LMU|LA
Loyola Marymount University

Committee on
Rank and Tenure

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: 28 March 2017

TO: Dr. Joseph Hellige, Executive Vice President and Provost
Dr. Elisabeth Drummond, President, Faculty Senate

FROM: **Committee on Rank and Tenure**
Vincent Coletta, Professor of Physics, SCSE
Paul De Sena, Professor of Educational Support Services, SOE
Véronique Flambard-Weisbart (Chair), Professor of Modern Languages & Literatures, BCLA
Mladen Milicevic, Professor of Recording Arts, SFTV
Katharine Noon, Professor of Theater Arts and Dance, CFA
Stephen Shepherd, Professor of English, BCLA
Anatoly Zhuplev, Professor of Management, CBA

RE: Overarching issues encountered during review of materials and deliberations of the CRT in 2015-2016 academic year.

Introductory remarks

This memo is written in accordance with the Revised Edition 2016 (updated July 13, 2016) of the *Loyola Marymount University (LMU) Faculty Handbook and Handbook Addenda*, commonly referred to (including in this memo) as the Rank and Tenure Resource Manual (RTRM). The RTRM states that on a yearly basis, after its review and deliberations are done for the academic year, the Committee on Rank and Tenure (CRT) should write a memo to the Faculty Senate President and Provost "detailing overarching issues encountered during its review of materials and deliberation." **The CRT encourages that this memo (or relevant portions thereof) be shared with tenured/tenure-track faculty (especially those who will soon apply for tenure and/or promotion), department chairs and deans.**

A. Continuing / On-going issues:

I. Related to Department Chair, Dean, and Departmental Review and Letters

1. On several occasions issues with candidates (whether with scholarship/creative works, teaching/advising, or service) have been brought up in the review process when these issues have never been documented in the faculty member's FSR letters, 4th year review, etc. Thus, the CRT strongly recommend that issues with/deficiencies in a candidate's performance be communicated in writing to the candidate in the FSR chair responses and 4th year review as early and fully as possible so that the candidate can make a good faith effort to address these. The lack of such prior evidence diminishes the authority of the department's presentation.

2. On occasions, departmental discussions have strayed from the evidence in the candidate's dossier, and have referenced evidence that department members have not had proper time to review. The inclusion of such discussions and evidence serve to weaken the departmental letter. Thus the CRT strongly

emphasizes that the departmental meeting at which the candidate's application for promotion/tenure is discussed and at which the departmental vote takes place should focus on the candidate's performance as evidenced by the material provided in the candidate's dossier, which the entire department has had sufficient time to review. If the department finds it pertinent to discuss matters/material not contained in the dossier, then that discussion should as much as possible focus on topics/matter for which there is documented evidence, and that evidence should be accounted for in detail in the departmental letter.

3. Chair and dean letters are less authoritative when they use customized means of assessment, such as straying from departmental guidelines, assessing the character of evaluators, positing theories about the psychological motivations of candidates, adding memorandums of understanding, etc. If the dean or chair finds it pertinent to discuss matters/material not contained in the dossier, then that discussion should as much as possible focus on topics/matter for which there is documented evidence, and that evidence should be accounted for in detail in the chair and dean's letter. Chairs and Deans should continue to express clarity in the first paragraph of their letters by stating explicitly whether they supported the candidate's case and giving the departmental vote in the case of the dean's letter.

II. Suggestions to Applicants in Assembling a Promotion/Tenure Application

1. It would be useful for candidates to refer to the 18 April 2016 memo (or most current version) posted on the Provost website from the Faculty Senate President and the Chair of the CRT. (See http://academics.lmu.edu/ranktenure/candidateresources/)

2. Applicants should take note that the RTRM states that "Statistical Summary Reports for *all courses* taught are required. In addition, candidates are strongly encouraged to provide *all available* written Student Course Evaluations for all courses. The CRT strongly encourages all applicants to a.) keep all CDs from each academic semester and summer, and b.) copy statistical summaries and the actual course evaluations from the CDs provided by the university each semester into the correct folder of the electronic dossier. In rare cases where student course evaluations are not available, their unavailability should be explained and accounted for in detail in the dossier.

3. It is important that peer review in published or creative works, teaching, and service should be verifiable. In the case that peer-reviewed work is published or presented in non-traditional venues, or if there is any reason that the peer-review process was other than a standard process, the candidate should provide verifiable evidence of the peer review and a description of the level and relevance of the peer review that the work underwent.

III. The committee is concerned with maintaining a core issue of the university mission, the *Cura Personalis*. Everyone involved in the process (candidates, colleagues, chairs, deans, staff, etc.) should be treated with dignity and propriety.

1. The CRT expresses concern for receiving documents that contain statements that include personal insults, defamation of individuals, and undocumented accusations. In all documents that value the research, teaching or service of the candidate, these diminish the integrity of the review process and often violate university policies, if not state or federal law.

2. The CRT notes that the departmental letter should be a summary of the discussion and not a transcript. The anonymity of the participants in the departmental discussions must be protected.

3. The CRT urges the Faculty Senate to modify the Rank and Tenure Manual to develop a unified process for what should be done in the case of significant procedural errors. Processes need to be put in place that allow for such errors to be immediately addressed. This is particularly true of procedural errors occurring during the departmental meeting, such as member attendance and/or tardiness, lack of appropriate documentation/information, significant disagreement over the basis of departmental standards, or other egregious errors.

4. The CRT cautions all participants that information descriptive of a candidate's ethnicity, gender, or membership in other protected categories is inappropriate unless such evaluative information is introduced by the candidate in the dossier for its relevance.

5. The CRT requests that the deans and chairs account for blank ballots and missing signatures on the departmental letters. The lack of such information means that the CRT is unable to verify that all voices in the department that want to be heard are heard.

6. Departmental standards should be periodically checked during probationary and associate professor period to be sure that all evaluations required by those standards are being carried out. This is particularly true regarding peer evaluations of teaching. The CRT notes that this should be a departmental duty.

7. Every department should look at their standards and clarify, if appropriate, what is meant by "published," "forthcoming," "accepted," etc. and how such items will be judged. In addition, departments should examine their standards in light of the advent of Internet publications-for-pay that do not include peer review appropriate to disciplinary standards.

B. New issues:

1. Ballots to the departments should include the names of the candidates. To preserve the anonymity of department members when casting their votes, they should not have to write in the names of the candidates.

2. External Reviewers should not be perceived as having any conflict of interest with the candidates. Also, the CRT recommends that each candidate's External Reviewers should be selected from diverse institutions.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Rank and Tenure:

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Paul De Sena (SOE) Paul De Sena

Véronique Flambard-Weisbart (BCLA), Chair

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