

University Rank and Tenure Committee Guidelines
(Submitted by the University Rank and Tenure Committee and
Approved by Provost: March 2023)

- 1. Role of the University Rank and Tenure Committee.** The role of the University Rank and Tenure Committee (“URTC”) as set forth in the University’s Faculty Handbook is to evaluate and make recommendations to the University’s Senior Academic Officer (or the title from time to time of the Chief Academic Officer of the University, who shall be referred to in these Guidelines as the “Senior Academic Officer,”) on individual petitions for tenure and promotion, after the appropriate review by the school or college rank and tenure committee and the dean. The URTC is also responsible for reviewing any proposed changes in tenure and promotion guidelines by individual departments, schools, or colleges. The URTC may also review candidates for Endowed Chairs and Professorships pursuant to the “Guidelines for the Review of Appointments to Endowed Chairs and Professorships Protocol Document.”
- 2. Composition and Election of the University Rank and Tenure Committee.** Per the Faculty Handbook, the URTC is composed of at least ten (10) full-time tenured full professors elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the University’s various schools and colleges. Elections shall be conducted prior to the start of the academic year by the Senior Academic Officer, or his or her designee.
- 3. Term.** The term of membership for members of the URTC shall be for three academic years, with approximately two-thirds of the members continuing each academic year and approximately one-third replaced each academic year.
- 4. Annual Meeting with the Senior Academic Officer.** Typically, the Senior Academic Officer shall convene the URTC on an annual basis during the Fall semester for an initial meeting for the academic year (the “Annual Meeting”). The vice provost responsible for faculty affairs (who shall be referred to in these guidelines as the “Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs”) may also attend and participate in the Annual Meeting; however, if that position is vacant, then the Senior Academic Officer may designate someone else to attend. The Annual Meeting offers the members of the URTC the opportunity to ask questions of the Senior Academic Officer and also the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or other designee (if such person is in attendance).
- 5. URTC Chair.** At or before the Annual Meeting, the Senior Academic Officer shall announce the appointment of one of the elected members of the URTC to serve as Chair of the URTC for the upcoming academic year. The Chair shall have full voting rights in all URTC matters. The Chair shall conduct the meetings of the URTC and discharge the responsibilities of the URTC Chair as set forth in the Faculty Handbook and these Guidelines. The URTC Chair is responsible for communicating with the URTC Liaison (as defined below), assigning primary and secondary presenter(s) for each of the cases and assigning the date on which the cases will be considered.
- 6. URTC Liaison.** The URTC Liaison is designated by the Senior Academic Officer and is responsible for carrying out the responsibilities of the role of the URTC Liaison as set forth in

these Guidelines. The Senior Academic Officer may communicate directly with the URTC or through the URTC Liaison. The URTC Liaison is a resource to the URTC, ensures that the URTC is properly constituted, charged and trained, and supports the URTC in processing cases and in developing and implementing policies and procedures. Deans and departmental chairpersons may contact the URTC Liaison, or his or her designee, to check the status of a case in their school, college, or department, respectively.

7. **URTC Training.** URTC members may receive training on topics such as confidentiality, implicit bias, attendance requirements and recusal.

8. **Quorum.** A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the URTC.

9. **URTC Review Process.**

9.1 The URTC review process begins with the dean of the school/college/institute forwarding his or her own recommendation, along with the recommendation of the school or college Rank and Tenure Committee, and all supporting materials of the candidate, to the URTC for review. For units offering programs through the Graduate School, these materials are also sent to the Dean of the Graduate School, who also forwards his or her recommendation to the URTC. Generally, when the faculty member submits the packet of materials for review, his or her file is closed. However, a faculty member will be allowed to submit evidence of acceptance or publication of a scholarly work after the packet of other materials is submitted for review.

9.2 After reviewing all of the materials and recommendations forwarded to it, the URTC makes a recommendation to the Senior Academic Officer. Generally, the URTC delivers its recommendation(s) to the Senior Academic Officer on or before February 15 of each academic year. However, exceptions to this schedule may be made by the URTC to discern certain issues (e.g., academic integrity or procedural or technical problems) or in the case of expedited cases.

