

# Bylaws for the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee

University of Colorado Denver  
Denver Campus

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## **Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee Mission**

It is the responsibility of the Denver Campus Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (called the 'VCAC' or the 'Committee' hereafter) to provide consistent, high-quality information and analysis to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost (called the 'Provost' hereafter). The VCAC advises the Provost of its findings, meaning that the Committee makes recommendations for consideration by the Provost. The final decision on each reappointment or promotion case rests with the Provost and the Chancellor. For tenure, final campus-wide recommendations rest with the Provost and the Chancellor while final decisions are made by the University of Colorado Board of Regents after review in the President's Office. All University of Colorado and CU Denver rules regarding reappointment, tenure, and promotion are strictly adhered to in Committee deliberations. Members are required to prepare for, attend, and participate in all meetings.

## **The Committee**

The Denver Campus VCAC is composed of its Chair, three members from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), each required to be from a different Primary Unit, one member from each other school and college on the Denver Campus, and one from the Auraria Library. Efforts are to be made to assure that the three CLAS members are from diverse disciplines. While all VCAC members must have attained at least the rank of tenured Associate Professor, typically there are a significant number of Professors on the VCAC. Primary Unit Chairs are not permitted to serve, since University policy stipulates that no faculty member may participate in the same personnel review twice. VCAC members who have participated in a Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure case at a lower level are excused from participating or voting in such cases. A VCAC member who is a member of a school, college, or the library from which a Reappointment,

Promotion, and Tenure case comes can review that case unless there is an overriding conflict of interest issue that would disqualify her/him. A decision regarding such a case will be made by the Chair in consultation with the affected VCAC member.

Every effort must be made in the selection process to assure that the VCAC reflects the rich diversity of the institution it serves. Members serve consistent with school/college by-laws for staggered three-year terms with a limit of two three-year terms. In only unusual circumstances will a member serve for more than two terms; such exceptions can only be granted by the Provost. The Provost can remove a member of the VCAC if circumstance warrants it. In doing so, the Provost will consult with the Chair of the VCAC and the appropriate Dean or the Library Director.

The Committee generally is convened in the Fall semester to receive its charge from the Provost, to consider any recent changes in Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure policies, and to consider any necessary business that may require action. Case reviews begin in January and continue until all have been decided. The VCAC usually has completed its work by the end of the Spring semester, but may be required to meet in the Summer in certain circumstances.

All deliberations of the Committee are confidential although vote totals and critical details of the VCAC's discussions represented in the VCAC Chair's letter to the Provost are officially part of the record. Members of the VCAC may not share any information about VCAC deliberations with anyone outside the Committee. Violation of this rule can cause dismissal from VCAC.

### **The Chair**

The Chair of the VCAC is appointed by the Provost and must be a tenured faculty member at the Associate or Full Professor level. Unlike Committee members, who serve an academic year appointment, the Chair of VCAC serves 12-month terms. The Chair is appointed for up to a three-year term that can be renewed once. Only under extraordinary circumstances will a second renewal term be considered by the Provost. The Chair is a voting member of VCAC.

## **Responsibilities of the Committee**

The VCAC is responsible for reviewing the dossiers of all tenure track candidates for reappointment (comprehensive review), tenure, promotion to Associate Professor, and promotion to Professor on the Denver Campus. Such reviews shall adhere to the Primary Unit Criteria and respect the processes undergone in the schools/colleges/library. Based on their deliberations, the VCAC determines whether candidates have satisfied Primary Unit Criteria and University rules and policies. The Committee reviews the record of each candidate as presented in the candidate's dossier, the external reviews, and the accompanying evaluations of that record provided in reviews by the Primary Unit, the Dean's Advisory Committee, and the Dean. The Committee also reviews (1) the tenure dossiers for external hires with tenure and (2) the promotion dossiers for external hires at a rank higher than that held at their previous institution.

