

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

August 1, 2009

(Supersedes Memoranda dated **August 1, 2008**)

To: Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Clinical/Professional Faculty

Re: West Lafayette Campus Promotions Policy

The following statements have been prepared for the purpose of informing the members of the tenured, tenure-track, and clinical/professional faculty of Purdue University of the policies and procedures that are followed in recommending them for promotion to higher academic rank.

SECTION I  
GENERAL CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

The tasks of University faculty members are to acquire, discover, appraise, and disseminate knowledge. They should communicate this knowledge and the manner of its acquisition or discovery to their immediate community of students and scholars, to their profession, and to society at large. Service to the institution, the community, the state, and the nation constitutes an important mission of University faculty members. As an institution of higher education with a commitment to excellence and a diversity of missions, Purdue University values creative endeavor, research, and scholarship; teaching and learning in its many forms; and engagement in its many forms, including extension and outreach for example. To be considered for promotion, a faculty member should have demonstrated excellence and scholarly productivity in at least one of these areas. Ordinarily, strength should be manifest in more than one of these areas.

RECOGNITION OF VARIETY IN ACHIEVEMENT

The diversity of academic enterprise in a land-grant institution such as Purdue University is to be taken into account when promotions are considered. For example, artists' portfolios and performances that may simultaneously represent unique discoveries and their communication are equivalent to the more traditional publications and research products. The same is true of innovation in clinical instruction, diagnostic activities, engagement, extension and outreach roles, and the like. Administrative functions, committee service, special program management, contributions to staff development, leadership in community affairs, participation in scholarly and professional societies, membership on review panels, consultation to government agencies, and the like are additional examples of professorial roles worthy of appropriate recognition. Faculty also may contribute in ways such as assisting in the production of scholarly publications, devising curricula, developing courseware, counseling students, organizing laboratories and libraries, officiating in professional societies, and so on. Many other equivalents exist and have to be recognized by members of the successive committees on promotions.

Length of service in rank is one of the criteria for promotion, but by itself it should not insure promotion or cause denial of promotion.

## THE FACULTY REVIEW SYSTEM

The above requirements are intended to guide all academic units of the University. Throughout the entire promotion process, primary, area, and university promotion committee members respond to each tenure or promotion nomination as individuals, interpreting achievements described in the nominating documents in the light of standards appropriate for the nominee's discipline and the University's criteria for promotion. In the course of these evaluations, the give-and-take of full and confidential discussion is a critical element to informing each committee member of the candidate's accomplishments. To this end, and with the unanimous support of the University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee, only those promotion committee members present for the entire discussion of a candidate's record shall be extended the privilege of voting (Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes, March 2, 1998). Additional information about Purdue's promotion process is included in Section III of this document.

To optimize faculty growth and productivity, it is important that heads of departments and schools (in the cases of the College of Engineering, the College of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Health Sciences), who chair primary committees and have an active role on area committees, attempt to convey, annually and as accurately as possible, to each colleague who is not a full professor, what levels of performance and achievement are viewed favorably by those two committees. Deans of colleges/schools who chair area committees and have an active role on the University Promotions Committee have corresponding obligations to the members of their area committees.

### SECTION II PROMOTION TO DIFFERENT RANKS

#### Tenure-track Faculty

##### Promotion to Assistant Professor

A tenure-track instructor may be promoted to assistant professor upon attaining the level of professional accomplishment, which would have justified appointment to an assistant professorship.

##### Promotion to Associate Professor

Academic tenure is acquired on promotion to this rank. A successful candidate should have a significant record of accomplishment as a faculty member and show promise of continued professional growth and recognition.

##### Promotion to Professor

Successful candidates should be recognized as authorities in their fields of specialization by external colleagues -- national and/or international as may be appropriate in their academic disciplines -- and be valued for their intramural contributions as faculty members.

#### Clinical/Professional Faculty

##### Promotion to Clinical/Professional Assistant Professor

Required degrees, qualifications, specialty certifications, and experience shall be determined by the appointing department. Successful candidates for promotion must exhibit expertise in clinical/professional practice and be qualified to participate in the education program of the department. They also must have a primary commitment to assist the college/school in meeting its programmatic need for clinical/professional services and instruction.

