

Procedures of the Faculty Personnel Committee

I. Function and Composition of the Personnel Committee

The full official definition of the committee's charge and composition may be found in Article III, Section 2, of the Faculty By-Laws. The members of the Personnel Committee are elected by the faculty of Kalamazoo College as its representatives in the process of reviewing faculty members for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and election to emeritus/emerita status. The results of the committee's deliberations take the form of recommendations to the Provost, who makes a separate recommendation to the President. Traditionally, if the Provost disagrees with the Faculty Personnel Committee, he or she consults with the committee in an attempt to reach consensus. According to the Plan of Employment (IV.B.4), should the President disagree with the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee, he or she shall meet with them in an attempt to reach consensus before making a final decision, which in all cases rests with the President.

For the election of Personnel Committee members, the Faculty Executive Committee brings to the full faculty a slate of nominees that, in accord with the Faculty By-Laws, has been prepared in consultation with the Personnel Committee. Nominees may be added from the floor of the faculty meeting. No more than two members from any division may be elected to the committee.

II. Philosophy of Faculty Review

Kalamazoo College faculty members are reviewed and evaluated on the basis of their performance in three areas: teaching and advising, professional development (research, scholarship, publication, performance, exhibition, etc.), and service. Teaching and advising ranks first among these three considerations. Faculty are expected to develop, in consultation with department and program chairs and the Provost, priorities that will allow them to pursue clear professional goals and make substantial contributions to the campus while sustaining a high level of teaching effectiveness, as assessed by peer review, student evaluations, course materials, and letters from current and former students.

The Personnel Committee understands that Kalamazoo College faculty are called upon to become multi-dimensional community members playing a variety of roles. The committee strives, in reviewing a case, to understand the candidate's performance and goals in departmental and programmatic contexts, and to develop a detailed picture of the candidate as a teacher and advisor; a scholar, researcher, or artist; a department member; a programmatic resource beyond the department; and a contributing member of the campus community. Toward this end, the committee obligates itself to gain the fullest possible sense of a candidate's abilities, achievements, and potential for further development.

III. Reappointment Procedures

The purpose of reappointment reviews is not only to assess performance to date but to clarify a candidate's direction for the future. This direction must satisfy individual, departmental, and institutional needs. It is important in all reappointment reviews that the department chair and the candidate agree on the candidate's role in the departmental program and on clearly identified priorities for the next segment of the candidate's probationary period. Their written statements, along with the Personnel Committee's assessment and the Provost's recommendations to the candidate, should ultimately be as congruent as possible. The candidate and department chair should take the initiative to address any confusion or disagreement arising during a review. At any time during the probationary period, a meeting between a candidate and the Provost to clarify a candidate's standing with regard to reappointment or tenure may, but need not, be arranged by either party.

Tenure-track faculty typically undergo a first-year review followed by a reappointment review during their third year in service, though individual contracts may vary according to previous experience. The reappointment review normally occurs during the spring term (see review schedule). The quarter before the review, the Provost's Office notifies faculty to be reviewed of materials necessary to the review, and the deadlines for submitting these materials.

Other continuing faculty (those without term appointments) may also undergo similar reviews.

Each review is conducted by the entire committee. In the absence of a member knowledgeable in the candidate's field, the Committee may solicit the help of other faculty to insure competence in understanding the candidate's teaching, professional development, and service. One committee member takes the role of file overseer, maintaining contact with the Provost's office to ensure that all needed materials are submitted to the file on time. This committee member typically writes the assessment letter, reporting on the committee's discussions.

The first-year review. The materials considered in this review consist of student evaluations, a statement from the department chair, a current curriculum vitae, and a statement from the candidate. Both the departmental and personal statements should assess the candidate's performance so far and identify goals in the three areas of faculty responsibility: teaching and advising, professional development (research, scholarship, and other professional involvement), and service to the College community. The document "FPC Advice and Guidance for Departments with Pre-Tenure Members" should be helpful in preparing materials for the review file.

Because the candidate has been at the College for a short time, this review involves relatively small body of documentation. However, the committee takes this review very seriously as an opportunity for the candidate to intentionally develop a coherent plan for his/her professional trajectory based this initial year of work at K, and to receive meaningful feedback from the committee and the Provost. The committee writes a letter to the Provost summarizing

its findings. The candidate is notified of the results of the process in a private discussion with the Provost shortly after the review takes place, and the letter and a summary of the conversation are placed in the candidate's personnel folder.

