



FACULTY MENTORSHIP GUIDING PROCEDURES

Faculty Mentoring and Service on Peer Review Committees

(A position paper endorsed by the CSUSM Academic Senate and adopted formally as a set of "guiding procedures" as a supplemental document to the University RTP Standards.)

One of the most appealing aspects of a career in academia is the apprenticeship-like model of moving through the ranks from assistant, to associate, to full professor. Mentorship is a crucial element to the functioning of such a model. Tenured faculty members ostensibly achieved their status through making prudent and productive career decisions. Probationary faculty members should be able to benefit from the wisdom, advice, and examples of their tenured colleagues.

Nonetheless, the benefits of mentorship may appear to conflict with the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) policies that limit the scope of consultation that may occur between those under review (probationary faculty) and those conducting the reviews, who are often the tenured colleagues who should be serving as their mentors.

Specifically, the wording in the University RTP policy states: "The committee shall maintain confidentiality of the file, deliberations, and recommendations (CBA 15)."

Some PRC members may believe that the RTP policy, which appropriately protects confidentiality of the file and the process, precludes them for mentoring their colleagues during the review period (which covers a substantial part of the academic year). Such a view may be overly narrow and counterproductive. This document seeks to clarify how PRC members can provide valuable mentorship, while not violating the University RTP Policy or the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

1. During the review period (i.e., once the WPAF has been submitted and until the final outcome of the entire review), PRC members review the file individually and may discuss it among themselves in PRC meetings. They may NOT discuss the file with the candidate or any non-PRC members. If PRC members need clarification or additional information from the candidate, they must request it through the processes dictated by the RTP document.

2. PRC members may not disclose the nature or content of the committee discussions or deliberations during the review period or after.
3. PRC members may not disclose the way in which any PRC member voted on a file to the candidate.
4. PRC members should direct probationary faculty seeking advice regarding the organization and composition of the WPAF, to faculty who are not on the PRC, resources and events available in the Faculty Center, and/or the Office of Faculty Affairs.
5. PRC members may provide mentoring guidance to probationary faculty on the organization and/or contents of a *draft* WPAF, only during times in which the file is not under review, e.g., in the Fall semesters of years one, three, and five, in the period of the academic year before the file is submitted for Periodic Evaluation.

Above all, tenured faculty members are encouraged to provide general insight and advisement to probationary faculty regarding Departmental and College RTP standards and processes. This document affirms the view that those colleagues within one's discipline and department are in the best position to explain department-level RTP standards and advise probationary colleagues on how to interpret their accomplishments within the context of those standards.

In addition, there is a LOT more to mentoring than discussing the specifics of the WPAF. Here is a range of ways in which tenured faculty may mentor probationary colleagues, even while serving on the latter's' PRCs:

Creative and Scholarly Activities

1. PRC members shall not be prohibited from discussing research ideas with their peers. These discussions may happen in a number of venues, formal or informal.
2. PRC members shall not be prohibited from collaborating with review candidates on research/creative activities during the review cycle. PRC members shall not discuss the review process or PRC deliberations with the candidate, in the context of such collaboration.
3. PRC members shall not be prohibited from informally reviewing or discussing the scholarly work the candidate is currently engaged in, provided that it is not included in the file.

4. PRC members shall not be prohibited from offering advice concerning appropriate journal or performance outlets for future scholarly or creative activities.

Teaching and Instruction

1. While they might not comment on the contents of the WPAF, there is nothing in the CBA that prohibits PRC members from mentoring candidates under review in terms of discussing issues of pedagogy, classroom management, or other issues related to learning and instruction.
2. PRC members shall not be prohibited from discussing general pedagogical issues aimed at ensuring student learning with their peers informally, or in formal department meetings.

Service

There are myriad service opportunities on the CSUSM campus, in the local community, and in our disciplines. It is often difficult for newer faculty to decide which opportunities to pursue. While PRC members may not comment on whether they think the level or quality of service detailed in the WPAF, there is nothing in the RTP policy that prohibits faculty members from helping their peers assess the value of future service activities.