#### Promotion to Clinical/Professional Associate Professor

Required degrees, qualifications (e.g., certification), or experience shall be determined by the appointing department. Successful candidates for promotion must demonstrate evidence of excellence in teaching and clinical/professional practice and have a primary commitment to assist the college/school in meeting its programmatic need for clinical/professional services and instruction. They also are expected to have accomplishments or potential for national prominence in their fields.

#### Promotion to Clinical/Professional Professor

Successful candidates must demonstrate an extremely high level of professional accomplishment in teaching, service, and clinical/professional practice and must be recognized by their peers at the national level.

### SECTION III GENERAL PROCEDURE

Before or during the first semester of each academic year, the head of each school, division, or department shall convene the primary committee, which is to consist of all tenured full professors and all tenured associate professors in the respective administrative unit. Tenured associate professors discuss and vote upon promotion up to and including the associate professor level. The department head shall act as chair of the primary committee.

In case of promotions to full and associate professor where there are departments with fewer than five tenured full professors, including the department head, in order to meet this minimum number additional tenured full professors shall be appointed by the chair of the area committee (usually the dean) to which the primary committee reports, following consultation with the appropriate department head. Clinical/professional faculty at the professor level will sit with the committee in review of documents of clinical/professional faculty being considered for promotion. Clinical/professional associate professors discuss and vote upon promotion up to and including the clinical/professional associate professor level.

Persons who are in their penultimate probationary year shall be automatically nominated for promotion and voted on by the primary committee, unless they specifically request otherwise in writing at any step in the process. Persons also may be nominated for promotion by any member of the primary committee. Those whose nominations are seconded shall be voted on by the committee. Persons with tenure who are not nominated by a member of the primary committee but, nevertheless, consider themselves ready for promotion may nominate themselves and have their cases for promotion considered by the primary committee, if they have not been considered for promotion during the last three years. Review of candidates in the final year of their probationary period requires prior approval by the Provost.

The department head shall prepare a form (Nomination for Promotion -- President's Office Form 36) for each nominee for whom a majority affirmative vote is obtained and forward this form to the dean of the college/school for consideration by the area committee. The department heads may also, if he/she wishes to do so, forward a nomination form for a person nominated in the primary committee who did not receive a simple majority vote.

The department head shall not cast a vote in the primary committee; rather, his/her recommendation will appear separate from the primary committee's recommendation on the promotion document. This constraint will not apply if the number (including the chair) of tenured full professors on the primary committee is less than seven. Tenured associate professors are included in this count for review of candidates for promotion up to associate professor. The Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the other members of the University Promotions Committee (see below) who are deans of academic colleges/schools will not vote in any primary committee.

The Nomination for Promotion Form **36** and supporting documentation shall contain at least the following items: name of the nominee, date and rank of initial appointment, **penultimate year (if applicable)** dates and ranks of subsequent promotions, proposed rank, list of academic degrees, basis of nomination, prior experience, teaching assignments and evaluations of performance, research responsibilities and achievements, extension and engagement assignments and evaluation of performance, scholarly work in progress, publications, administrative and committee responsibilities, other pertinent activities (membership and positions held in professional societies, consultation, committee and public service, etc.), prospects for future development, comments and recommendations by the department head, **reference letters**, and the vote of the primary committee.

A candidate should be given the opportunity to help create and review his/her promotion documentation and should receive a copy of any document (with confidential statements omitted) that will be submitted to the primary, area, and/or University committee(s). It is the right of the candidate to have included in his/her departmental file whatever the candidate chooses to add, including the candidate's own brief (one page) comments about teaching, research/creative activities, and service. The candidate may choose that these brief comments be attached to the promotion document.

To permit candidates and potential candidates to exercise these rights in a convenient fashion, it is expected that each chair of a primary committee should, during the first month of each fall semester, publish a timetable setting forth the dates of the primary committee meetings and suitable deadlines for faculty members to update their files and to receive and react to the appropriate parts of a nomination for promotion.

