



August 17, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Pamplin Faculty

FROM: Robert T. Sumichrast, Dean *ROBERT*

SUBJECT: Memorandum on Promotion and Tenure

After discussions with the College Academic Committee, I am providing these continuing clarifications to Pamplin College procedures and expectations for P&T reviews.

Expectations for Promotion and Tenure

With respect to publication in the College's elite journals, the College's Expectations for Promotion and Tenure are explicit—publication in the College's list of elite journals is **required** both for promotion to associate professor with tenure and for promotion to full professor. The policy applies to all assistant professors hired in 2013 or later. Even for assistant professors hired prior to 2013, publication in these journals has been an expectation in most departments and has certainly been a primary focus in the past two years, so it should be a consideration in P&T deliberations. For promotion to full professor, the policy applies to all tenured faculty members in Pamplin. Consistent with the Faculty Handbook which states that "candidates for the rank of professor must demonstrate excellence in research..." and that promotion "should be reserved for those whose achievements are broad and noteworthy" a record of post-tenure research including publication in the elite journals is required. I will be emphasizing these requirements annually to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

External Reviews in P&T Dossiers

The Provost's Office is making changes to the rules for assembling external reviewers. This does not affect the importance of assembling a strong panel of reviewers for our P&T reviews. In addition to requirements stated in the College's Policy and the Faculty Handbook, the following requirements apply immediately to department practices in assembling external letters for Pamplin cases:

1. A minimum of four external letters is required; however, six external letters are desirable in order to insure that the University expectations are met.
2. All letters must come from full professors.

Invent the Future

3. In selecting external reviewers, strong and relevant credentials of the potential reviewer form the central criterion and must be clearly delineated in the two-paragraph bio provided for the dossier. As stated in the University guidelines, "Reviewers are expected to be at peer institutions or other major research universities." Such universities for Pamplin might include the SCHEV comparison universities, Pamplin Peer and Aspirant universities, universities in the Pamplin doctoral placement target list, and doctoral-granting AAU university business schools.

The University guidelines state that there should be a balance between letters from reviewers suggested by candidates and those suggested by the department P&T committee. While the goal remains a balanced set of reviewers, the Provost's Office is re-interpreting the requirement. First, it is now requiring that at least 50% of the letters be submitted by reviewers selected by the P&T Committee. Second, the committee and the candidate should identify reviewers independently. It is possible for the same reviewer to be nominated by both the candidate and the committee. As a result, more than 50% of the reviews could come from those recommended by the candidate. However, the committee, in selecting from the lists the panel of reviewers to be contacted, should insure that not all of the reviewers are ones selected by the candidate.

To accommodate these changes, the Pamplin Process for Selection and Operation of Departmental P&T Committees has been revised to reflect these new requirements.

There is substantial variation among departments in the wording of the request for external letters. I will ask the Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs to work with the Academic Committee to develop standardized text for the requests for external review.

Second and Fourth-year reviews of pre-tenure faculty

Unless the final letter from the department head terminates a faculty member's appointment, the final letter to the candidate from the department head and P&T committee should make clear that:

1. The department head comments and those of the department P&T committee are meant to provide guidance to the faculty member in pursuing professional development and success as a Virginia Tech faculty member.
2. The comments do not provide definitive information regarding the possible outcomes of future reviews including review for promotion and tenure.

