

# OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

## Indefinite Tenure Selection OIT-20-030

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Indefinite tenure appointments are appointments given selected faculty members having an appointment of .50 FTE or more. Such appointments are made by the president in witness of the institution's formal decision that the faculty member has demonstrated such professional competence that the institution will not henceforth terminate employment except for cause, financial exigency, or program or department reductions or eliminations. It is awarded to faculty members whose character, achievements in serving the institution's mission, and potential effective long-term performance warrant the institution's long-term commitment.

Tenure is awarded for outstanding performance, not years of service, and is therefore not automatic. To be awarded tenure, a candidate must demonstrate qualities that evidence excellence and continued professional growth. In accepting tenure, a faculty member makes an explicit commitment to continuous improvement, both professionally and pedagogically. The granting of tenure is more significant to the institution than promotion in academic rank.

In some initial tenure-track appointments, a faculty member may be granted credit toward the probationary period, which is the first five years of full-time service. The provost may grant credit only under exceptional circumstances and only at the request and consent of the affected department and dean.

Candidates for tenure will be evaluated during winter term of the fifth year of full-time service on annual tenure (tenure track). Under extenuating circumstances, such as illness or family leave, a faculty member may ask the dean to extend the tenure timeline.

### **Performance Categories to be Evaluated**

Candidates for tenure shall be evaluated for evidence of excellence in their instruction, in their performance of other assigned duties, in their scholarship or creative activity, in their professionally-related public service, and their institutional service. Candidates shall document performance in each of these areas in their portfolios.

When evaluating a faculty member for tenure, specific performance categories to be considered are:

- Instruction
- Research accomplishments and other scholarly achievements or, where relevant, other creative and artistic achievements
- Professionally related public service through which the institution and its members render service to the public (i.e., individuals, agencies or units of business, industry, government), and institutional service including, but not limited to, contributions made toward departmental, school, or institutional governance, and service to students through student welfare activities such as individual student advising, advising with student organizations or groups, and similar activities.

Candidates for indefinite tenure shall also demonstrate professional integrity and a willingness to cooperate with their colleagues in a civil and respectful manner for the best interests of the department and the institution and shall evidence potential for and commitment to continued professional growth and improvement.

### **Evaluation Criteria for Indefinite Tenure**

The Oregon Tech Faculty Evaluation Policy (OIT-21-040) contains criteria for evaluating faculty in instruction, professional development, and institutional and professionally-related public service. Those criteria are included here for convenience.

The following guidelines are intended as an institution-wide standard to which each department and faculty member is held, yet allow for the flexibility to include other criteria warranted by the varying disciplines and professions represented at Oregon Tech.

#### *Instruction*

Given that the primary focus at Oregon Tech is teaching, faculty will excel in instruction in the following ways:

- Demonstrate knowledge of subject matter.
- Develop and revise curriculum to meet departmental and course objectives, as appropriate.
- Organize and deliver course materials to stimulate interest and discussion.
- Demonstrate growth in instruction.
- Employ a variety of assessment tools for evaluation of both teaching effectiveness and student learning.
- Maintain student numerical evaluations at a departmentally established level.

*Professional Development*

Faculty will advance knowledge in education and/or areas consistent with institutional, departmental, and personal goals and objectives. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Write and publish scholarly papers based on relevant research.
- Participate in conferences and conventions in education and/or discipline.
- Participate in workshops and classes in education and/or discipline.
- Hold membership and participate in professional organizations within discipline.
- Participate in professionally relevant employment or consulting.
- Earn a higher degree.
- Earn continuing education units (CEUs).

*Institutional and Professionally Related Public Service*

*Institutional Service:* Faculty will contribute to the advancement of the institution consistent with institutional, departmental, and personal goals and objectives. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Serve on institutional, departmental, and/or faculty senate committees.
- Participate in student advising.
- Participate in student activities.
- Serve as department coordinator (assessment, advising, curriculum, program, scheduling, etc.).
- Contribute to student recruitment and/or retention.
- Serve as department chair.
- Serve on faculty senate.
- Develop and maintain equipment maintenance budgets, schedules, etc.
- Participate in special projects (i.e., grants, on-campus presentations and conferences, documentation development, etc.)
- Develop and/or provide distance delivery courses.
- Teach summer session courses.
- Write grants to support or participate in development of sponsored programs.

