MEMO

TOPIC: Process Guidance for Personnel Reviews in the College of Education and Human Development

TO: The incoming College Personnel Committee; the College Senate

FROM: The College Personnel Review Committee (2015-16)

DATE: September 2016

The purpose of this memo is to offer guidance to the College Personnel Committee for use during the personnel reviews. It is not intended as a policy document – it is intended only to provide guidance. It is also being submitted to the College Senate for its consideration as to whether it is included as guidance for candidates coming up for review in the college.

The impetus for this memo is that, while the official policy documents of the college and the university (The Red Book, The Red Book Implementation document, the Provost’s Guidelines, the Union Contract, and the College Guidelines) establish procedures and criteria for reviews, there are areas where processes are not specified in detail, and it is the sense of the CPC that consistency in processes, as can be reasonably be operationalized, are important for both the integrity of the review process and fairness to the candidates being reviewed. None of the recommendations offered here establish policy in the college, nor should they be viewed as superseding or re-defining existing policies. They are recommendation to the CPC and the College only.

Guidance for the CPC

Chairing the CPC
Each year, the CPC, as a committee elected by the faculty of the College, chooses a Chair. Because the College has only a limited number of full professors, we recommend that the CPC consider having co-Chairs. The rationale here is 1) that a co-Chair structure can be done in such a way that one of the co-Chairs can continue in the role the following year, creating continuity in leadership of the CPC, and 2) that one of the co-Chairs be a full professor, so that one of the co-Chairs can both shepherd the review of cases of promotion to full professor, and also so that the co-Chair who is a full professor can take on roles in situations where there may be a perceived risk to the an associate professor who will be coming up for promotion in future years.

CPC reports
It is recommended that for the the CPC report, while conducted as an independent review of all the materials in the candidate’s file and the prior level reviews, does not
have to restate all of the evaluations made in the earlier reviews. The report should be clear and concise, and should aim for a length of 10-15 pages. Of course the complexity of the case and other circumstances may require longer reports, but the norm for the CPC should be toward moderating the length of the report.

The Fourth Year Review reports from the CPC are developmental reviews without votes for excellence or strength; they should include clear and specific recommendations for candidates that can be addressed before they submit their materials for promotion to Associate Professor and Tenure.

All levels of review should include a statement of institutional need.

**CPC Process Norms**

Not all the processes in the work of the CPC are specified in the official policy documents. There are some ways of operating that are left to the discretion of the CPC. Process need to be determined by the committee before the review processes begin. It is also important, for consistency and fairness over time that these processes do not vary significantly from year to year. The nuances of these processes are largely shaped by the context of the cultures within the college.

**How Reports are Written**

Typically, the drafting of the CPC report is done in sections, with the work of drafting sections assigned to members of the committee. This is done with the expectation that all members of the committee review the entire dossier of the candidate being reviewed, regardless of the section that they are assigned to write.

It is recommended that the CPC meet (meetings can be in-person or virtual) a minimum of three times for each case. The first meeting is for the purpose of establishing the process norms for the committee, and then to discuss the overview of the cases before the committee, as well as means of accessing the materials for each case, and establishing the timelines for review. At this first meeting the assignments are made for drafting of the sections of the report. It is also at the first meeting where a chair for each CPC case is determined. The second meeting is to fully discuss the candidate’s materials in each of the areas: teaching, scholarship, and service (if that set of deliberations cannot be completed fully, another meeting may need to be scheduled). Based on those deliberations, a redrafting of the sections is done and submitted to the Chair of the review for a particular candidate. At the third meeting, the CPC considers the full draft report, discusses it, makes changes, and votes (if required). Once a vote is taken, members can sign the signature page. Following the third meeting, the Chair of the particular committee finalizes the report.

