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ABSTRACT

The Department of Business at Montana Tech was required to draft a new set of standards for the promotion and tenure decisions for its faculty. Montana Tech, a small comprehensive university, had employed a campus-wide set of standards that were used for faculty members in all departments on the campus. The purpose of this paper is to identify the process used by the Business Department as they set their specific standards and to help those on the tenure-track to learn how to keep score and to argue for the importance of establishing standards by which tenure-track faculty will be measured.

INTRODUCTION

According to Kezar & Gehrke (2014), nearly 70% of faculty members in higher education today are off the tenure track. Nationally 75% of new hires are non-tenure track positions (Kezar & Gehrke, 2014). In 2011, 16.7% of all instructional staff faculty in higher education were tenured, another 7.4% of faculty held a tenure-track position, 15.4% of faculty was full-time non-tenure track, 41.3% were part-time faculty, and 19.3% were graduate students (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 2012). This suggests that less than 30% of faculty in higher education is eligible for tenure. The trend in higher education today has been to hire contingent faculty who frequently teach at multiple institutions in an effort to cobble together enough courses to make their financial ends meet (Scholtz, 2013). Those faculty members who find themselves in a tenure-track position are rare, which makes for those few who are navigating the tenure-track process and receiving tenure a major accomplishment.

Applying for and receiving tenure may give tenure-track faculty members a great deal of stress, but with limited data available, typically 90% of applicants for tenure do receive it (Fox, 2014). According to Fox (2014), the success-rate for receiving tenure is due to the hiring process which assumes those hired into a tenure-track faculty position have the demonstrated ability to successfully receive tenure. However, not everyone who receives tenure accomplishes this at their first institution as many tenure-track faculty may move from their first institution to a second, while others who think they may not receive tenure at their institution will not apply for it (Fox, 2014).

Tenure track positions are usually a six or seven year process, and during mid-tenure reviews if comments are made to the tenure-track faculty member that you are not meeting standards, you probably should be a bit worried, but the key to receiving tenure and promotion is knowing to what standard or measure you are being held, for if you do not know how the game is played, how to keep score, you have no idea if you are winning or losing. Tenure-track faculty is evaluated on teaching, scholarship and service, but these evaluations are generally based on "unspecified standards of achievement on each of these dimensions, and these standards may be applied inconsistently when evaluating different individuals" (Park & Gordon, 1996, p. 109). Additionally, it appears that the requirements under these standards have typically not been clear or well-communicated to tenure-track faculty which hinders the faculty member's perception of fairness when applying for tenure and promotion (Walker, Fleishman, & Stephenson, 2013). A research project, at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education as cited by Walker, Fleishman, & Stephenson (2013), provided the following evidence to support this concept:

"the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, a research project at Harvard University's Graduate school of Education, recently surveyed 6,773 tenure-track faculty members at 77 institutions. The investigators asked junior faculty members about 16

institutional policies and practices designed to help them succeed. On average, none were rated even "fairly effective" and junior faculty had the least understanding about tenure standards" (p.118).

The goal of this paper is to help junior faculty on the tenure-track learn how to build an academic portfolio and argue for the importance of establishing standards by which tenure-track faculty will be evaluated when applying for tenure and promotion. Tenure-track faculty are typically evaluated on three areas of performance; that is teaching, scholarship and service, but many faculty may question how these three items are weighted. Professors are expected to be good teachers to obtain tenure and promotion, but teaching loads vary by type of institution. A teaching institution may place greater emphasis on student evaluation scores. Most institutions will have a standard requirement of teaching four courses (12 credits) each semester (24 credits a year), but teaching workload questions arise especially if one class is a writing intensive course, another class has high enrollment, and yet another is a new course being taught for the first time, so the question of how to accurately assess teaching workload beyond the measure of number of classes or credits taught, as the type of class, size of class and newness of class affects workload.

