Post Tenure Development and Review – Faculty Handbook

IV. ACADEMIC HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES (Cont.)

This policy was issued by the Office of the Provost on xxxxxxxxxx (to be effective Fall semester 20xx). It reflects advice by the University Committee on Faculty Tenure, the University Committee on Faculty Affairs, and the Faculty Senate.

To remain one of the top universities in the world, Michigan State University faculty members must continue to perform at a high level. Tenure system faculty must seek to enhance their research/creative activities and teaching capabilities over time, regardless of rank. This is imperative to raise the quality, reputation, and prestige of Michigan State University. This Post-Tenure Development and Review Policy is based on four principles:

1. The protection of academic freedom;
2. Rigorous use of the Faculty Review policy requiring an annual written performance review of every tenure system faculty member based upon clear performance expectations;
3. Sincere and committed engagement with faculty who are not meeting expectations to improve their performance to an acceptable level through formalized developmental efforts; and
4. Systematic use of existing MSU policies and procedures for discipline and dismissal where needed and appropriate.

At Michigan State University, post-tenure development and review is implemented through existing policies and procedures (contained in the Faculty Handbook), rather than a distinct policy on the review of faculty following the award of tenure. For example:

- Performance is monitored through the use of annual written performance evaluations as required for all faculty by the policy on "Faculty Review."¹
- Work performance, as determined in such reviews, is to be reflected in annual merit salary adjustments and as a basis for advice and suggestions for improvement.
- Disciplinary actions for poor performance in a variety of forms may be invoked under the "Policy for Implementing Disciplinary Action where Dismissal is Not Sought."²
- In more serious cases, "the Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause Policy"³ can be invoked. This policy involves notice and a formal hearing involving review by peers.
- In addition, an Interpretation of the term "incompetence" by the University Committee on Faculty Tenure includes an expectation for professional development support and review by peers before disciplinary or dismissal action is contemplated⁴.

¹ http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/facultyreview.htm
² http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/Disciplinary.htm
³ http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/dismissal.htm
This policy augments existing policies and practices by instituting a “prompt” which requires administrative intervention, and where performance is below expectations, requires the creation of a development plan to help the faculty member improve.

**Process**

1. When a faculty member has received:
   - No more than three consecutive written annual evaluations indicating that she/he has failed to meet unit expectations, or
   - No more than three merit raises significantly below the typical unit merit increase,

   the faculty member and unit administrator will discuss and identify a developmental plan that will enable the faculty member to meet the unit’s standards and criteria for acceptable faculty performance within two years. The discussion with the faculty member and details of the development plan should be confirmed in writing, acknowledged by the faculty member, and shared with the dean. Implementation of the development plan must occur not later than the end of the first semester after the performance review or merit increase that prompts post tenure review.

2. The development plan created should be robust, yet reasonable in helping the faculty member to achieve performance levels that meet expectations. Among many possible strategies to be considered are:
   - Enhancing instructional effectiveness through workshops, one-on-one consulting, etc.
   - Improved or more intensive mentoring,
   - Training and support for developing new research skills and funding sources, etc.,
   - Rebalancing the assignment consistent with unit needs and priorities and the faculty member’s interests and strengths.

3. It is expected that by the end of the first year, the faculty member will be actively engaged in completing the development program, with evidence of substantial progress in meeting agreed upon performance expectations after eighteen months.

4. By the end of the second year, the faculty member’s performance should be at or above the unit’s standards and criteria for acceptable faculty performance.

5. During the term of the development plan, the unit administrator will share a copy of the annual faculty review letter with the Dean.

6. If the faculty member has not improved his/her performance level so that it meets or exceeds unit expectations after two years, the unit administrator, in consultation with the dean and

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4 http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/incompetence.htm
Office of the Provost (Associate Provost for Academic Human Resources) may impose sanctions under the terms of the “Policy for Implementing Disciplinary Action where Dismissal is Not Sought.” That policy states that:

- A faculty member may be disciplined for cause including but not limited to (1) intellectual dishonesty; (2) acts of discrimination, including harassment, prohibited by law or University policy; (3) acts of moral turpitude; (4) theft or misuse of University property; (5) incompetence; (6) refusal to perform reasonable assigned duties; (7) use of professional authority to exploit others; (8) violation of University policy substantially related to performance of faculty responsibilities; and (9) violation of law(s) substantially related to the fitness of faculty members to engage in teaching, research, service/outreach and/or administration. Discipline or the threat of discipline may not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom....

- Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to reprimand, suspension with or without pay, reassignment of duties, foregoing salary increase and/or benefit improvements, and mandatory counseling and/or monitoring of behavior and performance. Suspension without pay may not exceed six months.

As used in the University policy on Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause, the term “incompetence” refers to faculty performance of assigned duties and responsibilities. Faculty members may be found to be incompetent if:

1. their performance is judged to be substantially below their relevant unit’s standards and criteria for acceptable faculty performance;
2. they have been offered a meaningful development opportunity, the goal of which is to improve their performance to meet their relevant unit’s standards and criteria for acceptable faculty performance; and
3. they have not improved their performance to meet the relevant unit’s standards and criteria as a result of development activities within a reasonable time period.5

7. Additionally, the “Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause” policy may be imposed in the most serious cases.

5http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/incompetence.htm