



## **General Guidelines for NTT Promotion Review**

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR NON-TENURE-TRACK (NTT) PROMOTION REVIEW**

The primary responsibility for faculty review lies within the candidate's department and college. Departments and colleges are responsible for developing policies and procedures defining the standards and criteria for the review of promotion eligible NTT faculty members seeking promotion in rank and/or the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA). These standards and criteria shall be consistent with prevailing standards of excellence in their own disciplines, with college review policies taking precedence over departmental review policies.

Prior to the end of each academic year, the Office of the Provost shall contact each college and provide a list of promotion eligible NTT faculty members who are scheduled for a mandatory review (including mandatory third year pre-promotion review) during the upcoming academic year. The colleges will be responsible for alerting their individual promotion eligible faculty members that they are subject to review during the upcoming academic year. In addition, the Office of the Provost will provide instructions to the colleges on how to access the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site used to assemble the candidate's promotion packet and manage the review process.

**It should be noted that all mandatory reviews must be completed and submitted by the College through the NTT Promotion Share Point site to the Office of the Provost by March 1.**

### **Section 1 Departmental and/or College NTT Promotion Guidelines**

Departmental/college guidelines for the review of promotion eligible NTT faculty members will be reviewed by the departments/colleges, and if necessary updated, on an annual basis. Any changes or updates to departmental and/or college NTT promotion guidelines should be forwarded to the Office of the Provost for approval by May 1 of the academic year prior to when the changes will become effective. These guidelines will also be made available to promotion eligible NTT faculty candidates for promotion through the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site maintained by the Office of the Provost. The NTT Promotion SharePoint Site will be available to begin assembling the candidate's electronic promotion packet beginning at the end of the spring semester prior to the academic year in which the review will take place.

These review guidelines are designed to assure that the highest academic and professional standards are maintained and that due process is followed. Due process consists of two elements. First, promotion eligible NTT faculty candidates have the right to know what is expected of them to be promoted and/or granted a renewable employment agreement (REA). Second, candidates have the right to be heard, to clarify vagueness, and/or correct factual errors before any recommendation is forwarded to the next level of review. The review guidelines will be made available to all promotion eligible NTT faculty members in the department and/or college upon hiring, as well as being publically posted on the department/college website.

## **Section 2**     **Departmental and/or College Review Criteria**

NTT promotion reviews at both the departmental and college level must be based on written NTT promotion criteria and standards that have been developed by the department/college previously approved by the Office of the Provost. These policies should state the criteria for promotion in academic rank of promotion eligible NTT faculty members and shall provide examples of the types of evidence required to demonstrate that those criteria have been met. Review guidelines should clearly state the expectations for an NTT faculty member to be successfully promoted, but should also clearly articulate the similarities and differences in those expectations as it relates to the promotion of NTT faculty members compared to promotion tenured/tenure-track (T/TT) faculty members.

## **Section 3**     **Departmental and/or College Committee Composition**

Departmental and college faculty committees responsible for NTT promotion review may be made up of both tenured and promotion eligible NTT faculty members but must include at a minimum one promotion eligible NTT faculty member in the same career track as the candidate (i.e. instructional, clinical, or research) but of higher rank. NTT review committee should have a minimum of five (5) members. This requirement does not preclude a department and/or college from constituting an NTT promotion review committee that includes more than one NTT faculty member as laid out in departmental and/or college bylaws.

To ensure NTT faculty representation, if a department does not have promotion eligible NTT faculty members of a higher rank to serve on the departmental review committee the dean of the college may appoint a promotion eligible faculty member from a separate department within the college to serve on the review committee. In cases where a college does not have promotion eligible NTT faculty members of higher rank to serve, the dean may appoint a promotion eligible NTT faculty member(s) from a different college to serve on the NTT promotion review committee(s). In such cases, the appointed member must be a promotion eligible faculty member of higher rank than the NTT candidate seeking promotion, be in the same NTT career track as the candidate (i.e. instructional, clinical, or research) and be drawn from a similar academic department and/or discipline at UH.

## **Section 4**     **NTT Promotion Review Process**

Committee recommendations must include the name, rank, and title of each member of the review committee. Committee deliberations shall be conducted in confidence. The committee will make written recommendations based on the content of the promotion packet. Committee recommendations will be shared with the candidate and the appropriate administrator at each level of review, prior to moving the promotion packet forward to the next level of review. Department chairs and deans will conduct independent reviews and make written recommendations based on an examination of all promotion packet materials, including letters of review and committee findings. Written recommendations from department chairs and/or deans will be shared with the candidate, prior to moving the promotion packet to the next level of review candidate.

Faculty members who vote on a promotion eligible NTT faculty member's promotion packet at one review level shall not vote on that candidate a second time at a higher level of review. Each subsequent review body is responsible for considering any procedural problems it identifies in the prior review and for making every effort to correct any errors caused by those problems.