At Montana Tech, the Department of Business & Information Technology (BIT) has developed a workload matrix that provides a sense of the amount of work a faculty member is putting into teaching, see appendix 2. For example, in addition to the required 12 credit teaching load, if a class is writing intensive it takes more time to grade so one additional point (credit) is added. If another class has high enrollment of 45 students or more another point (credit) is added, and if faculty are teaching a new course for the first time another point (credit) is added that recognizes the additional work it takes to create a new course. It is then possible to demonstrate your teaching workload is greater than 12 credits and in the above example if all three conditions presented themselves in a semester the faculty members teaching load would total 15 credit points. If teaching at a Doctoral institution, the faculty member may get course relief and teach six credits or two classes per semester, but research expectations are also higher.

For most faculty there is also a research requirement and many junior faculty may be stressed over the expectation to publish while also working to prepare a portfolio of courses they are asked to teach. At many AACSB institutions there is a requirement of publishing in tier one rated journals, so the question remains do articles written and published in conference proceedings count as scholarly work? Another question for junior faculty, is what is the acceptance or rejection rate for a journal to be considered a tier one journal?

Another complication for new faculty conducting research is learning how long it takes for a manuscript to be reviewed, and published. Given the expectation of having journal publications, junior faculty should be aware that it can typically take a year or two before a manuscript is published.

Junior faculty who are also concerned about getting published need to be aware that The Journal of Marketing is the number one ranked journal in the field of marketing, but only has an acceptance rate of 11%, and while you wait nine months for a response of acceptance or rejection, you cannot submit the manuscript to another journal. If a rejection notice is received, it will take another nine months to hear back from the next journal to which the manuscript has been submitted. If there is no greater reward for having an article accepted to a journal with a low acceptance rate, and there is a need to have a minimum number of articles published, then it is recommended to identify a journal that is still respectable, but has a greater likelihood of publishing the manuscript. The University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN which is an AACSB institution requires two peer reviewed journal publications in five years to maintain academic qualification as a faculty member, and four-plus peer reviewed publications over six years for tenure (M. Spriggs, personal communication, June 15, 2015). Yet, even this expectation does not describe the weighting or importance of the quality of the scholarship based on the journal ranking or acceptance rate of the journal.

Service is another area that raises questions. How should service be measured when evaluating faculty for tenure and promotion. Academic committee membership is expected, but the library committee may meet once a year, while the Budget Committee may meet weekly. Again, it is important to have a service workload matrix to determine the actual time commitment of the committee work to which one is assigned. The question remains how much time a junior faculty member should devote to committee membership, and it would be advised for junior faculty to initially serve on committees that have a smaller time commitment, but still look good on the vitae demonstrating service to the institution.

BUILDING A PORTFOLIO

When applying for promotion or tenure, a portfolio will generally be required, and this portfolio must contain the documentation needed to prove to a collegiate evaluation committee you have done the work worthy of someone who successfully receives tenure, or is promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor. The key to receiving promotion or tenure, is to focus on doing the right things, knowing what is expected, and measuring up to these expectations. To

do this requires the academic department and the university to have well-defined departmental and university standards, this paper will describe the process followed at Montana Tech of The University of Montana (Montana Tech) and the Department of Business & Information Technology (BIT) to establish unit standards for promotion and tenure.

It is advised the applicant for promotion and tenure include the following in their portfolio.

1. Current copy of curriculum vitae.
2. A schedule of all courses taught including the number of students in each class, if the class is writing intensive, if the class was a new prep, and the average student evaluation score for the class.
3. All student evaluation feedback forms and comments.
4. Copies of syllabi for each course taught.
5. A schedule of all service work including academic committees served on and dates, volunteer work in the community, participation in student organizations and clubs advised.
6. A schedule of all scholarly work including journal publications, conference proceedings, conference presentations, community presentations, and new courses developed. Included in this schedule should also be a listing of professional development activities during the evaluation period.
7. Copies of all published work.
8. Letters of support from department faculty, faculty across the institution, faculty from outside the institution, and copies of thank you letters from former students. The importance of outside letters from scholars that comment on the value of your research to the field is strongly recommended.

