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**FACULTY SENATE**

**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY SENATE BILL 26-A-16**

Approved by the Faculty Senate  
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**BRIEF SUMMARY:** This bill clarifies the process by which departments evaluate, revise, and approve their department criteria, particularly in instances where the departmental T&P committee includes members from outside the discipline. It affirms that discipline specific criteria are developed and approved by faculty holding primary appointments within the department and possessing relevant disciplinary expertise.

In addition, this bill clarifies the approval process for both tenure and promotion criteria and RNTT merit criteria, including how governance functions when those criteria are maintained as separate documents or incorporated within a single combined document. It specifies voting authority, faculty input expectations, and procedural routing to ensure consistency, transparency, and compliance with university policy and procedures.

The purpose of these clarifications are to preserve disciplinary autonomy, ensure appropriate faculty governance, and provide clear procedural guidance during institutional restructuring, while maintaining alignment with established institutional approval processes.

**ACTION OF BILL REVISING “Development of Criteria” in Chapter 2- Tenure and Promotion Procedures**

**WHEREAS:** The Faculty Handbook establishes that departments are responsible for developing, maintaining, and recommending revisions to tenure and promotion (T&P) criteria that reflect the unique character and standards of each discipline;

**WHEREAS:** The Faculty Handbook further specifies that departmental T&P criteria shall be reviewed at least every five years to ensure alignment with current University policy and Faculty Handbook provisions;

**WHEREAS:** The Handbook provides for the development of Rank-Not-Tenure-Track (RNTT) merit criteria but does not clearly define the process for development, revision, and approval of RNTT merit criteria in relation to T&P criteria, particularly when such criteria are maintained as separate documents or incorporated within a single combined document;

**WHEREAS:** Current Faculty Handbook language does not clearly define the process to be followed when members of a Departmental Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee are drawn from outside the

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discipline, creating potential ambiguity regarding authority, participation, and voting in the development and revision of discipline-specific criteria;

**WHEREAS:** Clear procedural guidance is necessary to define faculty input, voting authority, and approval routing for both T&P and RNTT merit criteria to ensure transparency, consistency, and compliance with University policy and procedures;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Faculty Handbook be revised to clarify that discipline-specific tenure and promotion criteria are developed, revised, and approved by faculty holding primary appointments within the department and possessing relevant disciplinary expertise;

**BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED:**

That when a Departmental Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee includes faculty whose primary appointment lies outside the department, those faculty members shall be excused from participation in the evaluation, development, revision, and approval recommendation of discipline-specific criteria;

**BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED:**

That when the number of tenured faculty within the department serving on the committee is limited, the review and development of discipline-specific criteria shall include all tenured faculty members within the department, including the department chairperson and may include tenure-track faculty for purposes of discussion and development, consistent with existing voting requirements;

**BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED:**

The approval process for both tenure and promotion criteria and RNTT merit criteria is clarified;

**BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED:**

That when a Departmental Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee includes faculty whose primary appointment lies outside the department, those faculty members shall be excused from participation in the evaluation, development, revision, and approval recommendation of discipline-specific criteria;

**TITLE OF BILL**

1 Development of Criteria

2 Each department has the responsibility to develop, maintain, and, when necessary,  
3 recommend changes to its tenure and promotion criteria and RNTT merit criteria. Nothing in  
4 those criteria may contradict other provisions of the Faculty Handbook. For example, criteria  
5 shall not require that a faculty member submit student evaluations if other Handbook policy  
6 prohibits such a requirement.

7 Departmental criteria will be reviewed every 5 years and brought into compliance with  
8 current Faculty Handbook.

9 Department criteria for tenure and promotion, promotion, and post-professorial merit should  
10 be organized by the headings Teaching Effectiveness, Professional Growth, and Service and  
11 contain within each heading those activities that the department-considers relevant accompanied  
12 by the expectations for achieving promotion. Each department may determine whether RNTT  
13 merit criteria are maintained as a separate document or incorporated within the same document  
14 as tenure and promotion criteria. If RNTT merit criteria are incorporated within the same  
15 document as tenure and promotion criteria, the document shall clearly distinguish the evaluation  
16 standards applicable to RNTT faculty. RNTT faculty shall not be required to submit evidence in  
17 the Professional Growth category. For RNTT merit criteria, all full-time faculty members within  
18 the department, including RNTT faculty, shall have opportunity for meaningful input into the  
19 development and revision of those criteria.