In the case of a promotion eligible NTT faculty member initially appointed at the associate or full rank, a mandatory review for the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA) will normally be held during the final year of a four year probationary period. The review shall follow the format and criteria required for a promotion review to the rank at which the renewal employment agreement (REA) will be granted. If the review for the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA) includes a promotion in rank from associate to full, the review shall follow the format and criteria required for a promotion to full NTT professor.

Candidates are entitled to a reconsideration of any negative recommendations made by the department chair/director, dean, and/or the Office of the Provost. Further, NTT candidates are entitled to reconsideration of negative recommendations by the department and/or college review committees. Reconsiderations are limited to errors of fact and procedure. Reconsiderations may not question the professional judgment of the review body/administrator. After any reconsideration, the review body/administrator shall respond in writing to the candidate, with a copy of that response being included in the promotion portfolio for consideration by subsequent levels of review. Candidates may update their portfolios before the materials are sent to the next level.

After the Office of the Provost has made a final decision on promotion in rank and/or the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA), if negative, candidates may appeal the decision to the University Grievance Committee within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the decision from the Office of the Provost. Any appeal must be based on errors of fact or a lack of due process afforded to the faculty member during the NTT promotion process, but cannot challenge the professional judgement of the review committees and administrators involved in the promotion review process. The University Grievance Committee will review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Provost. The Provost's decision on whether to grant the appeal is the final institutional step in this matter and shall not be subject to further review or grievance proceedings.

## **Section 5**      **Process for Mandatory and Non-Mandatory NTT Promotion Reviews**

### (a)              NTT Pre-Promotion Review

Promotion eligible NTT faculty members at the assistant rank are required to undergo a thorough pre-promotion review normally conducted during the third year of the probationary period. In the case of current NTT faculty members who transitioned into a promotion eligible NTT faculty position and who are currently in the fourth or fifth year of their probationary period, while it is not required that a retrospective third year mandatory pre-promotion review be carried out, these faculty members are encouraged to discuss the possibility of undergoing a voluntary pre-promotion review with their chair

in preparation for their mandatory promotion review.

The pre-promotion review is managed at the department/academic unit level and will not utilize the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site utilized for NTT promotion reviews managed by the Office of the Provost. Assembling the pre-promotion review packet is the responsibility of the candidate being reviewed. The format of the pre-promotion review packet should follow that of a mandatory promotion review packet except that there is no requirement for reviewer letters to be included. Please see instructions for assembling the promotion review packet described on the NTT Policy page of the Office of the Provost website (<http://www.uh.edu/provost/faculty/current/non-tenure-track/>).

In accordance with departmental/college criteria utilized for promotion of NTT faculty members, the appropriate departmental/college committee and department chair will conduct separate and independent reviews of the pre-promotion review packet. The department chair (or dean if applicable) will write a letter to the candidate detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-promotion review. The findings of the two reviews may be combined into a single letter from the chair or alternatively can consist of two separate letters, one from the committee chair and one from the department chair. The original document should be filed in the college with a copy forwarded to the Office of Faculty Affairs for inclusion in the faculty member's Faculty Folder and subsequently becomes a part of the mandatory promotion review process at the appropriate time.

The timeline for conducting the pre-promotion review during the third year of the probationary period will be determined by the department/college with the caveat that it must be completed before March 1 of the academic year in which the third year review was required.

(b) Mandatory NTT Promotion Review

Promotion eligible NTT faculty members are required to undergo a mandatory review prior to the end of their probationary period. In the case of a promotion eligible NTT faculty member appointed at the assistant NTT professor rank, a mandatory review will normally be held during the final year of a six probationary period. If successful in their review, a newly promoted associate NTT professor will be eligible for the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA) at the beginning of the subsequent academic year.

In the case of a promotion eligible NTT faculty member initially appointed at the associate or full NTT professor rank, a mandatory review for the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA) will normally be held during the final year of a four year probationary period. The review shall follow the format and criteria normally required to award a renewable employment agreement (REA) with promotion to the rank the faculty was initially appointed at (i.e. associate or full NTT professor). If the review includes a promotion in rank from associate to full, the review shall follow the format and criteria required for a promotion to full NTT professor.

Colleges will be responsible for completing an electronic face sheet for each of their promotion eligible

NTT faculty members who are up for mandatory review, as well as any promotion eligible NTT faculty members requesting a non-mandatory review for promotion from NTT associate professor to NTT full professor, or, the award of a renewal employment agreement (REA) without a change in rank. Once these electronic face sheets have been completed by the colleges, the Office of the Provost will be responsible for creating and providing appropriate access to the required folders within the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site for the candidates and the appropriate levels of review. Once created, the Office of the Provost will then contact the candidates to inform them that they may now upload their promotion packet materials to the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site.

