

UTK Research Council
DRAFT Report to the Faculty Senate Tenure Policy Coordinating Committee
Responses to Proposed Revisions of the Faculty Handbook (as per November 1998 issue of
Notes from Academic Affairs)

and
Recommendations on Implementation of Reporting and Evaluation Procedures for Research and
Creative Achievement

In September 1998, the Research Council was charged by the Faculty Senate Tenure Policy Coordinating Committee with the task of making recommendations regarding how research and creative achievement should be addressed in implementing the *Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure*. The Council is responding to this charge through two primary actions. First, in Part A of this document, the Council wishes to respond to several statements and proposed policies in the document *Implementation of New UT Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure* (November issue of *Notes from Academic Affairs*). The page and section headings containing the text to which the Council wishes to respond are in bold face. Included in this part are some general recommendations regarding performance reporting and evaluation methods. Second, in Part B of this document, the Council proposes some guidelines specific to reporting, assessment, and evaluation procedures for research and creative achievement. The Council recognizes the importance of each department and college having its own by-laws for the purposes of conducting the Annual Performance-and-Planning Reviews and the Cumulative Reviews. However, certain recommendations should be universal across departments and colleges to ensure a fair system of reporting, assessment, and evaluation. The purpose of the recommendations is to reinforce the importance of establishing a fair and standardized system of reporting, assessment, and evaluation within each department or college and to facilitate implementation of the Cumulative Performance Review.

Part A. Responses to the Document and General Recommendations

Item 1: Page 4 Section D. “Criteria for Tenure”

The wording “**If a faculty member’s teaching is not acceptable, the research record is of no consequence**” should be stricken from the document. Research makes a critical contribution to the overall mission of the Knoxville Campus of the University of Tennessee (“...discovery and dissemination of truth through teaching, research, and service”). While the contribution of research to the mission of the University is broader than just the contribution research makes to teaching, it should be recognized that good, solid teaching relies on professional competence developed, in part, through scholarly discovery and activity. This is particularly true at the graduate level of instruction. Graduate programs which include a research and creative component can not be adequately executed without expectation of faculty competence in scholarly activity. The remaining text in the paragraph provides adequate balance to the roles of teaching, research, and service.

Item 2: Page 4 Section D. “Criteria for Tenure”

Because this section of the document deals with criteria for tenure, the sentence, “**In most cases, untenured faculty...**” should be reworded to “In most cases, tenure leading faculty...”.

Item 3: Page 5. Section G, Part 1. Annual Performance-and-Planning Review

This Annual Performance-and Planning Review serves as a foundation for the Cumulative Review. Therefore, it is critical that departments and colleges have well-established procedures for conducted their Annual Performance-and- Planning reviews. Furthermore, the Council recommends that the text under **Section G, Part 1** is suitable for untenured, as well as tenured faculty, as all faculty participate in some type of Annual Performance-and-Planning Review (the results of which may be used in annual retention reviews for tenure leading and non-tenure track faculty, or in cumulative reviews for tenured faculty). With respect to the wording, “**Each faculty member’s Annual Performance-and-Planning review should proceed from guidelines and criteria contained in the departmental and collegiate by-laws**”, the Council recommends the following regarding performance reporting and evaluation:

- *Although the **annual performance reporting instrument** adopted across departments and colleges may vary, a single standardized **annual performance reporting instrument** should be developed for use by every faculty member (tenured and untenured) within an individual department in reporting the faculty member’s activities and outputs. A single reporting instrument should be used by all faculty (tenured and untenured) within a given department.*
- *The opportunity for the faculty member to report on activities and outputs in the applicable teaching, research/creative achievement, and service categories should be included in the annual performance reporting instrument. The opportunity for the faculty member to report on planned activities and outputs in the applicable teaching, research/creative achievement, and service categories should also be included in the annual performance reporting instrument.*
- *The activities, outputs, and plans reported in the **annual performance reporting instrument** should provide information to be used in the Annual Performance-and-Planning Review. The annual performance reporting instrument should be completed soon after or close to the end of a performance reporting year, but with sufficient lead time for an evaluation period by the department head. It is recommended that the annual reporting period encompass a calendar year, with reporting occurring no earlier than December 1 of the reporting year, and no later than January 31 of the year following the reporting year. Faculty should be provided with the annual performance reporting instrument with sufficient time to complete the requested information.*
- *For each department, a single standardized **annual performance evaluation instrument** should be developed for the purposes of reporting an assessment of each faculty member’s (tenured and untenured) performance in teaching, research, and service. The*