It is important to note that once the report is final, the report along with the signature page is submitted to the Dean and a copy is shared with the Candidate.
Confidentiality
It is extremely important that the deliberations of the CPC remain confidential. At no time should a member of the CPC discuss anything related to the substance or content of a case - or views of committee members, with anyone outside the CPC. To be specific, it is fine to discuss process (i.e., the committee is meeting again next Thursday), but members cannot discuss any aspect of the case with anyone (not only the candidate). Members of the committee need to know that what they say in the committee will not be shared outside the committee. If candidates ask members of the CPC about the case, they should respond “I cannot discuss your case with you. If you have questions about the process, you can talk with the co-Chairs of the CPC.” If you are approached by colleagues inquiring about a case (not theirs) you can reply that “the CPC is currently reviewing the case and it will be completed within the scheduled timeframe.” It is fine to remind colleagues that “the integrity of the review process requires confidentiality, and I feel strongly that confidentiality must be maintained.” It would also be good practice if everyone in the college enforces this practice by not asking members of the CPC to discuss cases before it. Also, this applies to cases long after they are completed. It is not maintenance of confidentiality to share the work of the committee even years after the case in question.

Conflict of Interest
One thing to consider is that we are a small college, and between DPC and CPC reviews, and the terms of service on the CPC, it is likely that members of the committee undertaking the review of a candidate may have close professional relationships with the candidate. It is also the case that a member of the CPC may also be a member of the DPC. Additionally, members of the CPC may have written letters for the candidate under review, or may have published or presented with the candidate under review. The committee has the discretion to decide what constitutes a conflict of interest in these circumstances.

Past practice on the CPC has addressed these issues in the following ways, always with common sense, fairness, and the integrity of the process at the core:

The cultures of the college encourage collaboration. We don't want candidates to be penalized in any way for scholarly collaborations with colleagues.

Letters for candidates: If a member of the CPC has written a letter in support for a candidate who is being reviewed, there is no need to recuse themselves from the review.

Co-authoring/co-presenting: If a member of the CPC has co-authored a publication with the candidate being reviewed or has co-presented with the candidate being reviewed, there is no need to recuse themselves from the review.
Serving on the DPC: If a CPC member was also a member of the candidate’s DPC, then that CPC member will be recused from voting at the CPC level, and will not participate in any CPC deliberations related to that candidate’s review. When department chairs select members to serve on DPC reviews, they should consider who will be serving on the CPC. Department chairs can avoid appointing CPC members to the DPCs that they create. If that is not always possible, then department chairs can make sure that they appoint no more than one CPC member to a particular DPC. In this case, no more than one CPC member will need to be recused from the review. Since all departments will have at least two members on the CPC, there will still be at least one CPC member from the candidate’s department to provide departmental perspectives, even if a CPC member has been recused from the review.

In this sense, conflict of interest as applied to the work of the committee is not the same standard as applied to external reviews. In the case of external reviews, the review has more credibility if the reviewer has not co-authored or co-presented with the reviewer.

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

The “CEHD CPC Personnel Review Guidelines” provides the following “indicators of teaching excellence” to be consider in the review process:

a. consistently high responses via student evaluations with an analysis of any weak evaluations and steps taken to address any specific concerns;
b. evidence from student evaluation comments and student letters that show impact of teaching on student understanding and student development;
c. evidence from course materials/syllabi substantiating: a rich conceptualization of the field, how the relevant knowledge of the course relates to the conceptualization of the field, and pedagogical design that gives students both immediate and larger critical and evaluative understandings;
d. evidence of course development to accomplish the above (c) within courses, and of new course development that contributes to a richer conceptualization of the program and includes expansion or deepening of course materials, activities, and updated bibliographies;
e. evidence of activities related to improving one’s own teaching as well as modeling and mentoring for others (such as participation in and/or leading teaching improvement seminars or professional development activities);
f. consideration of actual teaching loads, numbers of students taught, modality (seminar, lecture, on-line course), extra efforts to meet teaching needs of program (e.g. summer sessions, training, field experience);
g. evidence from personal statement of reflective practice in teaching and advising, including a grounded understanding of what students need to learn within their field and program, of personal teaching goals within that context, of the efforts made to accomplish those goals, and of one’s own learning from those efforts;
h. evidence from personal statement, if appropriate, of ways in which teaching and advising are integrated with, contributing to, or informed by one’s scholarship and service;
i. additional supporting documentation such as portfolios, web pages, examples of student work, (with consent forms filled out by students); examples of mentoring and
peer coaching with colleagues, etc.

