

AY24-12-F

Title of Issue (short descriptive title by which the issue may be referenced)

Elimination of Year 3 Evaluation When Conducting an In-Depth Pre-Tenure Review

Description of Issue

Overview of Current Policy

Old Dominion University (ODU) requires that “non-tenured faculty members, without prior teaching experience, who are in their third year of probationary service at Old Dominion University will receive a major faculty review.” This review includes “a meeting with the faculty member and chair. The review process, conducted by the department promotion and tenure committee, department chair, college promotion and tenure committee, and dean, will include an in-depth evaluation of teaching effectiveness, scholarly works, grant and contract efforts, and other professional activities.”

ODU also requires an annual review of non-tenured, tenure-track faculty: “Each department conducts an annual review of the probationary tenure-track faculty in that department (including the chair if untenured). This review is based on the performance of the individual faculty member and the needs of the department...”

Current Issue: Overlap in Evaluation Requirements

Under the current policy, tenure-track faculty in their third year are required to submit materials for both an annual evaluation and an in-depth pre-tenure review. The deadlines for these submissions are as follows:

- Annual evaluation materials are due by December 16th.
- Pre-tenure review materials are due by February 1st.

Additionally, faculty must submit their teaching portfolio by November 15th. This results in three distinct evaluation submissions within a short 2.5-month period, creating redundancy in the evaluation process.

Comparison with Promotion and Tenure Policy

When non-tenured faculty submit their materials for tenure and promotion, or when associate professors submit materials for promotion to professor, they are not required to submit additional materials for the annual evaluation (ODU Faculty Handbook: II.B.7). The in-depth review of materials submitted for promotion and tenure suffice for that given year’s annual evaluation.

Proposal: Eliminate Year 3 Annual Evaluation

In light of the above, faculty and administration in the DCEPS propose that the same consideration be extended to third-year tenure-track faculty undergoing the pre-tenure

review. Specifically, we recommend:

- Eliminating the year 3 annual evaluation for tenure-track faculty during the year in which they submit their in-depth pre-tenure review materials.
- Revising the Pre-Tenure Review Process to ensure comprehensive evaluation of year 3 performance. This could include:
 1. Faculty inclusion of a specific section addressing year 3 accomplishments within their pre-tenure review materials.
 2. Department Chair and Dean review letters to explicitly address the faculty member's performance during year 3.

Rationale for Submission

Justification for the Proposed Change

1. Redundancy of Effort: Currently, tenure-track faculty must submit two sets of evaluation materials within a 1.5 month span—the year 3 annual evaluation and the pre-tenure review. These submissions cover similar content, with the pre-tenure review including year 3 efforts. This redundancy not only imposes unnecessary burdens on the faculty member but also shifts their time and focus away from core responsibilities like research and teaching.
2. Alignment with Promotion and Tenure Practices: Faculty who are undergoing tenure and promotion reviews are not required to submit additional materials for annual evaluations in the same year. The in-depth review of their promotion and tenure materials is sufficient to fulfill their evaluation requirements. Applying the same policy for third-year faculty undergoing pre-tenure review ensures consistency and reduces unnecessary administrative work for faculty and department leadership.
3. Protecting Faculty Time: As an R1 institution, ODU is committed to fostering the scholarly productivity of its faculty. Requiring both a year 3 annual evaluation and an in-depth pre-tenure review takes valuable time away from faculty who should be focusing on research, publication, and effective teaching. The proposed change would streamline the evaluation process and ensure that faculty can devote their energy to the work that matters most in the early stages of their career.
4. Streamlined Evaluation with Sufficient Oversight: By requiring faculty to address their year 3 accomplishments within the pre-tenure review materials, and by ensuring that department chairs and deans explicitly evaluate year 3 performance in their letters, we retain a thorough and transparent evaluation process. This approach ensures that the faculty member's performance is fully reviewed without requiring them to submit duplicative materials.

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DateNov 25, 2024