DEVELOPING STANDARDS

Montana Tech is primarily a teaching institution and covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement in conjunction with the Montana Tech Faculty Association. The CBA specifies expectations for academic rank, the time required in rank and institutional time to apply for tenure. The Department of Business and Information Technology (BIT) has six full-time faculty and is a candidate for accreditation by the IACBE. At the start of this process one faculty was tenured and five faculty members were on the tenure track. At the beginning of this effort there were no specific established standards for tenure and promotion within the Department of BIT, all tenure-track faculty members on campus were evaluated under one set of vague standards regarding promotion and tenure decisions. The University also had a new Chancellor who arrived in 2011, with the stated goal of increasing the rigor in the promotion and tenure process, and

further requiring faculty seeking tenure and promotion to have a publication record.

The Department approached the request for specific unit standards with the goal of developing a set of performance metrics used to clarify the process of measuring progress toward promotion and tenure for both the faculty member and the administration. Dennison (2011) stated that any robust and effective assessment or evaluation system should include the attributes of being easily communicated, well understood, consistently applied, and consistent and equivalent in the process of consequences or rewards.

The Department initially looked at the standards in place at a number of schools including the accepted unit standards in place at the Gallagher School of Business at the University of Montana as Montana Tech is a part of the University of Montana system. The BIT Department submitted the standards for approval to the administration and they were found to be unacceptable. The University of Montana Missoula is the flagship institution that is AACSB accredited, yet the unit standards in place were deemed to be lacking in rigor and specificity in terms of the number of publications needed during the evaluation period, what activities counted as scholarly work, and how to evaluate teaching effectiveness. The goal was to find a balance in scholarly work, to place a limit on the amount of scholarly work that would be identified as published in conference proceedings as opposed to peer-reviewed journals, and to give more weight to publishing in journals that had lower acceptance rates.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

The BIT Department then took the time to write unit standards which provided the rigor and specificity requested by the Chancellor in regards to scholarly activity. The focus of the new standards was a point system for scholarly activity. In a discussion with a colleague at Southern Utah University, with an AACSB accredited business school, it was mentioned they used a matrix that identified points for scholarly activity. This matrix was shared with faculty in the Department, adjustments were made, discussions held about what constituted scholarly activity and the importance of finding a balance as scholarly work should include more than just how many articles were published in peer reviewed journals.

There are generally two schools of thought when it comes to how much weight should be placed on publishing in tier one journals, and how many publications were necessary to achieve a satisfactory level of scholarship. The Chancellor was emphatic that faculty who desired to be promoted or obtain tenure, should be expected to pursue research and publish in a tier-one journal. Our situation fell in line with the study

by Glover, Prawitt, and Wood (2006) who argued more schools are putting additional weight on the research component in assessing promotion and tenure, but we were not in the situation argued by Chow, Haddad, Singh, and Wu (2007) where schools were also placing increased pressure on faculty to publish in "top" academic journals with acceptance rates less than 25%. The Department agreed to use the phrase scholarly activity as it was perceived to encompass a broader array of outputs than the term research (Walker, Fleishman, & Stephenson, 2013) and as such an approach would provide a level of flexibility designed to benefit the candidate applying for tenure and promotion.

The Department sought to make the evaluation of scholarly activity a more objective process by assigning the number of points earned from a scholarly activity. To also make for a more balanced approach, points could and should be earned from a variety of different scholarly activities such as new course development, publishing in academic journals, conference participation, professional memberships, and more.

The Department then had to decide how many scholarly points were required to show satisfactory effort in scholarly work. A decision was made that faculty who were teaching 24 credits a year (4/4), needed to achieve a minimum of eight scholarly activity points over a five-year time period, of which four points must be generated by publication in a tier-one publication. Faculty who request course relief to focus on more scholarly activity and teach 18 credits a year (3/3) are required to achieve 12 scholarly activity points, of which six points must be generated by publishing in a tier-one journal. Faculty who then apply for tenure or promotion will be given a rating of Excellent if they exceed the minimum number of scholarly activity points, a rating will be given of Satisfactory if they meet the minimum, and Unsatisfactory if they failed to meet the minimum.

