

SIMPSON COLLEGE FACULTY HANDBOOK

PART IV: INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SECTION 1: FACULTY GUIDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1.1 Faculty Guidance

1.1.0 Roles and Responsibilities. Faculty responsibilities are addressed in Part I, Article III of the Constitution. Department Chair and Division Head authority and roles are established in Article II of the Bylaws. A further breakdown of duties and expectations for program faculty, department chairs, and division heads can be found at **(link to come)**. Changes to this document are at the discretion of the Senior Vice President and Academic Dean in consultation with the Faculty Council.

1.1.0.1 Office Hours. Each faculty member should establish six or more hours per week that they will keep free insofar as possible and during which time they will be available to students who seek help, guidance, information, etc. It is most helpful to the students if not all office hours occur on the same day of the week nor at the same time of day through the week.

1.1.0.2 Academic Advisors. Freshman advisees are assigned an advisor who is the faculty member for their first-year experience course. This faculty member remains the new student's advisor until the student selects a major field of concentration. At that time, the student chooses or is assigned to an advisor in that field. Students must have a departmental advisor in each major. Students should contact the department chair in the department of the major to learn how advisors are assigned in that department. Normally, full-time students will transition from their first-year experience instructor to their major advisor by the end of their second semester.

1.1.0.3 Start and End of Term Policy. Due to federal regulations, all course activity performed by a student must fall within the academic term in which the student is registered. The start and end date of academic terms are established by the institution.

Faculty should not enter into an arrangement with a student whereby the student performs work in one semester and receives credit for the work in a subsequent semester. All work performed by a student that is entered to the calculation of a final grade for a course must be performed during the semester for which the grade is entered. Students may be asked to do preparation, prior to the start of the semester (read texts, journal articles, attend training, etc.), but the preparatory work should not be entered into the grade for the course.

For example, a student is not allowed to complete an internship for credit during the summer without officially enrolling during the summer. The student may not enroll in the spring or fall semester for an internship completed during the summer. However, a student may be asked to read a book over the summer and be prepared to discuss the book during a course or internship upon starting school in the fall.

1.1.0.4 Enrollment and Attendance. Instructors may make a recommendation to the Academic Actions Committee, composed at the discretion of the Senior Vice President and Academic Dean, that a student be withdrawn from courses and the rolls of the college for cause, which includes but is not limited to, excessive absences impacting the academic progress of the student. If this action occurs after the last date to ADD/DROP courses but prior to the last date of withdrawal according to the college calendar, a grade of “W” is recorded. If this action occurs after the last date of withdrawal, the instructor(s) will assign the appropriate grade. In cases of extended illness or other emergency situations, the Academic Actions Committee may approve a grade entry of “W” on the transcript. The student will be notified by the registrar of the college of the action taken by the college. If a student wishes to appeal this decision, they may request a hearing before the Admissions and Appeals Committee. The student shall present to the registrar of the college within three days following the notification of the decision a written appeal stating clearly what is being appealed and the rationale for the appeal.

The Academic Actions Committee serves to advise the Senior VP & Academic Dean in matters of probation, suspension, dismissal, and other academic matters as requested. The composition of the Academic Actions Committee is at the discretion of the Senior VP & Academic Dean, but normally includes the:

- College Registrar (who serves as committee secretary)
- Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
- Director of The Center for Academic Resources
- One Academic Coach from The Center for Academic Resources
- Dean of Students
- Director of Student Support Services
- One faculty member from the Admissions and Appeals Committee

1.1.0.5 Faculty Meetings. The faculty as defined in Part I, the Constitution, Article II meets prior to the beginning of the academic year at the end of August and monthly thereafter on dates to be determined by the President of the College. It may also meet as often otherwise as necessary to transact business and communicate important information. Classes are not to be held at the time of faculty meetings and all faculty members are obliged to participate. Any classes scheduled for that time should be rescheduled for an open period during the week.

1.1.0.6 Chair Consulting Responsibility. Department Chairs should regularly seek information and advice from program faculty, specifically as it relates to the structure of majors and minors, course scheduling, course substitutions, transfer credits, and advising loads.

