

MAPP Section 410: Formal Appraisal of Assistant Professor – Academic Senate Titles

Formal appraisals of an Assistant Professor shall normally be made during the fourth year of service in that title, or in combination with other titles counted under the Eight Year Rule, as defined in APM 133-0a and APM 133-0b. Formal Appraisal is conducted normally “in order to arrive at preliminary assessments of the prospects of candidates for eventual promotion to tenure rank as well as to identify appointees whose records of performance and achievement are below the level of excellence desired for continued membership in the faculty” ([APM 220-83](#)).

The School conducts the formal appraisal and assesses the complete record-to-date (including work in progress). The assessment is a careful, considered analytical evaluation of the appointee’s performance in the areas of teaching, research and creative work, professional competence and activity, and university and public service. The assessment also makes a candid prediction concerning the probability or improbability of a favorable promotion decision based upon the evidence. External letters may be obtained but are not required if there is sufficient expertise in the School to make the assessment. The appraisal must be specific, identifying areas of deficiency (if any) and include recommended actions to be taken by the individual and/or the dean.

Formal appraisal reviews may also include a recommendation for reappointment or for a merit increase. If this is the case, the reappointment/merit recommendation must be separate from the mid-career appraisal, with separate letters and separate faculty votes for each.

Because the mid-career formal appraisal is directed primarily to the candidate, it is in the best interest of the candidate and the School that the appraisal be careful, cautious, and candid, addressing problems where they exist while there is still time for adjustment and improvement. It is important that the faculty member is made thoroughly aware, in a formal way, of his or her situation in regard to eventual promotion.

411. GENERAL ROLES, PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

411-1. Academic Personnel Chair (APC)

a. Consulting with eligible candidate

Prior to a formal appraisal the APC Chair or Dean must inform the candidate of the appraisal process and the criteria for continued candidacy as set forth in [APM 210-1-d](#) and [APM 220](#). This step would reasonably include a discussion of the relative value given to books versus journal articles, etc., the importance of research vis-à-vis teaching or University service, and the relative merits of long- and short-term research goals.

The structure of the review process, including the responsibilities of various reviewing agencies, should also be explained fully. The candidate should be told that a formal appraisal can not result in a promise of eventual tenure. A final decision for a positive review and Continued Candidacy, based as it is on an early sample of the record an Assistant Professor will present when later considered for tenure, is only a tentative prognosis. Promotion to tenure rank will require greater accomplishment in all review areas and receives a more extensive review that includes solicitation of extramural letters as well as the convening of an ad hoc review committee.

Prior to the faculty discussion, provide an opportunity for the eligible candidate to review and comment on the complete case file. In all formal appraisal reviews the candidate will receive the appropriate reports from the School's review, as well as redacted copies of any additional reviewing agency reports. These redacted copies will be supplied by the Academic Personnel Office. ([APM 160-20-b](#))

Subsequent to the faculty discussion, advise the eligible candidate of his/her right to provide comment.

Complete the Procedural Safeguard Statement with the candidate.

b. Developing the case file

External letters may be obtained but are not required if there is sufficient expertise in the School to make the assessment. Should extramural letters be required for the appraisal action, refer to the section titled [Solicitation letters to extramural reviewers](#) to provide instructions pertaining to language and other requirements for letters of evaluation including model formats and other guidelines.

Letters soliciting extramural evaluations should contain the following:

- An explanation of the proposed action
- A request for analytical review of the candidate's performance under the applicable criteria and comparison with other scholars in the field at similar rank;
- The University's confidentiality statement.

c. Case Analyses for Formal Appraisal and Merit/Reappointment Recommendation, consultation with faculty, and the Transmittal letter

In the event that a formal appraisal coincides with a merit and/or reappointment, two separate Case Analyses need to be written and presented to the faculty for vote. One analysis will address the Formal Appraisal of the candidate and the second will address the Merit/Reappointment recommendation.

1). Case Analysis for the Formal Appraisal

The analysis will assess the candidate's trajectory of his/her career, including work in progress and prospects for promotion. The assessment is a careful, considered analytical evaluation of the candidate's performance in the areas of teaching, research and creative work, professional competence and activity, and university and public service. The assessment also makes a candid prediction concerning the probability or improbability of a favorable promotion decision based upon the evidence. The appraisal must be specific, identifying areas of deficiency (if any) and include recommended actions to be taken by the individual and/or the dean.

2). Case Analysis for Merit/Reappointment

The analysis should be a complete professional evaluation of the eligible candidate's work with respect to the proposed rank since his/her last review. It should be accurate and analytical, including both supportive and contrary evidence. The Case Analysis should strive for balance, yet be succinct. Extended quotations from supporting documents (e.g. extramural letters) and rhetorical statements are to be avoided.

Refer to [MAPP 400 Section 405](#) for further policy and procedures regarding merit reviews for Assistant Professor.

3). Consulting with the Faculty

The Case Analysis and supporting materials are posted for faculty review a minimum of 3 days and the faculty notified.

The APC (or designee) presents the Case Analysis to the faculty and allows for a full discussion. When the discussion has concluded, the APC follows the School's bylaws and voting procedures to obtain a vote on the Formal Appraisal and a separate vote on the proposed advancement if the timing of the appraisal coincides with a normal merit review. Two separate transmittal letters must be written, one for the appraisal and one for the merit/reappointment recommendation. Refer to [MAPP 400 Section 405](#) for further policy and procedures regarding merit reviews for Assistant Professor.

