

Recommendations of the Committee on Tenure and Promotion Procedures April 18, 2019

Background

The Promotion and Tenure Process Review Committee convened in the fall of 2018 to review the internal promotion and tenure processes at Columbia Business School. The committee is chaired by Don Lehmann and includes: Tim Baldenius, Carri Chan, Damon Phillips, Jonah Rockoff, Suresh Sundaresan, and Charles Jones (ex officio.)

The committee has spent the last nine months developing its recommendations. The process included multiple meetings of the committee itself as well as an extensive effort to obtain outside input and information. This included:

- Developing the initial report shared with the tenured faculty in December, 2018. (This was developed based on faculty surveys, meetings with previous Vice Deans and other faculty members, meeting with members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and TRAC, and benchmarking peer schools).
- Holding an open meeting with Tenured Faculty on January 28, 2019.
- Circulating a revised set of recommendations regarding internal promotion to tenure.
- Holding a second open meeting with Tenured Faculty on March, 28, 2019.
- Holding meetings with specific divisions in March and April (Finance, Marketing).
- Sharing status reports with the Executive Committee and the Dean.

The recommendations presented here evolved (and we believe were improved) through this process (e.g. an initial recommendation to drop the first faculty meeting for certain internal cases was dropped based on concerns about it). We have separated the recommendations into five categories 1) Overall, 2) Internal promotion to tenure 3) Promotion to untenured associate 4) Promotion to full professor and 5) External tenure cases

Recommendations

Overall

We recommend that the following “preamble” be adopted to clarify the purpose of the promotion and tenure process: “The purpose of our promotion and tenure process is to create and maintain an excellent and diverse faculty by evaluating a faculty member’s past accomplishment and anticipated future achievements in an equitable and, to the extent appropriate, transparent process. Consistent with university policy, the primary basis for promotion to untenured associate, to tenure, or to full professor is research productivity and impact. Teaching, collegiality, and service (to the division, school, and broader academic community) also matter”.

Internal Promotion to Tenure

We spent most of our time on this document. The significant changes recommended are as follows, a complete list of all changes, and a revised policy is also attached, We recommend that:

1. 70% be the normal minimum standard at the Division, P&T and full tenured faculty levels to move a case forward. (on the 1-4 scale, a 3 or 4 is considered a vote for the case.)
2. A division explicitly consider pros and cons when discussing and voting on whether to solicit letters for a case.
3. A candidate prepares a personal research statement and that it be distributed to the division's tenured faculty at least one week before the reading committee evaluates the case and the division meets to discuss and vote on whether to solicit letter for a case.
4. If either 70% of the division or of the P&T Committee support the case, it would normally be sent to the full tenured faculty, unless the candidate elects to pull their case
5. The candidate is informed by the Division Chair and a representative of the P&T whether <50%, 50-70%, or more than 70% of the Division and the P&T Committee supported the case. The candidate has the option to withdraw the case or allow it to continue forward. In the event it has inadequate support, i.e. neither 70% of the Division or P&T supported the case, the candidate may appeal to move the case to the full tenured faculty. This recommendation will be subject to approval by the Provost's Office.
6. If less than 70% of a Division support a case, the Division will supply P&T with basic data (the candidate's vita, papers, and research statement,) a procedural checklist, and a brief overview of the case including the main pros and cons of the case, but not a full divisional statement.
7. The Senior Vice Dean serves as a non-voting chair of the P&T Committee. They are not involved in canvassing faculty or presenting a case.
8. A system be established to allow electronic access to the files for promotion cases that is in compliance with University policy about adequate security.

The attached documents indicate how these changes would be integrated into the existing procedure.

Promotion to Untenured Associate Professor

Define a "reasonable possibility of tenure" as existing if a reasonable projection of research contribution, teaching, and service would lead to having a greater than 50% chance of sufficient support at the division level to proceed with a tenure case.

Promotion to Full Professor

For promotion to full professor, the main criteria should be research productivity since tenure, teaching, and service with a stronger weight on teaching and service than at the tenure juncture.

Note that promotions to full professor require approvals from the provost and trustees.

External Tenure Cases

A candidate's vita will be distributed to the tenured faculty at least one week before the P&T votes on whether to send it for outside letters.