*Professionally Related Public Service:* Faculty may choose to make connections in the public sector for no fee consistent with institutional, departmental, and personal goals and objectives. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Provide consulting services in area of expertise.
- Serve on boards and committees.
- Hold office in professional organizations.

- Serve in field of expertise or education (i.e., high school mentoring, public speaking, math contests, fund raising, etc.)
- Participate in outreach programs (TWIST, Expanding Your Horizons, etc.)

Additional criteria for tenure include professional integrity, a willingness to cooperate with colleagues and a commitment to and potential for continued professional growth and improvement. Evaluation guidelines for these follow; these lists are not exhaustive but rather indicative of conduct tenure review committees should consider.

### **Professional integrity**

Candidates for tenure shall demonstrate professional integrity in the following ways:

- Model high ethical standards as defined by the candidate's profession and OIT's statement of ethical principles.
- Deal honestly, fairly and openly with colleagues and students.
- Respect others.
- Accept responsibility for actions and decisions and their consequences.
- Follow through on commitments.

### **Willingness to cooperate**

Candidates shall evidence a willingness to cooperate with colleagues in the following ways:

- Accept responsibility for departmental projects that are compatible with and further its mission and long-term goals.
- Contribute to a stimulating intellectual environment in the candidate's department.
- Abide by departmental decisions.
- Follow policies and procedures of the institution.

### **Commitment to and potential for continued professional growth and development**

The institution's long-term commitment through the granting of tenure requires that the candidate demonstrate a reciprocal commitment to continued professional growth and improvement. A candidate's annual performance reviews during the probationary period document achievements for the specific annual periods only. Significant consideration should be given to how a candidate's annual performances project a long-term potential for growth and improvement within the four performance categories: instruction, scholarship or creative activity, professionally-related public service and institutional service.

## **Procedure**

All parties shall abide by the timeline set forth in this policy. However, the Dean or Provost may modify the timeline if either determines a reasonable need to do so, but not by greater than 90 days and with notice to the affected faculty.

### **Notification and Tenure Review Committee Appointment**

- During the first week of fall term, the provost shall provide each dean and department chair with the names of departmental faculty who are eligible for tenure review. The chair shall then notify these faculty members of the upcoming review by the end of the first week of fall term. Each candidate shall submit a portfolio to the Tenure Review Committee by the end of the first week of winter term (see portfolio requirements attached to this policy).
- By the eighth week of fall term, the chair of the department in which the candidate will be granted tenure shall appoint a five-member Tenure Review Committee. For consistency in tenure and promotion decisions, members of the departmental Tenure Review Committee shall also serve on the Promotion Review Committee, if eligible. Faculty ineligible to serve on the Tenure Review Committee include the department chair, members of the Promotion Advisory Committee, faculty under review and non-tenured faculty.

If fewer than five eligible department members are available to serve on the committee, all full-time members of the department shall elect one or more eligible faculty outside the department to serve on the committee. Preference first should be given to members of other departments in which the candidate holds a split appointment and then to faculty most likely to be knowledgeable about the candidate.

- Exceptions to the committee membership rules may be requested of the dean by submission of letters from both the candidate and department chair.
- Immediately upon appointment, the department chair shall convene the Tenure Review Committee, which shall select a chair. Each committee member shall sign the statement of ethics document.

### **Tenure Review Committee's Responsibilities**

- This policy requires student input (beyond the anonymous classroom evaluations) into the tenure process, at its initial meeting, the Tenure Review Committee shall also set a date and location for a meeting to be held during the second or third week of winter term at which written and verbal comments from students and other interested individuals shall be accepted. A separate comments meeting shall be held for each candidate. The chair of the Tenure Review Committee shall send the time and location information for the comments meeting along with the candidate's name to the Dean's Office by the end of fall term. The Dean's Office is responsible for

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advertising the comments meeting.

