

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Academic Policies and Procedures Manual

Section II. Item 18.

Working Rules
of the University Council Personnel Committee

9/17/96

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When any question of procedure arises which is not covered by the following rules, *Robert's Rules of Order* will prevail.

1.0 Voting Procedures

1.1 Any members of the UCPC who have voted in a personnel recommendation at another level may not vote on that recommendation at the UCPC, although they may participate in the discussion. UCPC members will be permitted to vote on actions affecting an individual faculty member *only* in the lower level committee or council on which they serve as a voting member.

1.2 Action on any motion requires a minimum of ten (10) votes, excluding abstentions. If there are fewer than ten votes, the motion is to be resubmitted at the same meeting or at a later meeting. In the case where eight (8) or more vote on one side of an issue, the rule of ten (10) shall not apply. In the instance when two people are unable to vote (as provided in Section 1.1) a minimum of eight (8), excluding abstentions, or seven (7) votes on one side would apply.

1.3 If a promotion or tenure recommendation comes to the UCPC as provided by 2.427 of the University Bylaws* with agreement at a lower level, 2/3 of those present and voting are required to make a contrary recommendation. Otherwise the recommendation to the UCPC is deemed as sustained and no further action need be taken.

1.4 A written vote may be submitted if the member has heard the entire testimony.

*** Bylaw 2.427**

Review and forward its recommendation to the President on each case involving promotion, tenure, or sabbatical leave in which the *executive* vice-president and provost disagrees with a unanimous recommendation made by the college and department concerned.

2.0 Appeals

2.1 All tenure recommendations and related appeals must take place no later than in the penultimate year; neither may be deferred until the ultimate year. On matters of rating or promotion, the UCPC may decline to hear appeals if the materials presented lack adequate substantive merit.

2.2 All written materials submitted to the UCPC, including the substance of confidential reports, are to be shared with the appellant and respondent before any appeal is heard. Discussion during the appeal will be limited to matters included in or derived from the written materials.

2.3 Where the UCPC returns a recommendation to the college dean or college council or both for reassessment and there is an indication that the previous position is reaffirmed, the UCPC will provide a full hearing which will permit all interested parties (the faculty member, dean, college council and department) to present information. This hearing will be both an appeal of the decision reached at the college level and a reconsideration of the prior UCPC recommendation.

2.4 In any case involving an appeal of the decision of a body which has made a personnel decision (e.g., annual evaluation, tenure, promotion, sabbatical) the members of the body which made the decision being appealed shall be obligated to abstain from voting on the appeal.

2.5 The procedure for appeals before the UCPC shall be as follows:

2.51 An appellant appearing before the UCPC shall be permitted to bring one NIU colleague as an advisor and up to two NIU colleagues as observers. Formal presentations to the UCPC shall be limited to the appellant and the advisor. The UCPC may invite other persons to appear and/or may appoint a fact-finding subcommittee of the UCPC. When the appellant is a departmental personnel committee or a college council, all members of that body who voted on the recommendation or decision appealed may be present and may speak. No party may be represented by legal counsel.

2.52 All parties shall be permitted to be present throughout the hearing unless the UCPC grants an exception. The appellant(s) and advisor(s) shall speak first. The respondent(s) and advisor(s) shall speak next. Each side's presentation is limited to one hour. At the conclusion of both presentations, the appellant shall be offered an additional ten minutes for rebuttal. Members of the UCPC may ask questions during any part of these presentations, but prolonged questioning should occur after the presentations have been completed. The parties may not question one another during the hearing.

2.53 The UCPC may recall any party to obtain additional information needed to consider an appeal. One person representing the other side of the appeal may be present to observe the UCPC proceedings with a recalled party.

3.0 Provost and President

3.1 If the Provost dissents from a recommendation of the UCPC, the Provost shall notify the UCPC sufficiently early so that the UCPC may prepare a statement of its position for submission to the President.

3.2 The UCPC invites the President to confer with it before the President submits all personnel recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

4.0 Confidentiality

4.1 In order to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of personnel deliberations, members of the UCPC will keep confidential all deliberations of the committee which relate to individual personnel recommendations. The findings and/or recommendations of the UCPC will be divulged only to the individuals concerned and only by the chair or an appointed subcommittee of the committee. If additional information is required for recommendation, it should be sought by an appointed subcommittee of the UCPC ([see Section 2.1 above](#)) rather than by members acting individually.

