TO: Academic Program Group
    Research Unit Directors

FROM: Paul N. Courant

RE: Promotion Casebooks for Instructional Tenure Track, Research Professor Track, and
    Clinical Instructional Track Faculty

The attached instructions set forth detailed procedures and requested format for submitting promotion casebooks. All casebooks should be submitted no later than February 14, 2018. I ask that you make every effort to meet this deadline. Instructional tenure track faculty promotion recommendations will be acted upon by the Regents at their May 2018 meeting. Promotion casebooks for Research Professors will be reported at the Regents’ May meeting, along with Clinical faculty promotions.

For your reference, I have attached a copy of the Regental guidelines on "Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion in the Several Faculties of the University of Michigan" (Attachment A), which is particularly relevant to the preparation of promotion casebooks for Instructional tenure track faculty. I would remind you, and ask you to remind your chairs and promotion committees, that no recommendation for Instructional tenure track faculty promotion or tenure is final until approved by the Regents. Any announcement prior to that date is premature and should be avoided. I would also like to remind you that it is the Dean’s/Director’s responsibility to contact individual faculty regarding a negative decision for promotion at the Provost’s level of review.

Producing these materials requires a substantial amount of work, and I am grateful for your careful attention to the attached instructions. I would like to re-emphasize that the Provost and the President must have a consistent basis for review of recommendations from many different units and disciplines. I am, therefore, requesting that each individual casebook be accompanied by a signed cover letter from the Dean or Director. This letter should provide an accurate, thorough, and balanced summary of the casebook and the promotion review in the unit. Please highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of the individual and explain the rationale for the decision to recommend promotion. In addition, I would like a 2-3 sentence assessment on what substantive impact the faculty member’s research or scholarly work has had either within his/her own field(s) or more broadly.

For those faculty with relevant activities, we ask that you comment on his/her contributions to interdisciplinary teaching. We also encourage you to recognize entrepreneurial, creative, and outreach activities as outlined in the attached memo. Additionally, many of our faculty engage in collaborative research, a practice strongly encouraged by the University. To acknowledge the contributions of these faculty, it is essential that schools/colleges document in the faculty member’s casebook his/her specific expertise and contribution(s) to collaborative research that indicate research independence.

Please note that only one casebook is required for faculty being promoted in two or more units. In these instances, it is important that the units coordinate their casebook preparations, which will include a cover letter signed by all the respective Dean(s)/Director(s). In the event the faculty candidate is not recommended for promotion and tenure in a unit(s) in which he/she holds a title, the cover letter should clearly indicate the reason(s) for this decision. Additional details are given in the attached instructions (Item #3.b. in the Checklist).
For each faculty member being promoted on the Instructional tenure track or Research Professor track, at least five “arm’s length” external review letters are required, and more are highly desirable. We do not consider teachers, advisors, mentors, or current faculty colleagues to be “arm’s length.” Co-authors and major research collaborators/former faculty colleagues are also not “arm’s length” unless the most recent association occurred over 10 years prior to the promotion. Please note that for the Clinical Instructional track only, we will accept up to two of these review letters from University of Michigan faculty who have seen the clinical work and actual teaching but are neither mentors nor scholarly collaborators nor in the same department as the candidate. If you have any questions about the application of this requirement, please contact our office as soon as the question arises (Item #3.j. in the Checklist).

Academic units must forward materials to the Provost on each decision not to recommend tenure. The cases that must be forwarded are those in which the faculty member will receive a terminal contract without expectation of further review. Those being deferred to another year for review should not be sent to us. The materials forwarded on a negative mandatory tenure case should include the same materials that are submitted for a positive promotion and tenure case, with one exception: all negative mandatory tenure cases require an updated curriculum vitae. This should be a CV that has been updated to reflect the candidate’s academic productivity at the time of the Provost’s level of review. It is essential that the cover letter present a concise but complete and unbiased accounting of all aspects of the case and make clear the reasons for the negative recommendation. All documents created as part of the promotion process and relied upon in reaching a negative mandatory tenure recommendation should be included in the casebook and uploaded to M-Box. In rare cases where the school or college dean wishes to forward a negative review that does not include external letters, all other materials need to be included in the casebook for the provost’s review and the exception must be discussed with the provost prior to October 31 of the penultimate year of the faculty member’s probationary period (see SPG 201.13, II.B.).

Wise and objective decisions about appointment, promotion, and tenure are essential to the overall quality of the institution. The conferring of tenure represents long-term intellectual and financial commitments by the University. In fact, it may be the single most important responsibility that we have. I appreciate your efforts and success in attracting and retaining the very best faculty. Your attention to these guidelines will greatly assist the President and me in this critical joint decision-making process. Please forward this memorandum and the attached instructions to Department Chairs, Program Heads, or others in your unit who are directly responsible for the promotional review of Instructional tenure track, Research Professor track, and Clinical Instructional track faculty. These documents will also be available electronically at <www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/promotion_guidelines/index.html>.

Your attention to this important process is greatly appreciated.

PNC/LJP/SBB/ts

Attachments

cc: Rebekah Ashley
    Sara Blair
    Kelly Cunningham
    Tammy Deane
    Jack Hu
    Lori Pierce
    Mark Schlissel
    Catherine Shaw
    Laurita Thomas