

## **PROMOTION PROCEDURES FOR FULL-TIME, FIXED-TERM OR STANDING NON-TENURE-LINE FACULTY**

### **Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences The Altoona College of The Pennsylvania State University**

The Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences recognizes that full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty represent a distinct and important part of the University's academic community and contribute significantly to Penn State Altoona's academic missions. This procedure is intended to ensure that opportunities for professional advancement are available to outstanding faculty members who are not eligible for tenure. Promotion procedures applicable to this group of faculties shall recognize their contributions to the University's commitment to teaching excellence, endeavors to remain current in their teaching discipline(s), and provide active service to the College, University, public and the profession. The following specifies procedures for promotion of full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty to second and third rank in the Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the Altoona College – Pennsylvania State University. These policies are consistent with the University's non-tenure-line ranks and promotion procedures as outlined in [AC21](#). Much of what follows repeats general Altoona College guidelines as the context for describing Division procedures.

### **Preparation for the Review Process**

#### **Frequency of full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty reviews**

Full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty are eligible for promotion to their Second Rank must have served the Altoona College full-time for at least five academic years or the equivalent of ten consecutive academic semesters. There is no fixed time-period for promotion to the third rank.

#### **Promotion Review Procedures**

Full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty who have completed the requisite years of service and are interested in being considered for promotion should meet with their respective Division Head early in the spring semester to discuss their potential candidacy. If there is a consensus that the faculty member is ready to move forward with a case for promotion, the faculty would then work with the corresponding Division Head to prepare a dossier documenting the candidate's credentials and evaluative evidence with respect to teaching; efforts to remain current in the discipline(s) being taught; and service to the College, University, public, and the profession. The Division Head has the responsibility for preparing the dossier in consultation with the candidate. The dossier will be submitted to the Division's Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee at the start of the fall semester promotion cycle.

If there is disagreement between the faculty and the Division Head about the presented case for promotion, the faculty member may solicit a letter from a fixed-term faculty member of higher rank, or from a tenured Associate Professor, or Professor in the same discipline to support the promotion request. If a member of the discipline is not available, a faculty member from the same division should be sought. This letter, together with other supporting documentation, should be submitted to the chair of the corresponding Divisional Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee. The committee will then

review the supporting materials and write an independent recommendation letter by the end of the spring semester. If the faculty member is not recommended for nomination at that time, formative feedback will be provided in writing from the Division Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee. If the recommendation is to move forward with a case for promotion, the faculty would then prepare a dossier for submission to the Division's Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee at the start of the fall semester promotion cycle.

### **Preparation of the Dossier**

For all full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty seeking promotion, the Division Head has the responsibility for preparing, in consultation with the candidate, the dossier documenting the candidate's performance in the scholarship of teaching, efforts to remain current in the discipline(s) being taught, and service to the College, University, public, and the profession. The dossier will include the candidate's written narrative statement of no more than three pages identifying their accomplishments and/or contributions of their Penn State career that support the promotion. Candidates shall assist in supplying relevant information for their dossiers.

Evaluation of teaching shall be based on both student and peer rating information about the quality of the teaching. Student ratings shall be obtained using the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) in accordance with the University Policies. The Division Head in consultation with the candidate will supplement this survey by other forms of student evaluation such as student comments on course evaluation questionnaires and letters solicited by the Division Head from former students. Peer evaluation of teaching will be performed by the members of the Peer Review of Teaching Committee, including those appointed by the Division Head to ensure appropriate disciplinary representation.

Evidence of efforts to remain current in the discipline(s) being taught, and service to the College, University, public, and the profession will be provided through information about these activities from the candidate's dossier and from any previous annual letters of evaluation. Additional materials can be provided to supplement these areas depending on the candidate's discipline.

### **Evaluation of the Scholarship of Teaching**

Candidate's teaching evaluation shall be based on both student and peer rating information about the quality of the teaching. Student ratings shall be obtained using the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) in accordance with the University Administrative Guidelines for AC23. The Division Head in consultation with the candidate will supplement this survey by other forms of student evaluation such as student comments on course evaluation questionnaires and letters solicited by the Division Head from former students (see Appendix C). For promotion to the second and third ranks, the peer evaluation shall be performed by the members of the Peer Review of Teaching committee, including those appointed by the Division Head to ensure appropriate disciplinary representation, as described in the Appendix A.

Evaluating evidence of efforts to remain current in the discipline(s) being taught and service to the College, University, public, and the profession will be based on information provided in each's candidates dossier.