The VCAC follows these guidelines in its disposition of cases:

Each dossier is reviewed in detail. Tenure, promotion to Associate Professor, and promotion to Professor cases are reviewed by the entire Committee; reappointment (comprehensive review) cases are reviewed by a VCAC sub-group as indicated below.

The Committee members vote - "yes," "no," or "recuse" on each case (see subsequent discussion concerning allowable reasons for recusal).

The Committee will revisit cases (a) when new material is added to a dossier, (b) if any member of the Committee requests that a case be reconsidered after an initial vote or (c) if the Provost requests that a case be reconsidered.

## **Responsibilities of the Chair and Staff Assistant**

The Chair of the Committee is a voting member, participating fully in discussions of the merits of individual cases. The Chair and Staff Assistant's responsibilities include:

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, works with the Committee membership to assure a balanced workload.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, provides members of the Committee with the documents that govern its actions and updates the Committee about any recent policy changes.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, reviews the dossiers to ensure that they are complete and properly organized before assigning them to the Committee.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, selects the dossiers to be reviewed for each meeting and assigns Committee members to present the case to the group.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, assigns a presenter for each tenure, promotion to Associate Professor, and promotion to Professor case.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, assigns two presenters for each reappointment (comprehensive review) case (see process below).

The Chair determines if a VCAC member should be excused from participating in a case. There may be different levels of participation that are considered suitable; these will be considered case-by-case.

The Chair manages the meeting during which cases are discussed, assisting the Committee if questions of policy or procedure arise.

The Chair writes a letter summarizing the discussion of the VCAC's recommendation to the Provost. This letter must reflect the summary judgment of the VCAC and not the independent judgment of the Chair. If a case is particularly difficult, the Chair may consult with the Committee or particular individuals on the Committee before transmitting the letter to the Provost.

The Chair, with the aid of the Committee's Staff Assistant, writes an annual summary report of the Committee's activities to be shared with the VCAC, the Deans and Library Director, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Provost, and the Chancellor.

The Chair serves as the campus representative of the Committee, meeting with interested parties about procedures, processes, and policy.

If the Chair for any reason is unable to fulfill the duties outlined above, a senior member of the Committee chosen by the Chair substitutes for the Chair.

### **Review of Cases**

While it needs to be understood that the work of the Committee is a painstaking process, it also needs to be reiterated that its reviews of candidate's records will adhere to the Primary Unit Criteria and respect processes undergone in the schools/colleges/library. Although members may have very different strategies in evaluating a dossier, it is assumed that the result is a thorough knowledge of all levels of information: members must assimilate the candidate's record, the evaluation of the external reviewers, the opinion of the Primary Unit, the vote count at the Dean's Advisory Committee, analysis from the Dean, etc. Participation in the meetings of the Committee requires such detailed knowledge of the cases being discussed.

The operation of the VCAC depends on the type of case presented:

(a) For tenure only, tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, and promotion to Professor cases, a primary VCAC member is assigned to present the case to the full VCAC. The Chair makes presenter assignments with particular attention to evenly distributing workload among the VCAC membership. All Committee members thoroughly review such cases in preparation for the presentation by the primary Committee member, the ensuing discussion, and the vote.

(b) Reappointment (comprehensive review) cases are assigned to two members of VCAC chosen by the Chair with particular attention to evenly distributing workload among the VCAC membership. Those Committee members carefully consider each case, make oral presentations, and recommendations to the Committee. The full VCAC is encouraged to read all reappointment dossiers. Some cases may arise that are controversial; under such circumstances the entire Committee will be required to read reappointment dossiers. A discussion and vote would then occur at a later time. Either the two-members who originally are assigned to the case, the VCAC Chair, or any committee member may request further scrutiny of a reappointment case.

In the rare instance that a Committee member is present who has not read a dossier, that member will be recused from both discussion and voting.

When cases are returned to the Committee from a Dean after reconsideration (after a negative VCAC vote, for example), members are required to reread the dossier, paying careful attention to all new documentation, and to vote.

