

Information on Transition to New Faculty Performance Review URPs and Procedures 2017-18

Beginning in Spring 2014, a Faculty Performance Review Task Force composed of faculty from all colleges as well as four representatives of the Faculty Senate began the process of examining all faculty review processes at TWU. The committee recommended new policies, now called University Regulations and Procedures (URPs), for periodic performance review, promotion and tenure, and post-tenure. The process included numerous opportunities for faculty input through written surveys and focus groups as well as review and comment by the Faculty Senate, Council of Chairs, and the Academic Council. The URPs received final approval in October 2017 and are now available on the faculty performance review website found at: <https://twu.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-performance-review/> .

This document provides information on the following topics for the transition in implementing the new URPs:

1. University Regulations and Procedures (URPs)
2. Calendars
3. Workflow, Electronic Forms, and Procedures
4. Academic Component (AC) Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Criteria
5. AC Peer Review Committee (PRC) Criteria
6. Teaching Observations—AC Administrator & Peer
7. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Faculty Performance Review website with all materials related to performance review in one location is now available at: <https://twu.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-performance-review/> .

University Regulations and Procedures (URPs)

The work of the task force resulted in creation of three URPs available on the website:

- Faculty Periodic Performance Review (PPR)
- Faculty Promotion and Tenure (P&T)
- Faculty Post-tenure Review

Calendars

As in the past, the University has established calendars for the periodic performance review, promotion and tenure, and post-tenure review processes—also found on the website. There are no changes in the P&T calendar. You will notice that the calendars for periodic performance review and post-tenure review includes dates very similar to the previous calendar with one exception. An outcome of the task force's work was defining the performance review year to be the prior academic year. In addition, TWU has established the timeline for merit pay decisions to be late spring or early summer each year. Therefore, the PPR and Post-tenure calendar is shifted forward by one month. For example, a faculty member being reviewed in 2017-18 will report on performance in the 2016-17 academic year. His/her materials will be due to the academic component (AC) peer review committee (PRC) on January 20, 2018. The faculty member will have the full fall semester to prepare the self-review. All steps in the review process will be complete by April 2, 2018 in time for merit compensation decisions.

Workflow, Electronic Forms, and Procedures

The TWU Office of Technology developed an electronic workflow which supports the operation of the three faculty performance review processes outlined in the URPs. Access to the system is available on the website. Here is a brief description of the workflow:

- When a faculty member initiates a faculty review process, he/she will log in and use this system to submit the appropriate materials.
- In some situations, the faculty member creates input on an electronic form in the workflow; an example is the self-reflection narrative.
- Some materials are automatically attached to the workflow, for example, quantitative student course evaluation information. In addition, a faculty member may elect to have the qualitative student course evaluation information attached to his/her file in the workflow.
- Artifacts may be uploaded into the system. Examples include documents, videos, or photos that illustrate teaching excellence, scholarly outputs, etc.
- Once the faculty member finalizes and submits his/her review, the first level reviewer (AC PRC or AC administrator, whichever is applicable) will be notified that materials are available within the electronic workflow.
- When that review is complete, the reviewer (AC PRC chair or AC administrator) will document the outcome within the workflow.
- The workflow will notify the next level reviewer that materials for this faculty member are available.
- At each step in the review, the faculty member will be notified of the results.
- The procedure is repeated for any remaining reviews within the performance review process.

Written documentation of the PPR procedures associated with the electronic workflow are available on the website. The new workflow will be used for PPR and Post-tenure reviews conducted in 2017-18. It is expected that the workflow and procedures for promotion and tenure will be available for training and subsequent use in Spring 2018. The workflow will be used for the 2018-2019 P&T application process (which begins in April 2018).

Academic Component (AC) Promotion and Tenure (P&T) criteria

At the heart of the TWU faculty performance evaluation process is the combination of University and AC performance criteria. As part of the work of the faculty performance review task force, a multitude of feedback was gathered from TWU academic personnel – faculty, AC administrators, and deans. One request heard and recommended by the task force was to create better alignment between the annual review process and the promotion and tenure process. The task force made some revisions to the TWU criteria, and then ACs were asked to provide AC-specific criteria in Fall 2016. In Spring 2017, the proposed AC criteria were reviewed by members of two faculty committees – the University Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Faculty Evaluation and Development Committee. In addition, the task force co-chairs provided comments and questions. This combined feedback will be returned to each AC and the corresponding college dean by September 1. The final proposed criteria will need to be submitted by each AC to the college dean by Friday, November 17. The Deans will need to provide their recommendations to the task force co-chairs by Friday, January 19, 2018. The two faculty committees will be asked to complete their final review by Monday, March 19, 2018. At that time, the Provost will review the proposed criteria for acceptance or modification. This review is expected to be completed by April 27, 2018.

Because the revised criteria will not be approved until late Spring of the 2017-18 academic year, faculty members who are engaged in any type of performance review (PPR, P&T, Post-tenure) during 2017-18 will use the current University and AC criteria. For reviews during 2018-19, faculty may choose to use the current or new criteria. Beginning with reviews in 2019-2020, the new criteria will be used for all PPR and Post-tenure reviews. Faculty applying for promotion and tenure in 2019-20 may choose to use the current or new criteria.

