

WMU-AAUP Bulletin

Western Michigan University
Chapter of American
Association of University Professors

External Review

There has recently been some confusion regarding specific conditions warranting external reviews. As a point of clarification, Article 17 — Tenure Policy and Procedures, in our current Contract, stipulates the following:

Article 17.§5.5 External Review Process. External review in the area of professional recognition for traditionally-ranked faculty may be initiated by the candidate, the Departmental Tenure Committee (DTC), or the department chair, for a candidate's final tenure review. Reviewers external to the faculty of Western Michigan University shall be appropriate to the tenure candidate's specialty area. By mutual agreement of the candidate and the department chair, one reviewer may be from Western Michigan University, but external to the department.

This means that external reviews are reserved for the final tenure review, as well as for promotion, as indicated in Article 18 — Promotion Policy and Procedures. The purpose of external reviews is to evaluate professional recognition, and they are undertaken solely for traditionally-ranked faculty.

Faculty specialists are evaluated on professional competence and professional service. Because they are not evaluated on professional recognition, external reviews are not appropriate. If you are a faculty specialist, and external reviews have been requested of you, please be aware that they do not apply to you; thus you are not be required to provide them.

It is appropriate, in general, for a Department Policy Statement (DPS) to provide more specific guidance on the criteria by which faculty should be evaluated. For traditionally-ranked faculty, with the consensus and consent of the department, a DPS may include external review for professional recognition. To apply the same policy of external review either (a) prior to the final tenure review or (b) to faculty specialists, would put the DPS in conflict with our official *Agreement*. Please be aware, for this year's and upcoming reviews, of the need to conduct your reviews appropriately.

Please do not hesitate to contact the WMU-AAUP with additional questions about the applicability of external reviews.

Some of the changes in the 2008-2011 Contract have implications for DPS. We will be running workshops during this coming year to to help you keep your DPS language consistent with the Contract, and to address some of the DPS questions that have arisen recently. Please be on the lookout for notification of these workshops.

October
2008

