

WKU Faculty Senate: December 9, 2021

Senate Recommendation 2021-12-09 Faculty Handbook d_1_c_handbook_III.G_and_IV.B_a_and_b

Faculty Senate Chair

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Proposal to Amend WKU Faculty Handbook

Editorial revisions include updates to the organizational structure, web addresses and names/titles, as well as other similar non-substantive changes.

Section(s) to be amended: III.G., IV.B.3.a., and IV.B.3.b.iv
Corresponding page number(s): 13

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Date Submitted: November 15, 2021

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1. Type of Change:

Editorial (non-substantive)

Substantive

Editorial revisions include updates to the organizational structure, web addresses and names/titles, as well as other similar non-substantive changes.

Addition: Where possible, identify the section of the handbook to which addition is proposed:

Deletion: Identify the section of the handbook from which deletion is proposed:

Revision: Identify the section of the handbook to which revision is proposed:

III.G., IV.B.3.a., and IV.B.3.b.iv

2. Proposals should be made in the form of text intended as an addition to or a replacement of, in whole or in part, some current section of the Faculty Handbook.

Current:

III.G. Procedures for Recommending Promotion for Instructors

[...]

2. Promotion Committee:

If there are candidates for promotion within the instructor ranks, the academic department head establishes a Promotion Committee composed of at least five (5) faculty members. Two (2) members of the Promotion Committee shall be tenured faculty members in the department and three (3) faculty members shall hold an instructor rank higher than the candidate. For departments with fewer than three faculty members with instructor rank higher than the candidate, a sufficient number of tenured faculty members will be added by the department head. If there is an insufficient number of tenured faculty members within the department, tenured faculty members and/or instructors of higher rank than the candidate will be added by the dean from within the college (or, if necessary, university) to bring the number of faculty on the Promotion Committee equal to five (5). In selecting the balance of the tenured and instructor faculty, the dean must consider the relationships among faculty to avoid an appearance of impropriety in the promotion process.

If formation of a committee according to these procedures is impossible, the dean shall request a variance from the Provost. The committee elects a chair. The department head serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the committee. Any individual with a conflict of interest is excluded from service on the promotion committee. Committee members who are themselves candidates for promotion are not permitted

to be present during deliberations on their rank.

IV.B. Tenure Appointment Policy:

[...]

IV.B.3.Policies and Procedures for Continuance and Tenure Recommendations:

- a. In addition to the regular annual evaluations of all faculty members, tenure-eligible faculty members will be evaluated each year on their progress toward tenure. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether there has been sufficient progress toward tenure to justify continuation of the faculty member.

Each year, from the first year of appointment through the year preceding the mandatory year for tenure consideration, tenure-eligible faculty will submit continuance materials to the department head for consideration by the continuance committee. The requirement for submission of continuance materials also applies to tenure-eligible faculty members who anticipate applying for tenure prior to the mandatory year.

Materials shall be submitted by January 25 of the first year of appointment and by August 20 for each subsequent year.

Continuance materials usually include, but are not limited to syllabi, examinations, SITE evaluations, activity reports, publications, creative works and evidence of service activities. The contents of any accompanying materials — for example a letter of appointment and workload assignments — used in the committee’s deliberations and of all materials accompanying its recommendation shall remain strictly confidential, except as they are conveyed to members of the faculty and administration whose duties require knowledge of the information.

Submitted materials shall comply with the department’s continuance policy.

The department’s tenured faculty serves as the continuance committee, excluding any faculty member having a conflict of interest as defined in Section II.X, or any individual with a subsequent role in the continuance decision. The department head is a non-voting member of the committee. The department head shall convene the committee and the committee members shall select a chair. Any committee member may comment on the candidate’s materials. The committee then votes for or against continuance by secret ballot.

Tenured faculty members who are unable to participate in person or via electronic means in the meeting must notify the department head in advance and may submit a sealed envelope with comments for each person under review, which will be shared with the department chair and with committee. Anyone participating in the meeting from a remote location must ensure the confidentiality of the meeting.

Absentee ballots can be cast. However, committee members intending to submit absentee ballots must notify the department head in advance. And the department head must establish a deadline prior to the committee meeting for submitting absentee ballots. Those ballots must remain sealed until the committee chair tallies ballots.

The department/division’s Continuance/Tenure (Promotion) Committee meets to review all evaluation materials and to vote on the candidate. Once the committee has met, the committee chair will provide a written memorandum to the department head. This

memorandum must include the recommendation of the committee, the number of faculty eligible to serve on the committee, the number of committee members voting, the actual vote count including any abstentions, and a summary of the faculty discussion. The memorandum may also provide additional information deemed relevant to the committee's decision. The committee will be given the opportunity to review, revise and approve the memorandum. By September 4 (February 1 for the first-year evaluation), the committee chair will send this memorandum to the department head.

By September 14 (February 9 for the first year evaluation), the department head will provide the candidate with a continuance evaluation in which the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in performance, as noted by the committee and/or the department head, will be clearly identified, documented, and explained. This evaluation will include:

- the committee's vote
- the department head's continuance evaluation

Candidate may request committee memorandum through the Office of the Provost.

The candidate will be given an opportunity to meet with the department head and send to the department head and dean a response to these evaluations by September 20 (February 15 for the first year evaluation).

The department head's evaluation and recommendation will be submitted to the college dean no later than September 20 (February 15 for the first year evaluation). The department head's recommendation to the dean will include:

- the result of the continuance committee's vote
- the committee's memorandum in full
- the department head's continuance evaluation

In case of a negative recommendation, the department head will inform the faculty member in writing.

