

## Report of 2006-07 College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee

April 20, 2007

<u>Members</u>	<u>Term Expiring</u>
Prof. Soura Dasgupta, Chair	May 2008
Prof. Jasbir Arora	May 2009
Prof. Andrew Kusiak	May 2007

General Actions: The P&T committee addressed the charges below by inviting the DEO's and the Dean to complete the attached questionnaires. A separate questionnaire was addressed to the Dean and the five DEO's. All the principals completed their questionnaire. Additionally, the Committee Chair followed up by requesting clarifications where appropriate.

### Response to the General Charge

*The Promotion and Tenure Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and evaluating the criteria for and the appropriateness of all recommendations concerning faculty promotions, tenure, and new appointments in the college and for making such recommendations to the dean and the faculty as it deems necessary.*

Since this charge is subsumed by the specific charges below, we report our conclusions by responding to the specific charges separately. Where appropriate we recommend action items for the next EFC.

### Response to Charge 1

*Review the procedures used in College of Engineering promotion and tenure reviews during 2005-06. Advise the Engineering Faculty Council (EFC) as to whether the reviews of tenure-track faculty complied with College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations, and Promotions and with the University's Tenure and Promotion Decision Making Guidelines. Advise the EFC as to whether College and/or University policies were implemented in ways that strike the Committee as unwise.*

While the procedures complied in large measure with *College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations, and Promotions* and the *University's Tenure and Promotion Decision Making Guidelines* certain issues did emerge.

- According to the Dean, the implementation of the policy on Peer Observation of Teaching has sometimes been patchy, but appears to be improving. One DEO noted that the requirement that, "three peer classroom reviews must be done within the last four semesters" is onerous and unhelpful to improving the candidate's teaching. There certainly appears to be wide variance in the manner

in which different departments implement this policy. *We recommend some streamlining of this policy.*

- The *College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments and Evaluations*, requires that if the recommendation of the Dean/DEO differs from the judgment of the DEO and/or the judgment of a majority of the DCG, the Dean/DEO shall report this fact to the DEO and or to the members of the DCG with the reason or reasons for the recommendation made. In the judgment of the P&T Committee both the reporting of the differing recommendation and the underlying reasons must be done in writing, in a letter separate from the letter containing the Dean/DEO's recommendation to the Provost/the Dean. This has indeed been the practice in the past. There is evidence that this policy is being misinterpreted. *We recommend that the policy be clarified to avoid misunderstandings.*
- There is no mandate in either the College or the University policy that all external reviewers be "arms length". While a vast majority of external reviewers should be arms length to the candidate, a case can be made that there are cases, e.g., where the candidate has collaborated extensively with a senior person, when that person's evaluation can be illuminating. *In any event the fact that such a mandate does not exist should be communicated to the DCG's, DEO's and the Dean as there is evidence of confusion on this point.*
- Neither the College nor the University policy prohibits the letters containing recommendations at any level from quoting an external reviewer. Indeed in some cases a *verbatim* quote may be more effective and forceful, as long of course as it does not compromise the reviewer's identity. *There appears to be confusion on this score that should be removed.*
- Some departments did not follow the normal time line set out in the *College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments and Evaluations*, although the recommendations were conveyed in time for the Dean to meet his deadlines. This can make it difficult for the DCG to meet its deadlines. *We recommend that the normal deadlines be met.*

### Response to Charge 2

*Review the procedures used for new appointments of tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering during 2005-06. Advise the EFC as to whether these appointments complied with the College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations.*

While the procedures complied in large measure with *College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations*, certain issues did emerge.

- A concern was expressed on the relative role of the Centers/Institute and departments. While this is not a P&T matter *per se*, we recommend that a future EFC discuss this issue at a policy level.
- There are no firm guidelines for cases where tenured/tenure track appointments are transferred from another college. We recommend that such guidelines be developed.
- Item 8, page 12 of the *College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations*, states: “It is understood that these procedures establish the norm by which departments will function and that in unusual situations it may be necessary to depart from them to assure that the department's responsibilities are met. Even in such situations, however, members of the DCG will be consulted to the extent it is feasible to do so.” In the judgment of the P&T committee this does not relax the requirement that all tenured/tenure track appointments in a department be preceded by a closed ballot vote of the pertinent DCG(s). There is evidence that there is some confusion on this point. We recommend that this point be clarified.

### Response to Charge 3

*College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations, and Promotions state that in a promotion and tenure review “A closed ballot vote of the DCG members attending the group meeting shall be taken, with the votes counted at the meeting” and that “After taking into account the recommendations of the DCG and after consulting, if feasible, members of the department who did not participate in a review of the promotion/ tenure file and/or the meeting of the DCG when the final recommendation was made, to transmit an independent recommendation to the Dean ... and to indicate in the transmittal letter the vote of the DCG and the results of consultations with those named above.” Determine departmental practices with respect to permitting Departmental Consulting Group (DCG) members to vote who are not present at the group meeting at which the vote reported to the DEO was taken.*

Some departments failed to comply with this policy, specifically by permitting DCG members who did not participate in the meeting where the DCG vote was taken, to nonetheless vote by other means. One DEO whose department did comply with this policy made the following observation: “There is, however, a serious problem with the specified procedure. In many cases it is difficult or impossible to convey the results of consultations with non-voting DCG members in a manner that does not reveal the identity of the consulted faculty member(s). This is at odds with the notion that the DCG vote should be closed-ballot and may make faculty who did not participate in the closed-ballot vote reluctant to express an honest opinion of a candidate, particularly when that opinion may be unfavorable.”

Response to Charge 4

*Upon request, assist the EFC in producing a single document integrating the College of Engineering Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Evaluations, and Promotions with the University of Iowa Procedures for Tenure and Promotion Decision-making.*

No such request was made.

Response to Charge 5

*Recommend specific charges for the 2007-08 P&T Committee.*

Some of the recommendations above should form the basis for such charges.