10. **Attendance.**

10.1. Attendance at scheduled URTC meetings is expected and URTC members are to exercise their best efforts to attend. The technology used for participation must allow the URTC members to be full participants in the discussion and confidentiality must be safeguarded.

10.2. If an absence cannot be avoided, URTC members are to provide as much advance notice as possible to the URTC Chair.

10.3. If meeting attendance is expected to be below a quorum, the URTC Chair may reschedule the meeting.

10.4. If a member is unable to meet the attendance expectations, the member may resign or request a leave from the URTC Chair. In such circumstances, in the interests of continuity and to allow for a substitute to be arranged, a leave of absence in semester increments is preferred.

10.5. A member with excessive absences without good cause may be removed from the URTC. In such cases, the URTC Chair may contact the member and discuss the situation and determine whether the absences will continue in a way detrimental to the URTC and/or if the member can meet the attendance expectations going forward. If the matter cannot be resolved, the Senior Academic Officer shall have discretion on whether to remove the member or not.

11. Recusal.

11.1. URTC members shall recuse themselves from consideration of a case if, for personal or professional reasons, the member has an actual or apparent conflict of interest or cannot judge the case in a fair and unbiased manner.

11.2 If a URTC member has participated in the departmental rank and tenure process by serving on the departmental rank and tenure committee, or by attending, speaking, or voting in departmental rank and tenure deliberations on a candidate, the URTC member must recuse himself/herself and may not participate in any way, nor be present at the URTC deliberations on that candidate.

11.3. Even if not in the same department, recusal shall be required if a member of the URTC participated in consideration of the candidate's tenure and appointment/promotion case at a level before the URTC.

11.4. Any URTC member may move that the URTC consider whether a member should be recused from a particular case, prior to the URTC's discussion of the case. Whether or not the member is recused shall be decided by a majority vote of the URTC members present (other than the URTC member whose recusal is an issue). Members who are recused from the URTC's deliberations for any reason are not replaced.

12. Role of the Primary and Secondary Presenter. The URTC Chair shall assign, from among the membership of the URTC, a primary presenter and at least one secondary presenter to each case. The primary presenter prepares a report that focuses on the candidate's strengths and weaknesses and offers a balanced assessment of the candidate's dossier. The secondary presenter(s) reviews the case in sufficient detail to help the primary presenter offer the assessment and answer questions from URTC members. The primary presenter's report may be read aloud to the URTC during the deliberation meeting.

13. Expedited Tenure Cases. Generally, the URTC Liaison, or his or her designee, shall notify the URTC when expedited tenure considerations need to be made by the URTC, so that the URTC can be informed of the need for evaluations that may occur during times when the URTC does not normally convene (e.g., during summer months).

14. Voting on Cases.

14.1. URTC members must be present for substantially all of the discussion about a case to vote on that case. Should a question arise as to whether this standard has been met, the issue shall be decided by a majority vote of the URTC members present.

14.2. All voting members who are present when a vote is taken must vote positively or negatively on the matter at hand; abstentions shall not be permitted.

15. Recommendations. In making their recommendations on specific cases, the URTC shall report the vote of the members and will provide a brief summary of the reasons or considerations that were deemed decisive.

16. Confidentiality. All deliberations of the URTC shall be confidential.

17. Procedural or Technical Problems. The URTC Chair shall report to the Senior Academic Officer regarding any significant procedural or technical problems as may come to the URTC's attention with regard to handling of any candidate's case at any lower level of review.

18. Amendment of Guidelines. The URTC may propose amendments to these Guidelines which shall require a two-thirds majority vote of all URTC members. Any amendments to these Guidelines must be submitted to, and approved by, the Senior Academic Officer before they take effect.

19. Relationship to the Faculty Handbook. All University Rank and Tenure Committee Guidelines (including these Guidelines) must conform to the provisions in the Faculty Handbook as it may be amended from time to time. In case of conflict, the provisions of the Faculty Handbook shall supersede any such Guidelines.