

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

## Office of Academic Affairs

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**To: Academic Deans and Directors, Academic Department Heads**  
**From: Tami Benham Deal, Associate Vice President**  
**Date: August 24, 2017**  
**Subject: Reappointment, Tenure, Extended Term, and Promotion Procedures**  
**Copies: University Tenure and Promotion Committee, Provost Kate Miller, President Laurie Nichols, Associate VP Anne Alexander, General Counsel Tara Evans, Chair Michael Barker**

This memo lists key dates, procedures, guidelines for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and extended-term decisions for faculty and academic professionals. Please read the document carefully – some items have been modified for the upcoming academic year. Please also feel free to suggest improvements for future installments. Note: A list of frequently asked procedural questions and answers, as well as voting materials, can be found on the Academic Affairs web site:

[http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure\\_promotion.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure_promotion.html).

**The decisions at issue are the most important that the university makes, and your role is pivotal. In accordance with university regulations, candidates for reappointment, extended term, tenure and promotion are evaluated on the academic functions they are expected to perform. The needs, directions and priorities of the University will also be considered in reappointment, extended term and tenure cases.**

**Departmental and college expectations for reappointment, tenure, promotion, or extended-term should be consistent with duties and workload distributions outlined in candidates' job descriptions. Performance evaluations will appropriately recognize the proportion of time and effort allocated and expected for the particular functions by the candidates at each rank.**

## KEY DATES

The table below lists important dates, including both suggested target dates and hard deadlines. **The hard deadlines are in boldface.** The most important dates are those associated with Packet I, which is the main compendium of information supporting a candidate's case for reappointment, tenure, promotion, or extended-term appointment. Information about the format of Packet I is available on the Academic Affairs web site (see address above).

Candidates and their department heads are responsible for preparing clear, concise, and convincing packets. It is not too soon for department heads and candidates to begin assembling Packet I for the coming year's decisions. **Normally Academic Affairs needs only one copy of Packet I, but please send three copies for any case in which there are significant negative recommendations or comments at any level of review.** If there are any questions about which cases meet this criterion, please consult with me.

As many have noticed, the deadlines for first-year reappointment cases are quite early. This fact is a consequence of national guidelines established by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AAUP condones dismissal of a first-year candidate without a "grace year," provided the candidate receives notice early enough. If you wish to dismiss a first-year employee but miss this deadline, you may have to retain the employee for an extra year. Viewed in this light, the deadline is an opportunity to avoid undesirable "grace years," not simply another administrative headache.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
Mid-summer 2017	Identify all candidates for promotion to Professor.
Mid-August 2017	Solicit external letters of reference for promotions to Professor.
September 8, 2017	Identify all other candidates for reappointment, tenure, promotion, extended term, or extended-term renewal.
September 22, 2017	Solicit all other external letters of reference for tenure, promotion, or extended-term cases. Receive all letters of reference for promotions to Professor.
November 10, 2017	Worksheets distributed for reappointment, tenure, and promotion cases
December 19, 2017	Fall semester exams end.
December 1, 2017	Receive all other letters of reference for tenure, promotion, or extended-term cases.
Late December 2017/Early January 2018*	Complete all department-level deliberations for first-year reappointments.
January 19, 2018	Forward all first-year reappointment packets to college deans.
January 22, 2018	Spring Semester classes begin.
February 1, 2018	Forward all tenure, promotion, and second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-year reappointment cases and all extended-term cases to college deans. (A&S has earlier deadlines for some of these cases.)
<b>February 2, 2018</b>	<b>Forward all first-year reappointment packets to Academic Affairs.</b>
February 20, 2018	Notify Academic Affairs of cases likely to be considered by the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee. This category of cases includes those with conflicting recommendations from different levels of review, cases receiving negative recommendations from all levels of review, and early cases. Note that the Provost may refer other potentially problematic cases to the University R, T, & P committee as well.
<b>February 26, 2018</b>	<b>Forward all second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-year reappointment packets and all packets involving tenure, promotion, or extended terms to Academic Affairs.</b>
<b>March 2018</b>	<b>Trustees vote on all first-year reappointments. Date yet to be determined.</b>
<b>April 2-4, 2018</b>	<b>University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee meets.</b>
<b>May 2018</b>	<b>Trustees vote on all remaining reappointment, tenure, promotion, and extended-term cases. Date yet to be determined.</b>

\*Academic Affairs recommends that review of first-year reappointments occur after fall semester course evaluations have been completed so that they may be included in department-level deliberations.

