POLICY ON TENURE

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1. Preamble

“Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.” [except from AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure]

Tenure is a fundamental pillar that supports and protects RIT faculty members’ freedom of inquiry and expression in teaching and scholarship, conferring the right of self-direction for faculty members without concern for the stability of their position.
The RIT tenure policy is designed to encourage and reward excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service and to promote the atmosphere of inquiry and creative expression that is vital to the academic and cultural life of the university. Tenure is earned by demonstrated achievements and ongoing pursuit of advancements in teaching, scholarship, and service, guided by concern for students' personal worth and advancement. Colleagues’ judgment of such achievements is primary, informed by an individual’s Statement of Expectations.

The pursuit of excellence continues beyond the tenure decision. Tenured faculty, department chairs, and other administrators share responsibility to ensure that all faculty continue to grow and develop professionally.

Tenure decisions should be based upon the criteria and documentation outlined in the following policy.

2. Conditions of Tenure Appointments

a. Appointment

(1) Contract

Appointment to the RIT faculty shall only be consummated through a written contract approved by the provost. The contract shall clearly state whether the candidate is or is not to be offered a tenure-track appointment, and in the case of tenure-track appointments, in which college tenure shall reside. In the case of a joint appointment the contract shall also clearly state in which college the secondary appointment shall reside.

(2) Statement of Expectations

If an appointment is to a tenure-track position, an initial written Statement of Expectations describing specific criteria for being awarded tenure shall be provided to the faculty member with the written contract provided at the time of hire. This Statement of Expectations shall inform the candidate of published tenure criteria for the university, college, and department, as well as any additional expectations specific to the candidate. The Statement of Expectations is based on an agreement made between the candidate and the dean of the college, with the recommendation from the head of the department into which the candidate is being hired, and with the approval of the provost and the president of the university. The signed Statement of Expectations document ensures that each party understands tenure expectations and clearly states how policy allows these expectations for tenure to evolve. This Statement of Expectations provides a frame of reference for those evaluating each faculty member throughout the tenure review process.

Before the Comprehensive mid-tenure review, the Statement of Expectations may be updated with the mutual consent of the candidate, the dean, and the department head. If
initiated by the candidate, the Statement of Expectations may be updated after the comprehensive mid-tenure review with the mutual consent of the candidate, the dean, and the department head. Revised Statements of Expectation must be signed by the dean, faculty member, and department head. All Statements of Expectations will be governed by university and college criteria.

(3) Records Storage

The initial Statement of Expectations, along with all subsequent Revised Statements of Expectations, shall be kept on file in the office of the dean of the respective college and in accordance with C22.0 Records Management Policy.

b. Tenure Location

(1) A faculty member shall be granted tenure in one of the colleges of the university or in the Golisano Institute for Sustainability.

(2) In the case of a tenured faculty member changing from a single to a joint appointment or of a tenured faculty member who moves from one college to another, the location(s) and status of the faculty member's tenure shall be established by following the provisions of E.21 Policy on Assignment and Transfer of Tenure-Track Faculty.

c. Probationary Period

(1) Length of the Probationary Period

The probationary period before granting of tenure is normally six contract years for a faculty member who has had no teaching experience before appointment to the university faculty. For candidates with no reduction of the probationary period, the tenure consideration and evaluation shall be made in the sixth year. If tenure is granted, it is effective at the start of the following contract year.

(2) Reduction of the Probationary Period

i. For each year of equivalent teaching experience, the probationary period may be reduced by one year, with a maximum reduction of two years, but the minimum probationary period shall be four years, except by action of the provost in very unusual circumstances, or in accordance with the Expedited Tenure Process section of this Policy. Equivalent teaching experience normally shall be full-time teaching at the rank of Instructor or above in a regionally accredited institution of higher learning, or full-time teaching in a non-tenure-track position at RIT.

ii. A reduction in the probationary period may also be given for scholarship in the subject-matter field in which the candidate is expected to teach and conduct scholarship.

iii. The equivalency of previous teaching and/or scholarship shall be evaluated by the department head and dean, and approved by the provost.
Faculty members with equivalency credit may reduce their initial equivalency credit by one year by written notice to the dean. Such notice must be made by the end of the Spring term before their tenure review. Further reductions in equivalency credit may only be granted with the written agreement of the dean. The dean shall notify Human Resources and the office of the provost of any reduction in equivalency credit. (3) Hiring with Tenure

A faculty member may only be hired with tenure under the provisions of Section 4 of this policy, “Expedited Tenure Process.”

