

Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure
Annual Report
2012-2013

The Senate Advisory Committee on Privilege and Tenure (SACPT) held three formal meetings during the previous year: on December 12, 2012, on July 17, 2013, and on September 6, 2013. Two appeals involving denial of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor were received by the committee, as well as one appeal involving a department not putting a Lecturer up for Senior Lecturer. On December 19, 2013, the university president consulted with the SACPT on a matter related to the employment of a particular faculty member. Below we summarize the appeals and provide recommendations regarding promotion and tenure procedures.

Appeals to the SACPT

Appeal 1 alleged that a department's decision to defer the potential promotion of a Lecturer to Senior Lecturer by one year was the result of privilege and procedural violations. The committee found that one minor violation had occurred, but that it had been satisfactorily resolved by all parties. The committee recommended that no further action be taken regarding this appeal.

Appeal 2 alleged that a faculty member was not able to request a two-year delay of the probationary period (from 7 to 9 years) after having two children because the faculty member was unaware of the (new) regulations that allowed for the delay. The committee could find no evidence that the faculty member had been notified of the policy, and therefore could not have waived the right to the 'automatic' probationary period extension. The committee recommended that the faculty member's probationary period be extended by two years and that the faculty member be reevaluated for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure in a timeframe consistent with the extension having originally been granted.

Appeal 3 alleged several violations occurred during the faculty member's probationary period and during the dossier evaluation. While the committee found issues with this case, it was determined that these issues did not rise to the level of violations. The committee recommended that no further action be taken regarding this appeal.

Recommendations

As a result of Appeal 1, the committee recommends that department chairs ensure that mentoring of probationary faculty, including lecturers, occurs in a manner that is consistent with their particular department and college regulations.

As a result of Appeal 1, the committee recommends that department chairs not also be the chairs of their particular department's tenure and promotion committee, where possible.

As a result of Appeal 1, the committee recommends that administrative regulation 2.9_IV_C, which states that “five (5) years of continuous full-time service” be fulfilled before a Lecturer can be considered for promotion to Senior Lecturer, be clarified to include that the full-time service be at the Lecturer rank - if this is the intent of the regulation. In addition, the committee recommends that each college and department ensure that their particular requirements for promotion to Senior Lecturer are consistent with AR 2.9_IV_C.

As a result of Appeal 2, the committee recommends that the University ensure that all probationary faculty be notified of governing regulation XB1c, which deals with a faculty member’s right to an automatic extension of the probationary period because of family obligations. It is desirable that a traceable record of this notification be maintained until after the probationary period for each faculty member. In addition, the committee recommends that regulation XB1c and its corresponding forms (the Faculty Tenure Delay Form and the University of Kentucky Delay of Probationary Period Procedure) be clarified with regard to the automatic extension (for example, is the extension automatic if it has not been requested?), as well as the waiver of the extension (for example, how can a faculty member waive the extension if there was no knowledge of the extension to begin with?).

As a result of Appeal 3, the committee recommends that it be reiterated to all concerned parties that faculty merit review scores and evaluations, most particularly for probationary faculty, be balanced and informative with regard to a faculty member’s strengths and weaknesses. These evaluations should be informative. It is undesirable and unhelpful when faculty members obtain excellent (or even perfect) review scores throughout the probationary period, only to ultimately be denied promotion.

As a result of Appeal 3, the committee recommends that the administration consider putting in place an official mechanism for faculty to appeal their DOE assignments. This mechanism should be independent of a faculty member’s department chair and, if possible, dean. While DOEs are currently negotiated between each faculty member and their chairperson, this has the potential to be a one-sided negotiation for probationary faculty.

Submitted on behalf of the 2012-2013 SACPT members Stephanie Aken, Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, Franca Cambi, Anne Harrison, Jane Hayes, Lee Meyer, Mary Kay Rayens, Catherine Seago, Vincent Sorrell, Ginny Sprang, and Stephen Testa (Chair).