The Chancellor was satisfied with this new Schedule of Scholarly Activity points as it required a publication in a tier-one journal. The schedule also awarded points for publications based on the rate of acceptance for the journal, while it still gave points for publications in conference proceedings, it had limits to how much of one activity could be counted. Department faculty were satisfied knowing they could earn points for other professional activity such as being a reviewer for an article, chairing a session at a conference, or serving as an editor to a journal, but these other activities could only be 50% of the scholarly activity points needed, as being published in a tier-one journal was still the bench mark which satisfied the Chancellor.

Appendix 1 provides a schedule of scholarly activities and the points allotted for each activity.

Please note that to achieve proper balance, some activities have a cap for the number of activities and points that can be earned for an activity. There is no cap for points that can be earned under first-level publications. Depending on the acceptance rate of the first-level journal as determined by Cabell's, more points can be earned for a journal with a lower acceptance rate.

A faculty member applying for promotion must achieve a Satisfactory rating in scholarly activity. A faculty member applying for tenure must achieve Excellence in scholarly activity.

EVALUATION OF TEACHING

Montana Tech uses a 20-question end of course evaluation form to measure the student's evaluation of their instructors. The applicant is required to show the results from the Montana Tech general student evaluation, as well as any student evaluation instrument adopted by the Department, for all courses they instruct and include these evaluations in the portfolio. The evaluation form has a rating of 1 = Strongly Disgree to 5 = Strongly Agree. In analyzing student evaluation scores, applicants shall calculate the weighted average of student evaluations each academic year for the courses they instruct. Scores shall be weighted by the number of student-credit-hours in the course. For tenure and promotion applications, the score will be taken from the two previous academic years with prior years evaluated on a qualitative basis. The goal is to demonstrate sustainable instructional performance. Using the current Montana Tech student evaluations, the following rankings shall be used. A faculty member applying for promotion must achieve a satisfactory rating in instructional performance. A faculty member applying for tenure must achieve Excellence in instructional performance.

1. Excellent = Weighted Average greater than or equal to 4.25 with consideration given to the course levels, content, and enrollments.
2. Satisfactory = Weighted Average greater than or equal to 3.75 with consideration given to the course levels, content, and enrollments.
3. Unsatisfactory = Weighted Average less than 3.75.

In developing the faculty portfolio for teaching effectiveness, the applicant should also include the following information:

1. Written opinion from either former or present students, gathered by the faculty member under evaluation;
2. Student performance on standardized tests;
3. Department, Montana Tech, or other teaching awards;
4. Other teaching recognition;

5. The relative number of writing intensive courses taught during the evaluation period; and
6. The total number of student credit hours generated by the applicant during the evaluation period.

SERVICE

Service is defined by the Department as any work that results in the betterment of the Department that is not related to instructional or scholarly activity. Service includes required efforts in student advising, class scheduling, attendance at department meetings, and campus committee work. To be considered having a Satisfactory level of service requires participation on at least one academic committee.

Other optional examples include, but are not limited to, student club advising, service to the profession, service to the community, participating on public or private boards, speaking engagements, and consulting work.

APPLYING FOR PROMOTION

Faculty applying for promotion must submit their portfolio which includes a file on scholarly activity, instructional performance and service. Faculty must achieve satisfactory levels of achievement for scholarly activity, instructional performance and service. Faculty applying for promotion must also have a terminal degree, or a master's degree and five years of professional experience.

Faculty applying for full professor, must have a terminal degree, include a written external review of their portfolio, and achieve Excellence in two of the three areas of evaluation and satisfactory in the third.

