

September 27, 2013

To: The SUNY New Paltz Faculty

From: The 2012-13 Central Committee on Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (RTP)

Subject: 2012-13 RTP Annual Report

I. Report on the Vote

Total Number of Dossiers Reviewed: 54

<u>Final Decisions of Provost and President</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Reappointment	28	0
Continuing Appointment	20	0
Promotion to Associate or Full Professor	24	0

Analysis:

Divergence in recommendations was greater than in recent years and a cause for concern for the RTP Committee. In four cases, the RTP Committee diverged from the vote it received from a dean; in five cases, the provost and president diverged from the recommendation of the RTP Committee. In some cases, the divergence concerned the number of years of a reappointment, and in other cases, whether to reappoint or promote.

II. Concerns that the RTP Committee shared with Provost Mauceri

The 2012-13 RTP Committee submitted a memo to Provost Mauceri on May 22, 2013, with the following concerns that the Committee wishes to share with the faculty.

- A. The RTP Committee strongly believes that in cases of promotion to full professor, it is essential to preserve scholarly/creative excellence as a key criterion. The Committee believes that significant accomplishment in scholarship and/or creative work provides an important model for our students and that it provides the basis for advancing teaching and learning. The RTP Committee wants the faculty to know that it is unanimous in its belief in the importance of maintaining scholarly/creative excellence as a criterion for promotion to full professor.
- B. When the RTP Committee requests additional materials to be added to the dossier, any response to such a request (whether from dean, chair, or candidate) must be made directly to the Committee (and not to the provost or to any other party). The procedure for requesting additional materials is described in the Guidelines for the Preparation of Dossiers, item "H."

- C. The RTP Committee noted that in a number of instances departments created non-standard sub-committees. Whenever such sub-committees are formed, the provost, appropriate dean, and RTP Committee chair must be notified in writing in advance. For Spring 2013, in some instances this notification did not occur. The policy is set forth in the Structures and Procedures of Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion and Salary Increase, "IV."
- D. The RTP Committee was especially alarmed to discover that in one case, due to personnel changes that occurred in the course of the departmental review of dossiers, letters were written by individuals who identified themselves as being in positions that they no longer held, rather than representing themselves in their actual positions and seeking the proper approval to write the letters in their new capacities. It is essential that letters give a true accounting of any unusual circumstances and that their authors identify themselves appropriately. In the case at hand, one of the letters came from an individual who had written previously to the RTP chair about the situation but had failed to follow up on the matter as the chair had requested in writing.
- E. The RTP Committee was concerned that questions of propriety, not to mention best practice, were raised by some of the letters in the dossiers. One letter openly criticized the department sub-committee vote (which was not in accord with the recommendation of the author of the letter). The author of the letter wrote that the sub-committee vote manifested a "lack of courage" on the part of untenured colleagues. Pointing a finger in this way is unfair to the non-tenured faculty, is unprofessional, and is inappropriate. Another instance of a letter, this time to an external evaluator, that the RTP Committee considered to be improper, contained wording that was inaccurate and appeared to manifest an inappropriate attempt to influence the outcome of the external evaluation. Letters soliciting external evaluations should be uniform in nature, following the "External Evaluations Guidelines." In light of this case, the RTP Committee recommends that copies of the cover letters which chairs and deans send to external evaluators be included in the dossiers and, therefore, that the inclusion of these letters in dossiers be added to the Guidelines for the Preparation of Dossiers.
- F. Several dossiers lacked a section on "Continuing Growth." "Continuing Growth" is one of the Five Criteria of the Board of Trustees that the RTP Committee is charged with judging, and therefore it is important that this criterion be represented clearly in the dossier. Candidates for reappointment, continuing appointment and promotion should be instructed to include a section on "Continuing Growth" in their dossiers.
- G. The RTP Committee discourages letters from sub-committees that lack the

names of sub-committee members and that lack the name of the sub-committee chair. We recommend, further, that all members of sub-committees sign or initial the sub-committee letters.

- H. Some dossiers lacked recent, dated peer evaluations of teaching. We urge candidates to include these evaluations in their dossiers. In addition, all peer evaluations of teaching should be dated.
- I. The RTP Committee strongly urges personnel sub-committees, department chairs, and deans to carefully review dossiers for errors and omissions, so that these may be corrected, to the extent possible, before the dossiers are sent forward to the Central Committee.

Committee Membership (Fall and Spring, unless otherwise specified)

School of Business

Surinder Tikoo

School of Education

Aaron Isabelle

Robin Smith

School of Fine and Performing Arts

Anita Gonzalez

Reva Wolf (Chair)

School of Science and Engineering

Alex Bartholomew (Spring 2013)

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Insu Fenkl (Spring 2013)

Eugene Heath

Lou Roper

Sojourner Truth Library

Valerie Mittenberg