

# **Guidelines for Guidelines**

(As recommended in S98-8: I.A., II.A.2 and II.B.1)

## **Steps for Developing RTP Guidelines**

### **I. Overview of the Unit**

The guidelines should begin with an overview of the Department, School, College or unit as an academic and/or professional area.

### **II. Effectiveness in Academic Assignment**

This section should unpack and elaborate on Section II.A. of the University Policy S98-8. Topics that might be addressed include:

- What is the nature of academic assignments for faculty in this unit?  
What is involved in teaching in this discipline or professional area? (Comment on the distinctive features of courses taught: GE offerings, labs, performance classes, class size, supervision, etc.)
- What is the typical teaching load in this unit? (Comment on whether thesis advisement, supervision of independent study work, etc. is generally done as overload or receives released time.)
- How is teaching effectiveness evaluated? (For example, Are more peer reviews than the minimum required? Is there a standard form colleagues have agreed to use for peer review? Is there a formal review of teaching materials such as exams and syllabi? Are there other sources of data on teaching effectiveness?)
- What is involved in service to students and the University?  
Is advising handled by all faculty or a few? What other student support roles are faculty members involved in?
- What is considered a typical assignment in terms of committee assignments and participation in collegial governance in this unit? What are the major leadership roles and quasi-administrative assignments such as graduate coordinator? How are these selected, compensated, and reviewed?
- How is such service documented and evaluated?
- Are faculty expected or encouraged to participate in faculty development activities that improve their effectiveness in academic assignment?
- Are faculty encouraged to develop innovative approaches to teaching? How are these to be documented or evaluated?

- Does the Department make any holistic assessment of effectiveness in academic assignment or the sub-areas as part of its review? For example, are candidates rated as below average, average, good, excellent or according to any agreed-upon scale?
- Has the unit articulated a minimal standard a candidate must meet in the area of effectiveness in academic assignment in order to receive a positive recommendation? (Please avoid stating this quantitatively, but try to articulate a general level of achievement.)

### **III. Scholarly or Artistic or Professional Achievement**

This section should unpack and elaborate on Section II. of University Policy S98-8. Topics that might be addressed include:

- What is the nature of scholarly, artistic and/or professional work appropriate for candidates in this unit? (Comment on the forms such work typically takes, the investment of time, skill and energy that goes into some forms of activity, the range of work that is highly valued.)
- How is the significance and quality of this work evaluated in the discipline or professional area? (Comment on refereeing and selection procedures, for example. It is also possible to group types of activities in “tiers” of general value and recognition.)
- What types of “non-traditional scholarship” are valued and how are these evaluated?
- What are the types of funded research or contract work that are valued in this discipline?
- Does the unit make a distinction between individual work and collaborative work? What has been the general practice in the field? How are these activities valued and evaluated?
- Does the unit make any holistic assessment of effectiveness in scholarly, artistic and or professional achievement or the subareas as part of its review? For example, are candidates rated as below average, average, good, excellent or according to any agreed-upon scale?
- Has the unit articulated a minimal standard a candidate must meet in the area of scholarly, artistic and or professional achievement in order to receive a positive recommendation? (Please avoid stating this quantitatively, but try to articulate a general level of achievement.)

### **IV. Requirements and Expectations for All Candidates in the Unit**

This section should list and explain any special standards or procedures established in the unit that affects the RTP review process. These might include:

- Are candidates required to include certain materials in their dossiers such as a professional development plan, all course syllabi, and narrative statements by the candidate?
- Are there requirements such as scheduled meetings with the chair, a mentor, or an advisory committee that are required of each candidate?
- Under what conditions are internal or outside reviews of a candidate's work required and what is the procedure for obtaining these?
- Are there minimal expectations that each candidate in the unit is expected to meet? (Please avoid stating this quantitatively, but try to articulate a general level of achievement.)

## **Steps for Developing RTP Guidelines**

1. Decide if you and your colleagues think it is useful to develop Departmental RTP guidelines at this time.
2. Consult with your Dean to determine if College guidelines will be developed, and if so, whether these will precede or follow Departmental guidelines.
3. Decide on a process for developing guidelines within your Department and for approval of them once developed.
4. Review any existing mission statements or other guiding statements.
5. Look at models. Review any existing disciplinary guidelines or accreditation standards. Check with colleagues at similar universities that have already developed guidelines.
6. Identify areas that have been misunderstood by higher level RTP committees in the past.
7. Identify areas that have been the source of difference in interpreting the quality of individual candidate's records in the past.
8. Define terms that may not have common meanings across disciplines.
9. Make key distinctions that enter into assessing the quality and significance of certain activities.
10. If appropriate, make some statement about the relative quality and significance of certain activities.
11. Consider what forms of internal and external review of certain achievements are appropriate for your candidates.
12. Explain any special expectations your Department has for what should be included in a candidate's dossier.