(4) Extension of Probationary Period

i. A pre-tenured faculty member who becomes a parent by birth or adoption before January 1 of the academic year preceding tenure consideration is automatically granted a one-year extension to the tenure probationary period. Written notice of birth or adoption must be provided to the chair and dean by January 1 of the academic year of the birth or adoption. The automatic extensions may be waived if the faculty member so desires and so indicates in writing to the dean.

ii. An extension of the tenure probationary period shall be provided to tenure-track faculty who apply for and are granted an approved leave of absence as defined in E.17, E.33.0, and E34.0. The extension of the probationary period shall be for a minimum of one year.

iii. Pre-tenured faculty who wish to focus on research activities and who secure external funding to support those activities (including full salary and benefits) may request temporary assignment to a non-tenure track research faculty position for one year (See E6.0). Tenure-track faculty who are accepted to research faculty positions will be given a leave of absence from their tenure-eligible faculty positions for a maximum of one year. They may also request a one-year tenure-clock extension during that period. Any scholarship completed in this period may be considered towards tenure and promotion should the faculty member return to their tenured or tenure-track position.

iv. In extraordinary cases, tenure-track faculty may request an extension of the probationary period for extenuating circumstances. The written request, detailing the reasons for the extension, shall be submitted to the department head. The request, along with the department head’s written recommendation, will be forwarded to the dean. The dean will forward his or her written recommendation accompanied by the original request and department head’s recommendation to the provost. The provost shall review the request and recommendations and make a determination. The faculty member, department head, and dean will be notified in writing of the extension decision and in the case of a positive decision, the projected tenure review date.
A candidate may request that a previously granted extension be reversed. Such a request must be made in writing to his/her dean by January 1 of the academic year preceding tenure consideration. Once such a reversal is requested in writing, the extension is automatically reversed.

Documentation associated with extensions of the probationary period for a pre-tenured faculty member as described within this section shall be maintained in the dean’s office of that faculty member's college and access to it shall be governed by the university’s policy on "Access to Official Professional Staff Files" (E31.0).

Extensions to the probationary period for a pre-tenured faculty member as described within this section shall not increase the individual faculty member’s expectations for achievement towards tenure.

(5) Advanced Notice of Non-reappointment During the Probationary Period

Except in situations of financial exigency (E22.0) or program discontinuance (E20.0), written notice of non-reappointment to the tenure-track or of intention not to recommend reappointment to the tenure-track shall be given to the affected faculty member by the dean as follows:

(a) Not later than 1 March of the first academic year of service on the tenure track.

(b) Not later than 15 January of the second academic year of service on the tenure track.

(c) After two or more years of tenure-track service, notice of intent not to reappoint to the tenure-track must be given by 30 June of the current contract year; in which case the tenure-track faculty member will be offered a terminal contract for one additional academic year.

d. Criteria for Granting Tenure

The view that teaching is the foremost activity of the RIT faculty is deeply rooted in the university’s traditions. While teaching will continue to be a hallmark of RIT, scholarship is of significant importance, and service is also central to the academic endeavor.

(1) Criteria

Each college shall develop, approve through faculty vote, and publish its own additional specific tenure criteria, as well as acceptable forms of documentation based on the general criteria of this policy. College criteria for tenure and for acceptable forms of documentation shall be no less specific than, and must be consistent with, this policy, and those criteria listed in Policy E.4. The criteria used for granting tenure, including specific qualities sought and achievements shall be defined in each college’s published tenure policies.
The Statement of Expectations provides the framework, or general parameters, for the faculty member’s agreement for hire and initial appointment. The annual Plan of Work (E7.0) includes specific annual goals toward meeting the Statement of Expectations. In the Statement of Expectations, the dean, department chair and a tenure-track faculty member might choose to weight items for subsequent annual Plans of Work. Each year, tenure-track faculty should reflect on the past year’s teaching, scholarship and service. In a written assessment, they should show how those activities met goals in the previous Plan of Work.