Our recommendation in this area is that no one indicator of evidence should have undue weight in the review process. In particular, course evaluation are but one indicator of teaching effectiveness, and given the increasing educational research on the ineffectiveness of course evaluations for evaluating the quality of teaching, we caution against their overuse in the review process. Additionally, when the results from course evaluations are being considered, we recommend that they be used in their entirety, without singling out any particular question or set of questions in their use.

We recommend that the CPC consider the full range of evidence of teaching effectiveness, and triangulate the evidence to determine the quality of teaching. Perhaps most important is the candidate’s reflection on their teaching practice, and evidence that they are not only reflective practitioners but that they have responded to their reflection on practice to improve their practice, and, to the extent possible, provided evidence that the changes that they have made have had the desired results.

**Guidance for Candidates Submitting Materials for Review**

**Personal Statements**
When the CPC is reviewing a candidate’s materials, one part of the candidate’s file is their personal statement. This is the opportunity for the candidate to make a public statement about who they are as a scholar, the kind of scholarly work that they do, and to provide a context for the reviewers to understand their work. The personal statement is the opportunity for the candidate to claim their scholarly identity and provide evidence for high quality teaching, scholarship, and service.

The CPC is looking for statements that are comprehensive yet concise. Below is some advice we offer for candidates:

This is the opportunity for the candidate to define himself or herself as a scholar. Don’t leave it to the reviewers to define who you are as a scholar. Don’t leave it to the committee to connect dots – make the connections for the reviewer.

In your statement on scholarship, consider discussing your areas of research, providing evidence indicating work you have done in each area. Make sure that you include a statement about research approaches and methods. Consider discussing why you chose to publish in the venues that you did – why a particular journal, why proceeding, why a book? Consider discussing evidence of the impact of your work beyond a discussion of a journal’s impact factor, if you have included that.

In your statement in teaching, we encourage deep reflection on practice as well as discussion of whys that your reflection has led to changes in practice and, if possible,
discusses evidence of the impact of those changes. It is helpful for reviewers if the candidate provides a discussion of their goals as a teacher and then provides evidence for how they are meeting those goals. The more that the candidate can discuss a range of evidence for understanding their teaching effectiveness and show how the various sources of evidence reinforce one another, the easier it is for the reviewers to make sense of the case for quality teaching. One of the pieces of evidence that candidates should consider is an observation of their teaching (see below).

**Service** is an important area in every review. We encourage candidates to clarify service work in distinct areas (e.g., international, national, campus, college, department, program) and to not only describe the activity but to provide evidence of outputs and impact from the service activity.

**Integration**
The College Guidelines state that “the college recognizes that some of the best models of practice for education faculty will involve an integration of teaching, service and scholarship, for example, in the context of developing multifaceted partnerships with schools, agencies, and other higher education institutions, or in the process of conducting research in community settings. This integration is particularly important to the College of Education and Human Development and thus should be reflected in candidate’s portfolio and should be addressed in the personal statement. For the purpose of review, however, candidates are advised to clearly state when and how any activity overlaps in their portfolio.” For many candidates in the College, the distinct areas of teaching, scholarship, and service – as separate activities – does not accurately capture their scholarly work. Where there is overlap and intersection of these, it is important for the candidate to make the connection and to discuss the integration of their faculty roles. It is not best to leave it up to reviewers to make these connections.

**Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness**
Faculty should work with the College staff to make sure that you have a full accounting of course evaluations for courses you have taught, and provide a summary in your statement from the data available. One way to do this is to provide scores and averages, and comparisons to the aggregate scores in the department and college.

While there is no requirement in the College for classroom observations and there are no standards or criteria for conducting an observation, we encourage you to work with your mentor or colleagues in your department to have an observation done as one part of the evidence you provide for your teaching effectiveness. There can be no repercussions for NOT having a class observation done. We also suggest that this be done as part of the Fourth-Year review, the rationale being that the candidate can provide a report on the observation as part of the evidence in the Fourth-Year review, but more importantly, that the candidate can take feedback from the review, reflect on it, and have time to implement changes and see results before coming up for their Promotion and Tenure review. As with course evaluations, class observations have
Limitations, but they can be one more piece of evidence in an area that is difficult to document.