### **Presentations of Cases**

Committee members are routinely asked to present cases before the entire Committee. A presentation should be an objective summary of the record and its evaluation by the Primary Unit, the external reviewers, the Dean's Advisory Committee, and the Dean. Members

presenting cases should carefully and succinctly summarize the quantity and importance of publications and/or requisite scholarly/creative contributions, analyze the measures used to evaluate teaching accomplishments, the nature of internal and external service contributions and their impact, evaluations from external reviewers, vote counts at Primary Unit and Dean's Advisory Committee, etc. Crucial to each presentation is an evaluation of the record in the terms specified by the Regents; each part of the record --- research/scholarly/creative work, teaching, and service --- must be evaluated as excellent, meritorious, or not meritorious for each tenure, promotion to Associate Professor, and promotion to Professor case; reappointment (comprehensive review) cases must be judged using language like approaching excellence, on course for meritorious in teaching.

For promotion to full professor, an overall recommendation also must be made that complies with the University of Colorado Administrative Policy Statement 1022, which says that criteria A-C (below) are required for successful promotion to Full Professor:

(A) a record that, taken as a whole, is judged to be excellent; (B) a record of significant contribution to both graduate and undergraduate education, unless individual or departmental circumstances can be shown to require a stronger emphasis, or singular focus, on one or the other; and (C) a record, since receiving tenure or promotion to associate professor, that indicates substantial, significant, and continued growth, development, and accomplishment in teaching, research, scholarship or creative work, service, and other applicable areas.

Presentation of the case concludes with an action motion and a second followed by an open discussion of the record and the motion. The final VCAC vote occurs when the discussion has concluded.

### **Discussion**

Discussion of the case strictly is limited to information presented in the dossier. Members of the Committee are not permitted to introduce information about the candidate or the candidate's

record, either positive or negative, from their personal experience. Such information is hearsay and is inherently damaging to the integrity of the review process.

### **Voting**

Voting can occur only when a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the Committee. If it becomes obvious in discussing a case that it is controversial and that VCAC attendance is not sufficient, any member or the Chair of the Committee may request a delay in voting until a greater representation of the Committee is present.

Votes are taken by a show of hands and recorded on a voting sheet prepared by the Staff Assistant. Minority opinions should be explained either verbally or in writing and will be summarized by the Chair in the letter to the Provost.

If a member participated in the evaluation of the case at a lower level, that member cannot participate in the case and is excused from the VCAC meeting until the case has been considered and voted on. The Chair is charged with explaining such absences in the final letter to the Provost.

Members of VCAC residing in a school/college/library of the candidate under review can participate in the Committee's work unless there are unusual circumstances at play. The latter will be determined by the Chair in consultation with the affected Committee member.

Members may be recused from discussion, deliberation, and voting only if there is a conflict of interest (COI). [see Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Policy in the Denver Campus Administrative Policy for COI definition] Recusals typically occur if a member and the candidate have had interactions that might compromise the member's objectivity and potentially influence VCAC deliberations. Members cannot be recused solely because they are confused by or conflicted about the outcome of a case. The case for reappointment, tenure, or promotion is to be made in the dossier. If that case is not made, the result should be a negative vote, not a



recusal. Members do not vote on cases if they have participated in a lower-level review or if there is a COI with the candidate.

If there is a tie vote, a motion does not carry.

### **Letters**

The VCAC Chair is charged with drafting a letter from the Committee to the Provost that summarizes the Committee's deliberations and its recommendation. Typically, such letters detail the points on which the Committee agrees with the lower level committee evaluations and those with which it disagrees. A separate document summarizes the votes at all levels of the review and provides the Provost with an accurate reflection of VCAC's view of the case. The Chair of the VCAC is responsible for representing the views of the Committee, not with providing an independent judgment. In cases where a minority opinion has been expressed, the Chair will summarize the minority view in the letter to the Provost.