

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

Amendment B to University Policy S15-8, Retention, Tenure and Promotion for Regular Faculty Employees: Criteria and Standards

Effective: AY 2020/2021

Legislative History:

At its meeting of February 10, 2020, the Academic Senate approved Amendment B to University Policy S15-8, presented by Senator Peter for the Professional Standards Committee. The revised language in Amendment B seeks to correct a problem with the way the current language discusses the “norms” of our SOTES. Amendment B provides flexibility, indicating that the survey results, “are considered supportive if they are either within appropriate norms, or if a preponderance of student opinion from objective and subjective questions indicates effective teaching.” Amendment B also inserts a reference to “course syllabi and other teaching materials.” These materials are already commonly present in dossiers, but the explicit inclusion of this language reminds evaluators that information beyond the SOTES must also be considered.

Action by University President:

**Approved and signed by
President Mary A. Papazian
San José State University on
May 4, 2020.**

Resolved: That S15-8 be amended as shown in the strikeout and underline of the excerpted policy, effective beginning with the 2020-2021 Academic Year.

Rationale: Professional Standards has become aware of several limitations in the “baseline” teaching descriptor of our RTP policy. This descriptor sets the minimum standards in teaching expected for tenure.

The main purpose of our amendment is to achieve the policy’s original intent that teaching be evaluated holistically and fairly, using multiple sources of information, including but not limited to the Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness surveys (SOTES.)

First, our revised language seeks to correct a problem with the way the current language discusses the “norms” of our SOTES. As one example of the problem, it is sometimes the case that a SOTE evaluation of 4.0 is “below the norm” as set by the Student Evaluation Review Board, even though the SOTE instrument states that a “4” means that the student agrees that the instructor is “effective.” Thus, faculty who are judged to be “effective” by their students are sometimes judged to be “below the norm” with important negative consequences for their professional advancement. Our proposed language corrects this problem by providing needed flexibility, indicating that the survey results, “are considered supportive if they are either within appropriate norms, or if a preponderance of student opinion from objective and subjective questions indicates effective teaching.”

The committee also inserted a reference to “course syllabi and other teaching materials.” These materials are already commonly present in dossiers, but the explicit inclusion of this language reminds evaluators that information beyond the SOTES must also be considered.

Approved: December 10, 2019
Vote: 10-0-0
Present: He, Cargill, Peter, Monday, Kumar, Mahendra, Kemnitz, Birrer, Chin, Riley
Absent: None
Financial Impact: No direct impact
Workload Impact: No direct impact

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

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~~3.3.1.3.2 Baseline. The candidate has taught assigned courses that are well-crafted and appropriate for the catalog description. The candidate has taken measures to correct any problems identified earlier in either direct observations or prior performance evaluations. Recent direct observations are supportive. Student evaluations, taking into account the nature, subject, and level of classes taught, generally within the norms by the end of the review period, particularly for classes within the candidate's primary focus and any curriculum specifically identified in the appointment letter.~~

3.3.1.3.2 Baseline. The candidate has documented effectiveness in teaching, particularly for classes within the candidate's primary focus and any curriculum specifically identified in the appointment letter. Assigned courses are well crafted and appropriate for the catalog description, as shown in course syllabi and other teaching materials. The candidate has taken measures to correct any problems identified earlier in either direct observations or prior performance evaluations. Recent direct observations and surveys of student opinion of teaching effectiveness (SOTEs) are also supportive. SOTEs are considered supportive if they are either within appropriate norms, or if a preponderance of student opinion from objective and subjective questions indicates effective teaching.