

CHASS RPT Committee

Interim Report

2007-2008

Interim Report of CHASS Promotion and Tenure Committee (Jesseph, Della Fave, Halberstadt, Garson, Jordan, Penrose, Sack) for Academic year 2007-08.

1. **GENERAL** The CHASS RPT is off to a reasonably good start this year. We have 25 cases to consider (9 reappointments of Assistant Professors, 8 tenures and promotions to Associate Professor, 3 tenures of untenured Associate Professors, and 5 promotions to Professor). In addition, there are several cases from the Music Department that are scheduled to be submitted for review. To date, we have reviewed all nine reappointment cases and are awaiting the arrival of the completed dossiers for candidates seeking tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. We are scheduled to meet on Wednesday, November 14 to review these cases, with promotions to Professor being considered at our meeting of November 28.
2. **AREAS OF STRENGTH.** The judgment that the RPT process is off to a good start can be substantiated by attending to several respects in which we saw significant strengths, both for the integrity of the process itself and the quality of the faculty being evaluated.
 - A. *Clarity in Departmental Standards.* Departments in CHASS have developed reappointment, promotion, and tenure standards that are, for the most part, very clear and specific. The criteria now in place make the assessment of the great majority of cases a relatively straightforward matter. This has made the committee's work significantly easier than in years past, and it provides all administrative units (as well as the candidates) with clear guidance as cases are assembled and considered at all levels.
 - B. *Thoughtful Consideration of Cases.* The nine reappointment dossiers we have reviewed all showed evidence of very thoughtful consideration by the relevant departments. In comparison with previous years, there have been very few "undervotes" where members of the Departmental Voting Faculty failed to vote on cases. In addition, the reports of the DVF and Department Heads are quite thorough and extensive. This has made the task of the committee relatively simple so far.
 - C. *Strong Documentation* Based on what we have seen thus far, departmental evaluations of teaching, service, and scholarship are well presented, and this makes the evaluation of cases and the assessment of departmental votes a fairly painless and straightforward task.
 - D. *Use of Electronic Forms.* Departments are now sending dossiers forward in electronic form, which allowed for a significant improvement in the work of the

committee. As in the previous two years, the committee has set up a secure server to which dossiers can be uploaded. This has made our work a great deal easier, as it permits committee members to access the relevant information from their home or office computers.

E. *High Quality of Faculty* We would be remiss in failing to note that the quality of the faculty in CHASS appears to be very high indeed. All of the reappointment cases were unanimously approved at the department and CHASS RPT Committee level.

3. AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT. No process is flawless, and there are two areas in the process that stand in need of improvement.

A. *The Role of Statements of Mutual Expectations.* It is abundantly clear that the role of Statements of Mutual Expectation (SMEs) must be clarified. University regulations declare that “Together with the annual report of accomplishments (faculty activity report), the SME should provide the principal basis for both annual and comprehensive evaluation of the performance of the faculty member in the light of the university Academic Tenure Policy and written Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) rules of the department(s) and college(s) in which the faculty member is appointed and active”

(<http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/employment/epa/REG05.20.27.php>). Departments must, however be very careful to ensure that SMEs do not come into conflict with their stated RPT requirements. It is possible for a faculty member to negotiate an SME that, even if fulfilled, would fail to satisfy guidelines for tenure and promotion. This raises the prospect of a faculty member being found to meet expectations at every annual review, while failing to be reappointed, tenured, or promoted.

B. *A Tightly Compressed Timeline.* A second point of difficulty is the very tight schedule that must now be observed in the college RPT process. The time available for the CHASS RPT Committee to consider dossiers has shrunk rather dramatically in the last few years. It is now a matter of less than two months from the time that departments forward their materials to the time that the RPT committee must sign off on all the cases. This makes it difficult for the members of the committee to give thorough consideration to all the dossiers. It also means that there is very little time to request additional information or clarification from a department in a case where the committee finds a problem with a dossier.