

Faculty meeting Department of Political Science  
Minutes  
January 19, 2018

We discussed the contract renewal document. We voted to endorse the Contract Renewal policy which was revised on September 22, 2017 by a vote of 18 in favor, 0 against.

# Procedures for Probationary Faculty Contract Renewal (adopted December 15, 1995; revised February 14, 1997; revised October 2, 1997; revised August 2005; revised March 3, 2011; Revised September 2012; Revised February 2014 vote 11 for - 0 against; Revised January 30, 2015 vote 14 for – 0 against; [Revised September 9, 2016, vote 15 for – 0 against; revised September 22, 2017, vote 18 for – 0 against](#))

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## 1. Guiding Presumptions for the Contract Renewal Process

The candidate, after having already undergone a thorough and extensive competitive review process in being hired, will be assisted by the contract renewal process in her/his development as a scholar, teacher, mentor, and colleague, and her/his advancement towards tenure and promotion.

The Departmental Personnel Committee (DPC) will undertake a fair assessment of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses, and offer the candidate helpful suggestions for means of improvement where necessary. Each review by a DPC is part of a sequential process, and each subsequent evaluation will carefully assess the candidate's progress in strengthening her/his case for promotion and/or tenure and in remedying previously-noted weaknesses.

The Department encourages the maximum participation of all members of its community in decision making, consistent with the norms of fairness, maintaining community, and adherence to external requirements.

Full information regarding the probationary period can be found [in the 2017-2021 Contract Agreement](#).

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## 2. Summary of the Process

As described in the current Agreement between the faculty union (University of Hawaii Professional Assembly--"UHPA") and the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii (a document which is variously called "The Agreement" or "The Contract"), "the initial appointment to the Faculty, by contract shall be for a two-year (2) period (p. 22)."

The review in the second year of probation, and those subsequently, pay increasing attention to whether or not the candidate continues to demonstrate strengths, is satisfactorily addressing any identified weaknesses as noted in previous assessments, and/or whether other weaknesses have been perceived. This means the candidate should be moving towards meeting the criteria for tenure as the tenure decision approaches.

The Contract describes the renewal process in Article XII, on page 20. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) annually submits to the Deans and Directors, and they to the department chairs for their use and for submission independently by the DPCs, "Probationary Faculty Forms" as well as "Time Lines for Termination of Probationary Faculty" which are used to determine the timing of the Department's contract renewal procedures.

The Chair shall give a copy of each of these documents, and this "Statement of Procedures for Contract Renewal" of the Department of Political Science to each newly-hired faculty member and discuss them with the new faculty member as soon as possible after s/he is hired. The Chair shall also give in a timely manner to and discuss with each candidate any new or amended documents which probationary faculty

need in order to prepare themselves for the contract renewal process.

Article XII, "Renewal of Contracts During Probationary Period", paragraph E "General" of The Agreement states in part:

Recommendations for renewal shall require that the Faculty Member's performance has been assessed for strengths and weaknesses and has been rated satisfactory, that there is a continuing need for the Faculty Member's services at the University, and that the Faculty Member has made the professional improvement or has demonstrated the professional and personal qualities needed by the department, or similar considerations. A positive assessment does not necessarily assure renewal of appointment.

Subparagraph 2 "Procedures" of the Contract states:

The department recommendation form is initiated by the Department/Division Chair. The form will provide for the assessment by the Department/Division Chair and the Department/Division Personnel Committee of the Faculty Member's performance. The form is passed to the Department/Division Personnel Committee which will include its assessment and recommendation with the form and transmit the material to the Chair who will make an assessment and recommendation. The Chair will then show the assessments and recommendations to the Faculty Member concerned before forwarding same to the Dean/Director. The assessments and recommendations shall be forwarded to the Dean/Director no later than December 20.

Following these guidelines, the application for contract renewal is prepared by the candidate in consultation with the DC, if so requested by the candidate, in accordance with the established guidelines. No anonymous material shall be made a part of any contract renewal application.

The application is then reviewed for completeness by the DC and the DPC. The DPC will consider the evidence, make one (1) written assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each applicant, append a recommendation if they so desire, and transmit the dossier to the next higher level of review. The DC shall not participate in the deliberations of the DPC nor influence the DPC's written assessment. The DC shall make a separate and independent assessment and recommendation. Each candidate is to be evaluated only on the professionally-relevant categories mentioned in the criteria.

On the VCAA forms, the DPC shall indicate whether it determined the "Overall Rating" of the probationary faculty member to be "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" and whether its recommendation is for "Renewal" or "Nonrenewable" of the probationary faculty member's contract. When more than one faculty member is being assessed by the DPC, the candidates shall not be compared to one another.