## **THE DIVISION LEVEL OF REVIEW FOR FACULTY HOLDING OR SEEKING FIXED-TERM PROMOTION IN THE ALTOONA COLLEGE**

For Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members holding or seeking promotion in the Altoona College, the first-level review for promotion takes place in the Division. The Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences Promotion Policy for fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members outlines the criteria, expectations, and standards for promotion by which candidates will be evaluated. The Division's Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee will review the dossier and write a joint letter indicating their recommendation(s) to the Division Head. The Division Head will review the dossier and the letter from the Division's Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee and write a letter indicating his/her recommendation to the College's Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee.

### **DIVISION FIXED-TERM PROMOTION PEER REVIEW COMMITTEES**

Consistent with [AC21](#), reviews for promotion of the full-time fixed-term and standing non-tenure-line faculty shall be conducted by Non-Tenure-Line Promotion Review Committees. The Division of Mathematics and Natural Science's fixed-term promotion peer review committees will be comprised of full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure line faculty members. Committees will either be three- or five-members committees with the latter being the optimal number of committee members, where applicable. Only full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members of the second or third rank for non-tenure line faculty are eligible to serve on the committees. Ideally, committee members must have a higher rank than the candidate under review.

#### **Size and composition of the committees**

For the purpose of these procedures, the nine **disciplines** in the Division are: agriculture, biology, biochemistry and molecular biology, chemistry, geography, geoscience, mathematics, physics, and statistics. These nine disciplines are **Grouped** as follows: the *Life Sciences Group* (biology, and biochemistry/molecular biology), the *Physical Sciences Group* (agriculture, chemistry, geography, geoscience, and physics), and the *Mathematical Sciences Group* (mathematics and statistics).

All full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members in the Division will be appointed to one of the nine disciplines at the time he or she is hired. Subsequent changes to this appointment may only occur with the written approval of the Chancellor. Candidates will be reviewed by the divisional fixed-term promotion review committee of the Group which contains their discipline.

The number of fixed-term promotion review committees in the Division can vary depending on the number of candidates under review and their current ranks. However, each fixed-term promotion review committee will remain consistent with the division's Groups and contain the same three "core" members representing the *Life Science Group*, the *Physical Sciences Group*, and the *Mathematical Sciences Group*. The three core members will be elected by a division-wide vote of full-time, fixed term or non-tenure line faculty, and each core member will chair the fixed-term promotion review committee for his or her Group.

Additional “non-core” members will be elected to each of the three committees by the members of each Group, or appointed by the Division Head if necessary, in order to create three- or five-member committees with appropriate disciplinary representation, where applicable. The term of service for elected core members shall be two years, and the term of service for all other members shall be one year.

Ideally, committee members must have a higher rank than the candidate under review. In situations where a candidate under review does not have at least three or more full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members at a higher rank, a three-member fixed-term promotion peer-review committee will be established.

## **PROCEDURE FOR CREATING DIVISION FIXED-TERM PROMOTION PEER REVIEW COMMITTEES**

### **Overview**

For every review cycle the “core Group” will be elected first through a division-wide election. After the core Group is established, there will be elections within each Group in order to secure “non-core” members from each Group that has a candidate(s) under review. If elections fail to secure a member from a candidate’s Group, there will be a division-wide call for nominations outside the Group of the candidate under review to serve as at-large members on the Group’s fixed-term promotion review committee. Even though the nominees may be from outside the Group, only the full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members of the Group are eligible to vote on the at-large nominees for their Group’s promotion review committee. The Division Head will appoint committee members from outside the Division (or the College) if necessary to meet these requirements or to replace elected members who are unable to serve.

All balloting will be conducted using approval voting, where voters are allowed to vote for as few or as many nominees as they want. Only full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty members are eligible to vote for the fixed-term promotion committee. All members serving on the committee should be of higher rank than the candidate being evaluated, and a minimum of three voting members is required.

### **Step 1: Establishing the core Group**

For each of those Groups for which there is no continuing member, there will be a division-wide election to elect a core member from the Group. The members of the core Group will be on all three fixed-term promotion review committees in the Division and chair the fixed-term promotion review committees for their respective Groups. The term of service for elected core members shall be two years. Elected core members should hold rank higher than that of all the candidates under review for the upcoming academic year.

The Division Head will solicit nominations for the core Group from all full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Division of fixed-term faculty who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Division except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The core Group ballot will group

the nominees into the three Groups (Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Mathematical Sciences), and each nominee will be included in exactly one of the three Groups. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees in each Group as they want. The nominee in each Group who receives the greatest number of votes will be the core member from that Group. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote.