*instrument should include performance evaluation of activities and outputs reported on in the **annual performance reporting instrument**.*

- *The annual performance evaluation instrument should include appropriate weighting of teaching, research, and service performance according to the faculty member's appointment and rank. It is particularly critical that the appropriate weighting be given to each area in arriving at an overall measure of performance. (**Section D. Criteria for Tenure**, "The relative weights of these factors will vary according to the fit between the faculty member and the mission of the academic unit in which he or she is appointed"). Note: This statement is appropriate for each level of performance evaluation, including the Annual Performance-and-Planning Reviews and the Cumulative Reviews). Furthermore, it is critical that the job description of the faculty member's appointment is current and accurately reflects their teaching, research, and service responsibilities.*
- *The **annual performance evaluation instrument** should contain sufficient detail regarding evaluation of performance (in addition to the overall five point scale of Outstanding, Very Good, Good, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory recommended as part of the Annual and Cumulative Performance Reviews) that the faculty member can ascertain where performance evidences merit or needs improvement. Specific examples of strengths and opportunities for improvement in performance should be included as part of the evaluation. These strengths and opportunities should reflect expectations of future performance. Because a purpose of the review is planning, the Annual review results should be provided in a timely manner to the faculty member being evaluated (No later than March 31. In cases where results will be used in a Cumulative or retention review, it is recommended that the results be provided earlier).*
- *The performance of faculty within a department should be measured with respect to pre-defined benchmarks and goals as suggested by standards within a given discipline, not relative to other faculty members' performance within the department. Benchmarks should reflect expectations of professional competence within a given discipline. Goals should reflect professional excellence within a given discipline.*
- *Because standards regarding levels and quality of output vary greatly across disciplines, the benchmarks and goals for levels and quality of outputs should be set within disciplines and not across disciplines.*
- *Benchmarks and goals regarding quantities and qualities of output should be clearly defined with adequate time for faculty to show changes in performance. Benchmarks and goals for any given year under evaluation should be set prior to the beginning the of that year so the faculty member is aware of performance expectations for the period under evaluation.*

Item 4: Page 5. Section G, Part 1. Annual Performance-and-Planning Review

Will copies of the rebuttal to evaluation and written statements of areas needing attention be provided to the Dean also? If so, this should be stated.

Item 5: Page 5. Section G, Part 2. “Cumulative Performance Review”

- *To minimize the reporting burden, the categories of research and creative achievement to be reported in the **annual performance reporting instrument** should, when possible, closely coincide with those requested in tenure, promotion, and Cumulative Review reports (As suggested in the document’s wording, “Cumulative Reviews are based on data from annual reviews and normally are conducted during the Spring semester before April 30; p. 5, col, 2, line 7).*
- The concept of a standardized reporting form is alluded to in the document’s wording, “The report from the peer review committee is advisory to the department head, who then makes his or her own assessment and prepares a summary report according to a form developed by the campus to evaluate the faculty member’s performance”. *This wording should be clarified. Will it be based in part on evaluation forms developed for the purposes of the Annual Performance-and-Planning review? If so, a clear statement is necessary indicating that a form should be developed to evaluate and assess the faculty member’s performance on an annual basis.*
- *The Council suggests the following “Cumulative Reviews are based on the information in the **annual performance reporting instruments** and in the **annual performance evaluation instruments** from the cumulative period under consideration and are normally conducted.....”.*

Item 6: Page 5. Section G, Part 2. “Cumulative Performance Review”

- The word “statues” should be changed to “statutes”.

Item 7: Page 5. Section G, Part 2. “Cumulative Performance Review”

- From the last sentence of **Section G, part 2 “Faculty members whose performance is found through the cumulative review process to be outstanding...are eligible for merit pay increments...”**, it would seem that merit pay is only to be awarded subsequent to a Cumulative Review. Has the discretion for award of merit based upon annual performance been removed? If not, then the merit statement should be revised to apply to Annual, as well as Cumulative, reviews and hence to be applicable to untenured, as well as tenured, faculty. This should be clarified.