5.0 Publication

5.1 After adoption by the UCPC, the working rules shall be sent to the Executive Secretary of the University Council and shall be published in the *Faculty Bulletin*.

6.0 Documentation of Recommendations for Promotion and Tenure

The University Council Personnel Committee has adopted the guidelines presented below in order to facilitate the review of recommendations for promotion and tenure at the university and college level. The UCPC also wants to remind departments and colleges of the importance of annual reviews of progress toward tenure and to encourage units to carefully and thoroughly communicate to probationary faculty the strengths and weaknesses of their performance in teaching, research and service.

6.1 The supporting documentation and the candidate's complete vita must be current and indicate all academic and professional activities.

6.2 The justification for promotion or tenure - Part II A. of the "Recommendation for Promotion and Tenure," completed at the departmental level - must identify the criteria used in measuring teaching effectiveness and provide evidence, which must be in addition to student evaluations, that supports the

conclusions reached. Part II B., which is the assessment of the individual's overall performance must, likewise, identify the professional accomplishments of the individual and their significance, and include an assessment of how these accomplishments meet the criteria for promotion and/or tenure.

6.3 If supporting letters are included in the material as part of the department and college process, they must be current. In addition, a statement describing how these letters were solicited and a *brief* biographical sketch about each reviewer should be included.

6.4 In cases of early promotion or early tenure, besides completing Part II, separate letters are needed from the Chair and the Dean explaining the extraordinary nature of the faculty member's performance. These letters should point out the criteria being used at the college or departmental level and how the recommended faculty member meets these criteria.

6.41 The University Council Personnel Committee expects that all recommendations for early promotion or early tenure will include the college criteria defining extraordinary and ordinary, contrasting extraordinary to ordinary achievement or circumstances.

6.42 The UCPC expects that recommendations for early promotion to full professor will include external evaluations.

6.5 Where there is a disagreement at either the college or department level or between the college and department a statement describing the nature of the disagreement must accompany the documentation to the next level.

6.6 If, at the college level, there are reasons for support which differ from the department's reasons for support, these additional reasons must be made known when forwarding the recommendation to the university level. If the college disagrees with the recommendation of the department, a statement indicating the reasons for the disagreement must be forwarded to the UCPC.

6.7 In listing scholarly activity the department must identify those publications which appear in refereed journals and those artistic exhibitions/performances which are juried.

7.0 External Evaluations

7.1 Guidelines for the Selection of External Evaluators

7.11 The process through which evaluators are identified, selected and invited to serve is to be coordinated by the department chair and should allow, minimally, for the independent nomination of potential evaluators by the candidate for promotion and/or tenure, the department personnel committee, and the department chair.

7.12 The credentials of the external evaluators and the procedures used to obtain objective

and unbiased reviews, including the chair's letter seeking the external evaluation, must be described in the materials departments submit in support of their tenure and promotion recommendations. The reviewers nominated and selected should be persons whose professional and personal distance/detachment from the candidate is clear. (For example: friends, co-authors, dissertation advisors, and graduate school colleagues should not be asked to serve as evaluators.)

7.13 It is recommended that departments seek more external evaluations than required by department policy in order to insure that the minimum number are obtained. All letters received, however, must be forwarded with the departmental recommendation.

7.2 Guidelines for Requests to Provide Evaluations

7.21 Only department chairs should extend invitations to review the candidate's records of achievement. (Candidates should not request a review of their own credentials directly.)

7.22 External letters of evaluation which will be confidential under University Bylaw (11.1) should be invited by letters which include notice of that confidentiality. Experience suggests that candid letters from external reviewers are more likely when the reviewer is assured that his/her comments will remain confidential.

7.23 Promotion and tenure recommendations are usually due in the college office by mid-October, and the department personnel committee and chair should have access to the comments of the external reviewers before the department recommendations are formulated. It is therefore recommended that letters soliciting external evaluations be distributed no later than August 15 with a return date of no later than October 1. Department procedures may dictate earlier release/response dates.