As allowed in 2016-17 and 2017-18, a faculty member applying for promotion and/or tenure in 2018-19 may elect to limit the narrative for a P&T application to 15 pages.

AC Peer Review Committee (PRC) Criteria

Another factor in the faculty review process that was addressed by the task force is the role of the PRC. Prior to the new URP, PRC participation ranged from 1-3 times in a faculty member's career (promotion and/or tenure only) to participation in the annual review each year as well as promotion and/or tenure. Based on a variety of input, it was determined that the AC PRC should provide feedback to faculty about every 3 years. The exact schedule is contained in the URP for PPRs, and the PRC will be a reviewer in every application for promotion or tenure.

In connection with the above change, it was also determined that there would be minimum university requirements for the composition and operation of each AC PRC with some flexibility for each AC to determine selected factors related to its PRC. ACs submitted proposed PRC criteria around December 2016. Similar to the feedback for the AC P&T criteria discussed above, each AC will receive specific comments or questions related to its proposed PRC criteria by September 1. Revision and resubmission will follow the same timeline as outlined for the AC P&T criteria.

Teaching Observations—AC Administrator & Peer

Another source of frequent input during the task force work was that student course evaluations have played a disproportionate role in the evaluation of faculty teaching performance at TWU. In response to that input, the task force recommended and the URPs prescribe that the assessment of teaching will include at least 4 sources: student course evaluations, peer observations of teaching, AC administrator assessment of teaching (including observations), and the faculty member's self-assessment.

Teaching Observations will be conducted by peers and AC Administrators. The documents generated by this process will be uploaded by the faculty member into the Performance Review workflow discussed in an earlier section of this memo. Please note – each AC administrator and peer reviewer must complete the prescribed training provided by the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) prior to conducting any teaching observations that will be a part of a faculty review.

The procedures for Peer Observers are nearly identical to those for the AC Administrators. The key difference is that peer observers will be selected from the roster of faculty who have completed the CFE peer observation training. Observers may be from any discipline, but must be of the same or higher rank as the faculty member being observed and must teach in the format of the course being observed (F2F or online). All faculty are encouraged to be trained as a peer observer as a service to the University and your faculty colleagues.

On a final note, teaching observations are not required for reviews conducted in 2017-18. Observer training will be provided by the CFE on multiple occasions during the fall semester. Teaching

observations for inclusion in 2018-19 reviews may be scheduled in late fall 2017 or spring 2018 as there should be a growing pool of trained observers by that time.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is being reviewed during 2017-18?

A: The following will be reviewed during academic year 2017-18:

- Any faculty member in the first 6 years of employment (PPR).
- Faculty applying for promotion and/or tenure (P&T).
- Faculty who have completed more than 6 years at TWU and appear on the list of faculty to be reviewed during 2017-18 (PPR or Post-tenure). Your AC administrator will provide the year of your next review.

Q: How many years of performance should be included in post-tenure reviews?

A: At this time, faculty undergoing post-tenure review should include the years since tenure or the years since the last post-tenure review, whichever is shorter. In Texas, post-tenure review is required at least every 6 years. Under TWU's revised system, eventually each tenured faculty member will undergo post-tenure review every three years and will include three years of performance in their post-tenure reviews.

Q: How many years of performance should be included in periodic performance reviews?

A: As we transition into the periodic performance reviews on a staggered schedule, faculty members should include all years since the last performance review unless undergoing post-tenure review as described above.

Q: How will annual merit compensation be determined in years when faculty are not scheduled for a periodic performance review?

A: A plan for merit compensation documentation for those not scheduled for a periodic performance review will be announced well in advance of the next merit compensation awards.

Q: If an AC has proposed criteria that would be favorable to a group of faculty applying for promotion, would it be possible to use those criteria sooner than 2018-19?

A: During reviews carried out in 2017-18, the current criteria must be used. Under the new criteria, clinical faculty may be promoted to Clinical Professor without a terminal degree if that option is specified by the AC criteria. ACs may utilize this one provision for promotion decisions in 2017-18. For 2018-19 and 2019-20, faculty members may choose to use current or new criteria.

Q: What rating scales will be used for 2017-18 periodic performance reviews?

A: Because of dissatisfaction and confusion around the current rating scale (Outstanding, Excellent, Meets Minimum Standards, and Does Not Meet Minimum Standards), periodic performance reviews will utilize the new rating scale for reviews conducted in 2017-18. Therefore, one of the following ratings will be assigned for the faculty member's performance in each of the three domains--Teaching, Scholarship, and Service--as well as for the Overall Performance:

- *Exceptional Performance* – The performance of the faculty member has met the criteria associated with a rating of *effective performance*, plus has resulted in significant or extraordinary outcome(s).
- *Effective Performance* – The performance of the faculty member has consistently and comprehensively produced the expected, desired results identified in the TWU and AC criteria.

- *Performance Needs Improvement* – The performance of the faculty member has inconsistently produced the expected results as identified in the TWU and AC criteria, and the performance needs specified improvements to reach *effective performance*. To facilitate the specific improvements, the AC administrator and faculty member will develop an informal plan to address the areas in need of improvement.
- *Ineffective Performance* – The performance of the faculty member has not produced the expected, desired results as identified by the TWU and AC criteria. Significant improvements in performance are needed, and a professional development plan must be developed collaboratively and immediately as described in the PPR URP.