Minimum Language for Internal RPT Committees and External Referee Solicitations
April 2021

Background & Context
In recognition of the impact of COVID-19 on faculty evaluation, the Faculty Matters committee prepared a number of recommendations for the Faculty Senate to consider. The report, “Faculty Evaluation Recommendations during the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic,” was overwhelmingly approved by the Faculty Senate at their meeting on March 31, 2021.

Action Items
As the Faculty Matters report recommends, it is important to consider potential adaptations for faculty Renewal, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT). Specifically, given national conversations, best practices, and mounting concerns over equity, all colleges/schools should include the following minimum language in instructions to internal and external reviewers. Colleges, schools, and LAUs may choose to add to this language, as appropriate for the discipline/field of study.

For Internal Level 1 & Level 2 RPT Committees

- Minimum language to internal Level 1 and Level 2 RPT committees for both tenure-line and term faculty, as appropriate.

  “Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty across the academy experienced significant disruptions to teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service. In conjunction with the disruptions experienced on-campus, many faculty members had to navigate additional challenges related to working from home. As these impacts are not felt equally, the Provost approved an optional tenure-clock extension. Candidates who may have used university-approved extensions for any reason should be held to the same standard one expects for a typical probationary period; that is, additional time should not prejudice the review in any way. We suggest that you take these unprecedented events into consideration when evaluating teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service since spring 2020.”

For External Referees

- Minimum language for inclusion in all external referee solicitations.

  “Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty across the academy experienced significant disruptions to teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service. In conjunction with the disruptions experienced on-campus, many faculty members had to navigate additional challenges related to working from home. Candidates who may have used university-approved extensions for any reason should be held to the same standard one expects for a typical probationary period; that is, additional time should not prejudice the review in any way. We suggest that you take these unprecedented events into consideration when evaluating teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service since spring 2020.”