(3) Teaching

Teaching, see E4.0: An effective teacher, among other things, communicates special knowledge and expertise with sensitivity towards students’ needs and abilities. This entails selection and use of appropriate instructional methods and materials and providing fair, useful and timely evaluation of the quality of the learner's work.

Evaluation of teaching must include a conscientious effort to obtain and consider information that relates directly to teaching and learning and makes effective classroom performance possible. This includes the review of student and peer evaluations.

(4) Scholarship

Scholarship, see E4.0: Documented, peer-reviewed, and disseminated scholarship forms the foundation of a faculty member’s career activities. Each administrative unit may define specific standards or qualities related to scholarship.

(5) Service

Service, see E4.0: While teaching and scholarship are the fundamental tenure-track faculty responsibilities, service performed by faculty members is also an indispensable part of the university’s daily life. Tenure-track faculty at all ranks are expected to engage in service, though the type and amount of service will vary over a faculty member’s career.

(6) Balance

No faculty member has to be deeply engaged in all of the foregoing activities at any one time. Rather, specific forms of endeavor should be planned and agreed upon to the end that full opportunity is provided for individual and professional development and enhancement.

3. The Tenure Process
The administration of the tenure-granting process shall be under the direction of the provost.

a. Documentation

(1) Content

All tenure recommendations shall be supported by available documentation. This should include the following:

- all agreements relating to the faculty member’s conditions of employment;
- the Statement of Expectations and requirements with respect to tenure;
- annual reviews on record; as well as
- appropriate and reliable documentation related to the faculty member’s teaching performance, academic and professional qualifications, scholarship, and service;
- materials submitted by the candidate for mid-tenure review;
- and such other matters as the faculty and administration of a given college and the provost shall deem appropriate.

All documents provided by the candidate will be available to all reviewers until the tenure decision is made. Review committees and recommending administrators shall use this documentation at the appropriate and necessary points in the tenure process. See Appendix A within this policy for a table describing access to documentation during the tenure process.

(2) File Location

The documentation, as defined above, for each faculty member with a tenure-track appointment shall be maintained in the dean’s office of that faculty member’s college and access to it shall be governed by the university’s policy on "Access to Official Professional Staff Files" (E31.0) as well as the table within Appendix A.

(3) Confidentiality

In order to assure that recommendations are completely candid and accurate, all letters and recommendations for or against the awarding of tenure made by department members, the tenure committee, external reviewers, and administrators shall remain confidential and not accessible to the candidate. See Appendix A of this policy for a table describing access to documentation.

(4) Final Disposition of Documents

At the candidate’s request, the Provost may summarize the content of all letters of review or assessment with the candidate while maintaining the confidentiality of all internal and external evaluators. At the conclusion of the tenure review process, all documentation
shall be kept on file in the office of the dean of the respective college and in accordance
with C22.0 Records Management Policy.

b. Annual and Comprehensive Mid-tenure Reviews

(1) Annual Review

The content and process for annual reviews are given in E7.0. Although tenure-review
committees are not bound by any tenure implication contained in annual reviews, such
reviews made during a candidate’s probationary period are an important measure of a
candidate’s progress toward tenure and must be considered along with all other evidence.
If the college has special areas of competence to be emphasized or if there is any change
in the original Statement of Expectations with respect to tenure, candidates must be
clearly informed of this and they must be consistent with Section 2.a.2 of this policy.

(2) Comprehensive Mid-tenure Review

The purpose of the comprehensive mid-tenure review is to provide preliminary feedback
to the candidate midway through his or her probationary period. The review will cover all
performance in all the areas required for tenure. [These provisions apply only to those
who enter the tenure track in fall 2009 and beyond.]

i. Timing: As part of the tenure process, tenure-track faculty members will undergo
a comprehensive review process during the third year of their six-year
probationary period. Tenure-track faculty who were granted credit towards tenure
will undergo the comprehensive review process during the second year of their
probationary period.

ii. Committee: The review will be conducted by the college tenure committee or by
another equivalent committee established by the college. The exact model for an
equivalent committee must be developed and approved by the college faculty and
dean.

