

To: Members of the Faculty
From: Faculty Handbook Committee
Subject: Amendment to the Faculty Handbook
Date: April 26, 2007

The following amendment was submitted to the Faculty Handbook Committee by the President of the University and, in accordance with the Faculty Handbook, was presented at the April 25th Faculty Forum Meeting. The Faculty Handbook Committee unanimously recommended that the amendment be adopted. If the amendment receives a majority vote of the faculty eligible to vote, it will then be forwarded by the Faculty Service Committee to the Board of Directors for consideration.

The Faculty Handbook Committee asks that you vote and that you encourage all your colleagues to vote. On Faculty Handbook issues a non-vote is essentially a no vote.

Background:

The Faculty Handbook Committee met this past year with a group of administrators appointed by the President in order to discuss, among other issues, an amendment to the Faculty Handbook that would change the contract date from December 15 to March 15. A change in contract date necessitated changes in the annual Faculty evaluation process. This afforded us the opportunity to reexamine this process and to address some long standing concerns about the evaluation and appeal processes.

An initial draft of an amendment was written and made available to the university community and subsequently discussed at a series of open hearings held in the fall semester. A new draft that incorporated suggestions made at the open hearings was prepared and, after receiving feedback from individual chairs and deans, a final draft was completed and forwarded to the President..

**Proposed Amendment to the Faculty Handbook
April 25, 2007**

That Part Four, Section I., B.3 be changed to read:

- I. B. General Conditions for Full-Time Service
 3. Reappointments of Faculty serving on full-time teaching contracts are issued by the Academic Vice President on March 15, and acceptance of them is due within six weeks after issuance. Any other exception to the March 15 date must have the written consent of the University and the Faculty member.

That Part Four, Section II Annual Faculty Evaluation Process be replaced by:

II. ANNUAL FACULTY EVALUATION, AND TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCESSES

A. Annual Faculty Evaluation Process

Each full-time Faculty member in an academic department is evaluated annually to determine the person's salary for the next academic year. The faculty member completes a self-evaluation each Fall using the format distributed by the Office of the Academic Vice President. The Faculty member submits the self-evaluation to the departmental chairperson by the deadline set forth by the Academic Vice President for the given year. The chairperson reviews the Faculty member's performance, and during a private conference discusses this performance with the Faculty member. Each chairperson sends both the self-evaluation and his/her recommendations to the respective dean or deans (in the case of graduate programs) by the date set forth by the Academic Vice President for the given year. The respective dean meets with the department chairperson and assesses the performance of each Faculty member within his/her college/school and makes a recommendation for salary to the Academic Vice President.

Professional librarians undergo a similar evaluation process through the Director of the Library and the Academic Vice President.

The self-evaluations of the chairpersons are reviewed by the respective dean or deans. The dean takes note of the chairperson's dual responsibilities: those of a teaching Faculty member and those of an administrator. The appropriate dean reviews the chairperson's performance and discusses this with the chairperson in a private conference. This dean assesses the performance of the chairperson and

makes a recommendation for salary to the Academic Vice President. The Director of the Library is reviewed by the Academic Vice President.

The Academic Vice President reviews all of these recommendations and meets with the deans and the Director of the Library to note concurrence or to discuss and resolve differences. The dean notifies the chairperson of the final salary decisions in that department. The reaction of the chairperson to the proposed contract adjustments may be given further consideration by the deans and Academic Vice President. The Academic Vice President has responsibility for final decisions regarding the next year's salaries.

This process is normally completed by early March; contracts are mailed to the Faculty not later than March 15.

The chairperson's recommendations concerning any Faculty member may be examined by that Faculty member. Similarly, the comments and recommendations made by the dean in the evaluation of a chairperson may be examined by the one so evaluated.

Appeals from the decision of the Academic Vice President may be made, normally prior to the final date for signing the contract. The appeal process begins with the Faculty member notifying the departmental chairperson or the Director of the Library and the deans of an appeal on the salary decision. Subsequently, a meeting of the Faculty member, the departmental chairperson or the Director of the Library, and the academic deans is held to review the decision in question. Then the deans make a recommendation on the matter involved, sending their recommendation to the Academic Vice President for decision. Results of this appeal are communicated to the Faculty member and the chairperson by the Academic Vice President.

As described in Part Four, Section IV, the line of further appeal within the University is as follows: the Faculty Grievance Committee, the President of the University, and the Board of Directors.

B. Tenure Process

Each untenured Faculty member on active or on leave status is reviewed annually by the department's Tenure Committee to determine the person's progress toward tenure. Untenured library Faculty members are reviewed by the library's Tenure Committee. This is done in accordance with the procedures and guidelines presented in Appendix M.

