

**CSU Workshop on Retention, Tenure and Promotion Criteria & Procedures
Friday, February 24, 2006**

Session D: Setting Reasonable Limits on RTP Files

Issue: Proliferation of RTP Materials

Solutions: Campus Guidelines for Preparing /Submitting RTP Packages

Presenters: Edith Benkov, Mary Elizabeth Stivers, and Marie Thomas
(Bonnie Zimmerman was not in attendance to present)

Edith gave a brief background of an effort made in 1989/1990 to streamline and simplify the RTP procedures. The goal was to find ways to make the process easier overall. Another goal was to simplify the use of personal data (go back to the silos). She then went through a list of all of the items to be included in the RTP package, most importantly the CV. She mentioned that someone has to validate all of the items on the CV. Specifications vary from department to department. If a reviewer is only looking at the last three years of a person's work, how do you rate a career?

Question: How does limiting the RTP package affect a candidate?

Answer: It doesn't. The candidate has to think about how he is going to present himself. It's a matter of looking at one's career and how things interrelate.

Edith continued by saying that if a candidate is probationary, her campus tries to downplay service. The campus looks at syllabi, and student and peer evaluations. How many committees evaluate this? They look at items listed on the CV. They also look at items listed on the candidate's CVs. There should be an emphasis on quality instead of quantity, which will make the process more manageable. The three-page narrative that needs to be submitted tells us where the candidate is going. Each item in the CV should have a short narrative that shows how a candidate should learn to manage the system. The candidate should always self-evaluate. Some candidates don't present themselves well. Candidates should look forward more than backward. The post-tenure review requires the same detail. Use evaluations from other universities if they are within the past three years, but only rely on information from previous universities for background. Consulting should be determined by the college or department.

Question: Is there value in including non-funded grants?

Answer: There is a certain amount of flexibility by college or department. It depends on how they look at publications, grants, etc.

Question: The values of RTP committees change as the composition of the committee changes. What should be put into the RTP package and what not?

Answer: The department needs to make it clear what the department is looking for.

Question: Is there significance in having eight binders?

Answer: Just to make things easier to find within the binders.

Question: *(I missed the question.)*

Answer: New faculty lunches at which what is considered scholarship is discussed.

Question: Does summer count in the three years?

Answer: No, because no one has ever asked that it be used. Semesters are the primary.

Question: Where does advising fall?

Answer: Some faculty put advising under service and some put it under teaching.

Mary Elizabeth said that the culture is that more is better – a faculty member once turned in five boxes of materials as their RTP package. Also some faculty had trust issues. San Marcos has a university-wide committee that said small files are okay and that clarity is necessary. Colleges should define their own standards. It took five years to pass the document (three years for the process to be defined, and then two years to deal with the “big bins”).

Mary Elizabeth said that faculty members should play it safe. If you're not sure, put it in. In order to help faculty cut down on the materials, give us your best practices. One way is to limit the number of materials to thirty items, not including student evaluations. Take fifteen pages tell us your philosophy. Too much, not enough. There are always going to be complaints. On the RTP vita, you should put down everything that you've done – everything. Then go back to best practices and limit the list to thirty items.

Marie said that when figuring out how many student evaluations to include in the file, that a minimum of two courses should be on file. Some expected every evaluation to go into the file. Then faculty would be forced to explain why some students made bad comments. How did people react to the smaller files?

1. Everyone agreed that fifteen pages was enough for a narrative.
2. Instructions and procedures were clearer.
3. Files were generally more organized – reviewers were thrilled.
4. Thirty items was enough.
5. People being reviewed had a hard time deciding what to include, but liked that there was a limit.

Did the reviewers need a definition of an item? Any amount of papers that could fit in one staple. Some gave additional suggestions, including that people can go to the Academic Resources page on the San Marcos website to get the CSUSM definition of an item. Some people put in really random things like emails (example given was an email saying that the faculty member said hello to

another faculty member in passing). Workshops for junior faculty were helpful. She wishes that more young faculty would attend RTP workshops – those in attendance now are mostly reviewers. We need to get reviewers to be more specific in their comments.

Question: Do you have problems where the evaluators are not experts in the field/discipline of the faculty member being reviewed? There is a culture in which departments feel that they must make a case for the individuals and never want to make things harder for their people.

Answer: Encourage faculty to write narratives as if writing to someone not in their field. The faculty/chair/department/provost need to come to an agreement. One said yes, one said no doesn't work. Must have all levels agree.

Question: How do you verify abstracts, such as an organization on someone's CV that no longer exists?

Answer: There should be spot checking and an understanding of what my faculty does and a trust of faculty.

Question: How much time does the chair need to validate faculty information?

Answer: It varies. Longer the first time, the second time, just what is new.

Answer: San Marcos doesn't validate.

Question: If they exceed thirty items, do you send it back?

Answer: Some faculty balked. You have to focus your attention on new faculty.

Question: What about too few pieces? For example five and the faculty member refuses to submit more?

Answer: The school understands if you are new and that you may not have more materials yet.

Question: What about the faculty member who refuses to add more materials?

Answer: This is a requirement for professional growth.

Question: Are some colleges more rigorous than others?

Answer: Different colleges are going to be different. This is where the narrative is critically important. There are different standards for different people. Must review each department's procedures and help them to be clearer in order to help the candidates. The University should have a general statement. It seems like each college has a statement plagiarizing other departments (one department comes up with a good statement and other departments just copy it so they don't have to do the work).

Question: What about items in the performing arts?

Answer: There can be videotapes, dvds or reviews in the package.

Question: Most performances are not videotaped, so I encourage people to see the live performances.

Answer: It's a difficult problem.

Question: No student evaluations, but what about course journals, syllabi, etc?

Answer: You would have to pick items that you talked about in your reflective statement.

Question: Course journals may balance student evaluations?

Answer: Yes. You can also require the syllabi, but don't count them as items, though.

Question: Do candidates use items to show development?

Answer: Yes, this is an effective tool.

Question: What are the instructions given to the departments regarding guidelines?

Answer: This is what we are trying to work in. We need to make sense out of what they do, but it can't conflict with the CVA or university policy.

END OF DISCUSSION