iii. Documentation: Candidates will provide documentation to the committee as
specified in the college’s tenure guidelines.

iv. Schedule: Each college will establish its own dates for receiving documentation
from candidates and for communicating with them. The schedule shall ensure that
input is received by the provost no later than April 1.

v. External Review Letters: Each comprehensive mid-tenure review committee
shall seek a minimum of two external peer reviewers in the candidate’s field of
scholarship. The external reviewers shall evaluate the candidate’s scholarship in
their respective field according to policy and criteria established by the college.

vi. Evaluation: In its review of the faculty documentation, the committee shall
prepare a letter that discusses its analysis of the candidate’s strengths and
weaknesses and states whether current performance would normally lead to a
recommendation for tenure under current guidelines. The dean will forward the
committee’s letter, the candidate’s documentation, the external letters, the
department head’s letter and a separate dean’s recommendation letter to the
provost. After review, the provost’s comments on the candidate’s progress toward tenure will be sent in letter form to the dean. The dean and the candidate’s department chair will discuss the comprehensive mid-tenure review with the candidate.

Like annual reviews, the comprehensive mid-tenure review is a measure of a candidate's progress toward tenure and an opportunity to provide guidance for continued growth. However, a favorable satisfactory review does not imply that tenure will eventually be granted; nor does an unfavorable unsatisfactory review imply that tenure will not be granted.

Disposition of comprehensive mid-tenure review documents: The letters of review or assessment from the department chair, dean, committee, and provost shall be made accessible to the candidate by the dean at the end of the mid-tenure review process. However, all other letters, including those from individual department members (if applicable) and external reviewers shall remain confidential and will not be made accessible to the candidate. The letters of review or assessment from the department chair, dean, committee, and provost from the comprehensive mid-tenure review shall be included in the tenure documentation at the end of the probationary period when the candidate is considered for tenure. See Appendix B of this policy for a table describing access to documentation.

c. Tenure Review and Recommendations

When an Assistant Professor is being evaluated for tenure, s/he must be simultaneously evaluated for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Each college will establish a procedure to ensure that it recommends to the provost either approval or denial of both tenure and promotion. Each college will establish a schedule consistent with university policy to receive materials that support tenure review for tenure-track faculty within the academic unit.

(1) Department

The candidate’s department head assesses the candidate’s performance during the probationary period. In addition, letters from tenured department members that contain comments that can be substantiated and supported with documentation shall be sought. Based upon the documentation, the department chair's written assessment of a candidate's progress toward tenure shall be forwarded with other support materials and documentation to the college tenure committee.

The tenure candidate's department chair shall submit a written recommendation to the dean by 15 September based on the candidate's documentation and university and college tenure criteria.

(2) College Tenure Committee
The committee shall weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the tenure candidate. The committee shall review the candidate based on RIT's and the college's tenure criteria, all support material and documentation, and (where applicable) written letters of review or assessment from the department chair, dean, committee, and provost from the comprehensive mid-tenure review process. The tenure-track candidate shall provide documentation of his/her efforts to fulfill the Statement of Expectations specified at hire or as modified to the college tenure committee by 30 September or earlier if specified in the college tenure guidelines.

i. Membership: When there are candidates for tenure in a college, a committee shall be assembled - six tenured members from the candidate's college and another appointed by the Academic Senate from a list of nominees elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of each college. The group shall hold its initial meeting by 30 September. Each college shall determine its procedure for electing the members, ensuring that at least one member was on the college tenure committee during the immediately preceding year to provide for continuity over time. The Academic Senate shall determine its procedure for appointing the outside member specified above.

Elections for each tenure review committee shall be conducted before 1 June of the prior academic year. Faculty members in colleges that have six departments or academic units shall elect one representative from each unit for the tenure committee. Faculty members in colleges that have more than six departments or academic units shall elect one representative from each of six units to prevent undue weighting of a single unit on the tenure committee. Faculty members in colleges that have fewer than six departments or academic units shall elect representatives from the academic unit(s) in a manner designed to promote broad representation on the tenure committee.