Reappointment review (normally undertaken during the third year): This review is conducted by the full committee, which bases its conclusions on a personnel folder containing the following materials:

Provided by the candidate:

- a curriculum vitae or résumé;
- personal statement;
- record of workload (advisees, independent study courses and SIP supervision);
- copies of publications;
- course syllabi;
- other materials deemed relevant by the candidate, the Provost, or the Personnel Committee.

Provided or solicited by Provost's Office and Personnel Committee:

- a detailed statement from the department chair, representing the departmental view and written after confidential interviews with each department member (the department chair may have access to the teaching evaluations in the file);
- statements from chairs of committees, elected, standing, and ad hoc, on which the candidate has served, and from directors of college programs in which the candidate is involved;
- statements from faculty members at large;
- student course evaluations;
- other materials deemed relevant by the Provost or the Personnel Committee.

Candidates will be asked by the Provost's Office to provide the names of committees and programs whose chairs should be contacted for comment. The document "FPC Advice and Guidance for Departments with Pre-Tenure Members" should be helpful in preparing materials for the review file.

One committee member takes the role of file overseer, maintaining contact with the Provost's office to ensure that all needed materials are submitted to the file on time. This committee member typically writes the assessment letter, reporting on the committee's discussions. This assessment letter summarizing the committee's findings is sent to the Provost. The President makes the final decision in the case, which is communicated by the Provost to the candidate by the end of the spring term (see review schedule). A copy of the Personnel Committee's letter is placed in the candidate's personnel folder.

IV. Tenure Reviews

Tenure reviews typically occur in the candidate's sixth year. The candidate is notified by the Provost's Office of materials required and deadlines for completion of the tenure file. The entire Personnel Committee conducts these reviews, making its recommendation to the Provost. One committee member takes the role of file overseer, maintaining contact with the Provost's office to ensure that all needed materials are submitted to the file on time. This committee member typically writes the assessment letter, reporting on the committee's discussions.

As indicated in Section I, in case of disagreement, consultation traditionally occurs in an attempt to reach consensus. The Provost makes a recommendation to the President. According to the Plan of Employment (IV.B.4), should the President disagree with the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee, he or she shall meet with them in an attempt to reach consensus before making a final decision. The President subsequently makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board will normally vote on each recommendation at its March meeting.

The Personnel Committee bases its deliberations on a personnel file containing all the materials required for a reappointment file, plus the following, solicited by the Provost's Office:

- letters from former students, current seniors and advisees;
- letters from colleagues and others whose familiarity with the candidate's work may aid the Committee in its deliberations;
- external evaluations from experts in the candidate's field(s);
- a statement from a faculty advocate of the candidate's choice who has read the file. The faculty advocate is generally a senior faculty member who understands the candidate's work and record.

Unsolicited letters from former and current students and from colleagues will also be included.

All material in the candidate's file is open for the candidate's and advocate's review except for the external review letters. If requested, the Personnel Committee will provide the candidate and/or the advocate with a summary of confidential letters.

To compile this information, the candidate is asked by the Provost's Office well in advance of the review to provide the following information:

- a list of potential external reviewers, compiled with the assistance of the department chair and annotated to describe their relationship to the candidate and his or her work. This list should identify experts in the candidate's field(s) who can competently evaluate the candidate's work. It should include faculty from liberal arts colleges as well as research universities, but should not include close associates or collaborators. The Provost may narrow or augment the list. The candidate and the Provost will reach an agreement on the adjusted list, and each may eliminate names for reasonable cause. In case of a disagreement between the Provost and the

candidate over what constitutes “reasonable cause,” the Personnel Committee shall serve as final arbiter, and its decision shall be final. The Provost's Office will contact from the final list a selection of potential reviewers, who are assured confidentiality and paid a stipend for their service.

- a list of former students to be contacted.
- a current curriculum vitae, copies of syllabi, publications, and the personal statement. This packet is sent to the external reviewers.
- the name of the candidate's advocate.

The Provost's Office informs the faculty at large of the impending review and solicits written comment from current seniors, advisees, former students, and faculty. The Committee also solicits student opinion through a mailing to a broad range of recently graduated majors of the relevant department and all advisees of the candidate. Students who request confidentiality will have their names removed and their letters edited and otherwise disguised to protect their identity. The candidate may solicit letters from supporters both on and off campus. The document “FPC Advice and Guidance for Departments with Pre-Tenure Members” should be helpful in preparing materials for the review file.

