February 4, 2008

To: Tim Hegstrom  
Dean, College of Social Sciences

From: Joan Merdinger  
AVP

Re: Department of Psychology’s RTP Guidelines

Please find attached the final, approved version of the Department of Psychology “Department RTP Guidelines”. These Guidelines have been approved per S98-8: “Such statements or guidelines should be included in the dossier, after having been approved by the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs in consultation with the Professional Standards Committee of the San José State University Academic Senate.”

The Guidelines for RTP from the Department of Psychology were received in the Office of Faculty Affairs on September 4, 2007 and were reviewed by the Professional Standards Committee of the Academic Senate in Fall 2007. Comments and feedback from the Professional Standards Committee were duly incorporated. The implementation date for the approved “Guidelines” is August 21, 2008.

As directed by S98-8, the current, approved Guidelines must be included in the dossiers of Department of Psychology RTP candidates. The Guidelines should assist committees and administrators in understanding the specific standards appropriate to candidates for RTP in the Department of Psychology and in ensuring fair and equitable application of these standards to the broader procedures, standards, and criteria of the current University policy.

Attachment

c: Shannon Bros, Chair, Professional Standards Committee  
Brad Davis, Assistant AVP/FA  
Chair Sheila Bienenfeld  
Linda Garcia
12/10/2007

Memo
To: Tim Hegstrom, Dean, COSS
From: Sheila Bienenfeld, Chair, Psychology
Subject: Department RTP Guidelines

Attached is a revised version of the draft of the proposed Psychology Department RTP policy document. It was reviewed by Joan Merdinger, AVP/FA, and by the Professional Standards Committee of the Senate. They recommended several changes, most of them minor or of a clarifying nature. I have made the changes recommended and am resubmitting the document for consideration. Attached also is a copy of the Professional Standards Committee’s recommendations.

Thanks for taking the time to review these guidelines!

[Signature]
Sheila Bienenfeld, Chair, Psychology

[Signature]
Timothy Hegstrom, Dean, COSS
Department of Psychology
San Jose State University

Introduction: The Department of Psychology is the largest in the College of Social Sciences, with many undergraduate majors and three Masters level programs: M.S. in Clinical Psychology, M.S. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, and M.A. in General/Experimental Psychology. In addition to psychology majors, we attract students from a wide variety of disciplines, and provide several lower and upper division general education courses. Our mission is to provide high-quality training in the science of psychology, equipping our students to enter many occupations and professions in the sciences, human services, industry, education and other areas. Our major emphasis is on excellence in teaching, but we also value and expect our faculty to contribute to the discipline of psychology through conducting and disseminating research in the field. Good citizenship through service to the department, the college and the university is also expected of our tenured/tenure-track faculty.

Retention, Tenure and Promotion

In the following sections we describe in more detail our expectations for successfully navigating the tenure and promotion process. We are a large department made up of faculty members with a variety of interests and strengths. Together, by combining our different strengths, we strengthen the whole department. We firmly believe that there are many paths to excellence, i.e. that each faculty member can strive for and attain distinction in his/her own way. Consistent with University policy as set forth in S98-8, (APPOINTMENT, RETENTION, TENURE AND PROMOTION CRITERIA, STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR REGULAR FACULTY EMPLOYEES. http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/s98-8.htm ) we expect that all faculty perform at least adequately in all areas, but that some faculty will be particularly gifted as teachers, others as researchers and scholars, and yet others as citizens of the department and the university community. In rare cases where a faculty member has attained an unusual level of excellence in all areas, the department recognizes such outstanding performance by recommending early promotion or tenure, but such cases are, and should be understood as exceptional and rare.

Overview of the Retention, Tenure and Promotion process.

University policy (S-98-8) states that candidates will be evaluated on two basic criteria:

A. Effectiveness in Academic Assignment
   1. Effectiveness in teaching
   2. Service to Students and the University
B. Scholarly or Artistic or Professional Achievement

Evidence of achievement in these two areas shall be presented to the various RTP Committees and administrators in the form of a dossier. Candidates have primary responsibility for assembling the dossier; however, it is the department chair’s
responsibility “to ensure that the evidence necessary for a full and fair evaluation” is contained therein. Evidence of achievement with the exception of the candidate’s vitae shall encompass only the period under review; i.e. since appointment or last promotion. See http://fa.sjsu.edu/Rtp/FAQ_RTP.doc for information about the dossier and its contents. Candidates should begin assembling the appropriate materials as soon as possible and should maintain and continually update a file containing the necessary documentation.

