

To: Faculty Senate
From: Senator Melissa Dieckmann, Department of Earth Sciences
Date: November 28, 2005

I would like to bring forward at the December 5th meeting the following two amendments to the Ad Hoc Committee P&T report:

AMENDMENT 1:

To strike Part I, Section A, #5 in favor of the current policy of having department, college and university committees review all tenure and promotion recommendations, whether positive or negative.

Part I: Main Recommendations

A. Promotion and Tenure Process Recommendations

5. Review Process

- a. If a candidate receives a positive recommendation for promotion or tenure from the department committee and chair, the application shall not be forwarded to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee but shall be forwarded for consideration by the dean.
- b. If a candidate is not recommended for tenure by committee or administrator at any level, the application shall be reviewed by the promotion and tenure committee at the next level. The chair, dean, or Provost shall initiate the review.
- c. If a candidate is not recommended for promotion by committee or administrator at any level, the application shall not be considered further, unless the candidate appeals to the next level.
- d. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends no change in the practice in which administrators at all levels review and make their own recommendations concerning all applications for tenure, applications for promotion that have received a positive recommendation, and applications for promotion that have received a negative recommendation, which the candidate has appealed.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE AMENDMENT:

University functioning is based on two principles that we at ECU say that we embrace wholeheartedly: peer review and shared governance. However, the recommended change in review process by the Ad Hoc Committee diminishes these two prerogatives of the entire university faculty.

First, by removing the faculty-based committees from the decision-making process, but retaining the authority of the administrators at those same levels, faculty shared governance in personnel decisions is diminished greatly, and “peer review” is reduced to peers within one’s own discipline rather than the collegiality of the entire faculty as peers in the teaching and learning process.

Second, the basis of a decision of tenure and promotion has implications beyond the department level. The tenure decision is basically one that grants employment for life, and faculty members are more than simply departmental teaching and research colleagues. Faculty members are part of the university community who serve in shared governance in a variety of college-level and university-level responsibilities (e.g., search committees, P&T committees); and who represent the university and the college through active scholarship, quality of teaching and service to the community and profession. Because a long-term hire impacts the college and university in addition to the department, the faculty at the college and university level have both a right and a responsibility to share in the tenure decision for these colleagues. Promotion decisions also affect the college and university in addition to the department, directly because of the financial implications of the promotion decision, and indirectly through rank-based requirements for service and shared governance issues. For this reason, faculty members at the department, college and university level should all have the right and the responsibility to review their peers and participate in the promotion and tenure process.

AMENDMENT 2:

To change Part 1, Section C, #8 as follows:

Part I: Main Recommendations

C. Promotion in Faculty Rank

8. The university shall ~~continue to permit~~ prohibit faculty ~~to apply~~ from applying for promotion in rank prior to being considered for tenure. Tenure will not be granted without concomitant promotion.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE AMENDMENT:

Joint granting of tenure and promotion to associate professor are common, best management practices at universities throughout the country. The separation of these two actions provides significant ambiguity and variance of policy throughout the university. Often, the practice at the departmental level is to have two standards for promotion – if a faculty member wishes to apply for promotion to associate professor prior to tenure, then the expectation is that the faculty member significantly exceeds the standards required for tenure. On the other hand, these same departments are willing to grant tenure to a faculty member who does not meet the requirements for promotion to associate professor. This inconsistent application of criteria is a legal landmine.

Additionally, if, as is the common practice, promotion to associate professor prior to tenure implies that all requirements for tenure (except for time in service) have been met or exceeded, then the university is, in effect, granting early tenure by granting promotion prior to tenure. A candidate who achieves promotion then is denied for tenure would have just cause to question the action if the criteria are identical. The university should be very leery about making a decision that has implications for lifetime employment after only three years of employment at ECU, and it must be questioned whether three years of employment at ECU provides sufficient knowledge of the long-term success of one's teaching, scholarship and service.