1.1.1 Conflict of Interest. At the first meeting of any committee, the chair should discuss conflict of interest with committee members. The following statement summarizes conflict of interest for committee members:

- Faculty members participating in hiring or review committees must exercise integrity and objectivity when making decisions. Committee members must be certain that conflicts of interest or other biases do not exist which may interfere with their ability to make an

impartial decision. A conflict of interest or bias occurs when a committee member has a financial or personal relationship or interest which impairs the member's ability to be fair and impartial. For example, a conflict of interest may well exist where a committee member will receive an individual financial benefit from a decision or where a committee member has a familiar or similar relationship with an individual who may be affected by a decision. A person serving on a committee may conclude that they have an actual (or perceived) conflict of interest or bias and may remove themselves from involvement in a particular decision to be made by the committee. A committee member who is not certain whether a conflict of interest or bias exists may bring their concern about the conflict or bias to the attention of the appropriate dean, committee chair, or supervisor; in this event, the committee member must disclose enough information to enable the dean, committee chair, or supervisor to consider the matter fairly and openly. If the dean, committee chair, or supervisor determines either that a conflict of interest or other bias (or the appearance of a conflict of interest or other bias) may exist, the committee member shall be excused from participating in making that decision.

- A member of the committee or an individual who is the subject of a decision to be made by the committee may also raise a question as to whether a committee member has a conflict of interest or bias which may interfere with that committee member's impartiality. The concerned individual shall bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate dean, committee chair, or supervisor. The dean, committee chair, or supervisor shall discuss the matter with the affected committee member; if the dean, committee chair, or supervisor determines that a conflict of interest or other bias (or the appearance of a conflict of interest or other bias) may exist, the member of the committee shall be excused from participating in making the decision at issue.
- A member of a committee who is excused from participating in making a decision in accordance with this policy does not forfeit their position as a member of the committee. The fact that an individual has been excused from participation pursuant to this policy shall not prejudice any personnel or other institutional decision made with respect to the committee member.

Although these guidelines have been created to be instructional for committees, the basic principles also apply to department chairs, division heads and others participating in hiring and review decisions and other departmental and College matters. This may include long-range planning within a department, discussions about specific curricular directions, how to assign overloads, etc.

1.2 Committee Guidance

1.2.0 Meetings. All committees are expected to meet as needed to fulfill the duties assigned to them. This will typically require meetings at least monthly throughout the academic year.

1.2.1 Voting. When agreement on action items cannot be reached through discussion, a vote may be taken. A vote may be called by any of the eligible voting members of a committee. A simple majority of present voting members is required for passage.

1.2.2 Committee Consultation Responsibilities. Committees should regularly seek information and advice from campus leaders related to their responsibilities and duties. This consultation can take the form of e-mails or formal invitations to meetings.

1.2.3 Committee Reporting Responsibilities. All standing committees shall provide periodic updates to the Faculty Council as requested by the Faculty Chair. In addition, committees shall update their working rules by the end of September each year. These rules are to be sent to **(email to come)** and are available at **(link to come)**.

SECTION 2: GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Faculty Council

Every standing faculty Governance Committee and Administrative Committee has the responsibility to provide periodic updates to the Faculty Council.

2.1.0 Timeline and Procedures for Committee Reports

- a) At the beginning of the Fall semester, the Faculty Chair shall solicit reports from each committee.
- b) The committees shall draft reports of the major goals of the committee for the year and any issues that have been identified, particularly those with broader impact on faculty or for governance.
- c) Reports shall be submitted to the Faculty Chair by midterm of the Fall semester.
- d) At midterm of the Spring semester, the Faculty Chair shall solicit reports from each committee.
- e) The committees shall draft reports of the results of any major initiatives by the committee or questions that may have a broader impact on faculty or for governance.
- f) Reports shall be submitted to the Faculty Chair by the end of the Spring semester.

2.1.1 Policies and Procedures for Position Requests and Consideration of Institutional Need

The Faculty Council consults with and issues recommendations to the academic dean regarding requests for Full-Time Regular and Full-Time Term positions.

2.1.1.1 Policy for Consideration of Institutional Need for Full-Time Regular and Full-Time Term Contracts

Institutional need refers to the degree to which a position held by a faculty member is judged to be necessary to support the academic programs of the College. The examination of institutional need for tenure-track and full-time, term-limited faculty positions is part of the College's routine monitoring of its use of institutional resources. Specifically, it is the shared responsibility of the faculty and the administration to prevent necessary positions being displaced by unnecessary ones, and to ensure over time that departments and programs have the positions they need most to support the programs and general education curricula for which they are responsible. Another

important purpose of this monitoring process is to keep programs and departments and probationary faculty informed, in a timely way, of the status of positions with respect to continuing institutional need.

The Faculty Council is responsible for the review of Full-Time Regular (tenure-track) and Full-Time Term positions to determine institutional need. Requests for new or replacement full-time positions are typically made in the spring prior to the year in which the search will be conducted. In cases in which a full-time line has been vacated after the normal spring review, Faculty Council may review requests early in the fall semester of the academic year in which the search will be conducted.

The Faculty Council also reviews positions for ongoing institutional need two additional times after a Full-Time Regular or Full-Time Term line has been filled.

