

## **Changes to the Tenure and Promotion System – What you Need to Know**

**Hosted by the MRFA Professional Standards and Governance Committee  
and the MRFA Negotiating Committee.**

Notes from the Event Below

Also refer to the [Summary of Changes and FAQ document](#) prepared by the Negotiating Committee.

Current applications for professor go through with the old procedures. Any further applications and ongoing tenure reviews will be under the new processes effective January 1. Tenure track members in their fifth year will still be meeting in spring 2015.

These changes go in effect the beginning of 2015: all the other items in the CA went into effect immediately (unless there is a different date specified in the article)

We are not running 2 different tenure systems. The criteria for evaluation have not changed. The only thing that has changed is when people meet with their tenure committee and the composition of the committee. Tenure track members will not be disadvantaged in any way: the changes are not more onerous nor are they any easier.

There used to be four criteria considered for tenure and promotion: now there are three. The fourth criteria on responsible and professional conduct was removed and combined with the first three criteria. The Agreement now, also, indicates who is responsible for determining whether a member has conducted themselves in a “responsible and professional” manner.

- Many people pointed out in the Tenure and Promotion review consultation process that they were not sure if it was the committee’s job to find evidence of responsible and professional conduct or if it was the candidate’s. There were also questions about how you could provide evidence for this except for in the negative.
- To resolve these confusions the CA now indicates that the Chair and the Dean will have to indicate whether the work done under teaching service and scholarship has been done in a responsible and professional manner.
  - If it was considered not to have been done in a responsible and professional manner then there are mechanisms to address this.
  - UTPC will be creating a form for this sort of information. The Dean or the Chair would use this form, and there will still be form 507 which members of the department can still use.
  - Part of the problem is that people thought the fourth criterion was for really egregious things. When really, it could be as simple as not being in office for office hours.
- It is really important that the TC meeting with the candidate should not be the first time concerns are raised.
  - As things come up during the year they should be brought to the Chair.
  - This should be documented and investigated properly and addressed if necessary.
  - This documentation could then be brought into the TC process. Problems arise when issues are brought forward for the first time at the TC meeting.
  - When concerns are brought to the TC, the TC must ensure it is factual and relevant to the criteria: this is where the documentation comes in.
    - If it is factual and relevant it will be included in the TPC report.
    - The candidate sees the report and can meet with the committee and bring their supporting documentation.
- Form 507s do not get included in the binder.

- If you are not on the TC you can submit a 507 if you are on the TC you cannot. But, the form should not be used to raise concerns for the first time. Members with concerns should contact their Chairs when issues come up. Also, it is the chairs responsibility on the TC to determine if something is relevant or not. It is very important they do this and ensure the process is followed properly.

TPC is now TC and PC. The Tenure Committee (TC) is at the department level and the Promotion Committee (PC) is at the Faculty level with representatives from all departments.

In the old system you could choose the composition of your TPC or have a committee of the whole. In this Agreement, that will no longer be permitted.

- Size of the TC
  - The biggest possible TC is 9 members including the Chair. You can, in consultation with the dean, structure the TC to have representation from specific disciplines within your department.
  - The smallest possible TC is 5 members including the chair. Departments without enough members will bring in representatives from other departments.
- TC Composition
  - Going forward the Chair of the tenure committee must be the Chair of the department. One of the main reasons for this change is that much is discussed at Chairs' Assembly about Tenure and Promotion: people who are not chairs are not privy to this information.
- The Chair of the TC only votes in the case of a tie.

The timing of committee meetings have changed (and submission of annual reports). Based on feedback prior timelines were not ideal and people wanted to free up the spring for other things.

- The review of your first year will be done in Sept/Oct of Year two,
- the review of your second year will be done in Sept/Oct of Year three,
- the midterm review will be in the fall of the fourth year,
- there will be no annual review for the fourth year though you still need to do all the same things and update your binder accordingly, and
- the binder is due in the fifth year.
  - The midterm review takes on greater significance since there is no annual review between it and the final review.
  - Forms will change to reflect these changes.

Members currently in their fifth years - your binder is due in January and your TC will meet to deal with that binder in this academic year.

## **Q & A**

- What goes in the Binder?
  - Any contents of what is to be in the binder is in the tenure and promotion guidelines document being written by UTPC
- If there is a formal record of disciplinary action against you placed in your file in the last four years it needs to be included in your tenure and promotion binders.
  - Refer to new articles in the CA on personal files and discipline.
  - There is a process in place now and there is progressive discipline
  - A record of disciplinary action refers to official records held by the Dean and HR - this is not a form 507 etc. It has to have gone through the proper channels to be recognized as such
- If I am in my fourth year do I submit a binder?