**Note: This year, all first and second year packets will be submitted electronically.** Instructions on how to upload packets will be provided to the college staff member who is responsible for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and extended-term. Refer to the Academic Affairs web site (see address above) for the most current documents for review packets.

## PREPARING FOR REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEW

While most of us can probably think of nothing more boring than reading university regulations—and I understand that sentiment—we highly recommend all faculty and administrators read those pertaining to the reappointment, tenure, and promotion review processes prior to the review meeting. The relevant regulations are UW Regulations 5-1.D, 5-803 governing reappointment, tenure, and promotion for tenure-track faculty and 5-408 governing academic professional appointments. Archivist and Librarian appointments are governed by UW Regulations 7-490 and 7-631, respectively.

All university regulations pertaining to academic personnel are posted on the General Counsel website at: <http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/current-uw-regulations-and-presidential-directives/index.html>.

## PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

The following suggestions may help avoid misunderstandings in the department-level discussions and voting.

**FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS.** Faculty members should read the following statement (in *italics*) before they meet at the department level to discuss reappointment, promotion, tenure, or extended terms.

*Recommendations on matters of reappointment, promotion or tenure constitute what is arguably the most important element of faculty governance. Please approach the review and recommendation in a professional manner that safeguards the rights of the individual being reviewed and rigorously advances the academic stature of the University. The process must permit faculty and others with voting privileges to comment honestly and freely.*

*A written rationale must accompany each vote or recommendation. It is the persuasiveness of these written recommendations that counts the most, not the numerical vote tally. The lack of thoughtful, factually based rationale weakens a recommendation, whether it is for or against the candidate under review. It is also important to provide brief, factual reasons for abstentions, so that subsequent reviewers interpret them correctly. A family connection is a valid reason for an abstention. Timidity, failure to read the packet, or failure to schedule adequate time to review the packets are not valid reasons for an abstention.*

*Reviewers who abstain should provide written reason (e.g. voted at another level, conflict of interest, etc.). However, reviewers who abstain may not submit evaluative comments.*

***Department staff members who collect and transcribe votes and recommendations for the candidate's packet--or an appropriate faculty designee—will omit any evaluative remarks that accompany abstentions.*** The Office of Academic Affairs has insisted on the removal of evaluative remarks by abstainers in past cases and will do so, if necessary, in the future.

*Legally, recommendations and comments may not be privileged information, even if they are anonymous when collected. There have been court cases where faculty members were asked to identify their comments, and in some cases have been asked to explain them. It is awkward to explain baseless attacks, cowardly abstentions, or ill-informed support to a skeptical audience. The best way to avoid legal exposure is to perform one's responsibility, which is to make reasoned, academically based judgments based on professional expertise and facts.*

**GUIDELINES FOR MEETINGS.** Departments should adhere to the following guidelines for conducting meetings to discuss candidates' cases for reappointment, promotion, tenure, or extended term.

1. ***Review/Meeting Schedule:*** Departments should hold at least one meeting specifically for reviewing reappointment, tenure and promotion, and extended term decisions, with no other business on the agenda. Schedule several meetings if one is not enough. Avoid dates and times when faculty are not able to attend. Please allow ample time for full review of all candidates. **Packets should be available to voting members sufficiently in advance of the meeting(s) so that a thorough review may be done by the voting members. (All materials, including any documents or reviews pertaining to joint appointments, must be included in the packet before the department review and meeting.)**