In the case of a college with fewer than eighteen (18) tenured faculty eligible to serve on a tenure committee and with fewer than six departments or academic units, a special tenure review committee shall be formed and hold its initial meeting by 30 September. The special committee shall be comprised of four tenured members of the faculty of the college, two tenured faculty with at least two years experience on tenure committees from other colleges appointed by the Academic Senate from a list of nominees elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of each college, and another faculty member appointed by the Academic Senate from a list of nominees elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of each college. Faculty members in these colleges that have more than four departments or academic units shall elect one representative from each of four units to prevent undue weighting of a single unit on the tenure committee. Faculty members in colleges that have fewer than four departments or academic units shall elect representatives from the academic unit(s) in a manner designed to promote broad representation on the tenure committee. The committee shall review the candidate based on university and college tenure criteria, the candidate's documentation, and the letters of review or assessment from the
department chair, dean, committee, and provost from the comprehensive mid-
tenure review. Colleges with fewer than eighteen (18) tenured faculty shall not
provide representatives to other small college special committees, but those
colleges may choose to nominate tenured faculty to serve as external members on
other college committees if desired.

ii. External Review Letters: The college tenure committee shall seek a minimum of
four external reviewers in the candidate’s field of scholarship who, according to
policy and criteria established by the college, shall evaluate the candidate’s
scholarship.

The committee must include at least two reviewers suggested by the candidate.
The external reviewers shall not have conflicts of interest (C4.0) with the
candidate. In all cases, the reviewers should have fields of study within the
candidate’s expertise.

iii. Evaluation: Recommendation for approval for tenure by the college tenure
committee shall require a minimum 2/3 majority in favor as determined by secret
vote. All members of the committee must vote; there shall be no abstentions or
avoidances of voting by absence. Recommendation for approval or non-approval
of tenure, a written statement of reasons for approval or non-approval, and the
vote shall be forwarded by the chair of the tenure committee to the dean of the
college and to the Provost by 30 January.

iv. Joint Appointments: In the case of a joint academic appointment that crosses two
colleges, a joint tenure review committee shall be formed and hold its initial
meeting by 30 September. The joint committee shall be comprised of four tenured
members of the faculty of the college in which the candidate’s primary
appointment resides (and in which tenure will reside, if granted), two members
from the college in which the candidate’s secondary appointment resides, and
another appointed by the Academic Senate from a list of nominees elected by the
tenured and tenure-track faculty of each college. The committee shall review the
candidate based on RIT’s and the tenure criteria of the primary college, the
candidate's documentation, and the letters of review or assessment from the
department chair, dean, committee, and provost from the comprehensive mid-
tenure review

(3) Dean of the College

i. Shortly after the membership of the college tenure committee is determined by the
above process, the dean shall announce to the college the names of the committee
members. (The records of the election process shall be kept on file in the dean's
office until 15 November and be placed at the disposal of those who wish to
examine the process.)
The dean will also call the committee to its initial organizational meeting. This meeting shall be called prior to 30 September. During that meeting, the dean shall:

a. Announce to the committee the names of the candidates for tenure
b. Provide the documentation, the written recommendation of the departmental chair and the letters of review or assessment from the department chair, dean, committee, and provost from the comprehensive mid-tenure review
c. Instruct the committee to elect a chair from the faculty elected in 3.c.2 above. The dean shall depart before the election of the chair

The dean of the college shall prepare a tenure recommendation, separate from that of the college tenure committee recommendation. The dean shall write a recommendation, based upon university and college policy and criteria, an assessment of the candidate documentation, the tenure committee's analysis and the opinions of the external evaluators consulted during the external review. That document shall be forwarded with the committee’s letter, the department head’s letter, and the candidate's documentation to the provost by 8 February.

(4) The Provost

i. The provost shall review the candidate’s documentation, the recommendations of the college tenure committee, departmental chair, and dean and form a tenure recommendation. The provost may call upon the candidate, the departmental chair, the college tenure committee, and/or the dean for clarification or additional information and may meet with any of them to reconcile opposing views.

ii. University Tenure Review Committee: If a college tenure committee and dean are in dispute over a candidate’s viability, and/or the provost disagrees with the conclusion reached by the dean as representative of the college regarding the candidate’s viability, the provost may convene a meeting of the chairs of all the college tenure committees. That group shall review all the available documentation and advise the provost toward a final decision, guided by the specific tenure criteria outlined by the candidate’s college. The group shall relate its findings in writing to the provost.

iii. When satisfied on all points, the provost shall make an official recommendation to the president that includes all prior recommendations received.

