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Faculty Senate Resolution (#2324-01) | Faculty Handbook and Tenure and Promotion

JSU Faculty Senate

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JSU FACULTY SENATE 2023-2024

Resolution #2324-01

Faculty Handbook and Tenure and Promotion Resolution

1. **Background to Motion:** It is assumed that all faculty hired at Jacksonville State University (JSU) will be given the opportunity to develop their professional skills as teachers and researchers and that they will join in collegial service to the institution. These faculty should be fairly and objectively evaluated for tenure and promotion at appropriate times. In the past five years, JSU has experienced quite a lot of change in the Office of the Provost and the structure of Colleges and Deans. With this growth and each new development have come differing ideas about faculty recruitment, retention, and tenure and promotion standards. The Senate began to receive reports from faculty of the lack of objective, measurable criteria for annual performance evaluations, tenure, and promotion decision-making in some departments.

In an effort to facilitate greater clarity about these issues for the faculty, the JSU Faculty Senate needs to examine departmental tenure and promotion policies, evaluate these policies for objectivity, equality, and fairness, and, more specifically, clarify departmental guidelines for teaching, authorship on scholarly/creative endeavors, and objectively measurable collegiality.

It was determined that annual performance evaluations at JSU are heavily linked to decisions regarding tenure and promotion, but there seemed to be a significant “disconnect” between these two processes. For example, some annual evaluations do not differentiate between what “exceeds expectations” vs. “meets expectations vs. “does not meet expectations.” In addition, some annual evaluations do not reflect the criteria for tenure and promotion, so tenure-track faculty are unaware of specific tenure and promotion requirements or the status of their work toward successful achievement of tenure and promotion. Some tenure-track faculty do not receive any written evaluation reflecting their progress toward a successful tenure and promotion process.

Here is what the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has to say about these matters:

- decisions regarding faculty performance are primarily a faculty responsibility because it is scholars in each field that have the “...chief competence for judging the work of their colleagues...” (p. 121).
- decisions regarding tenure should be made by an appropriate faculty group using procedures approved by the faculty (p. 95, 97)
- a wide “latitude of academic freedom...and standards of fairness” should be observed when an institution is making decisions regarding tenure (p. 95).
- deliberation on faculty tenure and promotion must avoid judgments based on “arbitrary or...inadequate consideration” (p. 94).
- “Good practice requires that the institution (department, college or university) define its criteria for reappointment and tenure and its procedures for reaching decisions on

those matters” (p. 94).

- it is important to inform faculty members of instances that could affect a negative decision regarding tenure so that they have the opportunity to correct such deficiencies (p.95) and;
- Finally, that following the guidelines discussed above “contributes to the achievement of harmonious faculty relationships and the development of well-qualified faculties” (p. 98).
- *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*. AAUP. (2022, January 25). <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

2. **Motion:** Whereas retention of productive and scholarly faculty is tantamount to promoting excellence in teaching and effective learning

Whereas Jacksonville State University (JSU) recognizes the importance of facilitating a culture of productivity through significant contributions to scientific knowledge, public policy, economic opportunity, and artistic expression

And Whereas the faculty expects the university to adhere to AAUP best practices with regard to faculty retention, tenure, and promotion, be it

Resolved, that the JSU Faculty Senate requests that faculty within individual departments work with department chairs/heads to develop written procedures and implement processes across colleges and departments to:

1. ensure all departments have annual evaluations for tenure track and promotion-eligible faculty that reflect the same criteria by which they are evaluated for tenure and promotion;
2. ensure criteria for annual evaluations reflect criteria for tenure and promotion for relevant faculty;
3. ensure criteria for performance evaluation, 3rd-year review for tenure track faculty, and tenure and promotion are specific, measurable, objective, and fair given resources available for faculty;
4. ensure faculty are aware of and provided in writing evaluation and T&P criteria early in their appointment;
5. ensure a workable plan is in place for mentoring of new and junior faculty;
6. make available to the greatest extent possible resources for faculty to achieve T&P goals;
7. establish promotion and tenure committees at both the departmental and college levels;
8. adopt and enforce standards for determining authorship on scholarly works (publications, creative art productions, presentations); and
9. ensure periodic evaluation of T&P procedures, mentoring processes, and implementation of standards for co-authorship of scholarly works.

Passed by the Senate on 11 September 2023