If these elections fail to secure a core member for each Group, then additional elections will be held to elect a core member(s) from the other Groups in the Division. This will result in a core Group that does not equally represent all three Groups.

If these elections fail to secure a core member for each of the Division's Groups, then the Division Head will appoint a core member from outside the Division (or the College) to meet these requirements.

### **Step 2: Electing at-large members within a Group**

For five-member fixed-term promotion review committees, there will be elections to elect two members in each Group that has a candidate under review.

For the in-Group ballot, the Division Head will solicit nominations from all full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Group of the faculty in the Group who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Group except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The in-Group at-large ballot will list the nominees without regard to discipline and indicate how many seats on the Group's fixed-term promotion review committee need to be filled. Each fixed-term faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees as they want. The nominees with the most votes will be at-large members on the Group's fixed-term promotion review committee. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote. If these elections fail to secure at-large members within a Group, then there will be elections from outside the Group for at-large members.

### **Step 3: Electing at-large members from outside a Group**

For five-member fixed-term promotion review committees that have fewer than five elected members after completing Steps 1-2, there will be an election for at-large members from the Division to bring the number of elected committee members to five. At-large members will vote only on the candidates who have fewer than five elected and appointed disciplinary representatives eligible to vote. If there are no candidates for the at-large members to vote on, then it is not necessary to elect at-large members.

For the outside-the-Group at-large ballot, the Division Head will solicit nominations from all full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Division of all the fixed-term faculty in the Division who are eligible to serve on the committee. The Division Head will then conduct a secret ballot. All full-time, fixed-term or standing non-tenure-line faculty in the Group except for the Division Head are eligible to vote. The outside-the-Group at-large ballot will list the nominees without regard to discipline or Group and indicate how many seats on the Group's fixed-term promotion review committee need to

be filled. Each faculty member who is eligible to vote may vote for as few or as many nominees as they want. The nominees with the most votes will be at-large members on the Group's fixed-term promotion review committee. The Division Head will resolve ties, typically by a tie-break election. If a tie-break election results in a second tie, then the Division Head will cast the deciding vote. Enough at-large members will be elected to bring the committee to five members.

**Additional rule for when there is insufficient number of faculty at a higher rank**

For instances where there are an insufficient number of willing or able faculty at a higher rank to evaluate a candidate(s) under review, particularly for candidates being considered for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor (for faculty without terminal degree) or to Teaching Professor (for faculty with terminal degree), a three-member fixed-term promotion peer-review committee will be established. Rules for developing the committee will be developed when needed and approved by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

**Additional rule for when there is only one nominee for a position.**

If a ballot contains only one nominee for a particular position, then that nominee must receive a 25% approval vote of the people eligible to vote in order to be elected.

In all situations, the Division Head must complete the election and appointment of Committee members and report the results to the Division and to the Dean of the Altoona College by the end of March each Spring Semester.

**Committee Chairs**

Each Group's fixed-term promotion review committee will be chaired by the core member from the Group.

**Evaluation of the dossier by the committees**

The Division Head will make completed dossiers available to the committees and will call the initial meeting of each committee to review policies and procedures. The Division Head shall consult with the committees to ensure that all members are well informed about each candidate's dossier and about the criteria and policies of the Division, the Altoona College, and the University. The Division Head shall serve as a resource person to the committees; however, the Division Head and the committees shall render independent judgments of the candidates being reviewed. The Division Head shall not be present during peer review discussions or when votes are being taken.

The review process for fixed-term promotion is concerned with the academic and professional merits of particular candidates, judged in reference to all alternative candidates, including prospective faculty members. The peer review at the Division level will focus on professional and scholarly judgments of the individual's academic work within his or her discipline. In evaluating a candidate, the committee members should seek the views of senior members of the candidate's Group. Moreover, the committee members may also seek out evaluations by expert peers at other institutions, as those evaluations may provide essential, helpful information.

After due deliberation and a vote, the committee will submit to the Division Head a letter of evaluation for each candidate addressing each criterion based on the evidence in the dossier. In particular, the Administrative Guidelines for AC23 require the committees to make a judgment of the candidate's teaching effectiveness based on both peer and student reviews in terms of the following classification: excellent, very good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. When there is dissenting opinion among the voting committee members, the reasons for the dissent must be addressed in the letter. The letter must list the voting committee members and must report the vote count of the committee. The chairs of the committees must sign the letters.

#### **Evaluation of the dossier by the Division Head**

After receiving the Division's Fixed-Term Promotion Peer Review Committee letter of evaluation and placing it in the candidate's dossier, the Division Head shall prepare a letter of evaluation also addressing each criterion based on the evidence in the dossier and place it in the dossier. The Division Head shall submit the dossier to the Chancellor of the Altoona College for review by the Altoona College Fixed-Term Promotion Review Committee.