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21 Once developed or modified, these criteria are subject to the approval of the College Tenure and  
22 Promotion Advisory Committee, college dean, University Tenure and Promotion and Sabbatical  
23 Leave Advisory Committee, and the Provost. RNTT merit criteria, whether separate or  
24 incorporated within a combined document, shall follow the same institutional approval routing  
25 process.

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27 Once approved, and until revised by the department, these criteria shall serve as the sole basis  
28 upon which faculty members are evaluated for tenure and promotion. No committee or  
29 individual evaluating a dossier may impose criteria upon a faculty member in excess of those  
30 itemized in the departmental criteria. New sets of criteria or revisions to existing criteria shall be  
31 approved through the process described below. Until such time as new or revised criteria are  
32 approved, existing criteria remain in force.

33 1. The Departmental Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee shall be responsible for  
34 the ongoing review, development, and updating of the department criteria. When the  
35 Department Tenure and Promotion Committee includes members, whose primary  
36 appointment lies outside the discipline or department, those members shall be excused  
37 from participation in the development, revision, and approval of discipline-specific  
38 criteria. Authority for such criteria rests solely with faculty holding primary appointments  
39 within the discipline and possessing relevant disciplinary expertise. Where the committee  
40 includes a limited number of tenured faculty from within the discipline, all tenured  
41 faculty members of the department may participate in the review and development  
42 process. Tenure-track faculty may be included in discussion and development.

43 2. For tenure and promotion criteria, approval requires a majority vote of the tenure and  
44 tenure-track faculty of the department. If RNTT merit criteria are incorporated within a  
45 combined tenure and promotion document, voting on the tenure and promotion sections  
46 shall remain limited to tenure and tenure-track faculty. Approval of RNTT merit  
47 requirements requires a majority vote of all full-time faculty in the department. The  
48 Chairperson for Department Tenure and Promotion will submit the approved criteria for  
49 academic review. The approved departmental criteria will be routed sequentially to the  
50 College Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee, the Dean, the University Tenure

51 and Promotion and Sabbatical Leave Advisory Committee, and finally to the Provost for  
52 review and approval.

53 3. If either the College T&P Committee or the Dean does not approve the criteria, the  
54 document will be returned to the department with written feedback and suggested  
55 revisions within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt during the academic year (or  
56 within a mutually agreed upon period during the summer). The Department T&P  
57 Committee shall review the suggested revisions, deliberate, and if necessary, modify the  
58 criteria. The approved revised document shall then be resubmitted for review. If, after  
59 resubmission, differences persist with either the College Committee or the Dean, the  
60 recommendations of the Department, College Committee, and Dean shall be forwarded  
61 concurrently to the University Tenure and Promotion and Sabbatical Leave Advisory  
62 Committee within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt during the academic year (or within  
63 a mutually agreed upon period during the summer). The University Committee shall  
64 review the recommendations and either: endorse the criteria and forward to the Provost  
65 for final approval or return the criteria to the Department T&P Committee with suggested  
66 revisions for further review with written feedback and supporting rationale. The  
67 department shall then review the feedback, make necessary revisions and submit the  
68 updated criteria.

69 4. The Provost will review the final submission and either approve the criteria or return  
70 the criteria to the University T&P Committee for clarification. If the Provost does not  
71 approve the criteria, the Provost shall meet with the University T&P Committee to  
72 discuss revisions. If no resolution is reached, the criteria shall be returned to the  
73 department with recommendations for further modification.

74 5. Upon final approval, the Provost shall inform the Department and Dean that the  
75 criteria are approved and effective.

76 For a period of three years following the final approval of a revision of departmental criteria,  
77 a faculty member applying for tenure and promotion, promotion, or post-professorial merit may  
78 elect to be evaluated by the previous criteria instead of the new ones.

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<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Introduced to Senate	3-25-26
Second Senate Meeting	
Faculty Senate Vote	
President's Review	
15 Day Review	
Posted to Faculty Handbook	