

**Report of the A & S Senate Promotion and Tenure Committee
September 2009**

**Prepared by Joanne Davila, Former Chair PTC
Presented by Gary Matthews, Current Chair PTC**

2008-2009 Committee:

- Joanne Davila, Chair – Psychology (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Ellen Broselow – Linguistics (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Vitaly Citovsky – Biochemistry (Natural Sciences)
- Jacqueline Reich – Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies (Humanities and Fine Arts)
- Peter Manning – English (Humanities and Fine Arts; Fall semester only)
- Gary Matthews – Neurobiology and Behavior (Natural Sciences)
- Ryan Minor – Music (Humanities and Fine Arts) – non-tenured member

Organization and functioning:

The committee met regularly, typically bi-weekly, during the 2008-2009 academic year, with excellent attendance. All committee members are dedicated and hard working. They take their position seriously and behave in a professional, ethical manner. The committee functions very well as a group, demonstrating cohesion and respect for all members. The committee also met three times during the 2009 summer session. Summer meetings have become increasingly necessary to deal with new hires whose appointments begin in September, as well as complex cases.

Philosophy and process:

The PTC plays an important role in the College of Arts and Sciences. The PTC represents the faculty and serves as a means for providing quality control for the faculty. The PTC independently assesses cases of tenure and promotion and makes advisory recommendations to the Dean accordingly. The faculty members who make up the committee are critical to its functioning and success and it is important to continue to elect strong members to serve on the committee.

The PTC has maintained a strong level of continuity in process with prior years. We continue to adhere strongly to the Policies of the Board of Trustees, and to focus decisions on scholarship, teaching, and service. We recognize that every case is different and make certain that we take into account diversity across departments and types of scholarly achievements.

In making decisions, the main question that we focus on is whether the candidate's scholarship is having an impact on their field. Our ability to assess this relies on the clarity with which this is presented in the dossier, and we rely heavily on the views expressed in outside letters and in the chair's letters. A few comments about each are in order. Regarding outside letters, those that come from individuals who do not have a close professional relationship with the candidate are essential, as they are likely to be least biased by personal connections. Regarding the chair's

letters, it is critical that they express and discuss both the strengths and weaknesses of the case, particularly those pointed out by outside letter writers. Providing a clear rationale for the departmental vote is also extremely important. If there were “no” votes or abstentions, it is important to clarify the reasons for such votes. Chair’s letters that simply reiterate or quote from outside letters, or that present a run-down of the faculty discussion of the case are least helpful to the PTC and are a disservice to the candidate. Unfortunately, many chairs’ letters continue to be written in this manner.

Regarding the assessment of scholarly ability for promotion to Full Professor, the PTC feels that promotion should not be awarded just for significant administrative or other accomplishments, but should be awarded only to those who show true excellence and a strong reputation in creative and scholarly activities. However, teaching and service do matter, and weight is placed on the extent to which candidates for full professor have shown initiative in contributing to the future of their department and their field.

Caseload and actions:

From 9/11/08 through 9/1/09, the PTC acted on 32 cases. Of these, 17 were cases for promotion with tenure, 2 were cases for tenure of individuals hired as Associate Professors without tenure, 10 were cases for promotion to full professor, and 3 were new appointments (with tenure). Four of the cases were from SoMAS, and one was from journalism (note that the CAS Dean does not act on these cases).

Of the promotion cases acted on (excluding the new appointments; n = 29), the departments were in favor of promotion in 28 cases and the PTC agreed with the departmental recommendation in all but three cases (one promotion to full, two promotion and tenure). In the one case in which the department was not in favor of promotion, the PTC concurred.

Of the 27 cases that have been acted on by the Dean(s) (Dean Staros and more recently Dean Squires), the Dean has agreed with the PTC in all but two cases (one promotion to full, one tenure and promotion). In both cases, the PTC recommended against promotion, but the Dean recommended in favor of promotion. Note that one of the cases on which the Dean agreed with the PTC was the case in which both the department and the PTC were not in favor of promotion. Of the 27 cases, 23 have progressed to the Provost and President, and both have agreed with the prior recommendations (yielding promotion in all cases, but the one for which the Department, PTC, and Dean were not in favor). Two cases have progressed to the Provost, who has agreed with the prior recommendations. The remainder of the cases (n = 2) are in progress. The four SoMAS cases and one journalism case have all been acted on by the Provost and President and resulted in promotion in all cases.

Other:

1. The PTC continued to consider the move to the use of electronic dossiers. The committee continues to be in favor and will continue to determine how to best implement such a process.

2. In spring 2006, the PTC was contacted by members of library science to initiate discussion about whether library files could be evaluated through the A & S PTC. This discussion continued through the 2007/2008 academic year, with a number of meetings of the PTC and the library faculty. In October 2008, the librarians voted to stay with their own promotion and tenure procedures. As such, the A & S PTC will not act on library files.

3. Three amendments proposed by the PTC were passed by the Senate in October and November 2008. The first was to amend language in the PTC Guidelines to clarify what is expected in the candidate's research statement. The second was to update the biographical file accordingly to reflect the changes in the Guidelines regarding the research statement, as well as to update outdated terminology used in the biographical file. The third was to include the biographical file as an appendix to the PTC Guidelines. All changes have been implemented.

4. During Fall 2008 and Spring 2009, the PTC consulted with the Provost and with the School of Journalism regarding the School's promotion and tenure guidelines. The School of Journalism revised its guidelines in accordance with PTC requests for greater clarity and specificity.

5. In Fall 2008, the PTC consulted with Mark Aronoff, Graham Glynn, and Emily Thomas regarding changes to the University Course Evaluations. The PTC provided them with a list of suggestions that would facilitate utility of the evaluations for the PTC review of dossiers.

6. In February 2009, the PTC consulted with Ruth Ben-Zvi, at her request, regarding handling course evaluations for small graduate courses in a way that would be useful to the PTC.

7. In February 2009, the PTC consulted with the Dean's Office, at their request, to decide that in cases where an individual was hired at senior rank without tenure, and then is coming up for tenure, the PTC expects to review a file that meets the guidelines for regular tenure files. If the file is going to come to the PTC within one year of hiring, then the department can use the hiring file, as long as they add what is necessary to bring it up to tenure file standards. However, if the file is going to come to the PTC more than one year after hiring, a new, complete tenure file is required. An amendment to update the PTC guidelines in this regard will be prepared this fall.

8. In Spring 2009, the PTC consulted with the Dean's Office, at their request, to decide that notices of PTC recommendations are to be sent to departments immediately (rather than the old procedure of 14 days later).

9. In Spring 2009, the PTC consulted with the Provost's Office, at their request, regarding a proposal to allow the Provost to request additional information from candidates. After discussion, the Provost's Office decided not to pursue the proposal.