1. The first position review will give notice and guidance to the department and the academic dean about the continuing institutional need for the position. The timing of this review will mirror FPC's timeline for review of the position holder. Typically, this will mean, in the fall prior to FPC's mid-probationary review of candidates in Regular Full-Time positions, or in the fall of the third year of a Full-Time Term position.
2. The second review shall make a final recommendation to the academic dean regarding the institutional need for the position. The timing of this review will typically occur one year prior to a position holder's application for tenure and promotion in a Regular Full-Time position, or in the fifth year of a Full-Time Term position in which the decision to convert the contract to Regular Full-Time as outlined in Part II, Section 2.1.1.2 of the Faculty Handbook has been deferred.

2.1.1.2 Procedure for Consideration of Institutional Need for Full-Time Regular and Full-Time Term Contracts

The Faculty Council and academic dean, in consultation with the appropriate department chair(s), will examine the institutional need for all proposed Full-Time Regular (tenure-track) positions and Full-Time Term faculty positions.

At the beginning of each academic year, the academic dean will notify the Faculty Council and appropriate department chair(s) of the scheduled need to review specified positions according to the Consideration of Institutional Need Policy in Part IV, Section 2.1.1.1 of the Faculty Handbook. The initial review will be conducted by the Faculty Council based on information submitted by the department chair(s).

The department should include the following information to be considered by the Faculty Council in making its recommendation:

- Overall student enrollment
- Course enrollment patterns
- Numbers of majors and minors

- Departmental, general education, and other program staffing needs
- Role of the department or program in fulfilling the College's mission

Whenever possible, at least three years of data should be provided. In addition to these factors, the Faculty Council and academic dean should consider the overall financial condition of the College and any other information deemed relevant to this process.

In the case in which the academic dean ultimately determines that a position no longer meets the requirement of institutional need, the academic dean will notify the president, the Faculty Council, the chair of the affected department, and the faculty member holding the position of the reasons for this conclusion. With the concurrence of the president, the academic dean has authority to act and inform the faculty member in the position that they will not be reappointed for reasons of institutional need. In such a case, every effort will be made to inform the person affected as soon as possible but no later than the end of the academic year in which the review is conducted for Full-Time Regular (tenure-track) positions and March 1 for Full-Time Term Positions. Otherwise, the administration shall be construed as tacitly affirming the continuing institutional need for the appointment. In any instance of non-reappointment for reasons of institutional need, the position will not be replaced within a period of three (3) years, unless the released faculty member, if otherwise qualified, has been offered reinstatement and given a reasonable time of at least twenty (20) working days in which to accept or decline the College's offer. A faculty member rehired under this provision will be reinstated at their previously earned rank.

2.1.1.3 Timeline for Requests for New or Replacement Positions

- The Faculty Council shall publish rubrics by March 1.
- Position requests are due to the Faculty Council by April 1.
- The Faculty Council shall consider the requests and issue recommendations to the Academic Dean by April 30.

2.1.1.4 Timeline for Requests for New or Replacement Positions Following Late Resignations

- Position requests are due to the Faculty Council by September 1.
- The Faculty Council shall consider the requests and issue recommendations to the Academic Dean by September 30.

2.1.1.5 Institutional Need Review Timeline

- The Faculty Council shall notify department chairs about positions requiring institutional need review by September 1.
- Institutional need review reports are due to the Faculty Council by October 1.
- The Faculty Council shall consider the reports and issue recommendations to the Academic Dean by October 31.

- d) For Full-Time Regular positions, decisions against continuation shall be made and communicated to the person affected by the end of the fall semester.
- e) For Full-Time Term positions, decisions against continuation shall be made and communicated to the person affected by March 1.

2.2 Handbook Committee

2.2.0 Procedures for Changes to the Faculty Handbook

Any individual member of the faculty or group of faculty may propose a change to any part of the Faculty Handbook. While not formally required, proposed changes should be submitted to the Handbook Committee before they are presented to the faculty. The Handbook Committee shall:

- Review and suggest changes to the language of the proposal in context with the rest of the Faculty Handbook
- Offer feedback on the content of the proposal as requested by the faculty bringing the proposal
- Present the proposal at the next Faculty Meeting
- Manage discussion about and voting on the proposal as specified in the amendment procedures for the affected part of the Handbook

The Handbook Committee may not alter the content of the proposal or decline to present the proposal without the approval of the faculty making the proposal.

2.2.1 Timing and Procedures for Committee Nominations

The Handbook Committee solicits nominees and manages elections for standing faculty committees, ad hoc committees, and division heads.

