

# **Guidelines for Conducting Pre-Tenure Faculty Contract Renewals**

## **College of Arts and Sciences**

### **University at Albany**

Pre-tenure faculty contract renewals are viewed as a timely and important opportunity to review a junior faculty member's progress toward tenure and promotion. In most instances, term renewals, based on a 3-2-2 contract term renewal schedule, will take place in the second and fourth years of employment. The first 3-year term appointment is specified in the original offer letter. The first term renewal, in addition to evaluating the individual's scholarly, teaching, and service activities, is also an opportunity to discuss resources available to faculty members (e.g. Drescher Award, if applicable, services of the Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership). The second term renewal comes at a critical juncture, as the individual has had sufficient time to progress toward the requirements of tenure and promotion and any deficiencies in the candidate's file will often be apparent by this time. At this point the individual must be advised of specific deficiencies to address prior to the tenure and promotion review. The following guidelines have been developed to assist the Departments in establishing a process for term renewals that will best serve all parties.

#### **Philosophy**

Emulate in the contract renewal process, as much as possible, the procedures undertaken in promotion and tenure, short of sending out materials to external reviewers and soliciting letters of support. University at Albany guidelines for promotion and tenure can be found at: [http://www.albany.edu/academics/promotion\\_tenure/introduction.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/academics/promotion_tenure/introduction.shtml).

#### **Materials Required for a Complete Term Renewal Packet (Submit to Dean's Office)**

- HRM-3
- Department Chair Recommendation – Addressed to the Dean; the first paragraph of the recommendation must include “the method by which the Chair consulted with the faculty in the candidate's academic unit”
- Candidate's CV
- Course Enrollments
- Grade Distributions
- SIRF data including student comments; only recent scores and comments are needed for second (and any additional) term renewals.
- Peer observation report (or Chair may comment on this in his/her recommendation)

#### **Departmental Review**

Faculty will discuss the term renewal according to Department bylaws or customs using the following materials.

- Curriculum Vitae – prepared by candidate in accordance with guidelines for promotion and tenure
- Personal Statement – prepared by candidate regarding research, teaching philosophy, and service (suggested by the second term review; required for tenure review)
- Teaching Materials
  - ✓ Collection of course syllabi – provided by Department
  - ✓ Course evaluations – provided by Department; include quantitative scores (SIRF scores when available) and qualitative comments for all classes taught
  - ✓ One or more in-class visits; observation and report/s to be organized by faculty mentor or the Chair
  - ✓ Grade distributions – Department will request from IRPE
- Copies of publications, manuscripts under review, selected conference papers, and/or evidence of creative activity – supplied by candidate
- Faculty mentor to provide other relevant information, if any

**Note:** Departmental minutes do not get forwarded with the renewal packet and do not need to be provided to the faculty member

## Topics and Questions for Faculty Discussion and Deliberation

### A. Scholarship

*Issues Relevant to an Assessment of Scholarship and Creative Activity (in no particular order)*

- Rate of publication or performances/exhibits/recordings, etc.
- Quality of publications (journals, press) and/or performances/exhibits/recordings, etc. and venues
- Authorship and collaboration – single, multiple
- External funding, received or seeking
- The issue of focus in scholarly or creative activity
- Future research/creative agenda, evidence of work beyond the dissertation
- Visibility in the field/associations/public

*Scholarship Question:* Is the candidate making adequate progress toward tenure and promotion from the perspective of the dimensions listed above and criteria of the Department?

### B. Teaching

*Issues Relevant to an Assessment of Teaching (in no particular order):*

- Mastery of subject
- Lectures well organized and clear
- Syllabi and course materials complete
- Teaching evaluations (compare favorably with Department, on upward trajectory)
- Use of technology, if relevant

*Teaching Question:* Is the candidate making adequate progress toward achieving excellence in teaching?

### C. Service

*Issues Relevant to an Assessment of Service (in no particular order):*

- Appropriate service to the Department, College, University
- Evidence that candidate is a good University citizen
- Service to the profession
- Public engagement, if any

*Service Question:* Is the candidate making service contributions appropriate to his or her rank? Generally speaking, service contributions of the most junior faculty should not be too heavy and should include participation in Departmental activities. More time-intensive commitments, such as chairing a committee, will, when possible, be the responsibility of more senior faculty.

### D. Final Questions

- Renew contract or not?
- If so, then what information might be provided to the faculty member to guide continuing efforts toward promotion and tenure?

## Feedback to Candidate

- Department Chair must meet with faculty member to discuss the feedback from the faculty discussion
- Faculty Member receives a copy of the Department Chair's final recommendation to the CAS Dean along with a copy of the HRM 3

## Assessing Progress in the Future (Between Contract Renewals)

The Chair will have an informal conversation annually with each tenure track faculty member and his/her mentor about progress toward tenure. The discussion will be based on a consideration of the faculty member's CV and teaching evaluations. This discussion will generally take place at the end of each academic year. If the Chair has concerns that tenure or the next contract renewal is in jeopardy, the Chair may convene the tenure-track faculty to conduct an informal review of a faculty member's progress toward tenure. When appropriate, these discussions will be documented and provided to the faculty member.