The timeline for conducting the mandatory promotion review will be determined by the department/college with the caveat that it must be completed before March 1 of the academic year in which the mandatory review was required.

(c) Non-Mandatory NTT Promotion Review

While the expectation is that a promotion eligible NTT faculty member who has been promoted to associate NTT professor rank with a renewable employment agreement (REA) will in due course seek promotion to full NTT professor rank, there is no mandatory requirement for an associate NTT professor to seek promotion to full NTT professor rank. In addition, there is no specific time-in-rank that an associate NTT professor must have served before they are eligible to seek a non-mandatory review for promotion to full NTT professor. Rather they must have satisfied the expectations of their department/college for promotion to the full NTT professor rank. Candidates seeking a non-mandatory promotion review should discuss their readiness for promotion with their department chair and/or dean prior to applying for promotion. The time-line for a non-mandatory NTT promotion review shall follow that used for mandatory review.

**Section 6** **Instructions for Obtaining Reviewer Letters for NTT Promotion**

The department chair (or if applicable the dean) is responsible for obtaining a minimum of three reviewer letters for promotion eligible NTT faculty members seeking a promotion in rank and/or the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA). The candidate has the right to provide the department chair with the names of up to three potential reviewers. However, the final choice of reviewers remains with the department chair (or if applicable the dean).

Reviewers should be clearly qualified based on their professional experience and expertise to comment on the performance of the candidate in the candidate's primary professional domain. As such, reviewers should hold or have held an academic appointment at the university level (at the rank to which promotion is being sought) that includes at a minimum the professional responsibilities on which the reviewer has been asked to comment.

Promotion to the rank of NTT associate professor requires a minimum of three (3) reviewer letters. At least one reviewer letter must be from outside the home department/academic unit. The remaining

review letters can be obtained from within the university including from qualified individuals in the home department/academic unit. Letters from reviewers outside the university (external “arms-length” reviewers) may be used but are not required in the case of promotion from NTT assistant to NTT associate professor.

Promotion to the rank of NTT full professor requires a minimum of four (4) reviewer letters, with a requirement for at least one of the reviewer letters to come from an external “arms-length” reviewer. The remaining review letters may be from within the university including from within the home college and department. Any and all reviewer letters received must be included in the promotion review packet.

Reviewer letters (either internal or external to UH) may not be accepted from the NTT review committee members, prior supervisors or colleagues, Co-PIs, or collaborators on grants and/or academic projects. In the case of external “arms-length” reviews, requests for reviews from thesis or dissertation advisors, co-authors, or former students are not considered to be “arm's length” and will not be considered. A department may request more than three (3) review letters but no more than a total of six (6). Candidates will not be shown or have access to review letters as part of the NTT promotion process.

In the case of a promotion eligible (PE) NTT faculty member undergoing a mandatory review for promotion to the NTT associate professor rank and the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA), reviewers may be either tenured or NTT faculty members holding the associate professor rank or higher. In the case of a promotion eligible NTT faculty member undergoing a review for promotion to the NTT full professor rank, reviewers may be either tenured or NTT faculty members holding the full professor rank. In the case of a promotion eligible (PE) NTT faculty member who was appointed at the associate or full professor rank and is undergoing a mandatory review for the award of a renewable employment agreement (REA), reviewers may be either tenured or promotion eligible NTT faculty members with an REA holding the equivalent rank or higher. Regardless of academic rank, the reviewer must be appropriately qualified to provide an objective review of the candidate’s performance and accomplishments in the professional domain(s) in which the NTT faculty candidate holds their faculty appointment.

The candidate’s electronic folder must contain one sample copy of the letter sent to reviewers requesting a review, and a one-paragraph description of the qualifications of each reviewer with any relationship of the reviewer to the candidate clearly stated. The department chair (or dean if applicable) will be responsible for uploading these reviewer documents to the NTT Promotion SharePoint Site. Letters to potential reviewers should include the candidate’s full CV, a brief description of the candidate's role within the department and how this is related to the department’s mission. Letters should also specify a date for return of the evaluation.

When requesting evaluations, the department chair should include the following questions in the letter requesting the review from potential reviewers both internal and external to UH:

- 1) What is the nature of your professional contact with and knowledge of the candidate?*
- 2) Does the candidate's work, taken as a whole, constitute a serious and significant contribution to the discipline?*
- 3) What is your assessment of the candidate's contributions in the primary domain in which the faculty member holds their academic appointment (e.g. student teaching/instructional activities, research/scholarship/creative activity, clinical instruction/patient care, etc.)?*
- 4) What is your assessment of the candidate's contributions outside of the primary domain in which the faculty member holds their academic appointment to the overall mission of the department, college, university and/or profession?*
- 5) Does the reviewer recommend a promotion?*