Renewal, Tenure and Promotion Procedures

Policy:

This Policy describes the procedures of the departmental, faculty and University bodies that are charged with the responsibility for reviewing the performance of faculty members and making recommendations on contract renewal, tenure, and promotion. The procedures of these committees are part of an administrative decision making process that recognizes the legal duty of fairness.

1. Application and Documentation

1.1 Faculty members who are to be considered for contract renewal, tenure and/or promotion shall submit a letter to that effect to the Committee by May 15 along with a curriculum vitae.

1.2 By May 30 the faculty member should have submitted to the Tenure and Promotions Committee copies of at least three examples of his/her published research that he/she wishes to be given to the external referees.

1.3 By September 15 the faculty member should have submitted all material then available relating to his/her performance in the areas of teaching, research and service that he/she wishes the Committee to consider.

1.4 The evaluation of a faculty member’s scholarly work by external referees with appropriate expertise should inform the assessment made by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. The Committee should take account of the academic stature and the independence of each referee in weighing the assessment.

1.5 The Tenure and Promotion Committee must provide the faculty member with a list of four suggested external referees by May 30.

1.6 Having considered the suggestions of the Committee, the faculty member must submit a rank-ordered list of eight referees to the Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee by June 15. Those referees should normally be at arm’s length from the candidate, that is they should not have been a recent thesis supervisor, co-author or personal friend of the faculty member. The practice of soliciting letters of reference from faculty members at S.F.U., including retired faculty members, or from other members of the University community is not acceptable.

1.7 The Tenure and Promotion Committee may comment on the suitability of the faculty member’s rank-ordered list but has no power of veto. The faculty member may modify his/her list as a result of the feedback from the Committee. The faculty member must finalize the rank-ordered list by June 30.

1.8 The Committee must request confidential letters of reference from six referees on the faculty member’s list by rank order using a template letter and guidelines for external referees that has been approved by the Department and the Dean. A sample is found in Appendix II of A11.01. There must be a minimum of five referees’ reports received before the case can be considered. These reports are to be written; telephone references must be followed by a written report from each referee.

1.9 Pertinent material received after a recommendation has been made formally at any of the stages of review, shall be forwarded for consideration to the next higher stage. If the new material
is judged to be sufficiently important, the Dean, the Vice-President Academic, the Faculty Review Committee or the President may direct that the case be reconsidered at any of the previous levels of review. A summary of the pertinent material shall be sent to the faculty member under review. If there is to be a reconsideration, a revised timetable for the case shall be adopted and the candidate shall be notified. The reconsideration shall be governed by the same procedures as the initial consideration.

2. Development of Recommendations to the President

2.1 In developing a recommendation, each level of review must specify the basis on which the recommendation is made and the information that is relied on in formulating the recommendation. This must be set out in sufficient detail to allow the faculty member to make a full response.

2.2 After the Tenure and Promotion Committee has examined and discussed the material relevant to a case, including the letters of reference, the faculty member shall have the opportunity to meet with the Committee to answer any questions the Committee may have.

2.3 Prior to voting on and making a recommendation, the Tenure and Promotion Committee shall provide a faculty member with a draft copy of its assessment of his/her performance, in a manner consistent with requirements for maintaining confidentiality. This draft assessment shall be provided to the faculty member by December 1st. The faculty member shall have two weeks to provide the Committee with any written explanations or additional material in response to the draft. S/he also has the right to anonymized versions of the original letters and of the covering letter sent to the referees, and to appear before the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

2.4 The Tenure and Promotion Committee shall forward its recommendations concerning renewal, tenure, and/or promotion to the Dean of the Faculty by January 15th. This recommendation must be accompanied by a statement of the reasons for the recommendation, all material received, and a list of any additional material considered by the Committee. If the decision is not unanimous, then the members dissenting from the majority opinion must submit a written statement of dissent. All members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee are to be given the opportunity to review the statements referred to above before they are sent to the Dean.

2.5 At the same time, the Tenure and Promotion Committee shall transmit to the faculty member a copy of the recommendation of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, and the reasons for the recommendation and for dissent, if any, and a list of all the materials sent to the Dean. Neither the identity of those who have given confidential assessments nor any aspect of the vote of the Committee shall be disclosed.

2.6 If a Tenure and Promotion Committee fails, without sufficient cause, to make a recommendation on time, the Department Chair will make the recommendation and transmit it to the Dean by January 30th, accompanied by an explanation of the failure of the Tenure and Promotion Committee to meet the deadline.

2.7 A faculty member has the opportunity to provide the Dean with his/her comments on the recommendation of the Tenure and Promotion Committee within two weeks of its transmittal to him/her. He/she may also meet with the Dean and be accompanied by a support person at that meeting.

2.8 The Dean shall make his/her recommendation after considering the recommendation from the Tenure and Promotion Committee, the comments, if any, of the faculty member, and such other information as the Dean considers relevant. If the Dean chooses to obtain additional letters of reference, he/she shall go back to the original rank-ordered list provided by the faculty member. If that list has been exhausted, the Dean shall request additional names from the faculty member. All referees reports are to be written and the faculty member is entitled to anonymized versions of these original letters.