The area committee shall consist of the dean, serving as chair, all the school's directors (in the case of the College of Agriculture) and department heads, and/or school heads (in the cases of the College of Engineering and the College of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Health Sciences), plus tenured full professors elected by the voting faculty of the college/school according to procedures established by that faculty. At least one-third of the membership of each area committee shall consist of tenured faculty members without administrative responsibilities. In no case will the number of faculty members without administrative responsibilities be fewer than two. Clinical/professional faculty at the rank of full professor selected in accordance with college/school procedures will sit with the area committee in review of documents of clinical/professional faculty.

Each nomination shall be considered and discussed individually by the area committee, after which a secret ballot will be held. The result of the ballot shall be recorded on the nomination form.

The dean shall not cast a vote in the area committee. Rather, the dean's recommendation will appear separate from the area committee's recommendation on the promotion document.

A separate, secret ballot shall be cast for each candidate in the primary and area committees. In addition to providing for a "yes" or "no" vote, the ballot should provide an opportunity to show reasons for the vote cast, with space allocated for comments, explanations, etc. The primary purpose of the ballot, other than to obtain a numerical vote count, is to contribute to a summary for "feed-forward" and "feed-back" use. The reasons for a negative vote are especially important. **The Dean of the College/School determines the attendance policy for the primary and area committee meetings.** All eligible members participating in promotion committee deliberation are ~~expected~~ **required** to vote on all candidates unless a conflict of interest with a particular candidate has been identified. Submission of a blank ballot, recusals, or failure to cast a ballot are not regarded as votes.

Candidates who receive at least a simple majority vote of the area committee and support of their dean will be considered by the University Promotions Committee. In addition, the University Promotions Committee will consider candidates who receive either a simple majority vote of the area committee or the support of their respective college/school dean. Panel A will consider promotions

within tenured and tenure-track ranks and Panel X will consider promotions within clinical/professional ranks. These panels, following a secret ballot on each nomination, shall record the result of their ballot on a form that also shows the results of the balloting by the primary and area committees. These forms are then to be transmitted to the President of the University who, in turn, makes his/her recommendations to the Board of Trustees for final action.

Candidates receiving a two-thirds affirmative vote by the University Promotions committee will be recommended by the Provost for promotion. In those cases where a recommendation supported by at least two-thirds of an area committee has been rejected by the University Promotions Committee, the dean may request written explanations for the vote.

Panel A of the University Promotions Committee for the West Lafayette campus shall consist of the Provost (chair); the Dean of the Graduate School; the Dean of Libraries; the academic deans; seven tenured faculty members nominated by the University Senate Nominating Committee and appointed by the President for three-year terms. **Members of the University Promotions Committee must attend in person in order to cast a ballot.** The Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Vice Provost for Engagement will attend Panel A sessions as non-voting advisors to the Provost.

Panel X shall consist of the Provost as chair, three academic deans from schools/colleges employing clinical/professional faculty, and six faculty members. The Provost shall nominate three of these faculty from Panel A of the University Promotions Committee. The remaining three faculty, either tenure-track or clinical/professional professors, shall be nominated by the University Senate Nominating Committee and appointed by the President for three-year terms.

It is in the best interest of the University and faculty that full and frank discussion occur during the deliberations of promotion committees. The confidentiality of remarks made at such meetings should, therefore, be carefully preserved. Recommendations against promotion may be discussed with the faculty member affected, in a discreet manner and without undue delay, by the appropriate department head or dean. Faculty will be advised of their promotion progress by their department head after the Primary Committee and by their dean, **or his/her designee** after the Area Committee and University Promotions Committee meetings. Official notice will be sent to promoted faculty members after the President and the Board of Trustees approve the promotions.

Questions regarding interpretation of these procedures shall be referred to the Provost or Vice Provost for Academic Affairs for final determination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Woodson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randy Woodson  
Provost

POLICY-09-10

**Note: Bold print and/or strike-out notes change from last revision**