- The Handbook Committee will solicit nominations at the start of the spring semester.
- Division head nominations are due by February 1, and division heads will be elected at the February faculty meeting
- Nominees for all committees are due by March 1
 - Elections for committees requiring divisional representation, Faculty Secretary, at-large representatives for the Faculty Council, and the Faculty Chair will be held at the April faculty meeting
 - Elections for committees not requiring divisional representation will be held at the May faculty meeting, as will elections for Governance Committee chairs with the exception of the Faculty Chair

2.3 Faculty Personnel Committee

Refer to Parts II and III of the Faculty Handbook for personnel policies and procedures involving the Faculty Personnel Committee.

2.4 Curriculum Committee

2.4.0 Course and Program Petitions Timeline and Procedures

All of the following additions, deletions, or changes to courses or programs must be petitioned to the Curriculum Committee.

- Course name changes
- Course description changes
- Course number changes
- Prerequisite changes
- Additions or deletions of courses
- Additions or deletions of programs
- Addition of academic majors or minors
- Addition of a certificate
- Any changes to a major or minor
- Any changes to a certificate
- Exceptions to deviations from the 10 four-credit courses (40 credits) plus capstone required for a major FROM CURRENT PART IV
 - a. Proposals for exceptions should include documentation such as accreditation requirements and examples of similar majors at other Bachelor of Arts institutions.
- Exceptions to deviations from the 16-24 credits required for a minor FROM CURRENT PART IV
- “Honors in the Major” degree requirements FROM CURRENT PART IV
- Exceptions to the standard 1, 2, or 4 credits granted for a course FROM CURRENT PART IV
- Course description for a special topics course catalogued as 190, 290, 390, 590 or 690. FROM CURRENT PART IV

Petitions must be submitted by the department chair on a current petition form as published by the Curriculum Committee. Academic departments seeking to drop academic majors and minors from the curriculum must notify the Curriculum Committee of their intention to do so on the appropriate forms in time to allow Curriculum Committee and the full faculty to consider the change and have any concerns addressed, and in time to allow the college to change all of its marketing materials. For any changes to be included in the following year’s catalog, the timeline for petitions is as follows.

- Petitions for changes to courses, majors, minors, programs, and certificates are due by November 15. Changes requiring a full faculty vote must be approved by the January faculty meeting.
- Petitions for study abroad courses are due by March 1. Courses must be approved by the April faculty meeting.

- Petitions for deletions of majors and minors are due at least 15 months before the major will no longer be offered. For example, a department seeking to drop a major for fall semester 2017 should plan on submitting its materials to Curriculum Committee by March 1, 2016. FROM CURRENT PART IV

2.4.1 General Education Designation Petitions

The following changes to courses must be petitioned to the Associate Dean for General Education & Assessment.

- General education course designations

Petitions must be submitted by the department chair on a current petition form as published by the Associate Dean for General Education & Assessment. The timeline for petitions is as follows.

- Petitions for designations for fall and spring semester courses are due by November 15 in the school year prior to their effective date.
- Petitions for designations for study abroad, May term, Summer term, and special topics course catalogued as 190, 290, 390, 590 or 690 are due by March 1 in the school year prior to their effective date.

The Associate Dean for General Education & Assessment will then forward recommended proposals to the Curriculum Committee for review and approval or return the proposal with review comments to the department for revision and resubmission.

2.4.2 International and Domestic Travel Courses

2.4.2.1 International Travel Courses: 197, 297, 397: All international travel courses offered for academic credit are to be reviewed by the Campus Advisory Committee and the Curriculum Committee as outlined in the Bylaws, Sections 3 and 4 of the Faculty Handbook. These courses must be approved by the faculty. FROM CURRENT PART IV

2.4.2.2 Domestic Travel Courses: 196, 296, 396: All domestic travel courses offered for academic credit are to be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and approved by the faculty. FROM CURRENT PART IV

2.4.3 Independent Interdisciplinary Major (IIM) FROM CURRENT PART IV

2.4.3.1 Interdisciplinary Studies Program. The interdisciplinary studies (IntSt) program faculty consists of three faculty members, one of which will be the director of the program, representing three divisions of the college. The interdisciplinary studies program faculty will serve as a committee that will advise students on the development of student-chosen advisory boards and completion of Independent Interdisciplinary Major (IIM) proposals and will review, but not approve, proposals to pass on to the Curriculum Committee for final approval. The IntSt program faculty will serve as a department for students pursuing an IIM, signing graduation applications, petitions and other documents requiring department chair review.