### 3. Information Used By the DPC in the Assessment

Each probationary faculty member shall assemble and give to the DPC a file of appropriate information, which should include assessments of scholarly work, statements and copies of research projects proposed or underway, and other evidence of professional activity and improvement.

Full and complete teaching evaluations from all classes taught, based on a common departmentally approved instrument, administered independently of the probationary faculty member by the Department, shall also be placed in the member's DPC file.

The DPC is not a venue for the filing of formal complaints. If the DPC were to receive something which seems to be a formal complaint, the chair of the DPC will immediately contact the appropriate administrator or counselor (Department Chair, Dean, Student Advocate, and the like) for evaluation and resolution of the matter. In order to assess the candidate's strengths and areas that need improving, the DPC does not need exhaustively to search for every bit of information available, but merely try to obtain a fair sampling of relevant information. Whenever the committee receives negative information about the candidate, the committee should evaluate the information as to its accuracy.

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**Deleted:** The DPC, independently of the probationary faculty, shall elicit supplemental information by requesting via an email to the Department listserv that *written* submittals on teaching, scholarship, and professional, university, departmental and community service from faculty and students. The DPC should make an effort to secure letters from those within the candidate's field of specialization, but letters from all faculty can be submitted. Letters from other UH faculty may be solicited or accepted, when the candidate teaches courses in disciplines other than political science. The candidate may also provide individuals to contact. Only signed letters will be accepted. These letters are in addition to those of outside reviewers, which shall be solicited in accordance with established university procedures.¶

Requests for student comments will be distributed by the DPC to departmental graduate students and undergraduate majors by email and by posting on official departmental bulletin boards. When requesting letters, the DPC should make it clear that it is asking letter writers to assess the strengths and weaknesses of, and continuing need for, the candidate in terms of her/his teaching, scholarship, Department participation, professional and community service, meeting the curricular needs of the Department and University, and other elements as described in The Contract.¶

## 5. Composition of the DPC

The DPC will be composed of five tenured faculty members selected via a random (unbiased) process from all Department tenured faculty members above the rank of the candidate being reviewed. Prior to the actual selection, each of the candidates being reviewed may ask the Department Chair to remove one name from the pool of potential DPC members. This request will be kept confidential. The five tenured faculty members shall be chosen from a box containing the names of all departmental tenured faculty members above the rank of the candidate being reviewed, excepting any otherwise eligible tenured faculty members who have been excluded by the candidate(s) under review. The names of all eligible tenured faculty members who have previously served on a DPC shall also be included. The names shall be pulled blindly from the box by the Department Chair during a Department Meeting. No active member of the tenured faculty above the rank of the candidate being evaluated has the right to refuse to participate in the selection process or to refuse to serve on the DPC, if selected. The Chair of the Department, though informed by the DPC report, is not a member of the DPC and engages in, and reports to the Dean, an assessment of probationary faculty independently of the DPC.

## 6. Procedures of the DPC

The Chair of the DPC is a tenured faculty member elected by DPC members. Each member of the DPC shall receive a copy of this document, and all of the other documents mentioned above. The meetings of the DPC shall be closed and all information and discussions kept in confidence. The DPC will strive to arrive at a consensual appraisal of the candidate's professional progress. In the absence of consensus, the decision about the "Overall rating" and "Recommendation for or against renewal" will be determined by a majority vote by secret ballot.

## 7. The Norm of Confidentiality

All DPC members will adhere to strict confidence of information sources. Unsigned letters and "secondhand" information are not legitimate inputs into the DPC assessment process and will not be accepted or considered. Maintaining the confidentiality of sources, however, will remain the prime consideration at all times.

## 8. The Right of Candidates to Respond to the Committee's Assessment

During the initial deliberation stage, candidates shall have an opportunity to respond to any especially critical information that the Committee might receive. The candidate shall have a chance to review and comment on the DPC's draft report. The candidate may, at his or her discretion, choose to bring the final report and file before a meeting of the tenured faculty members above the rank of the candidate for further discussion. The DC is not included in this meeting because he/she must provide an independent assessment.

## 9. Reporting the Committee's Assessment

The Committee's final report will be submitted to the Chair, who will show both the Chair's and the DPC's assessment to the Candidate, who signs a statement of acknowledgment (and not necessarily agreement) before the Chair transmits all of this to the Dean for the Dean's subsequent assessment and decision.

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**Deleted:** The DPC shall then hold a meeting with all tenured faculty members above the rank of the candidate in order to solicit information about the candidate and obtain a sense of an interactive faculty evaluation.

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