APPLYING FOR TENURE

Faculty applying for tenure must submit their portfolio which includes a file on scholarly activity, instructional performance and service. Faculty must achieve Excellence in Instructional Performance or Scholarly Activity and Satisfactory in the other. In addition the candidate must achieve satisfactory in service. Faculty applying for tenure must also have a terminal degree. Faculty applying for tenure must also include a written external review of their portfolio.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this experience it would be strongly recommended that academic departments establish unit standards that reflect the requirements for promotion and tenure. According to Ambrose and Cropanzano (2003), organizational and procedural justice is important when determining fairness. In adopting standards by which faculty are measured to achieve promotion or tenure, justice is improved as the arbitrary nature of the promotion or tenure decision is now established and each applicant for promotion or tenure knows what they must do to receive their promotion or tenure. Applicants must still submit their portfolio demonstrating they have met the requirements, but the arbitrary nature of the decision is now removed as reviewers must make their decision based on assessing if the applicant has measured up to the stated and agreed upon requirement for promotion or tenure.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the process to develop a set of promotion and tenure specific to the Department can be considered a success. Faculty members now know the benchmark they must reach when applying for promotion or tenure. In the past, applicants for promotion and tenure submitted a portfolio, but it was unclear whether or not the applicant had done enough to be approved for promotion or tenure. Given the newly adopted standards, the applicant now has a standard by which he is measured. The goal for establishing department standards is to remove the subjectivity so often inherent in applications for promotion and tenure. As junior faculty members advance in their career it is important to know what activities they must complete in order to reach satisfactory and excellence performance requirements for research, teaching and service.

When there are expectations for scholarly activity, this is clearly spelled out and identifies the level and type of scholarly activity that is expected, and how it is measured. If publications in peer-reviewed journals is expected, it is stated what the acceptance rate should be for the journals that publish research. Instead of stating the number of publications required, a point system or weighting is created that recognizes the quality and importance of research based on the journal that publishes the work. Since scholarly work is more than publishing research, departments establish a matrix that identifies scholarly activity and recognizes scholarly activity in all its forms, not just published research.

If junior faculty are focused solely on the number of published articles they accumulate over their evaluation period, then the focus on teaching and service may take a back seat to their research activities. If publishing is the only measurement to research, then other professional development activities may also suffer, junior faculty may decide to not lend their services to reviewing articles for publication, they may not seek to make presentations at conferences or participate in panel discussions.

Junior faculty soon figure out what will get them ahead in their careers, and if there are activities that will not move them forward in their careers they will avoid

these activities. It is important to have a well-rounded faculty member who contributes with scholarly work, teaching and service, and it is important that faculty working towards promotion or tenure knows ahead of time how this decision is made.

The Department had two faculty members apply for tenure during the academic year following the new department standards, and their individual applications were reviewed by the university's Collegiate Evaluation Committee. The committee members were subsequently asked their individual thoughts regarding the promotion and tenure standards adopted by the BIT Department and how they compared to the standards enacted by other departments on campus. All members of the Committee agreed the BIT Department standards were clear regarding the requirements for promotion and tenure which made it easy to apply in their decision making process, which was the ultimate goal of the Department and both applicants were awarded tenure.

Any success notwithstanding, discussion has been ongoing as how to further improve the standards. Potential issues have been identified regarding hiring of faculty members new to Montana Tech who have experience at other academic institutions. An issue recently arose questioning whether scholarly activity completed at another institution, if completed within the past five years can be applied and counted as scholarly activity points under the new standard. What was unclear was if all points must be accrued while employed at Montana Tech, or if work could be carried forward and be counted. In an effort for fairness and justice, it would be beneficial to clearly state that any scholarly activity completed in the past five years and earned at a previous institution may or may not be brought to Montana Tech.

In addition, the Department has had discussions regarding the use of the Montana Tech standard student evaluation forms. There have been discussions that a Department specific evaluation tool may likely be a better approach for student evaluations. Another question has been how to measure faculty teaching workload. The question has been should a faculty member be measured on a simple 3/3 or 4/4 teaching load, or should there be recognition for faculty who teach writing intensive classes, classes with large enrollments, a preparation of an online class, or teaching a class for the first time. The Department has worked on a teaching load matrix (Appendix 2) to recognize that all classes and credits taught are not equal. Again the goal is a question of fairness and justice so faculty are willing to teach large classes, teach writing intensive classes, prepare new courses, or teach online without feeling they are asked to do more work than other members of the Department. The adoption of this workload matrix would acknowledge the increase in workload for large classes, writing intensive classes, online classes and developing a new class. The goal is in the future, course relief could be a possibility while recognizing that faculty may be teaching only nine credits in a semester, but the workload is the equivalent of teaching 12 credits. In this situation a faculty member teaching three classes, would be recognized with teaching equivalent of four classes.