2.4.3.2 Independent Interdisciplinary Major (IIM) Approval Procedure:

1. The student consults with the interdisciplinary studies program faculty on choosing an advisory board and developing a proposal.
2. With support from the student-chosen advisory board, the student develops a title of the IIM, a set of courses, including options to allow for changes in course offerings, and the nature of the senior project.
3. The student submits a proposal to the interdisciplinary studies program faculty including the title of the IIM, a list of required courses, description of the senior project, two letters of recommendation, and an explanation for how the proposed program will meet the student's educational goals and lead the student into a career or graduate school.
4. The interdisciplinary studies program faculty will review the proposals and advise the students on the development of a proposal but will not approve the proposals. The proposal then goes to the Curriculum Committee for final approval. The student, along with their advisory board, will have the opportunity to meet with the Curriculum Committee in support of the proposal.
5. After Curriculum Committee approval, the interdisciplinary studies program faculty can approve changes to the required courses of the IIM.

2.4.4 Reporting and Faculty Voting

Any changes to be reported or voted on during a faculty meeting must be included in the agenda for that meeting.

2.4.4.1 Reports: The following changes approved by the Curriculum Committee shall be reported to the faculty

- Course name changes
- Course description changes
- Course number changes
- Prerequisite changes
- Addition of a course
- Any changes to a major or minor
- Any changes to a certificate
- Deletions of courses
- Deletion of majors or minors
 - If there are objections to the proposal or teach out plan, the matter is referred back to the Curriculum Committee for further review
- General Education designations for courses

Any member of the faculty may request a vote of the full faculty on a change reported to the faculty, during the faculty meeting at which that change is reported.

2.4.4.2 Faculty Votes: The following changes brought by the Curriculum Committee must be approved by the faculty

- Addition of a major
- Addition of a minor
- Addition of a certificate
- Exceptions to deviations from the 10 four-credit courses (40 credits) plus capstone required for a major
- Exceptions to deviations from the 16-24 credits required for a minor
- “Honors in the Major” degree requirements
- Exceptions to the standard 1, 2, or 4 credits granted for a course

2.4.5 Posthumous and End-of-Life Degree Awarding Policy FROM CURRENT PART IV

To award a degree or certificate from Simpson College posthumously or in end-of-life circumstances that prevent a student from completion, a request to do so should be made to the Curriculum Committee. The request should state the reasons that the degree should be granted. The student to be awarded the degree must have completed at least 75% of the credits required for graduation.

If the Curriculum Committee approves the request, it will be forwarded to the full faculty at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the faculty approves the degree, the proposal will be sent to the president of the college, the secretary of the board, and the academic dean. If all three approve, the degree will be granted.

2.4.6 Academic Petitions Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee. The academic petitions subcommittee shall consist of three members of the Curriculum Committee, including the current chair of the Curriculum Committee. The academic petitions subcommittee will provide an avenue for students to petition for exemption from the academic policies established by the faculty of the college.

This committee shall meet once a month, dates to be announced, and review all appropriate academic petitions making the decision to either approve or deny the petition. FROM CURRENT PART IV

2.4.7 Changes to Graduation Requirements: The authority to change the requirements for degrees is vested in the faculty. FROM CURRENT PART IV

SECTION 3: ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Assessment Committee (AC)

3.1.0 Assessment Committee Meetings. The Assessment Committee will meet once every two weeks during the Fall and Spring semesters, and work through May Term as needed. As stated in the committee roles, the committee chair will set the meeting schedule and agenda.

3.1.1 Assessment Committee Email. The Assessment Committee shall maintain the e-mail address assessment@simpson.edu, which should be used for all assessment business. The Chair will assume control of the address for the duration of their term. Upon assuming control of the account, the chair should update the account password.

3.1.2 Assessment Submission and Review Procedures. The deadline for each program's Annual Assessment Report is June 1. Reports should be sent to the Assessment Committee's email address (assessment@simpson.edu) by the department chair or the program's assessment coordinator.

- During the Fall semester, The Assessment Committee will review Annual Assessment Reports and complete a Rubric for Evaluation of Annual Assessment Reports for each program.
- A committee member will be assigned to each program and will send the completed Rubric for Evaluation of Annual Assessment Reports to the department's assessment coordinator or chair. The committee member will also serve as the representative for the committee in answering any questions about the report.
- The aggregate results of the Reports should be recorded in the Assessment Rubric Summaries spreadsheet on the OneDrive.
- Assessment Reports, completed Rubrics, and Minutes shall also be archived in the committee folder on SC Connect.

3.1.3 Program Changes. Program assessment modifications are accepted on a rolling basis. The Committee will review the proposed Assessment Plan and complete a Rubric for Evaluation of Assessment Plans. The Chair of the Assessment Committee will send the completed Rubric to the department chair and the chair of the Curriculum Committee.