#### **Consultation in the review process**

In accordance with University guidelines for AC23, consultation must occur when the Division Head's recommendation differs from that of the Division Promotion and Tenure Peer Review Committee. Consultation should be initiated after the Committee review has been completed and its recommendation has been made in writing.

## **APPENDIX A - REVIEW OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS DIVISION OF MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL SCIENCES**

### **1. Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness**

#### **Responsibilities of the Peer Review of Teaching Committee**

Peer review of teaching is a process in which an individual's disciplinary peers evaluate a full range of teaching activities including, but not limited to, the development of course materials, class assignments, grading, student research, and student mentoring.

Each member of the peer review of teaching committee will observe at least one class period and one lab period (if applicable) taught by the faculty member under review. In addition, committee members will review course materials such as class syllabi, examples of graded student work, and whatever additional information (including possibly a teaching portfolio) the faculty member makes available to the committee. The peer review of teaching committee will write one letter signed by all members of the committee. In the event that there is disagreement within the committee, the letter will include separate majority and minority opinions.

The peer review of teaching committee will also write a separate summary of student comments. Student comments will be collected using the procedures outlined in Section 2.

#### **Procedures for Selecting a Peer Review of Teaching Committee**

The Division Head will ask the faculty member under review for a list of at least five peers whom the faculty member considers acceptable for his/her peer review of teaching committee. The list of acceptable faculty members can include any full-time faculty in the Division and/or full-time Penn State faculty from outside the Division/College who teach courses similar to those that the faculty member under review teaches. However, the list should include tenured faculty whose teaching assignment is similar to that of the faculty member under review, and if the faculty member under review teaches a significant number of credits/courses in a certain discipline, then at least one tenured faculty member from that discipline should be included on the list.

The Division Head will form a three-person peer review of teaching committee from people on the list supplied by the faculty member under review, provided that the list includes tenured faculty as specified in the preceding paragraph. If fewer than three of the people on the list are willing and able to serve or the list does not satisfy the criteria in the preceding paragraph, then the Division Head will ask the faculty member under review to extend the list or appoint additional members to the committee as necessary.

#### **Additional Reviews of Teaching Effectiveness**

The Division Head in consultation with the candidate may arrange for additional evaluators to observe and provide written assessments of a candidate's teaching effectiveness for placement in the candidate's dossier.



## **2. Procedures for Collecting Student Comments**

Student comments may be collected using any combination of the following.

### **Written student comments collected with the SRTEs.**

Any combination of the division-approved forms for written student comments may be handed out at the same time the SRTEs are administered (see Section 4). The forms with written student comments will be collected separately from the SRTE forms and will be delivered to the office of the Division Head. The forms will be scanned electronically and forwarded to the faculty member's peer review of teaching committee.

### **Letters from students who have completed a course taught by the faculty member.**

At the request of the faculty member under review, the Division Head will solicit letters from a random sample of students who have completed courses taught by the faculty member during the previous two years. The Division Head will work with the faculty member to ensure that letters are solicited from a wide range of students. The student letters will be forwarded to the faculty member's peer review of teaching committee together with the grades of the students who wrote the letters.

### **Formal interviews with students at the end of the semester.**

At the request of the faculty member under review, the division head and the peer review of teaching committee may arrange for formal interviews with students at the end of the semester.

## **3. Timeline for Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness**

After a candidate declares their nomination for promotion to second- or third-rank, the Division Head will form the peer review committee by the end of the 10th week of the spring semester. The Division Head will solicit the names of those peers whom the faculty member considers acceptable for the peer review committee. At this time, the Division Head will also ask the faculty member what procedure he or she wishes to use to collect student comments. The committee will complete its work and submit its letter and summary of student comments within 4 weeks of the end of the spring semester.

## **4. Division-Approved Forms for Collecting Student Comments**

Appendix B presents forms (pages 8-9) that have been approved by the Division for collecting written student comments.

## Appendix B

### Student Evaluation of Learning Experience Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Penn State Altoona

Professor \_\_\_\_\_ Course/s \_\_\_\_\_  
*Course Semester*

In answering the questions below, please discuss specific aspects of the course with this professor, such as the syllabus, assignments, teaching style, classroom environment, etc. Feel free to use the back of this sheet.

1. Why did you take this course? (e.g. required for major, elective, etc.)
2. What did you like about the way the course was taught?
3. What did you not like about the way the course was taught?
4. Include any additional comments.  
(You may use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