Item 8: Page 6. Section G, Part 3. “Review Committee”

- In the sentence, “within thirty days of the Dean’s concurrence with an unsatisfactory cumulative review or a second negative annual review”, the word negative should be changed or specified in parentheses as “unsatisfactory” to keep consistency of terminology.
- With respect to composition of the Review Committee, will the appropriate tenured faculty include only those at rank or above? What is meant by appropriate? How many

faculty should be involved (all at rank or above within a department or a select number appointed by the head)? Also, how will outside faculty and administrators be selected? How many?

- What if the Review Committee does not reach consensus? Is consensus interpreted as majority recommendation (2/3 or 3/4) or complete agreement?

Item 9: Page 7. Appendix A, Part 2. “Department Head’s Recommendation”

- The intent of the sentence “Tenured faculty, individually or collectively, may forward a dissenting report to the next level of review,” is unclear. If it means when the faculty vote differs from the head’s recommendation, it should probably have the phrase included “In cases where the faculty recommendation differs from the head’s recommendation, the tenured faculty, individually or collectively, may...”. If it means in every case, whether the faculty vote is in agreement with the head’s recommendation, then it should be reworded “In all cases, tenured faculty, individually or collectively, may ...”

Item 10: Pages 8-12. Appendices B and C

- Do these procedures apply to all faculty or only tenured faculty? The term “faculty member” is used, which would imply all faculty.

Item 11: Page 11. Appendix C, Part 3, Subpart A. “Suspension With Pay”

- The sentence “After consultation...” should have “President of the Faculty” stricken if it is the intent that the Chancellor hold the sole ability to suspend the faculty member with pay.

Item 12: Page 12. Appendix C, Part 7. “Expedited Procedure...”

- The wording “conduct causes or threatens” should be changed to “conduct causes or threatens”.

Part B. Recommendations on Implementation of Reporting and Evaluation Procedures for Research and Creative Achievement

- *A research and/or creative achievement mission statement should be defined for each department. Evaluation of research and creative achievement for the individual faculty member should include how well the faculty member's research/creative achievement fit within that research and creative achievement mission. A clearly defined mission is necessary for setting benchmarks and goals for research and creative achievement (Section D. Criteria for Tenure, "The relative weights of these factors will vary according to the fit between the faculty member and the mission of the academic unit in which he or she is appointed").*
- *The opportunity for the faculty member to report on activities and outputs in the applicable research and creative achievement categories should be included in the annual performance reporting instrument. The opportunity to report on planned research and creative achievement activities and outputs should also be included in the annual performance reporting instrument. The categories of research and creative achievement in a reporting instrument will likely vary across departments and colleges (See the list of recommended categories at the end of this document). The categories to be included in the reporting instrument should be defined through joint recommendations of administration and faculty in consultation with peers from the respective discipline.*
- *For some disciplines, a variety of categories of research and creative achievement outputs are appropriate. Hence, benchmarks and goals should take into account comparative advantages of each faculty member in producing various types of research and creative achievement outputs. In other words, benchmarks and goals may consist of a range of combinations of outputs.*
- *Benchmarks and goals should be defined through joint recommendations of administration and faculty in consultation with peers from the respective discipline. The Council proposes that feedback regarding benchmarks and goals for a discipline should be solicited as part of the respective department's Academic Program Review.*
- *Both research and creative outputs and input activities should be measured and evaluated. Because progress toward certain types of research and creative achievement is cumulative, an output may take several years or evaluation periods to be produced. Therefore, measurement of activity levels that will likely produce research and creative achievement output may be useful in projecting future accomplishments.*
- *Research and creative achievement should not only be measured in terms of quantity, but also in terms of quality. In each discipline, certain outlets for research and creative achievement are considered to be more prestigious and to demonstrate higher standards of scientific and creative merit than others among members of the discipline. Publication, presentation, exhibition, or performance through these outlets should be recognized as demonstrating a high standard of scientific and creative merit. Because these standards of merit vary greatly among disciplines, assessment of quality measures should be made within a discipline rather than across disciplines.*
- *While the appropriate mix of research and creative outputs and input activities may be*

*specific to a given discipline, some general dimensions of research and creative achievement performance might be considered. Each of these dimensions could be evaluated according to the five point scale, with **an associated narrative explaining the rating for each performance dimension.***