3.1.4 General Curriculum Assessment. The Committee is responsible for the assessment review of the general education program. In consultation with the Associate Dean of Curriculum and Assessment, the committee will review at least two components of the general education program each year.

3.2 Campus Advisory Committee (CAC)

3.2.0 Campus Advisory Committee Meetings. The Chair establishes the agenda of each meeting with the input of the Directors serving as ex officio members and other committee members. Directors of campus programming may request the Chair schedule a meeting as needed to complete the committee's duties.

3.2.1 Committee Role. Annual discussions should include the library's annual report, budget, comparative statistics, and web presence; off-campus program proposals and study abroad opportunities; faculty development opportunities, needs and grants.

3.2.2 Grant Review Timeline. Faculty development grants will be reviewed by CAC, with the exception of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion grants which are reviewed by CADI and

Professional Travel grants which are reviewed by the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center.

- Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant proposals will be accepted on the last day of March. Further proposals will be accepted the last day of August if there are grants remaining. Accepted March proposals will not be paid out until after June 1.
- Course Development and Enhancement Grant proposals are due the last day of March, August, and January. Accepted March proposals will not be paid out until after June 1.
- All other grants will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

3.3 Faculty Grievance Committee (FGC)

3.3.0 Roles and Responsibilities. The Faculty Grievance Committee shall serve as the advisory committee in all cases of dismissal for causes other than financial threat or retrenchment as described in Part II, Section 11 of the Faculty Handbook.

SECTION 4 GUIDELINES

4.1 Support Letters from Off-campus Colleagues, On-campus Colleagues and Students

4.1.0 Support Letters from Off-campus Colleagues

Faculty up for tenure or promotion may request up to two letters of support from off-campus colleagues.

- a) **Purpose:** The purpose of inviting letters of support from off-campus colleagues is to provide the FPC with context and understanding regarding the professional acumen of the candidate which may be unavailable from on campus colleagues. The candidate's achievement against the established criteria, especially with regard to teaching and professional development is not always easily measured by the FPC. In several of our departments, faculty members are in sub-disciplines that may be relatively unfamiliar to the members of the FPC, and in some cases even other faculty within the department.

Having letters from an off-campus writer with expertise shared by the person under review provides an important context for the evidence provided by the candidate, especially in regard to the content areas of the candidate's teaching and what might be considered appropriate professional development.

- b) **Selection of Off-Campus Colleague:** The candidate will identify up to two colleagues who are in a position to provide the FPC with letters of support for their tenure and/or promotion. The candidate will provide the names of the two individuals to the chair of the FPC. The prospective writers should be knowledgeable in the field of the candidate and will normally come from a similar institution. The writer of the support letter should be in a position to comment on the achievement of the candidate using one or more of the criteria established for tenure and/or promotion as described in the Faculty Handbook. The off-campus writer should be someone well informed about the specific discipline of

the candidate under review and as such may be uniquely positioned to comment on things like the content of the courses taught by the candidate, the candidate's scholarship/creative or other professional work, etc.

The writer should understand the challenges of being a faculty member at a place like Simpson College. The writer should not have a significant personal relationship with the candidate. It is important that the candidate under review disclose the depth and nature of any such previous relationship when presenting the chair of the FPC with names of their off-campus colleagues who have been invited to write for the file.

The invitation to write a letter of support should come from the person under review and include the college's expectations for the review process, including a copy of the criteria for reappointment and tenure.

- c) **Contents of the Letter:** It is suggested that the candidate furnish the writer with a copy of the candidate's self-evaluation, vitae, and any other materials (course syllabi, publications, photos of creative work, etc.) they believe might be helpful to the writer.

The letter of support for the candidate should address all of the criteria for tenure or promotion with which the author is familiar. For example, if the writer previously taught with the candidate, they should feel free to comment on the candidate's teaching. If the writer has reviewed syllabi and assignments submitted by the candidate, they should comment on the appropriateness of the material covered, etc. If the writer has co-authored journals, or worked in another professional context, it would be appropriate for the writer to help put the candidate's participation into context. At the same time, the writer should not feel compelled to write to all of the criteria. As suggested earlier, the purpose of the letter is not to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate, but rather to help put the evidence submitted by the candidate into context from the perspective of a colleague in the field. Is the content in the candidate's courses appropriate and up-to-date? Are the assignments and learning objectives appropriate? Is there evidence that the candidate's research, scholarship, and/or creative work is respected by others within the discipline? These are the types of questions that should be addressed in the support letter.

The support letters submitted by the invited writers will be included in the file and as such will be available to the candidate.

