

## **A Non-Tenure Faculty Evaluation System**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

A non-tenure system for faculty evaluation exists at the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE). All faculty members are reviewed at regular intervals throughout their employment, the timing of the review dependent upon the faculty rank. The procedure consists of a review for renewal that is conducted by a university wide committee that receives input from multiple sources , including the home department of the faculty member. The members of the committee are elected each year by the faculty. Review criteria include teaching excellence, research activities, professional growth, and service to the university. Teaching excellence is the major factor considered during the renewal process.

The Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) is a private university that specializes in technical based programs. The university offers undergraduate degrees in engineering, engineering technology, technical communications, business, and nursing and master's degrees in engineering, engineering management, environmental engineering, and perfusion. The university stresses undergraduate education, with an emphasis on design content, laboratories and small classes. The university does not use teaching assistants. Faculty members teach all classes and laboratories.

### **FACULTY REVIEW, RENEWAL, AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS**

The Milwaukee School of Engineering faculty review, renewal and appointment process incorporates both peer review and administrative review procedures at both the department and university-wide levels. This review process is automatic, occurring at intervals that are dependent upon the academic rank held by the faculty member. The faculty member is expected to participate at the appropriate time in this review. Failure to participate is construed as giving notice of intention to terminate employment.

As part of the process, faculty members are also required to submit a plan of professional growth that they expect to accomplish during the future contract period. The faculty members are advised to consult with their academic department chair when developing their professional growth plan.

The process starts in the fall of the academic year. In September, the faculty members who are up for renewal submit a form that indicates their intention to participate in the process. In October, the member submits a packet of prescribed material to the College Faculty Academic Review Committee (CFARC) chair. The packet contains a narrative and supporting material, representative class work and student evaluations. The narrative is an overview of the faculty member from the standpoint of teaching philosophy and effectiveness, service to the department, institution, and community and professional growth.

The packets (without the student evaluations) are distributed to the faculty member's home academic Department Peer Review Committee (DPRC). DPRC consists of all faculty members in the home department and reviews the packet and votes on the issue of contract renewal in December. The DPRC comments and votes are forwarded to the CFARC committee. The CFARC committee relies on the academic department for evaluation of student work and professional activities.

The CFARC committee reviews the packets from each faculty member, the student evaluations, and the DPRC response. The committee meets to discuss each faculty member and also votes on the issue of contract renewal. This process occurs from January through March. The committee drafts letters containing the committee's views on the strengths and weaknesses of the faculty member, along with a recommendation of renewal or non-renewal. These draft letters are sent to the faculty members in March. The faculty member can respond to the letter and request to meet with the CFARC committee at this time.

Final letters from CFARC are sent to the Chief Academic Officer, the Academic Department chairs, and the faculty member in late March or early April. The Chief Academic Officer reviews the recommendation from CFARC and with the Academic Department chairs makes a final recommendation to the University President for renewal or non-renewal of each faculty member under review. Faculty members who are renewed will receive employment contracts in April. Those faculty members who are not renewed may appeal the decision.

### **Departmental Peer Review Committee (DPRC)**

The DPRC committee consists of all faculty members with professorial rank. Following a period of time for review by DPRC of all appropriate material, the DPRC Chairperson conducts a secret ballot pertaining to each faculty member being reviewed. The ballot calls for a satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or unsure indication on each of the following evaluation items:

1. Effective Classroom Instruction as measured by peer perception of the range of knowledge involved in subjects taught, student evaluation of the faculty member's teaching, organization and skill in preparing and presenting course materials, etc.
2. Departmental Activities through the development of new courses, laboratories, electives, seminars, etc.
3. Institutional Activities through committee service, attendance at all-university events, etc.
4. Professional Activities as indicated by research publications, paper presentations, active membership in professional societies, society meetings attended, etc.
5. Professional Development/Growth During Past Appointment Period.

Of these items, Effective Classroom Instruction is considered the most important element. However, involvement and achievement of the faculty member in other evaluation areas are also important for professional growth and development.

The concluding item on the ballot calls for an indication of satisfactory, not satisfactory, or unsure that the faculty member's appointment be renewed. Ballots will contain space for comments for each section. Committee members will be instructed that votes other than satisfactory must be accompanied by comments with reasonable particularity.