2. ***Peer Group/Voting Protocol.*** UW Regulation 5-803, as revised by the faculty during the 2008-2009 academic year, calls for each department to establish a standing protocol to form a peer group for the purpose of voting and making written recommendations on faculty reappointment, tenure and promotion cases (see section 3.a.v). Any departments that do not currently have voting protocols in place should establish them as soon as possible and prior to reviewing any reappointment, tenure, or promotion cases. All voting members of the department must be invited to participate in the department meeting described in (1) above, and must have the opportunity to review the candidate's packet. **Each academic unit must have a written copy of the voting protocol on file as well as documentation indicating how the protocol was established (e.g., by faculty vote and date). Where appropriate, voting protocol involving joint appointments should be articulated in the document.**

3. ***Participation in Meeting by Non-Voting Members.*** Department custom may allow for participation in departmental meetings on faculty cases by department members not explicitly specified in the voting protocol. Alternatively, department heads may solicit input on reappointment, tenure and promotion recommendations from non-voting academic personnel familiar with aspects of the candidate's job duties, on a case-by-case basis, as he or she deems appropriate. Departments and colleges must be judicious in meeting protocol regarding participation in discussion when a faculty member votes at a different level.

4. ***Role of Department Head/Dean in Meeting.*** The department head may or may not be present at the department meeting, depending upon departmental customs and the wishes of the faculty. In any case, another faculty member should preside over the meeting. Since the head is responsible for making an independent recommendation, the head's role at the meeting should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification. At the college level, the chair of the college RT&P committee should preside over the meeting. Since the dean is responsible for making an independent recommendation, he or she need not be present. The dean's role at the meeting, if any, should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification. Similar considerations apply to deans' designees.

5. ***Meeting Attendance.*** Attendance at the meeting by a voting department member is not a prerequisite for making a recommendation. For example, employees away from the university on sabbatical or professional-development leave **should vote** if otherwise eligible, unless it's highly impractical to do so. All eligible voters, however, should have an opportunity to review packets **before** the department meeting, even if they are unable to be present at that meeting. Packets may be shared electronically on a secured website with access granted to eligible voters.

6. ***Abstentions.*** Abstentions are only occasionally appropriate. For example, faculty members must abstain in cases involving relatives, spouses, or domestic partners. (See UW Regulation 4-2.B for a more complete list of those who must recuse themselves from decisions affecting reappointment, tenure and promotion.) In general however, faculty members have a duty to stay informed about their

colleagues' work and to cast meaningful RT&P votes. Abstention should not be a vehicle for ducking difficult judgments or shrinking from disagreement. This behavior effectively cedes power to administrators, who don't abstain. Also, it is inappropriate to include with an abstention any evaluative comments about a candidate's performance. Such comments should be omitted from the packet.

### TIMING OF REVIEW/SKIP YEARS

1. **Tenure Track.** UW Regulation 5-803 specifies that mandatory reviews be conducted in years one, two, four, and six. At any level, including Academic Affairs, a majority vote by faculty or by department head/dean in favor of a third- or fifth-year review suffices to mandate it. (Note: recommendations to skip are done during the second- and fourth-year reviews.) College RT&P committees need only evaluate and make recommendations on cases in which the candidate or an appropriate administrator has requested a third- or fifth-year committee review.
2. **Extended Term Track.** As stated in UW Regulations 5-408, 7-490, 7-631, Academic Professionals, Archivists and Librarians on probationary appointments must undergo annual reviews for reappointment. However, in cases in which all levels of review agree (by majority vote) in the second- or fourth-year review, reappointment reviews in the third and fifth years of the probationary period may be skipped. At any level, a majority vote in favor of a third- or fifth-year review suffices to mandate it.

### VOTING

1. **Voters for Tenure Track and Promotion Cases.** In reappointment, tenure and promotion cases for faculty, the following department members should submit recommendations:

- All tenured faculty members.
- All non-tenured tenure-track faculty, with the candidates expressed approval.
- All other members of the department's voting protocol, with the candidates expressed approval.

