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<th>Sep 20 2007 12:00:00 AM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sender</td>
<td>Sheldon Zedeck, Vice Provost- Academic Affairs &amp; Faculty Welfare</td>
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<td>To</td>
<td>Deans, Department Chairs</td>
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<td>Subject</td>
<td>Step VI Letters</td>
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| Message    | DEANS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRS:  
I am pleased to announce a new policy regarding the solicitation of external letters for advancement to Professor, Step VI. Effective immediately, for July 1, 2008 actions, letters for Step VI will be optional.

Currently, the campus requires that external letters be solicited as part of the advancement case to Step VI, even though there is nothing in the APM requiring such. However, the change in practice to make such letters optional does not alter the standard for Step VI advancement. Instead, this change will provide departments and schools the option of omitting external letters when they believe a clear and compelling case for the advancement can be made without them. If campus-level review cannot be completed without additional information, such letters may be requested by reviewers. Departments and schools should continue to solicit letters in cases where the evidence for “highly distinguished scholarship” and “great distinction, recognized nationally or internationally, in scholarship or creative achievement or in teaching” is not sufficiently clear from sources available within the campus.

In addition, Departments and Schools will establish an internal review body, if one does not already exist, to recommend to the chair or dean on Step VI advancement. This body may be a standing committee on personnel or an ad hoc committee established for the purpose of reviewing Step VI advancements (following the model of the Mid-Career Appraisal at the Assistant Professor level). Only Professors at Step VI or higher may serve on this committee (standing personnel or ad hoc) constituted to review advancement to Step VI merit cases; in the event that a department has insufficient faculty at or above Step VI to evaluate a Step VI review internally, the Chair shall consult the Dean of the unit or the Dean of a Professional School shall consult the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Welfare, and an appropriate ad hoc committee will be constituted within the unit or School. In effect, the committee takes the place of the external letters. The committee will have the option to recommend that external letters be solicited, but will ordinarily be expected to evaluate on the matter based on the record assembled.

External letters shall be obtained by the Department Chair or School Dean if requested by the internal ad hoc committee (or standing personnel committee), by the candidate for advancement, or by campus reviewers.

This change is being made in response to an ongoing desire to...
streamline the academic personnel review procedures.

Questions regarding this policy may be addressed to the Academic Personnel Office.

Sheldon Zedeck
Vice Provost
Academic Affairs and
Faculty Welfare