

Report of the CAS Promotion and Tenure Committee
April 2006
Prepared by Joanne Davila, Chair PTC

Committee:

- Joanne Davila, Chair – Psychology (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Clare Grey – Chemistry (Natural Sciences)
- Hongkyung Kim – Asian and Asian American Studies (Humanities and Fine Arts) – non-tenured member since January 2006
- Manuel Lerdau – Ecology and Evolution (Natural Sciences)
- Peter Manning – English (Humanities and Fine Arts)
- Timothy Mount – Music (Humanities and Fine Arts)
- Michael Schwartz – Sociology (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Gene Sprouse – Physics (Natural Sciences) – temporary member November 2005 replacing Lerdau who was on leave

Organization and functioning:

The committee has met regularly, typically bi-weekly, during the 2005-2006 academic year, with excellent attendance. All committee members are dedicated and hard working. They take their position seriously and behave in a professional, ethical manner. The committee functions very well as a group, demonstrating cohesion and respect for all members.

Philosophy and process:

The PTC plays an important role in the College of Arts and Sciences as an advisory committee to the Dean and as a means for providing quality control for the faculty. The faculty members who make up the committee are critical to its functioning and success and it is important to continue to elect strong members to serve on the committee.

The PTC has maintained a strong level of continuity in process with prior years. We continue to adhere strongly to the Policies of the Board of Trustees, and to focus decisions on scholarship, teaching, and service. We recognize that every case is different and make certain that we take into account diversity across departments and types of scholarly achievements.

In making decisions, the main question that we focus on is whether the candidate's scholarship is having an impact on their field. Our ability to assess this relies on the clarity with which this is presented in the dossier, and we rely heavily on the views expressed in outside letters and in the chair's letters. A few comments about each are in order. Regarding outside letters, those that come from individuals who do not have a close professional relationship with the candidate are essential, as they are likely to be least biased by personal connections. In addition, although the PTC provides guidelines for the minimal number and type of letters, cases with only the minimum sometimes are harder to evaluate. Regarding the chair's letters, it is critical that they

express and discuss both the strengths and weaknesses of the case, particularly those pointed out by outside letter writers. Providing a clear rationale for the departmental vote is also extremely important. If there were “no” votes or abstentions, it is important to clarify the reasons for such votes. Chair’s letters that simply reiterate or quote from outside letters, or that present a run-down of the faculty discussion of the case are least helpful to the PTC and are a disservice to the candidate.

Regarding the assessment of scholarly ability for promotion to Full Professor, the PTC feels that promotion should not be awarded just for significant administrative or other accomplishments, but should be awarded only to those who show true excellence and a strong reputation in creative and scholarly activities. However, teaching and service do matter, and weight is placed on the extent to which candidates for full professor have shown initiative in contributing to the future of their department and their field.

Caseload and actions:

Since the beginning of Fall 2005, the PTC has acted on 19 cases, and will act on 2 more on 4/24/06. Of these, 10 will have been cases for promotion with tenure, 10 will have been cases for promotion to full professor, and 2 will have been new appointments (1 to Associate, 1 to Full).

Of the promotion cases that have been acted on (excluding the new appointments), the departments have been in favor of promotion and the PTC has agreed with the departmental recommendation in all cases except for one.

Of the 8 cases that have been acted on by the Dean, he has agreed with the PTC in all cases. Two of those cases have progressed to the Provost and President, and both have agreed with the prior recommendations. The remainder of the cases are in progress.

Other:

1. An amendment to the constitution regarding the 7th member on the committee was proposed and passed this academic year. The rationale and change was as follows:

Current policy states that the PTC will consist of 7 members, one of whom is a non-tenured member who serves a one-year term. This policy was re-affirmed by the PTC and the Senate in May 2005. However, the Senate was unable to successfully recruit a non-tenured member for the PTC for Fall 2005. Because of this, and because the reasons for it are likely to be ones that persist into the future (e.g., few junior faculty, low motivation for participation), the PTC would like to have the option to have the 7th member be an additional tenured member. The PTC prefers a 7-member committee so that there can never be a split (i.e., tie) vote. As such, the PTC proposed the following addendum to the constitution, to be added at the end of the PTC section, Article C, section 3, point (2):

"In the event that it is not possible to find a qualified non-tenured faculty representative, the Senate Executive Committee shall appoint, with the consent of the Senate, a tenured faculty

member to fill out the term. That faculty member may be from any department not represented on the PTC that term."

The PTC proposed that a non-tenured member must be appointed no later than May for the following academic year. If a non-tenured member cannot be secured by that time, then the tenured faculty person elected, during regular elections, as PTC "alternate" would serve a one-year term. That is, during regular yearly elections for positions on the PTC, the runner-up candidate would be elected as an "alternate" to serve if needed. This does away with the need for any additional elections. Should there be no "alternate" (i.e., one candidate was running unopposed), then the Senate shall appoint a member in consultation with the PTC.

2. The PTC was asked to consider changing the format and wording of the biographical file so that it is more amenable to accomplishments by faculty in the humanities and arts. The PTC believes this to be an excellent idea. The faculty addendum is currently undergoing a similar change and once that is done, the PTC will adopt a format similar to the new faculty addendum. It should be noted that, regardless of the format of the biographical file, the PTC makes decisions that are informed by the local culture and expectations for promotion of the department to which the candidate belongs. As such, there is no reason to believe that the format of the biographical file leads to any bias in PTC recommendations.

3. The PTC was alerted to the fact that the Provost may want the Business school to send their promotion files through our PTC despite the fact that they run other business through the CEAS committees. This has not yet come to pass, but the PTC is opposed to this on two grounds: (1) we have no expertise overseeing a professional school and (2) the business school should decide with which single branch of governance they will align.

4. The PTC chair consulted with Howie Schneider regarding use of the CAS PTC for promotion and tenure in the new journalism department. The journalism faculty will be reviewed by the CAS PTC. The PTC chair provided Schneider with the PTC guidelines and agreed to consult on the department's development of promotion and tenure guidelines for faculty.

5. The PTC was asked to comment on whether departments are required to provide sub-committee reports (in addition to the chair's letter) in promotion and tenure dossiers. PTC guidelines currently do not require the inclusion of such sub-committee reports, and it has been the position of the PTC that all formal written documents must be provided if requested by the PTC, Dean, Provost, or President. If departments do not want to have to include sub-committee reports, then formal written documents should not be prepared and kept on record. The PTC is currently preparing an amendment to the PTC guidelines that will require all formal written documents to be included in the dossier.

6. The PTC and Dean's office will propose revised deadlines for submission of tenure and promotion cases in order to place all assistant professors on the same tenure clock and to provide more time for review. This amendment will be presented to the Senate in April 2006.