4.1.1 Letters from On-campus Colleagues and Students

- a) **Purpose:** With the exception of the up to two letters from off-campus colleagues and the two out of department colleague letters requested at the time of promotion and tenure review, candidates are strongly discouraged from soliciting letters from colleagues and students. Rather, it is the intent of the committee in notifying the community about the

review to regularize how evidence of the candidate's effectiveness is gathered from those not directly involved in the review process.

- b) **Contents of the Letter:** Each semester the chair of FPC will, in an advertisement in the *Simpsonian*, announce the review schedule to the campus for all faculty members undergoing review for reappointment, tenure or promotion. Signed letters will be accepted for the candidates file in the Academic Dean's office. These letters should focus on the criteria for reappointment, tenure and promotion as outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook Part II: Personnel Policies, Section 7.
- c) **The Role of the Letters:** It should be clear to all involved in the review process that the raw number of letters received by a review committee on behalf of a candidate is not itself a significant measure of how well the candidate meets the established criteria. Nor does the absence of such letters indicate failure to meet the criteria. The letters received on behalf of a candidate will be only a small part of the evidence upon which the decision of the committee is made.

4.2 Guidelines for Mid-probationary (Third-year) Review

The purpose of the mid-probationary review is to provide the candidate and the institution with an evaluation of their work midway to the tenure year. The review is conducted from the department's perspective, and the institution's perspective. The review is both formative and summative. A key purpose of the review is to provide the candidate with an objective assessment with regard to performance against the criteria established for tenure. By involving the FPC and the optional use of an off-campus evaluator, the third-year review is an opportunity for the candidate to become aware where they are succeeding against the criteria for tenure in time to address any outstanding issues before tenure, should it be necessary. At the same time, a formal recommendation will also be made concerning reappointment for the following year. It should be noted that the mid-probationary review is not a mini-tenure review. It is a snapshot of the work of the candidate midway to the decision to tenure. The probationary period preceding tenure is just that, a probationary period when the tenure-track faculty member has the opportunity to establish themselves as teacher, advisor, professional within a discipline, and campus citizen. For this reason, during the six-year probationary period, the tenure-track faculty member is provided formative review each year. The third-year review is simply an annual reappointment review conducted on behalf of the full faculty and the institution. A recommendation to reappoint after the third year does not indicate a presumption to tenure.

The department is represented in the review by the department chair. The institution is represented by the division head and the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC). The procedures for the mid-probationary review are outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The following guidelines presume the review will take place in the third year of service. The timing of the review may be altered for faculty members who bring service at another institution to Simpson College as negotiated at the time of hire and outlined in the original contract.

4.2.0 Selection of the Third-year Review Committee

The composition and selection of the on-campus review committee will follow the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The chair of the third-year review committee will be a member of the FPC. The faculty member under review will provide the chair of the third-year review with the names of three Simpson College faculty members from outside the department, one of whom will be selected to serve on the review committee. The candidate will nominate faculty members they believe have some understanding of their professional discipline, and someone they believe can impartially review their work. Normally, the outside of the department committee member will be tenured. The role of the outside of the department member is not to serve as advocate for the candidate, but rather to be a trusted, objective participant in the review process.

The chair of the review committee will make the selection of the committee member from outside of the department. Before the committee membership has been finalized, the candidate will be given the opportunity to bring to the committee chair's (the member of the FPC) attention any real, or potential perceived conflict of interest.

4.2.1 Off-campus Evaluator

See Part IV, Section 4.4 for guidelines for selecting an off-campus evaluator and the expectations for the evaluation.

4.2.2 The Review Committee's Letter

The procedures for the creation of the third-year review letter are outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The committee's letter should be formative in nature and identify the perceived strengths and perceived weaknesses of the candidate as measured against the criteria for reappointment and tenure.

4.2.3 Reappointment After the Third-year Review

The decision for reappointment for the year following the mid-probationary review is made by the academic dean upon the recommendation of the FPC following the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4.

The reappointment process for subsequent years (normally for years five and six) will follow the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 2.

4.3 Guidelines for Writing Letters for the Faculty Evaluation Process

The following are suggestions for writing letters for tenure and promotion files. Part IV of the Faculty Handbook, Section 4.1 outlines the role of the letters from on-campus colleagues and students.

Here are a few questions and answers that might be helpful to faculty as they consider writing letters for colleagues.

Q: Who needs to write letters?

A: First, all review, tenure, and/or promotion files are open files. This means that anyone connected with the college can write a letter and ask that the letter be included in the review, tenure, and/or promotion file. In certain cases (tenure and promotion) specific people are asked to submit letters as outlined in Part III of the Faculty Handbook. Note, that the candidate under review can read the letters and respond to the content of the letters by putting a letter in the file.

Q: If the review, tenure, and/or promotion files are open files, does that mean anyone can read them?

