

PROMOTION LEGISLATION, March 1, 2002

INTRODUCTION:

The current *Faculty Handbook* offers little guidance with respect to procedures for promotion to the rank of Professor. Moreover, in reviewing departmental procedures across the college, we find many differences from one department to another. One department sends all department letters to the CAPT; another requires no letters from department members at all. One requires letters from external reviewers; another does not. Such broad differences make for the perception of inequities, and may even produce inequities, for individual candidates. We are therefore proposing that the College accept a common set of procedures for promotion, procedures that would be included in *The Faculty Handbook*, just as our tenure procedures are. Attached to these proposals is a document showing the revised Faculty Handbook language for Article X, PROMOTION, should the proposed legislation pass in its entirety.

1. NOMINATION AND CONSIDERATION

At present, candidates may be nominated to the department for promotion consideration by the Chair or by any member of the department. Candidates may also nominate themselves. In the case of a department Chair, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty or CAPT nominates or may receive nominations from department members.

PROPOSALS:

1. *All departments shall review eligibility of Associate Professors at least every two years after they have served seven years in rank.*
2. *The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty may also decide to nominate a candidate for promotion. In such a case, the department is obliged to consider the candidate's credentials and to present its recommendation to the CAPT. Nomination by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty does not presuppose a successful outcome for the candidate.*

Proposals are incorporated in bold-face italics into the present text of the Faculty Handbook as follows:

b. Consideration for promotion may be initiated by the department Chair in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty or CAPT. [or] The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty in consultation with the President *may also decide to nominate a candidate for promotion. In such a case, the department is obliged to consider the candidate's credentials and to present its recommendation to the CAPT. Nomination by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty does not presuppose a successful outcome for the candidate.*

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty initiates promotional consideration in the case of department Chairs. The department Chair or the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty shall indicate the consultation procedures employed within the department when recommending a promotion.

c. By March 15 the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty shall provide Department Chairs with a list of faculty in their departments who have been at the rank of Associate Professor for seven years or more. The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty shall provide CAPT with a list of all faculty who have been at the rank of Associate Professor for seven years or more ***All departments shall review eligibility of associate professors at least every two years after they have served seven years in rank.***

d. Candidates being considered for promotion shall be sent a written notice by the Chair of the CAPT that they are candidates for promotion.

RATIONALE: CAPT is concerned that some worthy candidates may be overlooked by their departments. Proposal 1 mandates regular, routine consideration of eligible faculty; proposal 2 permits the Dean to nominate a candidate even if the department does not initiate the procedure. Such a provision is already implicit in the Faculty Handbook (***FHB, article X, A, 1, b***) and we believe that candidates who are convinced their credentials are worthy but who are not presented to CAPT by their departments for promotion consideration ought to have some recourse.

2. DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATION:

Consultation within departments varies widely. Some departments require letters from eligible (those in at least their third year) members and submit them to CAPT; some require letters only from tenured members and do or do not forward them to CAPT. Some Chairs summarize the gist of the letters and do not forward the letters themselves to CAPT. Some departments hold meetings; others do not. Some have Personnel Committees. Some Chairs send their letter to all department members for approval; others do not.

PROPOSAL:

e. All full time faculty and those holding shared appointments in the departments concerned and in at least their third year of service (in the ranks defined in The Faculty Handbook, Part One, IV, Categories of Appointments to the Faculty, Topics A: Tenure Track Appointments and C.b, Artist or Writers-in-residence) shall be consulted and shall write letters to the Chair. The department Chair must also request written reports from program directors and from other department Chairs if the candidate has offered courses in other programs or departments. Individuals writing letters of evaluation for the candidate shall clearly state whether they do or do not recommend promotion, and why, according to the criteria for continued service The Chair's letter

shall present the Chair's individual position as well as the department's. All these letters shall be forwarded to CAPT.

RATIONALE:

Some departments provide extensive documentation for a case and others do not; a department has more credibility if the case is fully documented. A Chair may be stimulated to deal more comprehensively and effectively with the range of positions in a department if she/he knows that all the supporting evidence will be forwarded to the next level; moreover, no summary can do justice to the nuances of any particular letter. We recognize that some departments wish to protect untenured or not-yet-promoted faculty, but such protection amounts to depriving those faculty of a public voice. We believe that citizenship in a community demands that, on occasion, we voice our opinions and be willing to stand behind them. CAPT proposes that faculty now mandated to participate in tenure decisions also be consulted for promotions.

3. CREDENTIALS

The Faculty Handbook offers criteria for promotion under the section "Guidelines for Advancement in Rank" (now FHB X.,2) but nowhere specifies the materials to be included in the promotion file

PROPOSAL:

f. Promotion files shall include the following:

- i. an updated CV, which makes clear what has been achieved since the last promotion.*
- ii. all scholarly, creative or professional materials produced since the last promotion; candidates may add some earlier materials for purposes of context--or to show continued growth. Candidates may wish to seek letters from Skidmore colleagues outside their department qualified to speak to their professional accomplishment. Candidates may also wish to include a statement about achievements and works in progress*
- iii. the ten most recent consecutive semesters of teaching evaluations. For purposes of context, the candidate may wish to include other evaluations. The candidate shall also add copies of syllabi, and may include assignments, and handouts. The candidate may also wish to append a statement about teaching goals and philosophy. The department may add peer evaluations of teaching.*

- iv. *a cover sheet showing courses taught, sabbatical leaves, and any course releases over the previous six years.*
- v. *service credentials presented within the context of the broad statements about service in The Faculty Handbook (Article V, A). The candidate may wish to provide relevant documents and seek letters from committee Chairs or members who can speak about the quality and extent of service.*

RATIONALE:

At present, departments are not consistent in the number of course evaluations presented; this statement clarifies what CAPT would like to see. This proposal also makes clear that CAPT focuses primarily on work completed since the last promotion.

4. EXTERNAL REVIEWERS:

At present, *The Faculty Handbook* is silent about the inclusion of external reviewers in a promotion case. Some departments mandate them for promotion candidates; others do not. Even when such letters are not required by the department, candidates in recent years have been including them in their promotion files.

PROPOSAL:

g. Candidates for promotion may solicit letters on their behalf from reviewers familiar with their credentials from outside the College. Such letters may come directly to CAPT, or go to the department Chair and then to CAPT as part of the candidate's dossier. Letters mandated by the department must also be transmitted to CAPT.

RATIONALE:

This proposal allows latitude for candidates to seek references from those outside the institution who have close knowledge of some aspect of their case. As with tenure, we leave the selection of such referees to the candidate.

5. RIGHT TO APPEAL:

At present, *The Faculty Handbook* does not specify recourse for a candidate who believes his or her rights may have been violated in a Promotion case.

PROPOSAL:

h. An individual denied recommendation for promotion may ask for a hearing before CAFR provided such hearing is based on an alleged violation of academic freedom and/or rights; or before the Diversity and Affirmative Action Committee, provided such hearing is based on an alleged discrimination in violation of the College's Affirmative Action Policies. Candidates shall have access to all written materials in their promotion files immediately after the President has made the Administration's recommendation known to them. These materials may not be photocopied.

RATIONALE:

This legislation brings promotion into line with *Faculty Handbook* policy in tenure cases by specifying the identical procedural recourse.

CAPT, 2001-02

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