BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL PREPARATION AND REVIEW OF P&T CASES

For departments and chairs:

- Department chairs have overall responsibility for the P&T process in their units. Chairs are expected to understand and follow department governance, as well as college-level policy and practice, in managing the P&T review process.

- The department chair is expected to guide the preparation of P&T dossiers that are timely and meet departmental, college, and university guidelines.

- Candidates should use their college's standard templates for the CV and portfolio summary (Tab 2). The CV and portfolio summary should clearly distinguish accomplishments and activity since the last promotion or initial appointment (in cases for which this is the first ISU P&T action) at ISU.

- Candidates will prepare and submit a "Factual Summary" as part of Tab 1 of their P&T package. The template of the "Factual Summary" is posted on the SVPP website.

- The Position Responsibility Statement (PRS) should be unique to each faculty member. The PRS should accurately reflect the expectations for each area of responsibility preferably using weighted percentages. The PRS serves as the benchmark for gauging faculty productivity when evaluating promotion and tenure cases.

- Teaching loads vary across disciplines and within departments. The P&T materials should accurately reflect a candidate's actual teaching load and be consistent with actual teaching activity reported for recent years, not the departmental average. Where a candidate's teaching load diverges significantly from the departmental norm, this divergence should be clearly explained.

- Peer teaching evaluations provide a valuable perspective in addition to the numerical student teaching evaluation scores. Each candidate with teaching responsibilities should include a summary of their peer teaching evaluations in Tab 2 (Portfolio Summary). The original peer teaching evaluation reports may be included by the department in Tab 3.

- Student teaching evaluation scores presented in tabular format should be included in every Tab 2 (Portfolio Summary). Evaluations should be forwarded using the institutional standard of 1=very poor and 5=excellent. Comparative departmental data must be provided. Candidates should address any negative trends in their teaching evaluation record, particularly sustained deviations from the departmental average.

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- While publishing articles in top tier journals is an important criterion, we expect the department and college to place more emphasis on the impact of the candidate's scholarship.

- Report citations of publications using conventional tools accepted in the discipline, such as the Web of Science database, Google Scholar, and h-index.

- Institutional service activities (e.g., committee service) should be included separately from extension or outreach activities.

- The chair is expected to meet with the departmental P&T committee at the start of the process to deliver the committee's charge and review expectations, conflicts of interest, and processes. Once the entire P&T review process is concluded and final decisions are delivered, the chair should again meet with the committee to debrief, review outcomes and assess expectations and process, with an emphasis on continuous improvement.

- The departmental P&T committee's report should be evaluative and analytical in its presentation of the case. Disciplinary standards for research/creative activities should be provided as context for non-experts evaluating the dossier. Include the name of the chair of the departmental P&T committee and names of the faculty members who served on that committee in the departmental report.

- Departments are responsible for obtaining letters from external referees. The Faculty Handbook Section 5.3.3.1.1 specifies a "maximum" of six letters. Departments should make every effort to secure six external letters. Regardless of the number, all external letters received should be forwarded with the case.

  - At least one, but no more than three, of the external letters should come from referees suggested by the candidate as supported by the Faculty Handbook 5.3.3.1.

  - Referees should be among the top faculty in their discipline who are at or above the rank being sought and at institutions having equivalent or higher stature than Iowa State.

  - Major professors, post-doctoral advisors, and former students should not be selected as external referees. Co-PIs, co-authors, and research collaborators should also be excluded except in very unusual circumstances that should be explained.

  - Other than in exceptional cases, departments should not obtain multiple letters from the same institution – and if that is done, department chairs must explain why.

  - A copy of the letter sent to external referees should be included.

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- The referee log should be complete and show whether the candidate or department chose each referee. In Part II of the log, departments should give a concise indication of why that evaluator was chosen.

- The biosketch for external referees should be brief (no more than a page, preferably shorter). Under no circumstances should the entire vita of any evaluator be forwarded with the dossier.

- Whenever possible, only faculty at or above the rank for which a candidate is being considered should vote on promotion, e.g., associate professors should not vote on cases for promotion to full professor. We strongly discourage the practice of having untenured faculty vote on cases for promotion and tenure. We encourage departments that allow this to reconsider the practice.

- Faculty input into promotion and tenure cases is an important part of shared governance and abstentions undermine this principle. It is the responsibility of each faculty member who is eligible to vote to evaluate the merits of each case and provide a recommendation by casting a vote.

- While it may not be possible for the department chair to address the exact reason for negative votes, the chair should make some effort to address the reasons for negative votes or provide some context where appropriate, especially in the case of split votes.

- If there are loose ends in the case, such as the status of a Ph.D. student who is expected to graduate soon or who may have graduated or a pending grant or significant publication, the chair should conduct the necessary fact-finding and include that information in their letter.

- The chair's letter should clearly state what the standard expectations are for scholarship in the candidate's particular discipline (e.g., "the gold standard" is published conference proceedings, juried exhibits, single-authored journal articles, case studies, etc.).

- The chair's letter to the dean must be analytical, candid, and evaluative. It should point out, discuss, and analyze any weaknesses in the case, and any aspects of the process that are unusual or of concern. We suggest the following format: 1) description of departmental review process; 2) synopsis of case; 3) evaluation of any concerns; and 4) chair's recommendation on the case.

- The issue of timing of the promotion should be explicitly addressed in the chair's letter, particularly if the promotion can be considered early (fewer than six years in rank) or if the interval between promotions is lengthy. This should be explicitly stated, for example "This is a mandatory case…" or "This case is being considered one year early because…."

- When there are concerns in a candidate's case, the chair's letter should describe feedback given

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to the candidate through the written annual or preliminary (third-year) reviews, mentoring interventions, and proactive measures taken by the candidate (for instance, participating in a grant-writing boot camp or receiving training from CELT to address low teaching scores).

- The chair must inform the candidate ***in writing*** of the nature of the departmental and chair recommendations being submitted to the college. This must be communicated ***before*** the case is forwarded to the college. If the recommendation is negative, or a non-mandatory case is not being forwarded, the chair must provide the reasons in writing.

For colleges and deans:

- The dean should meet with the college P&T committee at the start of the process to deliver the committee's charge and to review expectations, conflicts of interest, and processes. Once the entire P&T review process has concluded and final decisions have been delivered, the dean should again meet with the committee to debrief, review outcomes, and assess expectations and process, with an emphasis on communication and continuous improvement.

- The name of the chair of the college P&T committee and names of the faculty members who served on that committee should be included in their report.

- The dean's letter to the provost must be analytical, candid, and evaluative. It should point out, discuss, and analyze any weaknesses in the case, and any aspects of the process that are unusual or of concern. We suggest the following format: 1) description of the review process; 2) synopsis of case; 3) evaluation of any concerns; and 4) dean's recommendation on the case.

- The issue of timing of the promotion should be addressed in the dean's letter, particularly if the promotion can be considered early (fewer than six years in rank) or if the interval between promotions is lengthy.

- The dean must inform the candidate, the department chair, and the college P&T review committee ***in writing*** of the nature of the college-level recommendations being submitted to the senior vice president and provost. If the recommendation is negative, or a non-mandatory case is not being forwarded, the dean must provide the reasons in writing.

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