The dean's recommendation shall be submitted to the Provost no later than September 30 (February 22 for the first year evaluation). In case of a negative recommendation, the dean will notify the faculty member. The Provost will submit any negative recommendation to the President and to the faculty member by October 10 (March 1 for the first year evaluation). The President will notify the faculty member of any decision for non-continuation on or before October 15 (March 1 for the first year evaluation).

The probationary requirement may be satisfied through full-time faculty service for five (5) years as an assistant professor or above at WKU. Review typically occurs at the beginning of the sixth full year. Under exceptional circumstances, the University may consider tenure in less than the usual probationary time. Authorized leaves of absences will not be credited toward eligibility for tenure unless otherwise specified at the time they are taken.

b. For faculty hired with a probationary period, the procedures to be followed in tenure recommendations are:

- i. The department head will be responsible for notifying probationary faculty of the date for mandatory consideration of tenure, typically the beginning of the sixth full year. A faculty member who has applied for tenure before the mandatory tenure year may withdraw from the process at any time without prejudice. However, a tenure review must occur in the mandatory year. A faculty member may withdraw a tenure application at any stage of the review during the review process prior to final action by the Board of Regents, but withdrawal of the application at any point during the mandatory review year constitutes a de facto resignation from WKU

effective at the end of the academic year, unless the candidate submits a formal letter of resignation. If accepted by the Office of the Provost this formal resignation will be effective at the end of the next academic year.

- ii. Tenure eligible faculty members holding a probationary term of appointment may be granted an extension of the maximum probationary period with no resulting change in employment obligations. See academic policy 1.124V on the [Academic Affairs Policies page](#).
- iii. Faculty members being considered will be responsible for providing the tenured faculty by October 1 with all materials that they wish to be considered in the tenure decision. After the candidate submits all relevant evaluation materials for consideration by the October 1 deadline, nothing may be added or removed from these materials except the addition of recommendation letters.
- iv. Before November 1, the department head will convene all tenured faculty members and preside at the election of a chair of the tenure committee. In convening all tenured faculty members within a department, the department head must consider relationships among faculty to avoid any appearance of impropriety in the tenure process. Any faculty member having a conflict of interest as defined in Section II.X is explicitly excluded from service on the tenure committee. Exclusion of a faculty member from the tenure committee on the basis of any other relationship requires approval from the dean of the college.

The tenured faculty in executive session will discuss the credentials of all faculty eligible for tenure and make appropriate recommendation(s) based upon the department, college and University standards to the department head. The contents of any accompanying materials — for example a letter of appointment and workload assignments — used in the committee’s deliberations and of all materials accompanying its recommendation shall remain strictly confidential, except as they are conveyed to members of the faculty and administration whose duties require knowledge of the information.

The tenured faculty will vote by secret ballot to tenure or not to tenure. The department head may attend the meeting but is not eligible to vote.

Faculty members who are unable to be present at the meeting must notify the department head in advance and with the consent of the department head may submit a sealed envelope with a secret ballot enclosed for each person under review.

Once the committee has met, the committee chair will provide a written memorandum to the department head. This memorandum must include the recommendation of the committee, the number of faculty eligible to serve on the committee, the number of committee members voting, the actual vote count including any abstentions, and a summary of the faculty discussion. The memorandum may also provide additional information deemed relevant to the committee’s decision.

The committee will be given the opportunity to review, revise and approve the memorandum. The recommendation of the Tenure Committee will be immediately provided by the department head to the faculty member seeking tenure. In the case of a negative recommendation by the Tenure Committee, the faculty member will have the option of withdrawing the application (but see I above). If the application is not withdrawn by the faculty member, the process will proceed.

Revision/Addition:

III.G. Procedures for Recommending Promotion for Instructors

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2. Promotion Committee:

If there are candidates for promotion within the instructor ranks, the academic department head establishes a Promotion Committee composed of at least five (5) faculty members. Two (2) members of the Promotion Committee shall be tenured faculty members in the department and three (3) faculty members shall hold an instructor rank higher than the candidate. For departments with fewer than three faculty members with instructor rank higher than the candidate, a sufficient number of tenured faculty members will be added by the department head. If there is an insufficient number of tenured faculty members within the department, tenured faculty members and/or instructors of higher rank than the candidate will be added by the dean from within the college (or, if necessary, university) to bring the number of faculty on the Promotion Committee equal to five (5). In selecting the balance of the tenured and instructor faculty, the dean must consider the relationships among faculty to avoid an appearance of impropriety in the promotion process.

If formation of a committee according to these procedures is impossible, the dean shall request a variance from the Provost. The committee elects a chair. The department head serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the committee. ~~Any individual with a conflict of interest is excluded from service on the promotion committee. Committee members who are themselves candidates for promotion are not permitted to be present during deliberations on their rank.~~ The following individuals are excluded from service on promotion committees: 1) Committee members who are candidates for promotion are not permitted to be present during deliberations on their rank; 2) Any faculty member having a conflict of interest as defined in Section II.X; 3) Individuals who serve as the head of another department within the candidate's college; 4) Any university official with a subsequent role in the promotion process (the dean of that college, the provost, the president) and any individual with an executive/administrative appointment who reports directly to one of those university officials.

IV.B. Tenure Appointment Policy:

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IV.B.3. Policies and Procedures for Continuance and Tenure Recommendations:

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Rationale for amendment:

Revisions intended to clarify who is eligible to serve on continuance, promotion and tenure committees. Issues have arisen regarding eligibility of assistant and associate deans.