Evaluation of Effectiveness in Academic Assignment

Effectiveness in Teaching

Effectiveness in teaching is the primary but not the only consideration in evaluating candidates’ performance. Tenured or tenure track faculty normally teach four courses per semester, but when financially feasible, it has been the department’s practice to provide a reduction in teaching load of one course per semester for non-tenured full-time faculty. This reduction in teaching load is provided by the Psychology Research Committee from SJSU Research Foundation funds. This funding, when available, is reviewed every two years and is contingent upon the candidate’s demonstrating progress in her/his scholarly activities, e.g. grant writing and submission, an active program of research, submission and or acceptance of research or theoretically based articles in appropriate venues (e.g., peer-reviewed journals, book chapters or other publications), participation in professional conferences, and sponsorship of student research.

Effectiveness in the classroom is a primary indication of teaching effectiveness. This is demonstrated in a variety of ways, including numerical SOTE (Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness) scores and subjective student evaluations, and peer reviews of teaching effectiveness (see, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/2004Interguide.pdf for a guide to interpreting the SOTE as well as copies of the SOTE instruments). It has long been Psychology Department policy that SOTEs are collected for ALL courses taught. Full-time faculty members below the rank of Associate professor undergo peer observations by faculty at higher rank at least once every semester. Full-time faculty members at the rank of associate professor undergo peer observations at least once per academic year. A standard form used throughout COSS is used in all peer evaluations. Additional peer evaluations are possible if requested by the faculty member or, based on available evidence, the Chair or Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) Committee believes there is a possible performance problem.

All faculty members are generally expected to receive SOTE scores comparable to department, college and university norms. The department recognizes that new courses or new preparations sometimes receive lower ratings than well-established courses or courses that the instructor has offered in the past. We also recognize that there are some courses that students often find more challenging than others. In such cases the RTP Committee takes these factors into account in its evaluation. SOTE scores are interpreted in light of the instructor’s pattern of teaching rather than on one set of scores.

Service to students and the University
Definition

Performance in this area includes committee activities and administrative duties. All faculty members are expected to be active in departmental meetings and committees. For tenure and promotion to associate or full professor service on college and university committees is highly recommended. While there is no formal evaluation of committee activities, exemplary work (e.g., being elected committee chair or serving on a committee that is exceptionally demanding) is considered by the RTP Committee, and wherever possible should be documented by letters from committee chairs and/or descriptions of work done.

Service to the Department, the College, and the University

Departmental Administration

Administrative positions in the department include the Chair, the Associate Chair, the three Graduate Coordinators, and the Undergraduate Advising Coordinator. The Chair is elected by the faculty and appointed by the President. The Associate Chair is appointed by the Chair. The Graduate Coordinators are elected by the faculty of their respective graduate programs, and the Undergraduate advising coordinator is appointed by the chair. The Chair is formally reviewed by the department, college and university. The performance of the Associate Chair, the Graduate coordinators and the Undergraduate advising coordinator is informally reviewed by the Chair and is addressed in the RTP process. In addition to the Undergraduate advising coordinator, as many as three additional faculty may be granted assigned time for advising. Because advising is often highly technical and time-consuming, excellence in service as an advisor should be considered in RTP deliberations. In addition to the few department advisors, all faculty members are expected to provide basic career and curriculum advice to students.

The coordinator positions are among the most demanding positions in the department and successful and sustained performance in these positions is considered very valuable to the department and is taken into consideration in RTP deliberations. Coordinators generally receive reductions in teaching load in recognition of the demanding nature of these positions. The fact that these positions, and those of student advisors are in this sense "compensated" by the department should not detract from their value when RTP decisions are deliberated.