### **College Faculty Appointment Review Committee CFARC**

The College Faculty Appointment Review Committee (CFARC) consists of five full-time faculty members of Associate Professor rank or higher, elected for two year staggered terms. The committee members are elected at the beginning of the academic year by the faculty. The committee elects a Chair from among its members. The five faculty members must be members of five different academic departments. Faculty members may not be re-elected to serve consecutive terms.

The CFARC committee votes on the same evaluation items as DPRC with the indication of satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or unsure. In addition, the CFARC committee issues a final recommendation on the renewal or non-renewal of the faculty member. This recommendation and the committee votes on the evaluation items are summarized in a letter to the Chief Academic Officer.

### **Administrative Review and Chief Academic Officer**

The administrative review process is primarily concerned with adding input from the academic department chair of the faculty member under review. It may be appropriate, however, for the Chief Academic Officer or the faculty member, to solicit input from other administrative areas that might have a bearing on the overall contribution of the faculty member to the institution.

The peer and administrative review processes come together with the Chief Academic Officer. Based on the written reports and meetings between the faculty member, department chair, and a CFARC representative, the Chief Academic Officer will make a final recommendation to the University President on renewal or non-renewal.

Review of appointments, to determine if they will be renewed, are made at intervals of eight years for full professors, six years for associate professors, and four years for assistant professors. Faculty members with 25 years or more of service no longer have to go through the evaluation process. They must, however, still submit a plan for professional growth. Instructor and part-time faculty re-appointments are on a year-to year basis and may be processed directly by the Academic Department Chair in conjunction with the Chief Academic Officer.

### **APPEAL**

In the case of non-renewal, faculty members may petition the Committee on Faculty of the Board of Regents (CFBR) to review their case. The petition must be written and must indicate the reasons the faculty member believes the decision to be improper. The CFBR reserves the right to

assess the merits of the petition and conduct a review of the record, if deemed appropriate. In cases of appeal, the decision of the CFBR is final.

## **FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Faculty will submit their Faculty Development Plan, along with a copy of their CFARC evaluation, to their department chairperson by the end of the Fall Quarter following their CFARC Review.

The plan should indicate growth experience the faculty member expects to accomplish during the future appointment period. Plans pertaining to research, publication, consulting, summer industrial experience, continuing education, professional society activities, and institutional affairs, should be included. The primary goal of a Development Plan for any faculty member with problems regarding teaching should be the improvement of teaching effectiveness.

## **ACADEMIC RANK ADVANCEMENT**

At MSOE the evaluation process for faculty retention is separate from the evaluation process for advancement in rank. Advancement in rank can occur in any academic year after the first CFARC review. The process consists of a yearly review of the activities in the previous year of each faculty member who requests review for advancement in rank. The Academic Rank Committee (ARC) consists of 3 full-time faculty members from different academic departments. The committee submits to the Chief Academic Officer a list of faculty members who are eligible for promotion based on established criteria. The final decision on advancement is made by the Chief Academic Officer and the University President.

## **PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS**

The faculty of MSOE are generally satisfied with the review process. Specific comments by faculty members are as follows:

- I feel that the review process is very valuable in that it forces the faculty member to consciously assess how well they are doing, and develop a plan for improvement.
- The review process can be very beneficial both for analyzing past performance and to set goals for the future. The nature of the process assures continuous administrative feedback.
- Having spent 30 years in R&D in industry I was used to going through an annual merit review process. In industry, as well as in academia, I feel there ought to be minimum requirements placed on performance. Specifically, it ought to be possible to terminate faculty for poor performance. The long term renewal of contract and annual performance feedback to provide a sound, balanced system.

- If the process is properly administered and the CFARC committee members take their role seriously, the review process is excellent. It provides feedback to faculty members for continuous improvement and also provides a mechanism for remove non-performing faculty.
- The process is not all or nothing. New faculty members are given feedback that allows for improvement. This feedback is provided within the first 2 years of employment.
- The process promotes cross-communication between departments and facilitates discussions of effective teaching techniques by members of the CFARC committee.

### **Biographical Information**

DR. STEVEN BARNICKI is an Assoc. Prof. in the Dept. of Elect. Eng. and Comp. Science at the Milwaukee School of Engineering. His main areas of interest include signal processing, instrumentation and cardiac physiology. He teaches courses in the biomedical, computer, and electrical engineering programs. He was the CFARC chair for the 1995/96 and 1996/97 academic years. He received his Ph.D. from Ohio State University.

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