In all but the third year and the tenure decision year, the annual report of the departmental Tenure Committee is forwarded to the respective dean and that of

the Library Tenure Committee to the Graduate Dean. The respective dean responds to the Tenure Committee according to the guidelines in Appendix M.

In the third year and at the time of the tenure decision, the Tenure Committee's recommendation and report are forwarded to the respective dean who shares them with the Committee of Academic Deans (COAD). The COAD makes its recommendation to the Academic Vice President. The Academic Vice President has responsibility for final decisions in matters of tenure. Final tenure decisions are completed, and written notification is provided to candidates by December 15.

The criterion for tenure is given in Part Three, Section IV.D. University guidelines, procedures, and notification for continuance are given in Appendix M. For termination of contract by nonreappointment of nontenured Faculty see Part Four, Section V.D.

Appeals from the decision of the Academic Vice President may be made, normally within thirty days. The appeal process begins with the Faculty member notifying the departmental chairperson or the Director of the Library, the tenure committee chair, and the deans of an appeal. Subsequently, a meeting of the Faculty member, the departmental chairperson or the Director of the Library, the tenure committee chair, and the academic deans is held to review the decision in question. Then the deans make a recommendation on the matter involved, sending their recommendation to the Academic Vice President for decision. Results of this appeal are communicated to the Faculty member and the chairperson by the Academic Vice President no later than the date on which contracts are to be signed.

As described in Part Four, Section IV, the line of further appeal within the University is as follows: the Faculty Grievance Committee, the President of the University, and the Board of Directors.

C. Promotion Process

The criteria for promotion are given in the description of Faculty Ranks in Part Two of this handbook. Each department will establish and have approved by the Academic Vice President written statements on procedures and standards for promotion. Department procedures are to be consistent with University promotion policy, procedures, and guidelines approved by the Faculty and promulgated by the President (Appendix O).

Each Faculty member is evaluated by the Department Promotion Committee in the year the person comes up for promotion. The Department Promotion Committee's recommendation and report are forwarded to the appropriate dean, who shares them with the Committee of Academic Deans (COAD). The COAD makes its recommendation to the Academic Vice President. The Academic Vice

President has responsibility for final decisions in matters of promotion. Promotion decisions are completed, and written notification is provided to candidates by December 15.

Appeals from the decision of the Academic Vice President may be made, normally within thirty days. The appeal process begins with the Faculty member notifying the departmental chairperson, the promotion committee chair, and the deans of an appeal. Subsequently, a meeting of the Faculty member, the departmental chairperson, the promotion committee chair, and the academic deans is held to review the decision in question. Then the deans make a recommendation on the matter involved, sending their recommendation to the Academic Vice President for decision. Results of this appeal are communicated to the Faculty member and the chairperson by the Academic Vice President.

As described in Part Four, Section IV, the line of further appeal within the University is as follows: the Faculty Grievance Committee, the President of the University, and the Board of Directors.

Reasons for and against the amendment:

The main reason for the change in contract date is a budgetary one. More precise budget information will make salary increases more reasonable and less conservative than if done earlier as is the case now. Spring enrollment figures and updated number of transfer students will result in a better grasp of the total number of students we can expect in fall and therefore a better projection of tuition income.

A change in the contract date necessitated changes in the Annual Faculty Evaluation Process and afforded the opportunity to reexamine the process and address some long standing concerns about the evaluation of Faculty. Administrators involved in the evaluation process would like more time to work through the annual evaluations and tenure and promotion dossiers. Chairpersons would like to know individual salary decisions before contracts are sent out so that they can react to the amounts set by the Academic Vice President. Having tenure and promotion decisions completed by December 15 and extending salary decisions until March 15 splits the administrative workload and allows time for deans to meet with individual chairpersons to discuss the decision of the Academic Vice President. The reaction of the chairperson to the proposed contract adjustments may then be given further consideration by the deans and Academic Vice President.

The amendment explicitly states the role of the Dean of the Graduate School in evaluating graduate Faculty; includes departmental tenure committee chairpersons and promotion committee chairpersons in the appeal meeting with the Committee of Academic Deans; and sets a date by which notification of an appeal decision must be given. These are all considered to be improvements in the processes.

The main reason against the amendment is that the deadline for signing contracts leaves little time for departments to hire for the following academic year if a Faculty member decides not to hand in her or his contract. This is a problem but one that, judging from past administrative experience, does not happen enough to be a serious concern. In the past, faculty who were thinking of leaving usually indicated this early enough to plan for replacement. A bigger problem has been faculty who decided to leave after they signed their contracts and asked to be released from their contractual obligation. Practice has been to allow them to leave.