Please include in the packet a signed statement by the candidate clarifying his or her wishes in the matter of voting by non-tenured faculty and other academic personnel included in the department's voting protocol. A candidate who wishes to approve voting by non-tenure track academic personnel (e.g. lecturers, research scientists, or extension educators) included in the voting protocol may not at the same time exclude the non-tenured tenure-track faculty from voting on his or her case.

To ensure consistency with UW Regulation 5-803's prescription that votes be recorded by faculty category, recommendations of other academic personnel, such as lecturers, should be recorded separately from recommendations submitted by faculty members. Exceptions to this provision may be made when confidentiality of votes would be compromised.

2. **Voters for Extended Term Track and Promotion Cases.** Voting members for reappointment, extended term, and promotion cases may vary based on position classification (e.g., Extension Educator, Lecturer, Research Scientist, Archivist, Librarian). See UW Regulations 5-408, 7-490 and 7-631 for details.

3. **Ballots.** To gather votes, departments should use the standard forms posted on the Academic Affairs website at: [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure\\_promotion.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure_promotion.html)

4. **Voting Timeline.** Per UW Regulation 5-803, voters should have ample time to complete and submit thoughtful recommendations. The regulation stipulates that the ballots be cast within 72 hours of the end of the meeting, excluding weekends and holidays)

5. **Reporting/Transcribing Results.** When transcribing the results of departmental and committee recommendations, please *clearly indicate which reasons are linked to affirmative recommendations, negative recommendations, and abstentions*. Comments alone do not always make the voter's intent clear.

6. **Candidate Verification.** Please have candidates initial and date each page of written comments after reading the department and college level reviews.

### **CASES REVIEWED BY UNIVERSITY RT&P COMMITTEE**

The University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee will conduct an additional review of reappointment, tenure, extended-term or promotion cases in which one or more of the following conditions apply.

- A disagreement on the recommendation occurs between the department faculty (or alternative peer group), department head (or direct supervisor), college committee, or dean.
- The faculty member is recommended for denial of reappointment, tenure, promotion, or extended term.
- The Provost requests consideration of a particular case.
- The faculty member seeks an early decision for tenure, promotion, or an extended term.

College deans are asked by the Provost to identify and recommend cases for review by the University Tenure and Promotion Committee.

**MATERIALS** (The following materials will be sent electronically and/or found on the website at: [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure\\_promotion.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure_promotion.html).)

1. **Tally Spread Sheets (will be sent electronically to college or unit November 10, 2017).** Each Dean's or Director's office will receive electronic tally spread sheets listing the employees who will be reviewed. Please update (if needed) and return these to Academic Affairs with all applicable Packet I materials no later than

- a. 5:00 p.m., February 2, 2018, for first-year cases;
- b. 5:00 p.m., February 26, 2018 for all other cases.

For each candidate for reappointment and tenure, please indicate the review year. For example, write "2" for a candidate undergoing a second-year review. UW Regulations 5-408 and 5-803 contain more details about review schedules for probationary academic professionals and faculty.

If there are additions or corrections to the tally sheets, please contact Aneesa McDonald in Academic Affairs (6-4287 or [aneesamc@uwyo.edu](mailto:aneesamc@uwyo.edu)) as soon as possible. *Academic Affairs uses the tally sheets in preparing the agenda for the Trustees' votes, so accuracy is essential.*

2. **Vote Tallies.** In cases involving both tenure and promotion, please record the votes for promotion and the votes for tenure separately. All votes should be accompanied by comments. In the case of votes accompanied by no comment, please write "[no comment]." Abstentions should be accompanied by brief reasons, such as "the candidate is my partner."

3. **Evaluation Sheet.** Please use the percentages of effort assigned in formal job descriptions for the year under review to describe individuals' expected time commitments.

4. **History Sheet.** Departments should complete the history sheet. This information will enable the University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee to review a faculty member's history. Please use one sheet for each candidate and place it as the *first item* in Packet I. There is no hard deadline for cases involving promotion to Professor, so the history sheet should not list one until the case is advanced.

5. **Checklist for Packet I** (Please note differences in checklists for electronic and paper packets/submissions.)