

Key Considerations: Continuing Status Review in the Teaching Stream

It is important for Chairs/Deans to be aware that under the recent changes to the *Policy and Procedures on Academic Appointments* (PPAA) approved in 2015 as part of the SJAC process, changes have occurred relative to the continuing status review which are summarized below. You should refer carefully to the wording of the Policy in undertaking these reviews.

Timing

- The continuing status review normally occurs in the “sixth” year (academic year July–June) of a faculty member’s appointment. Review the file carefully to confirm the correct date for review as set out in the appointment letter or as adjusted in cases of approved delays.
- The candidate, with appropriate assistance and advice from the division or department head, will prepare a dossier in accordance with Divisional Guidelines for the assessment of teaching for submission to the continuing status committee **by June 30th** of the “fifth” year.
- The continuing status review, including final review of the dossier by the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life, should be completed and the candidate notified by **December 31st**.
- An unsuccessful candidate will be provided with employment to **December 31** of the following year for a total of twelve (12) months terminal contract employment in connection with the termination of contract.

Criteria

The criteria for Continuing Status are specified in the PPAA, 2015 (Part VII, section 30, x):

- “A positive recommendation for continuing status will require the judgment of excellence in teaching and evidence of demonstrated and continuing future pedagogical/professional development.
 - a. Excellence in teaching may be demonstrated through a combination of excellent teaching skills, creative educational leadership and/or achievement, and innovative teaching initiatives in accordance with appropriate divisional guidelines.
 - b. Evidence of demonstrated and continuing future pedagogical/professional development may be demonstrated in a variety of ways e.g. discipline-based scholarship in relation to, or relevant to, the field in which the faculty member teaches; participation at, and contributions to, academic conferences where sessions on pedagogical research and technique are prominent; teaching-related activity by the faculty member outside of his or her classroom functions and responsibilities; professional work that allows the faculty member to maintain a mastery of his or her subject area in accordance with appropriate divisional guidelines.”

Composition of the Continuing Status Committee

As laid out in the PPAA, 2015 (Part VII, section 30, x):

- “The candidate’s performance will be assessed by a continuing status committee of faculty members struck for this purpose by the chair or division head; the committee will contain at least one teaching stream member with continuing status from the department or a cognate area, the chair or representative of any academic unit (including graduate department), as appropriate, to which the candidate is cross-appointed, and a decanal representative or (in the case of a single-departmental faculty) a provostial representative.”
- “The chair shall formally notify the candidate as to the individuals whom he or she intends to ask to serve on the continuing status committee. If the candidate has reason to believe that any member of the committee cannot make his or her decision solely on the basis of the evidence available at the time of the continuing status committee meeting, he or she should indicate this to the division head or the appropriate Vice-Provost.”
- “The division head or chair shall then formally notify the candidate of the final composition of the continuing status committee and when the process of review, including assembling of documentation, is about to begin and when it will be completed.”

Components of the Dossier

1. Written Assessments

As laid out in the PPAA, 2015 (Part VII, section 30, x):

- “Written specialist assessments of the candidate's teaching and pedagogical/professional activities should also be obtained from outside the University.”
- “...the candidate should be invited to nominate several external referees, and the division head or chair should solicit letters of reference from at least one of them and from one or more additional specialists chosen by himself or herself.”
- “These referees should be invited to assess the candidate’s work against the divisional guidelines for assessment of teaching and the PPAA criteria and advise whether or not the candidate’s work demonstrates the achievement of excellence in teaching and evidence of demonstrated and continuing future pedagogical/professional development.”

2. Summary of Evidence

As laid out in the PPAA, 2015 (Part VII, section 30, x):

- “The division head or chair shall prepare and provide a written summary of the content of the external assessments and other evaluations, without identifying their source, to the candidate at the time of submission of the dossier to the continuing status committee normally at least one week prior to the first meeting of the committee.”

- “It is important that the summary be sufficiently detailed that the candidate knows the evidence before the committee and could, if desired, supplement the dossier with a written response, or by appearing before the committee to make a statement. The summary should include extracts of any significant information from all letters and reports while maintaining confidentiality. Please ensure that this is part of the dossier submitted to the Provost’s Office.”

3. Statement of Reasons

- In the case of a positive recommendation, the committee shall prepare and adopt a statement of reasons for its recommendation for communication by the Chair to the head of the division or the Vice-Provost in the case of a single-department division. See PPAA, 2015 (Part VII, section 30, x) for details.
- If the committee reaches a tentative negative decision:
 - “reasons for a proposed negative recommendation shall be given to the candidate who shall have an opportunity to respond to them, either orally or in writing, within **fifteen days of notification.**”
 - Following the fifteen day notification period, the committee must reconvene to make a final decision. In the case of a final negative recommendation, the committee “shall prepare and adopt a final statement of the reasons and a summary of the evidence. The summary of evidence should be prepared in sufficient detail to enable the candidate to make a particular response to all of the significant components if he or she appeals.”