2.9 In cases of tenure, promotion or contract renewal, if the recommendations of the Tenure and Promotion Committee and of the Dean are both positive, the Dean shall forward his/her recommendation to the Vice President, Academic.
2.10 If the Dean's recommendation is different from the recommendation made by the Tenure and Promotion Committee, or if the Dean concurs with the negative recommendation of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, he/she shall forward the recommendation to a Faculty Review Committee.

2.11 In all cases, by February 15th, the Dean shall forward his/her recommendation, a complete statement of the reasons for the recommendation, all material received, and a list of any additional material considered. A copy shall be sent to the Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee. At the same time, the Dean shall transmit to the faculty member a copy of his/her recommendation which shall include a statement of the reasons, with any information which might identify any authors of confidential assessments deleted, and a list of any additional materials considered by the Dean beyond those considered by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. The Dean shall also advise the faculty member that he/she may comment on the recommendation and may submit additional information to the Vice President, Academic.

3. Faculty Review Committee

3.1 A Faculty Review Committee will review cases in the following categories:
   a. Contract renewal, tenure and promotion cases that have negative recommendations from the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Dean; and
   b. Contract renewal, tenure and promotion cases in which the Dean disagrees with the recommendation of the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

3.2 A Faculty Review Committee shall examine a case(s) submitted to it and shall make a recommendation for or against tenure, renewal or promotion to Professor.

3.3 Prior to making a recommendation, the Committee must confer with the Dean, with the Chair and two representatives of the Tenure and Promotion Committee elected by and from the Tenure and Promotion Committee, and with the faculty member, in that order, except that the faculty member may decline, without prejudice, the opportunity to appear before the Committee. A support person may accompany the faculty member if he/she elects to meet with the Faculty Review Committee.

3.4 At the conclusion of each interview with a Dean or with the representatives of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, a Faculty Review Committee will prepare a summary of all additional information concerning the case (i.e. information which was not part of the written record in the case) that was obtained during the interview. These summaries will be provided to the faculty member at least five days before her/his interview with a Faculty Review Committee.

3.5 If a Faculty Review Committee chooses to obtain additional letters of reference, procedures similar to those described in section 2.8 shall be followed.

3.6 A Faculty Review Committee shall forward its recommendation to the President by April 30th. This recommendation shall be accompanied by a statement of reasons for the recommendation and must be copied to the Dean, the Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the faculty member involved, in a manner that would protect the identity of any authors of letters of reference or other confidential assessments. In addition, a Faculty Review Committee shall provide a list of any material that was considered by the Faculty Review Committee that was not considered by the Dean. When letters of reference or other confidential assessments form part of the documentation, anonymized versions of the original letters shall be provided to the faculty member, unless they have already been provided by the Dean or the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

4. Development of Recommendations to the Board of Governors

4.1 The President shall review the recommendations he/she receives from the Deans and Faculty Review Committees and by May 30th shall inform the Chair of the Faculty Review Committee, the Dean, the Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the faculty member if he/she intends not to recommend to the Board of Governors contract renewal, tenure or promotion for the faculty member. Otherwise, the President will forward recommendations for contract renewal, tenure and promotion to the Board of Governors for approval.
4.2 The faculty member has no right of appeal in a promotion case if the Tenure and Promotion Committee the Dean, the Faculty Review Committee and the President have each made negative recommendations.

4.3 In all other cases the faculty member has the right to initiate an appeal to the Ombudsperson in accordance with the Tenure and Promotion Appeals Policy (A11.06).

4.4 The Ombudsperson shall render his/her decision on each appeal by August 31, if possible, and in any event by October 31, of the year in which the appeal is brought. If the appeal of the faculty member is denied, the President’s decision not to recommend contract renewal, tenure or promotion for the faculty member shall stand.

4.5 If the appeal of the faculty member is upheld, the Ombudsperson shall direct that the faculty member's case be reconsidered by the University, specifying whether the reconsideration should commence at the level of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, the Dean, the Faculty Review Committee, or the President, and should continue according to the procedures outlined in this policy. If the case involves renewal of contract or tenure, the contract of the faculty member shall be extended for one year from its current expiry date.

4.6 The faculty member's case shall be reconsidered commencing at the level specified in the decision of the Ombudsperson and shall continue in accordance with these procedures. If the consideration results in a decision of the Board of Governors to award contract renewal, tenure or promotion for the faculty member, then the decision shall be retroactive for the purpose of the administration of the faculty member's employment by the University, as though the decision had been made by the Board of Governors at its meeting next following the date on which the President originally informed the faculty member of his/her intention not to recommend to the Board of Governors contract renewal, tenure or promotion for the faculty member.

Interpretation

Section 14.1 of the faculty Association Framework Agreement deals with matters of interpretation of this Policy.