

College of Education
Promotion & Tenure Voting Procedures

Approved May 2006

The processes and procedures for casting of Promotion & Tenure ballots in all college departments should be revised according to the following protocol:

To protect the integrity of the process and to ensure anonymity of faculty casting ballots and the professional rights of all faculty, the following process for departmental voting on tenure and promotion candidates shall be followed. Voting takes place after the department has met (face to face or virtual) to discuss each individual application/case and has considered appropriate criteria. The process for casting ballots by faculty in their department must ensure that faculty have adequate time to review applications before casting ballots, be coordinated by at least two tenured members of the faculty (in addition to the department chair), and allow at least seven days from the date of receipt of the ballot to return the ballots.

If a department does not have two tenured members to implement the process, the faculty may invite tenured faculty from another department to serve in this capacity and count ballots. The ballots shall be opened at a predesignated time and the meeting to do so shall be open to all voting faculty in the department, but must be attended by at least two tenured faculty in addition to the department chair. The department chair and the representative to the COE tenure and promotion committee shall be responsible for coordinating the voting process.

The candidate's portfolios and application materials shall be available for eligible voting faculty to review at least one week prior to the mailing of the ballots and remain available until the ballots are opened and counted.

The steps for voting follow:

Step 1. A letter shall be sent to all faculty eligible to vote in a department from the department chair and the department's representative to the P & T Committee. The letter shall include time line for return of the ballots, ballots, ballot envelopes and return envelopes.

Step 2. Faculty shall be allowed at least seven days from the date the ballots are received to cast their ballots and return said ballots to the locked box in the department. It is recommended that the department mail the ballots to faculty a minimum of ten days in advance of the deadline for receipt, thus allowing faculty seven days to cast their ballots and return them. Faculty casting ballots shall return the ballots personally or by mail to the chair who will place the "return envelope" in a locked box in the department.

Step 3. Ballots shall be pre-printed with the candidate's name, rank or status sought, and the voting options, e.g. vote for promotion and/or tenure, abstain (indicate the reason for conflict of interest). Each faculty member shall have an individual ballot; multiple faculty will not be included on the same ballot.

Step 4. Voting faculty shall NOT sign their ballots or place any mark on the ballot indicating their identity. A double envelope method of casting ballots will be followed. Marked pre-printed ballot(s) shall be placed in an unmarked "ballot envelope". The ballot envelope shall have the words "Ballot Envelope" on the front with instructions to place the sealed ballot envelope in the "Return Envelope." The Return Envelope shall include the department chair's name and address, and shall include in the bottom corner the words "Ballot Enclosed" and place for "Faculty Signature."

The faculty member casting the vote must sign and print his/her name on the outside of the return envelope for the vote to be counted. The return envelope shall be returned to the department chair. The return envelope shall be placed by the chair in the locked ballot box until a pre-set time that the box is opened and ballots counted.

Faculty may abstain from voting only if there is a conflict of interest.

A cover letter memorandum from the department chair and P & T representative shall be enclosed with the ballots, ballot envelopes, and return envelopes with clear instructions to faculty about the double envelope system voting process.

Step 5. No electronic voting, verbal voting or other processes will be allowed.

Step 6. On a specific day and time, the ballot box shall be opened and the votes counted. The meeting to count the ballots shall be open to all voting faculty in that department. The process for counting the votes shall be:

a) The faculty representative to the COE P & T committee and the department chair shall determine eligible votes cast by checking off the names of those authorized to vote who signed the outside of the return envelope.

b) The ballot envelopes of the eligible voters shall be separated from the return envelope and placed in a hat or otherwise set aside altogether. Prior to opening the ballot envelopes they shall be mixed or shuffled.

c) The ballot envelopes shall be opened and the ballots separated.

d) The ballots shall be counted independently by at least three faculty eligible to vote and may be inspected by all voting faculty attending the meeting to count ballots. The ballots must be counted at least two times, but may be counted more than two times to ensure an accurate and true record.

e) A tally memo of the votes cast in each category for each faculty member shall be made and kept in a confidential file in each department. The departmental representative to the COE P & T Committee, the department chair, and any other faculty counting the ballots shall sign this record (tally memo) certifying the accuracy of said record.

Step 7. The ballots and the tallies shall be kept for the time period required by the university in a safe, confidential file and only released if directed to do so as required by university policy.

The College and University Promotion & Tenure Committees shall not follow this process for voting. The voting and deliberations of the committee members shall remain confidential and conducted on site during the meetings with the committee's final tally communicated to the dean in a report.