

Motion to the Faculty: Faculty Placement at Hiring

Background:

A faculty concern last year prompted Faculty Council to examine the current policy of how previous experience is counted and awarded to faculty at the time of their hiring. Previous teaching, scholarship, and professional experiences all contribute to rank appointment, credit toward promotion and tenure, and the salary step at which they are initially placed. The final decisions, a result of the initial offer and subsequent negotiations, are articulated in the appointment letter and can vastly affect salary throughout a faculty member's entire career. Concern was voiced about potential disparity, specifically the risk that women faculty could be getting awarded less credit for equal experience. A "gender gap" in faculty salaries still exists in higher education nationwide

(http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/04/052/the_enduring_gender_gap_in_faculty_pay). While Faculty Council recognizes the inherent difficulty in comparing different types of scholarly experiences, we saw the value in naming the types of scholarly experience that might be relevant and specifying the credit in terms of distinct categories (i.e. rank, promotion, tenure, and salary step).

Ultimately a sub-committee was convened last spring (Cheri Larsen Hoeckley, Kim Kihlstrom, and Bill Wright with some input from Toya Cooper) to investigate this issue and draft guidelines and proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook. After vetting the document through Faculty Council, we sent the documents to the Faculty Personnel committee for comments. We now present these to the full faculty.

Motion:

To adopt the changes to Sections 2.1.2.3 and 2.9.2 of the Faculty Handbook as described below and to approve the clarifying document "Guidelines for Faculty Placement at Hiring". This document will then be included in *Advices and Queries*, a website off the Provost's page that contains other documents related to "best practices".

Handbook changes:

Current Language:

2.1.2.3 Prior Service Credit

By written agreement at the time of the initial appointment, instructional faculty with prior teaching experience and scholarly achievement may be given advanced standing towards promotion. Faculty who have not held tenure at a previous institution will be subject to the normal tenure process as specified in the Handbook; in exceptional cases, for faculty with substantial prior experience, the tenure review period may be reduced by two years. Normally, faculty with tenure at

a previous institution will not be given tenure at the time of their appointment at Westmont, though the tenure review process will be reduced by two years. In exceptional circumstances, faculty with significant experience and distinguished careers may be granted “provisional tenure status” at the time of appointment upon the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee and the approval of the Provost and President. During the second year of the faculty member’s appointment at Westmont, a mutual assessment-of-fit would be submitted to the Personnel Committee by the department chair and the faculty member. This assessment would be based on the Handbook criteria for tenure, but would also take into account written expectations at the time of appointment. At that time, the Personnel Committee may make one of three recommendations: (1) to remove provisional status and recommend full tenure; (2) to continue provisional status for an additional two years, providing further time for assessment; or (3) to schedule a full tenure review in four years as specified in section 2.2 (Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure).

Proposed New Language:

2.1.2.3 Prior Service Credit

At the time of initial appointment of tenure-track faculty, the Provost, in communication with the department chair and the chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee, will determine appropriate credit for prior service toward rank, promotion, tenure and salary step. Those terms will be put in writing at the time of initial appointment and placed in the faculty member’s personnel file. Final approval is given by the President and the Board of Trustees.

- a) **Rank** Initial rank reflects level of education and years of experience. Ranks are defined in Section 2.1.1.1.3.
- b) **Promotion** ~~By written agreement at the time of the initial appointment,~~ Instructional faculty with prior **college** teaching experience ~~and~~ **or** scholarly or artistic achievement may be given advanced standing towards promotion. **Scholarly or artistic achievement includes service in the discipline as a professional employee, researcher, practitioner, post-doctoral fellow, or expert consultant; publishing through a peer-reviewed process; giving performances or exhibits that are publicly reviewed; presenting at professional meetings; and/or leading workshops or seminars.**
- c) **Tenure** Faculty who have not held tenure at a previous institution will be subject to the normal tenure process as specified in the Handbook; ~~in~~ **exceptional cases, for faculty with substantial prior experience, the tenure review period may be reduced by two years. Normally, Faculty with tenure or in a tenure-track position at a previous institution will not be given tenure at the time of their appointment at Westmont, though the tenure review process will be reduced by two years. may be given up to three years’ credit toward tenure.** In exceptional circumstances **such as the appointment of an endowed chair**, faculty with significant experience and distinguished careers may be granted “provisional tenure status” at the time

of appointment upon the recommendation of the Faculty Personnel Committee and the approval of the Provost and President. During the second year of the faculty member's appointment at Westmont, a mutual assessment-of-fit would be submitted to the Personnel Committee by the department chair and the faculty member. This assessment would be based on the Handbook criteria for tenure, but would also take into account written expectations at the time of appointment. At that time, the Personnel Committee may make one of three recommendations: (1) to remove provisional status and recommend full tenure; (2) to continue provisional status for an additional two years, providing further time for assessment; or (3) to schedule a full tenure review in four years as specified in section 2.2 (Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure).

- d) Salary Step Advanced credit toward salary step may be given for relevant experience that prepares the candidate to bring perspective, insight, and/or maturity to the position. Such service includes serving as a professional, researcher, practitioner, post-doctoral fellow, consultant, or instructor.**

Current Language:

2.9.2 Salary Schedule

a) Prior to issuing contracts each year, the Board of Trustees adopts a revised Salary Schedule effective for the following academic year, listing salaries by rank and step. Ranks are defined in Section 2.1.1.1.3. Initial rank and step reflect level of education and years of experience. They are determined for each faculty member at time of appointment by the Provost in consultation with the departmental chair with the advice of the Faculty Personnel Committee. Final approval is given by the President and the Board of Trustees.

b) Faculty members receive step increases for each year of full-time service except in certain cases of non-performance of contractual obligations (see Section 2.2.4).

Proposed New Language:

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b) Faculty members receive step increases for each year of full-time service except in certain cases of non-performance of contractual obligations (see Section 2.2.4).