I. Evaluation of Research and Creative Achievement Input Activities

1. Selects realistic yet challenging research/creative achievement objectives
2. Uses appropriate methods and techniques in meeting objectives
3. Optimizes research/creative achievement outputs relative to inputs, such as time, personnel, materials, facilities, and equipment
4. Internalizes responsibility for research/creative achievement program effectiveness
5. Expends personal effort in the research/creative achievement effort
6. Invests in professional growth and development
7. Provides leadership in research/creative achievement efforts
8. Adheres to high standards of professional conduct in research/creative achievement
9. Integrates short-term and long-term goals into a comprehensive research/creative achievement strategy
10. Carries on-going projects to a timely conclusion
11. Commits appropriate efforts to seeking external funds
12. Secures appropriate external funds
13. Provides effective oversight to externally funded activities
14. Commits appropriate efforts to joint research/creative achievement activities

Note: Specific strengths and opportunities for improvement in research/creative achievement input activities should be provided to the faculty member for the purposes of planning.

II. Evaluation of Research Output

1. Research/creative achievement is innovative
2. Research/creative achievement demonstrates scientific and/or creative merit
3. Output level is commensurate with research responsibilities and available resources.
4. Research/creative achievement contributes to the mission of the department, college, and University.
5. Findings or achievements are communicated to the appropriate audiences
6. Findings or achievements are communicated through appropriate vehicles (journals, presentations, performances, etc.)
7. Communication of findings or achievements is articulate and or effective.
8. Findings or achievements are disseminated in a timely manner.
9. Outputs needed by collaborators are provided in a timely manner.

Note: Specific strengths and opportunities for improvement in research/creative achievement outputs should be provided to the faculty member for the purposes of planning.

- *As part of the Cumulative Review, in addition to the annual evaluation reports, other materials may be provided as information for the review. The Council recommends that the term “Other materials” should include the faculty member’s curriculum vitae, their statement on research and creative achievement philosophy, and any examples of research and creative achievement the faculty member wishes to include in support of their cumulative performance report of research and creative achievement.*
- *A listing of example categories of research and creative achievement that could be reported in **annual performance reporting instruments** and Cumulative Reviews is provided below. These closely coincide with the categories listed in the Handbook for Promotion and Tenure:*

■ Research and/or Scholarly Publications

I. Externally Peer Reviewed Publications

examples include

- Journal articles
- Published proceedings

II. In-House Publications

a) Internally Peer Reviewed Publications

examples include

- Research reports
- Staff papers

b) Non-Peer Reviewed Publications

examples include

- Staff papers
- Working papers

III. External Non-Peer Reviewed Publications

examples include

- Journal articles in nonrefereed journals
- Industry or popular press articles

IV. Books

- Authored
- Chapters or sections authored
- Edited

V. Reports to Sponsors

examples include

- Reports to granting agencies

- Creative Accomplishments
 - I. Exhibitions, installation, production or publication of original works of architecture, dance, design, electronic media, film, journalism, landscape architecture, literature, music, theater, and visual art.
 - II. Performance of original dance, literary, musical visual arts, or theatrical works, or works from traditional and contemporary repertoires of the performing arts.
- Projects, grants, commissions, and contracts (date, title, agency, amount, and status-completed, funded and in progress, or in review)
- Supervision of graduate dissertations, theses, monographs, performances, productions, and exhibitions required for graduate degrees; types of degrees and years granted; undergraduate honor theses supervised.
- Membership on graduate candidates' committees
- Other evidence of research or creative accomplishments (identify patents, new product development, new arts forms, etc.).
- Record of pursuit of advanced degrees and/or further academic studies.
- Record of participation in, and description of, seminars and workshops (Short description of activity, with titles, dates, sponsor, etc.); Indication of role in seminar or workshop, e.g., student, invited participant, etc.).
- Papers presented at technical and professional meetings (meeting and paper titles, listed chronologically in standard bibliographic form); indication about whether the candidate was the presenter.
examples include:
 - Selected papers (screened for acceptance by peers)
 - Other papers (not screened for acceptance by peers)
 - Invited papers
 - Organized symposia
- Description of speaking engagements or other activities in which there was significant use of candidate's expertise (consulting, services to government agencies, professional and industrial associations, educational institutions, etc.).
- Description of new computer software programs developed.
- Lists of honors or awards for scholarship or professional activity.

- Record of membership and active participation in professional and learned societies (e.g., offices held, committee work, editorships or editorial boards, peer review committees, or other related activities).