Curriculum Development, Assessment, and Mentoring

Other areas of service include new course development, the creation and supervision of service learning activities, interdisciplinary and team teaching, and other forms of curricular innovation. Coordinators of GE courses (e.g. Psychology 1, 100W, 191, 082, and Stat. 095) are expected to help maintain GE certification of the courses they coordinate, including monitoring syllabi, collecting assessment data and writing up periodic requests for recertification. Additionally, the department's Assessment
coordinator oversees departmental assessment activities. Program coordinators and the
department assessment coordinator are expected to contribute to the department's “five
year” reviews. All such activities should be documented in the dossier and considered in
RTP deliberations. Appropriate documentation may include letters from the chair, other
faculty members, or others outside of the department who may be in a position to
comment on the candidate’s contributions.

Faculty serve as advisors to student organizations both inside and outside the department
as part of their service to the department. The department also sponsors an annual student
research conference, the Spartan Psychological Association Research Conference
(SPARC), which is organized by a faculty member or a team of faculty members.
Activities such as advising the student organizations and/or organizing the SPARC
conference are considered service to both the department and to students, and should be
recognized in the RTP process.

Faculty may also become involved in supervising independent studies, honors projects, or
in serving as chairs or readers of graduate student theses (a thesis is required by both the
M.A. in General/Experimental and the M.S. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology
programs.) Such service is normally expected of all faculty, but particular excellence (e.g.
an unusual number of theses supervised to completion) should be recognized.

**Scholarly or Professional Achievement**

Faculty are expected to pursue active careers as scholars. Acceptable scholarship may
take a variety of forms and may evolve over the course of a career. Such scholarship may
include refereed journal articles, books, textbooks, monographs, funded research
applications and reports, and presentations of papers to professional organizations. All
scholarship subjected to peer-review is considered to be of acceptable quality.
Scholarship published in venues other than peer-reviewed professional journals (e.g.,
book chapters, technical reports, book reviews, workbooks, manuals, or other types of
scholarly publication) is acceptable, and in such instances, the type of review to which
such work has been subjected should be documented in the dossier.

Unpublished research, unfunded grants, and works in progress may also be considered in
the RTP review process but they are of less importance than peer-reviewed research that
has either been accepted for publication or published. Newspaper and magazine articles,
and published material in non-refereed journals, books or monographs or presented
papers not subject to thorough review are evaluated on an individual basis, and peer
evaluations of such work should be included in the dossier wherever possible.

The primary consideration in the evaluation of a journal article is the quality of the
article, regardless of the journal in which it is published. However those articles that must
survive a more competitive process (e.g., the journal rejects a high percentage of
submissions,) or which are frequently cited (as noted in cross-citation indices) in the
literature are given more consideration in the evaluation of faculty performance. The
relative prestige of the journal is noted in the dossier. In Psychology co-authored articles
are common, although generally single-authored articles are weighed more heavily than multiply authored articles. In cases in which the faculty member is one of several authors, first authorship is counted most heavily. When the faculty member is not the first author, the faculty member’s contribution should be described and documented. In addition, we place high value on interdisciplinary research and on the inclusion of student co-authors in faculty research, and for that reason interdisciplinary articles and those with student co-authors are considered very highly. Again, wherever possible, the candidate’s contribution should be documented.

While the department expects that faculty will be active scholars throughout their careers, we consider each case on its own merits. As noted in S98-8 (Section II.B.2.,) “Ordinarily the number or length of publications per se shall not be a criterion for tenure or promotion.” The RTP Committee takes a holistic approach weighing the originality, the quality, the consistency, and the importance of a faculty member’s scholarly contribution to their field of psychology, recognizing that a small number of high quality publications may be of greater consequence than a large number of lower quality publications. As noted above, involvement of students in faculty research and scholarship is also viewed with favor in RTP deliberations.

Other areas of professional achievement that are considered in the RTP process include research based on service learning, activity (e.g. holding office) in professional organizations, serving as ad-hoc reviewers for professional journals, sharing scholarship in non-scholarly venues (e.g. providing expertise to media, non-scholarly journals), organizing conferences, or professional activities such as consulting to businesses and other organizations, and engaging in clinical or community based work that is linked to teaching and/or research activities.