(5) The President

The president shall make the final decision to grant or deny tenure.

d. Granting or Denial of Tenure
The granting or denial of tenure shall be in the form of a written communication from the provost to the candidate no later than 15 April. In the case of denial, the letter shall set forth the specific reasons and the details of the college tenure committee vote.

If granted, tenure becomes effective on the first day of the following contract year; if tenure is denied, the candidate shall have the option of a one-year contract for the following academic year.

If a candidate wishes to appeal a tenure denial, the Institute Faculty Grievance Procedures are available to the extent provided in E24.0. Such appeal shall be limited to the question of whether the policies and procedures set forth in this tenure policy have been followed in the candidate's case.

4. Expedited Tenure Review

a. Purpose

An expedited tenure review may be requested in the infrequent case where the university, as part of a faculty search process, wishes to hire a faculty member with tenure (see E4.0.1 and E8.0).

b. Review Process

The request for an expedited tenure review shall be initiated by the person who would become the candidate’s immediate administrative supervisor, and the request for review must be approved by either the provost or the president. Upon approval, the provost or the president will ask the dean of the college in which the tenure will reside to have the college’s tenure committee evaluate the candidate for tenure in an accelerated timeframe.

If one or more members of the college’s tenure committee are not available during this accelerated timeframe, each such member can be substituted by an alternate elected by the faculty of the college. Each college shall ensure that a full tenure committee can be assembled as needed for the purpose of this expedited tenure review.

This expedited process is normally implemented in the case where the candidate currently holds tenure at an accredited institution of higher education. In these instances, the dean will provide the tenure committee with all the application materials collected by the search committee, including at a minimum the candidate’s CV, publications, and reference letters. Teaching evaluations may be requested by the committee. Within two weeks of the receipt of the complete application materials, the tenure committee shall evaluate the candidate and provide the dean with an unequivocal recommendation on tenure for the candidate. The dean will forward the tenure committee’s evaluation and recommendation to the provost. Based on the tenure committee’s recommendation, the president shall make the final decision in granting tenure.
In rare and unusual cases where the candidate does not currently hold tenure at an accredited institute of higher education, the dean will provide the tenure committee with all the application materials collected by the search committee, as well as additional material provided by the candidate that is viewed by the tenure committee as necessary and consistent with the college’s tenure policy. Within four weeks of the receipt of the complete application materials, the tenure committee shall evaluate the candidate and provide the dean with an unequivocal recommendation on tenure for the candidate. The dean will forward the tenure committee’s evaluation and recommendation to the provost. Based on the tenure committee’s recommendation, the president shall make the final decision in granting tenure.

5. Addendum for Implementation of Tenure Policy

a. Faculty hired prior to May, 2009 shall be evaluated for tenure according to the E5.0 policy in effect on the date of hire.

b. Faculty granted tenure in two colleges under former tenure policy may retain it.

c. During the implementation of this tenure policy, the provost may call on the Academic Senate chair to convene those elected as outside tenure committee representatives (see 3.c.3a) to review and comment on individual college tenure criteria and procedures.

Approved September 23, 1963
Last Revised October 2009

Last revised May 2010
### APPENDIX A: Access to Documentation for Tenure Review

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### APPENDIX B: Access to Documentation for Comprehensive Mid-tenure Review

| Access of each party: | 
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Documentation | Candidate | Department Tenured Faculty (if applicable) | Department Head | Tenure Committee (or equivalent) | Dean | Provost |
| Candidate’s Portfolio | - | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Department Faculty Peer Recommendations (if required) | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Department Head Recommendation | Yes | No | - | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Tenure Committee (or equivalent) Recommendation | Yes | No | Yes | - | Yes | Yes |
| External Review Letters | No | **No** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Dean Recommendation | Yes | No | Yes | No | - | Yes |
| Provost Evaluation | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | - |