

## **Department of Biology Procedures for Tenure Evaluations**

1. A file will be maintained in the departmental office for each faculty member. This file will contain most of the information important in making judgments on tenure. At the beginning of the fifth year of appointment faculty members who are to be considered for tenure will be advised by the departmental Chairperson to bring their files up to date and to continue to do so during the year.
  
2. In consultation with the candidate's Section Associate Chair, the Chairperson will appoint a Tenure Committee for each candidate. The Tenure Committee will typically be composed of the two members serving on the candidate's mentoring committee plus one additional faculty member whose area of expertise is appropriate for the candidate being considered. One member of this committee may be a member of the Indiana University faculty from outside the Department of Biology, if justified by research expertise. Although outside members are not allowed to participate in the departmental vote, they will be required to participate in the Tenure Committee vote. Appointment of the Tenure Committee will normally occur at the beginning of the candidate's fifth year in rank except when an early tenure decision is indicated.
  
3. It is understood that the committee will strive to evaluate the candidate objectively, as would an outside neutral expert making a professional judgment, and not act as an advocate for the candidate. It will be the duty of the Tenure Committee to gather information to permit an objective internal departmental evaluation of the candidate's contributions to research, teaching and service, and to prepare a final report for submission to the Chairperson.
  
4. In April of the candidate's fifth year in residence, the Chairperson of the Tenure Committee will confer with the individual under consideration to develop a list of names of sixteen external

individuals. Eight names should be supplied by the candidate and eight names should be compiled by the Tenure Committee. The names of individuals suggested by the candidate must be clearly distinguished from those suggested by others. Any professional relationships between the candidate and the external individuals should be indicated. Furthermore, candidates should be given the opportunity to suggest the names of any persons who they feel would not be suitable and to state why such objections are held.

Outside letters should be sought from any collaborator of a tenure candidate for which the collaboration has resulted in a jointly authored paper during the candidate's time in appointment. The letter should ask the collaborator to comment on the nature of the collaboration and each group's respective contribution. Examples of such letters from past years Can be made available. Collaborators do not count as outside referees.

5. The Tenure Committee will prepare short biographies of each potential referee on both the committee list and the candidate's list and prioritize each list in regards to who should be solicited first for letters of evaluation. In May, the Chairperson of the Department will forward the top six names from each list to the Dean of the College, who will then recommend four referees from each list from whom letters should be sought. In the event that more than two potential referees decline to write from either the candidate's or committee's list, the College will immediately be provided with the names of the two additional potential referees for approval.

6. After referees agree to provide a letter, they shall be sent the candidate's current CV, a personal statement from the candidate describing the candidate's research accomplishments and future directions, and copies of key papers, along with the tenure criteria for the department and the College. Note that this personal statement should be targeted toward experts close to the candidate's field and likely will differ significantly from the statement to be included in the candidate's dossier to be submitted to the College. The Tenure Committee, Section Associate

Chair and Chair are expected to read drafts of the CV and personal statement and make recommendations for improvement. These materials are typically sent to referees in late June with a deadline for receipt of letters in early August.

7. In late August the candidate submits a personal statement describing their research, teaching and service accomplishments, which will be included in the dossier. These statements should be written for a non-expert audience as they will be read and evaluated by non-scientist faculty on the College and University tenure committees.

8. After considering the completed body of information, including the letters from external referees and collaborators, the Tenure Committee will prepare a detailed report on the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in research, teaching and service. The Committee will separately rank the candidate's research, teaching and service using the adjectives mandated by the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs (Excellent, Very Good, Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory). The Committee will also vote on whether the candidate should be granted tenure and promotion. No abstentions will be allowed in this vote and the vote will be included in the committee report.

9. The candidate will present a research seminar to the department sometime during the first four weeks of the fall semester. This will usually be the beginning of their sixth full academic year at IU, unless the candidate is coming up early, or has been granted additional time due to leaves or facility-related delays.

10. Immediately following the candidate's seminar and prior to the meeting of the tenured faculty, the Tenure Committee will make its report available to the tenured faculty, accompanying the candidate's personal statement, CV, and complete copies of external letters. These documents will be provided through a secure website, and are to be treated with complete

confidentiality by the faculty. The full dossier will be available for inspection by tenured faculty in the office of the Chair's administrative assistant.

11. Within one week following the tenure seminar, the tenured faculty will meet to discuss the candidates' record. At this meeting, the Tenure Committee will be responsible for presenting an objective evaluation of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. The Committee members may change their vote if the departmental discussion has changed their opinions. Immediately following the departmental meeting the Committee will revise its report if needed, including its rankings and vote, and forward it to the Chairperson. The revised report will be distributed to the tenured faculty and included in the candidate's dossier.

12. After the revised committee report is posted, the faculty will rank the candidate in research, teaching and service using the required adjectives, and will vote to award or deny tenure to the candidate using an online anonymous survey tool. Comments may also be included with the rankings and votes, but are not required, and are not included in the dossier. In the case of votes that go against the committee recommendation, it is helpful to the Chair to have a brief comment explaining the basis for the vote. The faculty will have up to one week to vote after the revised committee report is posted.

13. The results of the rankings/votes will be disclosed to the Chairperson and relevant Section Associate Chair, who will co-author a unified "Chair's Letter" that provides their assessment of the candidate, with the opinions of both the SAC and Chair included if opinions differ. Both the SAC and Chair sign the main part of the letter. However, only one "Chair's Vote" can be cast, and that vote belongs to the Chair, which shall be made clear in the letter by a brief statement from the Chair stating his/her vote following the joint signature line if opinions are divided. In cases in which the SAC serves on the Tenure Committee, the Chair's letter shall be written and signed only by the Chair since the opinion of the SAC will be provided in Tenure Committee

Report. Once the “Chair’s Letter” is completed, it is added to the dossier and the complete dossier is forwarded to the College, typically no later than October 1.

14. Once the Chair’s letter is written, the Chair will meet with the candidate to inform them of the outcome of the vote and the Chair’s recommendation. Initially the Chair will simply disclose his/her recommendation and whether the majority of the vote was in favor of tenure. The candidate may ask for the exact vote count, but may also choose not to know. The vote count and Chair’s recommendation will not be disclosed to the faculty by the Chair or SAC. The candidate, at his/her discretion, may choose to divulge the recommendation of the Chair and whether the overall departmental vote was positive or negative, but exact vote counts should remain confidential. In the event of a negative decision by the Department, the Chair will explain the basis of the negative decision to the candidate and provide the candidate with information on the appeals process at Indiana University as outlined in the Indiana University Academic Handbook.

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