The Committee begins its deliberations when all its members have read the entire file. In complex or unclear cases, the Committee may interview the department chair, department members, the advocate, or other faculty or administrators whose knowledge of the candidate's performance may be relevant. A summary of such a conversation will be placed in the file. As in other reviews, but most emphatically and carefully in tenure reviews, the Committee evaluates the candidate's record in the three areas comprising the faculty member's role: teaching and advising, professional development, and service. As in retention reviews, teaching is evaluated on the basis of syllabi, department chair reports, student letters, and teaching evaluations, taking into consideration the candidate's teaching load, subject matter, and pedagogy. Faculty have the option to develop teaching portfolios that will include this material plus other data that will help to contextualize teaching: assignments, samples of student work with instructor comments, peer review of teaching, etc. The absence of a teaching portfolio will not adversely affect a review. In evaluating professional development, the Committee relies upon external assessments and context provided by the candidate and the department chair, as well as informed opinion from other knowledgeable faculty who may contribute letters to the candidate's file.

The Provost informs the candidate of the outcome of the review, and the Personnel Committee's letter becomes a part of the permanent file. A positive tenure decision includes promotion of an assistant professor to the rank of associate professor.

V. Promotion Reviews

According to the College Plan of Employment (IV.A.3), a faculty member is normally eligible to be reviewed for promotion to Professor after six years in the Associate Professor rank. However, at any time, the President, the Provost, or the department chair may nominate

outstanding faculty members for consideration for promotion. A faculty member reviewed and not recommended for promotion will not normally be reviewed again for at least two years.

Early in the fall term, the Provost's Office notifies eligible individuals that they may submit abbreviated files containing a curriculum vitae, copies of publications and a personal statement in which the candidate makes a case for promotion based on teaching and advising, professional development, and service. The Provost's Office will include teaching evaluations in the short file. Early in winter term, these files are considered in a meeting of the Personnel Subcommittee on Promotions, consisting of those Committee members who hold the rank of Professor. The subcommittee may be augmented by additional Professors, appointed by the Committee Chair in consultation with the Subcommittee, if necessary. This subcommittee writes a report to the Provost about the strengths and weaknesses of the short file. The Provost conveys this information to the candidate, who will then decide whether to proceed with the process.

Candidates who proceed are asked by the Personnel Committee to submit whatever further materials the committee judges necessary to its deliberations, but in all cases, external reviews are required. As in tenure reviews, the candidate, department chair, and Provost collaborate on a list of external reviewers, and the candidate provides a packet consisting of the curriculum vitae, personal statement, syllabi, and copies of publications. External reviewers' letters are, again, confidential, but summaries will be provided to the candidate upon request.

The Promotions Subcommittee reviews this file and makes its recommendation to the Provost. As indicated in Section I, in case of disagreement, consultation traditionally occurs in an attempt to achieve consensus. The Provost makes a recommendation to the President. According to the Plan of Employment (IV.B.4), should the President disagree with the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee, he or she shall meet with them in an attempt to reach consensus before making a final decision. The President's decisions are announced to the Board of Trustees at their June meeting, but no Board action is required. The Provost informs the candidate of the outcome of the review.

VI. Other Functions

Emeritus/emerita status: The Personnel Committee traditionally proposes to the faculty as a whole the candidacy of retired faculty for emeritus or emerita status.

Conversion of term positions to tenure-track: As a general rule, when a term faculty position is converted to tenure-track, the affected department conducts a national search to fill the tenure-track position. If the department and the Provost are considering appointing the faculty member in the term position to the tenure-track position without a national search, the Provost will ask the Personnel Committee to review the faculty member's Personnel file and make a recommendation.

Faculty Personnel Committee responsibilities for continuing faculty who are not on tenure track:
The Personnel Committee will review all faculty (exclusive of coaches) in continuing positions whose contracts are expected to be renewed indefinitely. Usually, these faculty will be reviewed during the spring of the second year of their three year contracts. The criteria (such as the relative importance of teaching, scholarship, and service) will be determined in consultation with the provost.

If at any time the Provost is considering not renewing the contract of a continuing faculty member for any reason, the Personnel Committee will be consulted before any final decision is made.

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