7.24 Written requests for external evaluations should consist of an appropriate cover letter from the chair and the following attachments:

- 1.** copy of department and college Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
- 2.** copy of Bylaws provisions pertaining to promotion and tenure
- 3.** publications and/or evidence of artistic accomplishment - selected in conjunction with the candidate
- 4.** candidate's vita

8.0 Sabbatical Leaves

8.1 Procedures for Reviewing Applications

8.11 The committee is informed as to the number of sabbatical leaves available to the university by academic unit.

8.12 The committee reviews each sabbatical request for appropriateness and gives preliminary approval to those found acceptable.

8.13 The UCPC reserves the right to override sabbatical recommendations and rankings made by a college and/or department who have not complied with the *Constitution and Bylaws* (Section 8.34).

8.14 Colleges will forward to the UCPC, with the sabbatical proposals, the chairs' cover letters (required by the first paragraph of *Bylaw* 8.32).

8.15 The committee shall review each college's rankings for appropriateness; any proposed alteration of a college's ranking shall be first discussed with the college.

8.16 Where an academic, academic support, or other unit has fewer sabbaticals leave requests or approved leaves than the number of sabbatical leaves available to it, the committee shall reallocate the unused leave to other areas.

8.17 The committee then makes final recommendation on all sabbatical leave requests within all of the colleges that had received preliminary approval and were within the allotted number of leaves per unit.

8.18 The proposals to fill the leaves not used by any college or other area and to establish a list of approximately ten alternate positions will be selected on the basis of comparative merit and ranked in general accordance with college priorities.

8.19 The Provost shall notify each applicant and the college of the committee's proposed action.

8.110 Where a sabbatical leave has been recommended and approved by the **Board of Trustees** but the proposed project is no longer possible, the Provost shall approve a substitute proposal from that individual if of a similar nature and merit as that initially proposed.

8.111 The recommendation of a sabbatical for a faculty member concurrently under consideration for tenure shall be made contingent upon the granting of tenure.

8.112 As approved sabbatical leaves are declined, the Provost shall turn to the alternate list. The Provost shall inform each alternate being considered that deans in consultation with departments have the power to deny, because of budgetary or staffing considerations, a sabbatical becoming available after May 15. No alternate may be awarded a sabbatical after the start of classes for the term of the academic year in which the leave would be taken. Faculty on the list of alternates shall be informed of the aforementioned conditions.

8.113 The UCPC will not approve a sabbatical request if a copy of the report for any previous sabbatical leave is not on file in the Provost's Office or if the faculty member cannot produce evidence that there is a linkage between the previous sabbatical proposal and scholarly or artistic activities.

8.2 Supportive Professional Staff Sabbatical Request Procedures

8.21 Supportive professional staff members in academic colleges will submit sabbatical leave requests to their chairs or immediate supervisors. The requests will be evaluated by the supervisors, approved or disapproved, and forwarded to their supervisors for review until they reach the dean. The dean will evaluate all the requests and submit the supportive professional staff sabbatical leave requests in rank order to the provost. The ranking of faculty sabbatical leave requests will be a separate list submitted to the provost by the dean.

8.22 Supportive professional staff not in an academic college will submit their sabbatical leave requests in accordance with the personnel procedures of that unit, if any, or to their immediate supervisors if the unit does not have such procedures. The requests will be evaluated by the supervisor/appropriate committee, approved or disapproved, and forwarded to the next level for review until they reach the dean, library director, or vice president. The sabbatical leave requests should be rank ordered and then submitted to the provost by the dean, library director, or vice president.

8.23 A supportive professional staff person who is denied a request for a sabbatical leave may appeal that decision to the next higher level.

8.24 The provost will submit the faculty and supportive professional staff lists to the University Council Personnel Committee. The UCPC will then allocate the university's allotment for supportive professional staff leaves in rank order consistent with 8.36 of the Bylaws. The sabbatical leaves generated by the supportive professional staff will be first allocated to the supportive professional staff within their college/division. The supportive professional staff leave allocations for the individual colleges will be combined for the purpose of determining the number of sabbatical leaves available to the supportive professional staff in the colleges.

8.25 Those not used by the supportive professional staff in that college/division will be first reserved for other supportive professional staff sabbatical leave requests. The unused supportive professional staff leave allocations will return to a common pool.

9.0 College Personnel Policies and Procedures

9.1 Ordinarily, the personnel policies and procedures submitted by the college for UCPC approval shall be implemented on January 1 of the year following UCPC approval. Exceptions can be made by the UCPC with a specific implementation date.

Reviewed by the University Council Personnel Committee, September 17, 1996

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