The following information is provided in response to questions posed by probationary faculty in the Psychology Department. These supplement the FAQ’s supplied by the Office of Faculty Affairs. See: http://fa.sjsu.edu/Rtp/FAQ_RTP.doc

Department of Psychology FAQ’s

1. What levels and types of review does a candidate go through?
   a. The review process consists of biennial mini-reviews alternating with biennial full reviews.
      i. Mini-reviews: In the Spring semesters of the first, third and fifth years, candidates undergo a mini-review which consists of a review of the candidate’s teaching, scholarship and service completed in the previous year.
      ii. Full-reviews: In the Fall semesters of the second, fourth, and sixth years, candidates are expected to prepare a full “dossier” for review. The dossier should contain all pertinent material since the last full review, and in the case of a candidate seeking tenure and/or promotion, the full review consists of all pertinent material for the entire period of review.
1. For candidates granted probationary credit, the review period may include work done before joining the SJSU faculty.

2. Who sits on the RTP Committee? How is this committee constituted?
   a. Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are reviewed at 5 separate levels. The first level of review takes place at the departmental level. The department RTP Committee is an elected committee, whose members serve three year terms. The minimum number of faculty who may serve as an RTP Committee is 3, although where possible, a committee of 5 is customary. This committee may or may not include the chair, depending on the size of the committee and the rank of the chair. Any elected member whose academic rank is higher than that of the candidate may take part in the deliberations regarding that candidate. So, for example, an Associate Professor may serve on the RTP Committee and evaluate the performance of an Assistant Professor requesting tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor. Only Full Professors may evaluate the candidacy of Associate Professors requesting promotion to Full Professor. When there are an insufficient number of faculty to constitute an RTP Committee, faculty from related disciplines may be asked to serve at the department level.

   After the completion of the departmental review (which may or may not include a separate evaluation from the chair, depending on whether the chair served as a member of the departmental RTP Committee,) the dossier is forwarded to the College level RTP Committee. The College RTP Committee is made up of Full Professors who are the elected representatives from each of the departments within the college.

   After review by the College RTP Committee, the dossier is evaluated by the Dean, and then forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs, and then, in cases of tenure or promotion to Associate Professor, is then forwarded to the University RTP Committee, which is made up of elected representatives from each of the colleges in the University. The final review is completed by the provost and the final decision is made by the President of the University.

3. What kind of help can the candidate expect from within the department?
   a. The Psychology department typically appoints a senior faculty member to serve as a mentor or “liaison” between the committee and the candidate. It is the liaison’s job to help the candidate in the preparation of the dossier, ensuring that the dossier, once completed, contains the appropriate material, in the appropriate places. The liaison may recommend that the candidate include additional documentary materials or exclude material that is not necessary.

   b. In addition to the liaison, the candidate is encouraged to discuss the dossier with the department chair.

4. What should be included in the dossier? What is not necessary?
a. During RTP deliberations only material that is included in the dossier may be considered. Therefore it is important that the candidate include all material that will be needed in order to fairly and thoroughly evaluate the candidate’s progress. At the same time, it is important to include only materials that are of genuine importance.

i. Index: the index should list the location of every document that is included in the dossier.

ii. Teaching: All numerical SOTE summaries for ALL classes taught. It has long been department policy that Psychology faculty are required to collect SOTE ratings for all classes taught. These must be included in the dossier. Additionally, it is currently university policy that all subjective SOTE ratings also be included in the dossier.

iii. Service to students and the university: All committee service and all mentoring activities should be noted, along with a concise description of the candidate’s contribution to that activity.

iv. Scholarly, artistic or professional achievement:

1. Scholarly work: This includes all scholarly work for the period under review, including copies of all publications, manuscripts under review, grant applications, reviews, workbooks, technical reports, or other material. Documentation may include correspondence with editors or publishers, contracts, letters notifying the candidate of awards, or other material that may document the nature and status of publications. In addition to this, the candidate may request, or may ask the Department Chair to request evaluative letters of scholarly achievements from scholars in the candidate’s field.

2. Artistic or professional achievement: This includes professional work such as consulting, public appearances, workshops, special certifications (e.g. licensure), membership and the holding of leadership positions in professional and/or community organizations in which the candidate’s professional credentials and contribution are put to use.