- You are not submitting a binder next fall but you still need to include all the evaluations etc. The binder is to be submitted a few months later for the final review
  - The member and the chair could decide to review these informally if agreed
- Can old TPCs that meet the new TC composition requirements continue?
  - Yes, it could but it will not look at Promotion
- If people went through midterm review last spring they would not have another review till their final review?
  - Yes.
- Candidates and tenure committees should note that if there are significant problems with performance it needs to be very clearly flagged during the midterm review. You have to describe it as a serious concern if it is a serious concern.
- The structure of the new TC is it common for every tenure candidate in the department?
  - Yes, There is one TC per department looking at all tenure track members
  - The only exception is for cross appointed members
- The chair of the department is the chair of the TC as long as there is not a conflict of interest...?
  - For the candidate for whom there is a conflict of interest the Chair will be replaced by an alternate who is appointed by the Dean
- Example of a conflict of interest?
  - See 9.4.3 – for instance, a conflict would be a relative or close friend, in position to gain or lose financially, affiliated with the persons company, co-authored, have long standing or personal differences.
  - People have to disclose If they may be in a conflict of interest and the Dean decides if it is a genuine conflict of interest (this is not up to the TPC)
  - 9.1.6 under exceptional circumstances the dean appoints a designate
- These are just process changes: the criteria and expectations are all the same?
  - Yes.

In the Tenure and Promotion Review consultation we heard a number of people felt that there was a better way to do promotion than at the department level. While tenure committees will still be at the department level, promotion committees will be at the Faculty level. The Faculty will have one committee examining all applications for promotion from that Faculty. Each department will have a tenured member and an alternate elected to the Faculty committee. These elections are by secret ballot and the elections are being organised now.

- Departments not directly connected to a Faculty
  - Counselling has a formal relationship with Arts for some aspects of its tenure evaluation so Counselling promotions will be with Arts
  - The library is not currently connected to another Faculty so there is an MOU committee working on a structure that will work for the librarians that will provide a better breadth of review for promotion.
  - ADC will be under the Faculty of Teaching and Learning
  - For members cross appointed across faculties a special promotion committee has to be created and the rules for this are in the article on cross appointments.
- Members from multidisciplinary units:
  - You may have concerns that your department representative not from your discipline will not be able to judge your teaching or scholarship appropriately. It is worth remembering that external referees are there to help judge your disciplinary specific aspects. During the process your chair will also come and speak to the promotion committee (they are not part of the committee or part of the decision).
- The Dean is now the Chair of the promotion committee and only votes in the case of a tie.
- Now it is the PC decision that goes to UTPC: the Dean no longer makes a recommendation to UTPC.

- Promotion binders will be made available to departments and members of the department can provide input.
- Changes to referee selection.
  - o Promotion is recognition of impact beyond the academic unit (this makes sense to have it at the Faculty level).
  - o Referees should be thought of not as job references but more as a peer reviewer for an article you send out.
    - The referee will get the binder and review it in accordance to the criteria MRU has.
    - The member provides 4 names the chair provides 2 and the Dean picks three.
    - The names you pick need to not be in conflict of interest situations.
    - The chair can ask you if the two people they are picking are in conflict of interest. Candidates can say no, and the chair should not submit a specific name for this reason.
  - o Members are not to contact the referees in advance.
  - o It is not unusual that the Dean has to contact more than their first three picks because some potential referees do not get back to the Dean.
  - o Members will not know which referees were contacted nor what they said.

#### **Q & A**

- Departments vote for their representative and alternate
- How does a chair pick a referee in a multidisciplinary department?
  - o The chair could go to the member for advice or to other members in the department who are in the candidate's discipline.
  - o Or the Chair could google other scholars doing similar types of work.
- What if the chair is also the elected person to the promotion committee?
  - o This is not in the agreement, but it should be made explicit. If a chair were on the PC and a member of their department came up for promotion then they would not serve in that case and the alternate would be involved.
  - o The tenure and promotion review committee is still doing its work and there will still be some work on this agreement over the coming years.
  - o If you know there are no members going up for promotion from a department the chair could be on the PC.
  - o Terms on the PC are staggered over three year terms

Limited term faculty used to be evaluated in the same way as tenure track people. This has changed now that the tenure committee's work has been moved to the fall. Their contract may be up in the spring; so, their review could not be in the next academic year.

- If an individual in, for example, a two year term they would be evaluated in the fall of their second year. When their term ends in the spring of the second year, they would not have to do an evaluation the following fall (whether or not they are re-appointed).
- But, they still need all the same SEIs, peer reviews and annual reports.
- Instead of meeting with the TC in the fall after the contract expired, the Limited Term member should meet with the chair in the spring who will write a summary of what the person did and this would be used if the Limited Term member wanted to apply Limited Term years to probationary period. (The member would have one TC review and one letter from the Chair).
- If the members Limited Term term is renewed in the subsequent year there is still no need to have the review done with the TC: all you need is the summary document from the Chair as this is all that is going to count in the tenure dossier.

Overall nothing significant has changed: just process. Members are still expected to do the same things but reviews are at different times