the personnel committee.

2) During the spring and summer preceding formal reviews, the personnel committee solicits the required evaluations from external reviewers and assembles the files for each candidate. At this time, the committee also notifies the administrators of non-departmental programs in which candidates are participants that evaluations will be needed from those programs.
3) Late in the spring or at the beginning of the fall semester, the chair of the personnel committee notifies the student advisory committee of the need for its recommendations, allowing at least three weeks for the completion of its reports. The committee chair also invites faculty members and students in the department to submit written comments about each candidate to be included in the non-confidential section of each file.

4) Review files are completed and made available to the faculty of the department at least a week, and earlier if possible, before each meeting of the RPT advisory committee.

5) After the RPT advisory committee meets, its minutes (for formal reviews) and recommendations are conveyed to the chair of the department after review by the members of the advisory committee.

6) The department chair writes his or her recommendations and candidates are asked to read both the documents from the RPT advisory committee and the chair's recommendations. The candidates then add letters to the file either commenting on these documents or stating their willingness to let the file go forward without comment.

7) The department chair and the chair of the personnel committee assemble the completed file in accordance with college guidelines for transmission to the college RPT committee.

NOTE: The process for informal reviews begins at the start of the semester when these reviews are conducted, because formal documentation is not required. Faculty members and other interested people are notified of upcoming informal reviews during the preceding spring semester, allowing them time to request that reviews be made formal. And the student advisory committee is provided early notice of the need for its recommendations. But the other work involved in informal reviews can be completed in the weeks preceding the RPT advisory committee's meetings.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL REVIEWS

Formal reviews require the compilation of complete files, including all the documents listed above, evaluations by external reviewers when these are mandated by university regulations, and recommendations from the department student advisory committee. Informal reviews occur when the presumption is that the faculty member being considered is doing well and will be retained. The purpose of informal reviews is to provide guidance to faculty members concerning their progress toward tenure. It is particularly important that any deficiencies be identified in these reviews. Deliberations of this kind require only updated vitas, course evaluations, and information concerning completed and current scholarly work. The personnel committee does not write reports or summaries for informal reviews, and discussions of these cases by the departmental advisory committee are normally brief.

Tenure and promotion considerations are always formal. For non-tenured instructors and assistant professors, university regulations require formal reviews in the third and seventh years of service and in at least one intervening year, normally the fifth year in our department. When formal reviews are not required, reviews are normally informal. However, faculty members may request that their own reviews be made formal; and faculty colleagues, the personnel committee,
the chair of the department, or the dean may request formal consideration of a person whose review would otherwise be informal. In any of these circumstances, reviews will be conducted formally if the decision to change from informal to formal has been made early enough to permit the assembly of a formal file two weeks before the scheduled meeting of the departmental advisory committee. (Except in extraordinary cases, these decisions should be made during the spring before the review is required.)

As required by university regulations, the departmental RPT advisory committee conveys the minutes of its deliberations in formal reviews and its recommendation regrading each candidate to the department chair. These minutes and the recommendation, along with the chair's recommendation, are forwarded to the dean of the college after the candidate has been given an opportunity to inspect them and add a response to the file.

**IV. POST-TENURE REVIEWS**

As required by university regulations, the work of regular faculty members is reviewed and evaluated every five years after they have been awarded tenure. The personnel committee assumes primary responsibility for these reviews. Faculty members under review submit vitas, current course materials, student evaluations, and personal statements to the committee. Other members of the department and the student advisory committee are invited to submit written comments for each file. The personnel committee then evaluates these documents to determine whether the people being reviewed are meeting departmental and university standards in teaching, research, and service.

The personnel committee conveys its findings and the file of each reviewed faculty member to the chair of the department, who makes a separate evaluation of each file. The chair and at least one member of the committee then meet with the individuals being reviewed to discuss their findings, and, when needed, to agree upon plans for improvement. The chair then advises the dean of the conclusions reached in the review processes and makes the results available to the faculty of the department.

Approved by the Department of Philosophy, May 2, 1997.

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