4). Transmittal letter for Formal Appraisal

The Transmittal Letter written by the APC is a critical component of the case file. The outcome of the faculty assessment must be clearly indicated in a report that contains the faculty opinion and vote and an evaluation of the candidate's performance in the following areas:

- a. Teaching
- b. Research or creative work
- c. Professional competence and activity
- d. University and public service

The Transmittal Letter must include a recommendation that is clearly labeled as "Good", "Fair," or "Poor." The "Good" recommendation indicates that the candidate is likely to eventually qualify for promotion to tenure rank. The "Fair" recommendation indicates that there are identified weaknesses in the record that appear to require correction in order for the individual to eventually qualify for promotion to tenure rank. A recommendation of "Poor" is made in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth in APM 220-84.

Sample Language for Transmittal Letter

In addition to the vote tally and substance of the faculty opinion, the wording below must be included in the transmittal letter.

The faculty in the School of X has reviewed Assistant Professor JJ Smith and is recommending the following:

- Good: _____ promotion is likely, contingent on maintaining the current trajectory of excellence and on appropriate external validation.
- Fair: _____ promotion is likely, if identified weaknesses, deficiencies, or imbalances in the record are corrected.
- Poor: _____ substantial deficiencies are present; promotion unlikely (APM 220-84)

Vote:

(NOTE: As this is the official record of the faculty's opinion, the votes are given considerable importance by other reviewing bodies. Hence, schools should develop guidelines that encourage the maximum number of faculty to participate in the evaluation of candidates. Excessive abstentions or a small number of votes relative to the number of faculty eligible to vote are likely to raise concerns about the action as other reviewers evaluate the file. In the case of individuals who abstain or who recuse themselves from voting, the transmittal letter should provide a reason, i.e. member of CAP (APM [210](#) and [220](#))).

Discussion:

(NOTE: The Transmittal Letter is the single document that reflects the discussion of the faculty. Hence, the letter should be balanced, identifying strengths and specific accomplishments; but also identifying any criticisms and reservations that help explain the faculty's opinion and vote.)

When the APC has completed the Transmittal Letter with the vote recorded, the letter is posted and the faculty notified. The Transmittal Letter is available for review a minimum of 3 days or the School's agreed upon duration. Any faculty concerns about the Transmittal Letter should be discussed with the APC. Any substantive revision to the Transmittal Letter must be posted and the faculty notified.

5). Forwarding the case file to the School Dean

Once the Transmittal Letter has been finalized, the APC forwards the case file to the School Dean.

411-2. Dean

a. Dean's recommendation letter

The Dean assesses the Transmittal Letters, Case Analyses and the evidence provided in the case file to ensure that the School review is fair and rigorous in maintaining University standards. The Dean writes two separate recommendation letters, one for the appraisal and one for the merit/reappointment recommendation.

b. Dean's confidential letter

The Dean may submit a separate letter indicating his/her analysis and recommendation. A Dean's confidential letter may also be used to address unresolved issues related to a case.

c. Forwarding the review file to the EVC/Provost and APO

The Dean forwards the complete review file and the Dean's recommendation letters to the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost and the Academic Personnel Office.

411-3. Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP)

The Committee on Academic Personnel will review the formal appraisal and decide whether it wishes to conduct further review and may request that the Chancellor (or designee) convene an ad hoc committee for the review. The

Chancellor may also convene an ad hoc committee if he/she deems one necessary.

411-4. Terminal Appointments or Non-Reappointments:

A proposal not to reappoint an Assistant Professor may originate with the School as a result of its review during the consideration of reappointment. In this event, the case shall be reviewed in accordance with the provisions of APM 220-82 and 220-84. In any case in which non-reappointment of an Assistant Professor is considered, there shall be review by the Committee on Academic Personnel. An ad hoc committee shall be appointed if the Chancellor or the Committee on Academic Personnel requests it.

During a review of a reappointment, a formal appraisal, or a promotion of an Assistant Professor (or other appointee of equivalent rank), if the Chancellor's (or designee's) preliminary assessment is to make a terminal appointment or to deny promotion the Dean, APC Chair and the candidate shall be notified of this in writing by the Chancellor (or designee). The candidate also shall be notified of the opportunity to request access to the records placed in the personnel review file subsequent to the School review in accordance with APM 160-20 c. When the candidate is provided copies of such records, copies shall also be provided to the Dean, and APC Chair.

After appropriate consultation within the faculty, the candidate and APC Chair shall then have the opportunity to respond in writing and to provide additional information and documentation. The candidate may respond either through the APC Chair, Dean or directly to the Chancellor (or designee). This response must be submitted within 10 working days of the date the candidate receives the reviewing agency reports. The personnel review file, as augmented by the added material, shall then be considered in any stage of the review process as designated by the Chancellor (or designee) before a final decision by the Chancellor is reached. The Chancellor's final decision to make a terminal appointment or to deny promotion requires the appropriate preliminary assessment notification process and opportunity to respond being provided to the candidate as specified herein.

In accordance with APM 220-80 I, after the final decision, the candidate may request a copy of non-confidential documents and a redacted copy of confidential documents. Such requests should be made to the Executive Vice Chancellor.

The above notification procedure provides the opportunity for reconsideration and possible reversal of the preliminary assessment for a terminal appointment or denial of promotion. For this reason, reconsideration of a terminal appointment or denial of promotion will only take place when there is substantial evidence of significant improvement in the faculty member's record of scholarly achievement, particularly with respect to those elements of the record that have been previously identified as areas of weakness. When these conditions are met, a request for reconsideration of a terminal

appointment or denial of promotion, justified by a brief review of the new evidence that supports the request, may be submitted by the APC Chair, to the Dean School and re-submitted for reconsideration; however this will not extend the terminal appointment end-date.

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