

TO: Academic Deans
FROM: Sacha Kopp, Provost
DATE: July 10, 2024
RE: Review of Tenured Faculty
CC: Vice Provost Mia Bertagnolli



As part of our commitment to University excellence and individual career development, all faculty are subject to reviews of their performance. For tenured faculty, the review of faculty is to be conducted using the process of *Faculty Handbook* Section 306.

The totality of the purpose of post-tenure review is carefully laid out in Section 306.01(a). The review of tenured faculty is intended to be a support mechanism for our colleagues. It serves to support the progression of our colleagues throughout their careers. Their aspirations may evolve over time, and they may wish to reflect that evolution in their work expectations. They may encounter roadblocks at various junctures and require assistance from you to support their career progression, whether in preparation for their next promotion or more simply to enjoy the greatest satisfaction with their role at Gonzaga. Throughout colleagues' careers, we seek to take a developmental approach, providing mentorship when difficulties are encountered, and also recognizing that the expectations that can be placed on a mid-career faculty member may be different than a more senior faculty member, or the expectations placed on one colleague experiencing difficulties can be tailored to support that colleague, rather than viewed as a deficiency.

At the same time, the review of tenured faculty provides assurance of continued alignment with faculty performance expectations and support of the University's mission. As noted in the Preamble of the *Faculty Handbook*:

"Faculty are committed to creating and sustaining a learning community that reflects the hallmarks of Jesuit education... Moreover, faculty recognize the need for mutual accountability and shared responsibility for sustaining the conditions necessary for shared inquiry and scholarship at Gonzaga."

As further noted in the *Faculty Handbook* Section 300.05 (Professional Rights and Responsibilities), *"Membership in the academic profession carries with it responsibilities..."* Thus, the review of tenured faculty provides the University and the faculty member an opportunity for two-way conversation, in which the needs and expectations of the University are also articulated as well as the needs of the individual.

This balance is found since the very beginning of Jesuit education. As Father General Arturo Sosa, Superior of the Society of Jesus, notes, St. Ignatius regularly asked Jesuit provincials to be in correspondence with him to share news of their works and speak to their needs, as well as hear from the Superior the needs of the Society. Father General Sosa refers to these purposes as "inseparable and complementary dimensions of *cura apostolica* and *cura personalis*."

Post tenure review criteria

Section 306 (Evaluation of Tenured Faculty) of the *Faculty Handbook* identifies Section 300.05 as the criteria for the review of tenured faculty members and also indicates that faculty will be evaluated in all four areas of Section 304 (teaching, advising, scholarly/creative work, academic citizenship and professional service). It is worth reviewing why both statements are found in Section 306.

Review of tenured faculty is necessary over all areas. For those seeking further promotion (to full professor) the totality of one's portfolio should be reviewed, and the faculty member is entitled to constructive feedback that addresses their progress toward promotion, per Section 306.01(a). It would be unfortunate for an Associate Professor to submit an application for promotion to Professor without ongoing feedback provided during the individual's time in rank – analogous to an academic class providing only a final exam and no feedback during the semester. The evaluation cycle outlined in Section 306.03 ensures that every Associate Professor would receive at least one post-tenure review before submitting an application for promotion to full Professor and also have at least two years after the post-tenure review to implement improvements in areas of concern and focus on aspects of the portfolio that require further development.

Whether an individual is an Associate Professor or already promoted to Professor, it is important to review all four areas for their career development. As one example, for some colleagues, their scholarly endeavors may require your support and encouragement if they encounter a challenge – the discipline may be changing rapidly and they may ask you for increased time to acquire new skills. Alternatively, they may be in the midst of a particularly difficult and ambitious project, and they will necessarily want to apprise you of this so that future evaluations are not viewed negatively in light of an absence of a result – indeed, we need to encourage colleagues to undertake ambitious or speculative work! For other colleagues' career trajectory, certain activities may be less of interest for them and yet they wish to contribute in other ways (e.g., more service, less advising, or more service/teaching, less research, etc.). Tenured faculty have some flexibility, given that they generally have fewer assigned credits (18 cr/year) compared to lecturers and senior lecturers (24 cr/year) to make room for scholarship. All three of these examples are constructive dialogs that may emerge in a post-tenure review conversation between you and the tenured faculty member. Finally, reviewing all four areas is of importance to assess the balance of duties an individual contributes to arrive at 100%. This notion of equity in all faculty's service is underscored in Section 300.05(c)6): "*Faculty members shall assume their share of the work of the governance within the University as directed by their chair and dean...*"

It must be emphasized that the purpose of reviewing these four areas begins from a place of formative work, an opportunity first and foremost for conversation between the dean and faculty member.

Post tenure review evaluations by reviewer and dean

As noted in Section 306.02, the faculty member is to be reviewed by both a “reviewer” (chair, your designee, a committee) and also by you as dean. As you (or your department) select reviewers, any conflicts of interest (Section 306.02(c)) will have to be identified and removed from the process. As noted in Section 306.04, for each of the four areas the faculty member shall receive an evaluation of “Exceeds Expectations,” “Meets Expectations,” or “Does Not Meet Expectations” using the guidelines developed for your area (see Section 306.01(d)).

A dean’s assessment may differ from the reviewer’s. A dean may provide a higher assessment than the reviewer (example: dean indicates “exceeds expectations” while reviewer indicates “meets expectations”). This is fine and may deserve some elaboration from you in your memo of evaluation for why you came to a different assessment. If your evaluation is higher than a reviewer’s assessment of “does not meet expectations,” you may also elect to expunge the reviewer’s assessment of “does not meet expectations” from the record altogether so it does not affect future post tenure reviews (Section 306.04(j)), but in any case per Section 306.05(c) you must notify and meet with the reviewer and the faculty member to create an agreeable plan of action.

If your assessment is lower than the reviewer’s, you cannot change a unit’s post-tenure review assessment to a lower assessment. However, the dean can provide their own assessment at a lower rating in the dean’s memo. Section 306.04 reads: “If the dean agrees with a Does Not Meet Expectations assessment of an aspect of the faculty member's file, or if the dean disagrees with a reviewer(s) positive assessment and wishes to revise to a lower assessment of an aspect of the faculty member’s file, the dean shall file the report for future reference and administrative access.” You would also be expected, per Section 306.05(c), to notify and meet with the reviewer and the faculty member to develop a mutually agreeable improvement plan. If agreement cannot be reached, the matter must be elevated to my office, and the Provost shall determine the next steps. This is an important component of the post tenure review process, because as you know some colleagues have worried about the hypothetical case in which a dean’s negative review could by itself lead to a case for termination – this by itself is not the case because the process of 306.05(c) would first manage the situation and the Office of the Provost would determine next steps.

Please also note that per Section 306.05, the faculty member who received a “Does Not Meet Expectations” rating in a given area is to work with their chair or dean to develop an improvement plan to enable the faculty member to achieve a “Meets Expectations” rating (or higher) in that area no later than by the next evaluation. According to 306.05(a), this would address the area of concern. Therefore, a new “Does Not Meet Expectations” in a different area in a subsequent evaluation would be addressed as a new, separate matter.

Post tenure review improvement plans

The language of 306.05 underscores that post tenure review is to be a formative process to support the faculty member on a path for improvement. Section 306.05(a) requires a plan, timeline, and resources to support the faculty member. You may, furthermore, require more frequent reviews (every year, every month, etc.) to follow the three-year review so that the faculty member is better prepared for the next three-year review.

Improvement plans will vary depending on the area of concern and the needs of the faculty member. I offer this list as demonstrative of what a developmental approach might look like (to be contrasted with the concerns expressed by some faculty that post-tenure review is intended to be punitive). These examples are meant to be illustrative, and not exhaustive.

- For deficiencies in teaching or advising, you may suggest (for example) specific workshops offered by the CTA, Office of the Pedagogy of Hope, IDD, or other pedagogical resources. You may suggest different teaching assignments that better leverage the faculty member's skills. You may assign a mentor from the department or another department, with specific instructions for areas of improvement that are needed. You may assign a more equitable teaching or advising workload.
- For deficiencies in academic citizenship and service, the possibilities are too many to enumerate. Examples include: If the faculty member has been disengaged, you may ask the faculty member to assume more significant roles (committees, administrative assignments, etc.). If the faculty member has exhibited non-collegial behavior with colleagues, you may suggest coaching remediation, such as those offered by Human Resources, the Office of Mission Integration, or the Office of Inclusive Excellence, or you may assign a faculty member as a mentor to the individual.
- For deficiencies in scholarship, you may offer greater research support if they encounter a challenge – the discipline may be changing rapidly and they may ask you for increased time to acquire new skills. Alternatively, they may be in the midst of a particularly ambitious project, and they will want to apprise you of this so that future evaluations are not viewed negatively in light of an absence of a result – indeed, we need to encourage colleagues to undertake ambitious work! For other colleagues' career trajectory, their scholarly activities may be less of interest for them and your conversations may reveal that it is better for the individual to contribute to the University in other ways (e.g., more service, teaching, or advising, less research, etc.). Tenured faculty have some flexibility, given that they generally have fewer assigned credits (18 cr/year) compared to lecturers and senior lecturers (24 cr/year) to make room for scholarship.
- As a reminder, the purpose of post tenure review is not to be punitive, but rather to be developmental and formative by ensuring clarity and equity of workload.

All of these examples are only intended to be illustrative. You may identify other improvement plans. In all cases, however, the dean's focus is to work constructively with the faculty member and institute an accountable plan for improvement.

As a reminder, Section 306 allows the chair and dean to assign improvement plans to individual faculty who do not meet expectations. Such assignments fall under the categories of duties that may be assigned to faculty members under Section 300.05(a)(5).

Recommendation for termination

As noted in Section 306.06, if the faculty member receives two successive three-reviews indicating “Does Not Meet Expectations” for the same area of concern, the dean may in certain cases recommend termination from the University. However, a few caveats apply:

- Even with two successive negative reviews, the dean may pursue alternative remediative steps to assist the faculty member. These additional steps should be given a timeline for improvement, being reviewed monthly, annually or at the next three-year review or other timeline as articulated by the dean.
- Per Section 306.06 (b) and (c), the Provost will receive such a recommendation and separately invite a response from the faculty member. It may be that the Provost will, instead of termination, suggest additional remediative steps to be undertaken by the faculty member and a timeline for accountable improvement.
- The two consecutive not satisfactory three-year reviews must be in the same area (or potentially more than one area). Consecutive “Does Not Meet Expectations” evaluations in different areas cannot be used to trigger termination for cause. Per 306.05, the faculty member who received a “Does Not Meet Expectations” rating in a given area is to work with their chair or dean to develop an improvement plan to enable the faculty member to achieve a “Meets Expectations” rating (or higher) in that area no later than by the next evaluation. According to 306.05(a), this would address the area of concern. Therefore, a new “Does Not Meet Expectations” in a different area in a subsequent evaluation would be addressed as a new matter.
- While the post-tenure review is to be conducted in all four areas (teaching, scholarly/creative work, advising, academic citizenship and professional service), only the subset of faculty responsibilities found in Section 300.05 may potentially lead to a cause for termination (failure to perform duties) per the language found in Section 310.02(b). As noted previously, deficiencies in scholarship are to be addressed by supportive steps or by redirection of workload.

If a recommendation for termination is made, this becomes an allegation of “Failure to Perform Duties” as outlined in Section 310.02(b). Such determinations can come only after the process of Section 306 is followed. Other allegations, such as Misconduct (Section 310.02(a)) may come at any time in response to a particular act on the part of the faculty member. In all cases, the faculty member is afforded the opportunity to have their situation reviewed by a group of their peers, the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, as outlined in Section 310.

Cycle of review

As noted in Section 306.03(a), “the evaluation of tenured faculty will occur at three-year intervals, beginning in the third year of an individual holding tenure.” This means that if an individual’s first day of tenure is August 16, 2024 (having been notified of this by a letter from the University President in a prior academic year), then the three-year review should first occur during the 2026-2027 academic year. Per Section 306.03(b), an individual who concludes service as an administrator in May 2024 will first undergo a three-year review during the 2026-2027 academic year. Per 306.03(b), an individual who begins the rank of Professor on August 16, 2024 will first undergo a three-year review during the 2026-2027 academic year. There are no exceptions or delays made for sabbaticals, though a leave of absence from the University will extend the three-year clock. If the three-year review is to be scheduled in the same year as an individual’s sabbatical, the individual should submit the relevant materials for review prior to or following the sabbatical so as to meet the February 1 deadline noted in Section 306.04(j). ITS is currently assisting us in developing a tool for submission of these reports, and we should have more information soon.