



Office of
Academic Affairs

Office of Academic Affairs
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Responsibilities of Tenure and Promotion Review Committee

Faculty members should read the following statement (in *italics*) before they meet at the unit and college level to discuss reappointment, promotion, tenure, or fixed 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 other 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 the subsequent reviewers interpret them correctly. A family connection is a valid reason for an abstention. Timidity, failure to read the case, or failure to schedule adequate time to review the case files 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. **Unit and college staff members who collect and transcribe votes and recommendations for the candidate's case—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.

Reference: University Regulation 2-7 (Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Fixed-Term)

Standard Administrative Policies and Procedures: *Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion* (coming soon)

Links: <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/section-2-academic-affairs/academic-personnel.html>