Finally, the Department would like to take a more measurable approach to assessing the component related to assessing service standards. Currently, the Department Head is required to qualitatively apply a grade of unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or excellent to an applicant's service activities, and it would be helpful to remove the arbitrary nature of this decision, as well. Overall the goal is to employ specific measures that would provide a clear and understandable set of metrics to a promotion and tenure candidate when measuring applicants on service, teaching and scholarly activity.

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Appendix 1

Table 1: Approved Scholarly Activity Assessment Instrument

Category	Activities	Scholarly Activity Points	Maximum Points[5]	Points Earned
Intellectual Contributions—First-level Publications[1]	Publications in refereed[2] journals with acceptance rates[3] less than 15%[4]	12	-----	
	Publications in refereed[2] journals with acceptance rates[3] from 15 to 25%	10	-----	
	Publications in refereed[2] journals with acceptance rates[3] from 26 to 50%	8	-----	
	Publications in referred[2] journals with acceptance rates[3] from 51% to 75%	4	8	
	Chapters in scholarly books, textbooks, and supplements, if refereed.[2] Complete books apply the same per chapter rate.	2.00 min./ [5]negot.	-----	
	National research grant received	1	-----	
Intellectual Contributions—Second-level Publications[1]	Publications in refereed[2] journals with acceptance rates[3] over 75%	2	6	
	Refereed[2] proceedings publications	2	4	
	Reprints in other publications	1	2	
	Updates of chapters	1	2	
	Published working papers	1	2	
	Citation of work in other publications	0.2	1	
	Other widely disseminated publications	1	2	
Scholarly Presentations	Presentations at refereed[2] national and regional academic conferences	1	2	
	Presentations at non-refereed conferences or professional conferences	0.5	1	
	Academic presentations to the broader Montana Tech "community"	0.5	1	
	Academic presentations to School of Business	0.5	1	
	Academic presentations to broad audiences at other universities	0.5	1	
	Academic presentations at civic groups	0.5	1	
Academic Support	Being an editor of a journal	5.00/ full year	5	
	Being on an editorial board	2.00/ full year	2	
	Being a session chair at an academic conference	0.5	1	
	Being on the program as a "critiquing" discussant at an academic conference	0.5	1	
	Being a referee of an academic paper for a conference	0.5	1	
	Being a referee of an academic paper for possible publication	0.5	1	
Other Academic Activity	Significant creation of a new course	[5]negot.	2	
	Other academic activity	[5]negot.	2	
	Faculty mentor to a student under the Montana Tech undergraduate research project program	0.5	1	
Other Professional Activity	Consulting	[5]negot.	2	
	Full- or part-time employment	[5]negot.	2	
	Service such as being an expert witness, reviewer for CPA exam, reviewer for a textbook, etc.	[5]negot.	2	
	Articles in newspapers, magazines, etc.	0.5	1	
Developmental Activities	Maintain one's active professional certification	1	2	
	Board member on Board of Directors	1	1	
	Officer in organization or association	1	1	
	Attending a teaching, research, academic, or professional conference, seminar, lecture, presentation, etc.	0.25	1	
			Total	0

Appendix 2

Faculty Member:	
Semester	

					Adjustments						
						Enrollment						
				New Prep	In-class (>40)	On-line (>25)	W Course	Lab	Graduate Level	Distance Delivery	
Course Number	**Course**	**Enrollment**	**Credits**								**Total**
				-	-	-		-	-		-
				-	-	-	-	-	-		-
				-	-	-	-	-	-		-
											-
Totals for Spring 20xx		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Semester	Fall 20xx
	Class

					Adjustments						
						Enrollment						
				New Prep	In-class (>40)	On-line (>25)	W Course	Lab	Graduate Level	Distance Delivery	
Course Number	**Course**	**Enrollment**	**Credits**								**Total**
				-	-	-		-	-	-	
					-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
											-
Totals for Fall 20xx		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals for 2014		#VALUE!	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-