

XXII. COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Preamble

The comprehensive review policies and procedures of Towson University are in accordance with the principles established by the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland on July 12, 1996. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to establish a comprehensive review of tenured faculty at regular intervals, and is in addition to existing policies on promotion and tenure, and on faculty workload and performance. This comprehensive review policy provides for the accountability of faculty as well as being part of a larger faculty development program, designed to enhance the professional abilities of the faculty as teachers, scholars, and members of the academic/professional community. This comprehensive review process shall not be substituted for the University System of Maryland and institutional policies and procedures relating to the termination of tenured appointments, which are in no way amended by this policy.

B. Comprehensive Review

All tenured faculty shall participate in a comprehensive review at least once in every five years to assess the faculty member's performance over time and to provide an opportunity to establish a professional plan to serve as a basis for the next comprehensive review. The chairperson of each department shall divide the faculty randomly into five mutually exclusive groups for review in each of five years. A faculty member who receives in the comprehensive review an indication that he/she is not meeting expectations shall meet with the department chairperson and dean to establish a plan for faculty development, which may include recommendations of the department review committee. In addition two consecutive annual reviews, which indicate the faculty member has not met minimum expectations, shall occasion an immediate comprehensive review, which shall be in addition to those otherwise required by this policy. Chairpersons, as faculty members, are included in the review process, and those faculty with joint appointments are to be reviewed according to the schedule of their "home" department.

C. Expectations for Faculty

The expectations for faculty are outlined in Towson's policy on "Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit" and include those requirements established by the University System of Maryland Board of Regents in "University System Policy on Appointment Rank and Tenure of Faculty" and in the "University System of Maryland Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities," as well as those expectations defined by the University and the faculty member's department.

D. Basis for Comprehensive Review

The evaluation of faculty members will be based upon activities in three broadly defined areas: teaching, scholarship, and service.

1. Teaching

"Teaching or instruction may take a variety of forms. Besides classroom teaching, which may occur as lectures, seminars, laboratory sessions, and clinical classes, instruction also occurs outside the classroom through supervising or directing student teaching, research, or other performances or activities. In addition, faculty spend a considerable amount of time in class preparation reading, developing new courses and curricula, learning new or innovative methods and practices, grading assignments and exams." (Towson University Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities.) Advising is also considered to be a critical component of the teaching function at Towson and will be evaluated as part of the comprehensive review.

2. Scholarship

"Faculty at Towson University are also expected to work as scholars in pursuing research, creating original works, and developing new and better ways of teaching. Research may be basic research, which leads to the discovery of new information, or it may be applied research, which finds ways to use knowledge for practical purposes. And faculty also engage in research when they integrate or connect knowledge to share with students or with colleagues through professional journals or through presentations at professional meetings. Performances, exhibits, or creative presentations might fit into one or more of these categories. Faculty should be guided by the definitions of scholarship/research that have been defined by..." their respective college and/or department. (Towson University Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities.)

3. Service

"Service is broadly defined to include participation in the governing and administrative activities of the department, college, university, or USM. It includes working with students and other members of the academic community to fulfill the mission of the University in all of its aspects. It may also include working with organizations of one's discipline and "the community outside the university, provided that work draws upon the professional training of the faculty and does not mean simply performing one's responsibilities as a good citizen or community member." (Towson University Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities.)

E. Sources and Methods for Comprehensive Review

In order to avoid duplication of effort and to assure consistency in the review process, the sources and methods for the comprehensive review shall be the same as those used for the annual faculty review, except that the comprehensive review shall examine a period of up to five years. All department policies and review procedures must be filed and approved by the dean of the college as well as the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, which is a standing committee of the University Senate. These procedures are defined in detail in Towson University's "Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit Policy." In summary, they include evaluation of teaching, through student evaluations and peer review; assessment of scholarship, primarily through peer review and consistent with each department's established standards and mission; and service, as defined by each department and consistent with the uniqueness of its discipline. All aspects of the portfolio need to be evaluated in light of the department, college, and the University missions and strategic plans. Materials used for both the rank committee recommendations and the comprehensive review may include information on publications (including non-print media), grants, international exchanges, technological innovations, works-in-progress, descriptions of special projects, letters of recommendations, teaching observation reports, and other information from the faculty workload document. Faculty must follow specific instructions from the Office of the Provost concerning the organization and presentation of materials.

While the comprehensive review uses the same sources and similar methods as the annual review of faculty, final evaluation must be prepared for each faculty member. In order to avoid duplication and to reduce the amount of materials to be submitted, copies of materials previously submitted with annual reports need not be submitted again. A reflective comprehensive summary shall be written by the faculty member being evaluated, analyzing the preceding five years of his or her work. This summary is included in the documentation submitted to the department PTRM committee. This document shall be considered in decisions of promotion, merit pay, and other rewards.

F. Faculty Development Resources

Since the comprehensive review is in part a formative process for future faculty development, for enhancing the learning environment for students, and for the improvement of the academic program as defined in the University, college, and department mission statements, the University is responsible for maintaining a broad foundation of resources to support the faculty. These resources are available through the Division of Academic Affairs and include those of university-wide offices such as the Faculty Development Office, and the Center for Instructional Advancement and Technology, as well as through departmental and college-based programs. It is the University's obligation to maintain adequate funding for faculty development in order to support the professional growth of its faculty.

Faculty receiving negative reviews shall work with their department chairpersons and college deans to create an appropriate plan for professional development, which must be completed no later than June 30 of the academic year in which the review occurred. The professional development plan must be approved in writing by the department chairperson and the dean of the college, and signed by all parties, including the faculty member. The progress of the faculty member in meeting the goals of the professional development plan shall be evaluated as part of the annual review process. Faculty receiving a positive review may also choose to create a professional development plan, but they are not required to do so.

G. Comprehensive Review Committee Structure

In order to reduce duplication of effort and encourage consistency in the review process, the appropriate rank committee(s) shall carry out the comprehensive review in each department following the procedures regarding the meeting times, selection of committee chairpersons, and votes on faculty evaluations. The specific procedures to establish rank committees are defined in the "Towson University Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit" document.

H. Comprehensive Review Schedule

The comprehensive review schedule shall be consistent with the Towson University Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit Calendar and follow the deadline established for annual promotion, tenure and merit decisions.

I. Confidentiality

All comprehensive review proceedings shall be held confidential by the comprehensive review committee members, the faculty member, chairperson, dean and the provost.

J. Appeals

Faculty members being reviewed shall have access to the periodic review reports and may appeal under the guidelines provided in Towson University's "Policy on Faculty Evaluation for Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit," page 3-40.

Approved by University Senate, April 6, 1998