- The comments meeting shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:
  - The candidate is not permitted to attend the meeting, but will have access to comments in the written report of the committee, as noted below.
  - Only one person giving comments may be in the room with the committee at a given time.
  - One member of the committee must keep careful notes of the meeting, indicating the name of each speaker and the content of the remarks. The notes must be sufficiently detailed to capture the essence of the testimony.
- The committee shall use the candidate's portfolio, and written and verbal comments to evaluate performance in terms of criteria outlined earlier in this policy. The committee may solicit other information to confirm documentation in the candidate's portfolio or to verify comments gathered during its review; however, no anonymous input may be solicited or accepted, nor can sources be kept confidential. Anyone offering verbal or written information must be informed that the candidate will have access to that information and that source anonymity cannot be preserved. In the case of verbal information, careful notes of the conversation must be kept, including the participants' names.
- If a candidate has served part of the probationary period in more than one department or has a split appointment at the time of review, the Tenure Review Committee shall solicit information from other departments in which the candidate has served.
- At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Tenure Review Committee shall prepare a separate written report for each candidate. The report must indicate the committee's recommendation, agreed to by a simple majority, and include the names and signatures of committee members and their individual votes. In addition, the committee may list specific activities where the candidate has met or exceeded the tenure criteria and/or identify specific areas where the candidate has failed to meet the criteria. The report shall be submitted to the department chair by Friday of the sixth week of winter term along with the candidate's portfolio, notes taken during the comments meeting, and all documentation accepted and used by the Tenure Review Committee in its deliberations. The content of the Tenure Review Committee's deliberations are confidential and shall not be divulged by its members.

- The Tenure Review Committee shall conclude its appraisal of the candidate in the fifth year of service with one of three recommendations:
  - Renewal of appointment with indefinite tenure
  - No renewal of appointment
  - Deferral of tenure consideration for one year
- The committee shall conclude its appraisal of the candidate in the sixth year of service with one of two recommendations:
  - Renewal of appointment with indefinite tenure
  - No renewal of appointment

#### **Department Chair's Responsibilities**

- The department chair shall notify each candidate, in writing, of the committee's recommendation by the end of the seventh week of winter term.
- The department chair shall attach a letter of support/non-support to the committee report and forward the report, the letter, the candidate's portfolio and all documentation to the dean by Friday of the seventh week of winter term.
- If the department chair is reviewed, the dean shall serve in place of the department chair and the provost will serve in place of the dean.

#### **Dean's Responsibility**

The dean shall review the recommendation from the Tenure Review Committee and the department chair's letter and forward the records along with a letter containing his/her own comments and recommendations to the provost by the end of the eighth week of winter term.

#### **Provost's Responsibility**

The provost shall review the recommendation from the Tenure Review Committee, the department chair's letter, and the dean's recommendation, and forward the records along with a letter containing his/her own comments and recommendations to the president by the end of the ninth week of winter term.

#### **President's Responsibilities**

- The president shall review all recommendations, decide tenure status in each case, and officially notify, by letter, each candidate by the end of winter term.
- The president shall return the candidate's portfolio to the candidate and send all other

documentation related to the review to the faculty member's evaluative file in the Provost's Office in accordance with the Faculty Records Policy (OIT-22-010).

### **Candidate's Rights**

- A candidate may request, in writing from the chair of the Tenure Review Committee, copies of the written documentation collected by the Tenure Review Committee and all notes kept of orally presented information. The candidate must make this request by Monday of the fourth week of winter term. The Tenure Review Committee Chair shall provide the documentation no later than Friday of the fourth week of winter term.
- After reviewing testimony given at the comments meeting and all documentation accepted by the Tenure Review Committee, a candidate may request a meeting with the committee to challenge questions of fact. By majority vote, the committee may decide to expunge information from the documentation. This meeting must take place before the committee makes its recommendation and before the fifth week of winter term. Only questions of fact are open to challenge.
- At the conclusion of the review, a candidate may request from the provost, in writing, the Tenure Review Committee's report, the department chair's letter, the dean's recommendation and the provost's recommendation.
- Grievance procedures are set forth in Oregon Tech policy OIT-21-321 as published in the Policy and Procedures portion of the Human Resources section of the Oregon Tech website.

Recommended by:

Faculty Senate – April 7, 2009; revised March 4, 2014; revised December 5, 2017  
President's Council – May 19, 2009; October 27, 2016; May 22, 2018

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Approved: Nagi G. Naganathan Date: June 14, 2018  
Nagi G. Naganathan, Ph.D., ASME Fellow  
President