The elements of changes recommended for internal cases that are relevant to external cases should be incorporated into the external tenure policy, but no structural change to the policy is recommended (e.g. no additional votes.)

Summary

We view these changes as mainly incremental. While no process is perfect, we think that these changes improve our process and hope the faculty approves them "en mass" at the upcoming faculty meeting. If any of you have a serious objection/concern, please let us know by April 26, 2019, so we can give it appropriate consideration and make any needed changes before the May 9 tenured faculty meeting.

The 2018-2019 Promotion and Tenure Process Review Committee

Don Lehmann (chair)

Tim Baldenius

Carri Chan

Damon Phillips

Jonah Rockoff

Suresh Sundaresan,

Charles Jones (ex officio.)

Itemized list of Recommended Changed and Edits to Internal Promotion to Tenure Process Document

Tenure Evaluation for Internal Candidates:

- a. Add preamble.
- b. Note location of P&T responsibilities in by-laws and more clearly define role of SVD.
- c. Codify that Dean's Office should meet with candidates going up for tenure in spring of 6th year to outline process, deliverables, and normal timeline.
- d. Make explicit the fact that the candidate may pull the case at any time.
- e. Change timing of personal statement deliverable so that it will be available for the reading committee and division a week in advance of considering the case.
- f. Require that divisions specifically discuss pros and cons of case in deciding whether to go out for letters.
- g. Clarify how to count abstain votes when calculating percent in favor.
- h. Clarify that the tally of vote is shared with meeting participants but ballots and how each person voted is private.
- i. Add a procedural checklist to the items that the P&T Committee will consider for all cases.
- j. Change the bar for a division to be required to prepare a divisional statement for a case to be reviewed to by P&T to at least 70% in favor of the nomination.
- k. Require divisions to provide to P&T the pros and cons of cases that do not get 70% support at division level to solicit letters
- l. Add additional clarification about the comparison lists to be sure they comply with current University policy. Specifically: (a) letter writer lists must include any associations between the candidate and the letter writer, (b) that candidates should not be consulted about who should be their letter writers, and (c) all comparison list candidates must be tenured.
- m. Streamline description of cite count requirements
- n. Clarify P&T guidelines for level of support to move the case forward and more clearly define "full examination" – specifically:
 - If the Divisional process is deemed fair and without irregularities, a Divisional vote of 70% in favor is sufficient for the P&T to give the case a full examination.
 - When the divisional vote is less than 70% but more than 50% the P&T committee will form a subcommittee and canvas.
 - When the divisional vote is less than 50%, the P&T will verify that there were no irregularities and may, at their discretion, give a case a full examination.
 - Full evaluation is defined as creating a subcommittee, canvassing, and having a committee wide evaluation based on the subcommittee's findings.
- o. Propose that candidates be advised of which of 3 vote buckets they fall into (on the first vote) for P&T and division: less than 50%, 50-69%, or 70+%. This change will need approval of the provost.
- p. Explain normal decision rule for cases moving to tenured faculty and allow candidates to either 'pull the case' or 'appeal the decision'.
- q. Clarify that materials must be distributed to the tenured faculty at least a week in advance

- r. Clarify that “Normally, a vote of at least 70% in favor [by the tenured faculty] would be necessary for the Dean to solicit external referee letters.” – Note this does not mean it would always be necessary or sufficient.
- s. Clarifying language about the substance of the 2nd divisional vote and the need for a post-letter addendum to the case statement.
- t. Clarifying the voting scale for P&T and that levels 3 & 4 suggest ‘support for the case’
- u. Propose that candidates be advised of which of 3 vote buckets they fall into (on the second vote) for P&T and division: less than 50%, 50-69%, or 70+%. This change will need approval of the provost.
- v. Reiterate normal decision rule for cases moving to tenured faculty and allow candidates to either ‘pull case’ or ‘appeal decision’ not to move forward rather than leave the decision with the candidate – as at earlier stage.
- w. Update of language about the signed ballot policy from the University guidelines.
- x. Clarify that “Normally, a vote of at least 70% [of the tenured faculty] in favor would be necessary for the Dean to move the case forward to the University’s standing Tenure Review Advisory Committee (TRAC). – Note this does not mean it would always be necessary or sufficient.