A: No, the only people who can read the file are the faculty member being reviewed, the committee in which is conducting the review, the members of FPC, the chair of the department, the division head, the academic dean, and the president of the college. Tenure and promotion files, but not other review files, are also open to the board of trustees. Saying the files are open simply means that anyone connected with the college can request to add a letter to the file.

Q: If I write a letter for a colleague up for reappointment, tenure and/or promotion, where do I send it?

A: All letters for all reappointment, tenure and/or promotion should be sent to the Academic Dean's Office. Please make it clear if you are submitting a solicited (you were asked by the candidate, or you are writing as department chair or division head) or an unsolicited (you were not asked) letter and who the letter is for. No unsigned letters will be accepted.

Q: What should the letter contain?

A: Letter writers are being asked to use their professional judgment to assess the candidate in relation to the four criteria (teaching, advising, professional development, and service) listed for tenure and/or promotion. Review the criteria in the Faculty Handbook (Part II Personnel Policies, Section 7). The letter writer should:

- Identify if the letter was solicited or unsolicited.
- Describe in what context the letter is being written (i.e. tenured colleague in department, department chair, division head, etc.)
- The letter is not a character reference. Use the four criteria outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Letter writers should address all four areas. A writer will likely focus on the area(s) where they have the most knowledge about the candidate. For example, a letter writer may have knowledge about a colleague’s teaching but have no experience with the candidate when it comes to service to the college. It makes sense to write most about what you know.
- State your position on the candidate’s reappointment, tenure and/or promotion. For example, “I support the promotion of Dr. Doe because I believe they have achieved the standards set by the faculty as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.”

Q: If I am asked to write a letter, do I need to observe class?

A: Good practice suggests that a letter writer be knowledgeable about their subject. When asked by a colleague to write a letter, it is good practice to ask for a copy of the person’s vitae, observe them in class, review their publications or creative work, and have a conversation with the person before writing the letter. There is no requirement to do these things, it is just good practice.

Q: What if I am asked by a colleague, but I don’t feel I can write a positive letter? What if I don’t know the person well enough to write for them?

A: You should express your reservations to your colleague and suggest that they may wish to choose someone else to write a letter.

Q: If I write a letter for someone, do I send a copy to that person? Should I talk to the person and tell them what I am going to write?

A: Since the candidate will likely read the letter in the file, it is up to the letter writer to decide whether to share the contents of the letter before submitting it to the Academic Dean’s Office.

Q: What if I am a department colleague, department chair, or division head, and I don’t want to write a letter? Can I be forced to write a letter for someone?

A: You should not write a letter if you feel that you cannot be objective. You should not write if you have a conflict of interest. Check with your department chair, or the academic dean if you are not sure about a possible conflict of interest.

At the same time, you are being asked to participate in the process as part of your professional responsibility. You are being asked for your professional opinion based on your experience with the candidate and your understanding of the established criteria. You are being asked if you believe the candidate meets the criteria established for

reappointment, tenure and/or promotion as you understand them. Your opinion could be yes, or it might be no. The important thing is that you keep your letter focused on the four elements of the criteria and write only about what you believe to be true. Speak from your experience with the candidate. Do not include speculation, conjecture, or things you have heard from others.

Q: If I choose not to write a letter, will the person be penalized? How important are the letters?

A: The decision will be based on the information in the file, not on what is missing. It would be wrong for anyone to infer why a letter has not been written. The decision process includes multiple types of data, from multiple sources. The committee will be looking for a pattern. No one letter or other single piece of evidence will sway the decision.

Q: If I am under review, how do I select someone to write a letter for my file? What do I tell the person?

A: Generally, you should ask colleagues who know your work through personal experience. You will want someone to speak effectively about all four of the criteria. At the same time, it is perfectly acceptable to tell the writer that you think they are especially prepared to highlight your work in a particular area. For example, if you have served on a committee with your letter writer, you may wish to ask that person to make sure to speak to their experience with you on the committee.

Q: If I am under review but not being considered for promotion or tenure, may I ask other faculty members to write a letter for my file? May I ask students to write?

A: According to the Faculty Handbook, Part IV, Section 1, people under review are strongly discouraged from soliciting letters from colleagues and students.

4.4 Guidelines for Outside Evaluators

As indicated in Part III Section 5, faculty members applying for tenure are required to have an outside evaluator. In addition, faculty members in their mid-probationary review are strongly encouraged to have an outside evaluator (Part III Section 4).

4.4.0 Purpose of Off-campus Evaluator

The purpose of having an evaluation on campus by an off-campus colleague is to provide FPC with context and understanding regarding the professional acumen of the candidate which may be unavailable from on campus colleagues. The candidate's achievement against the established criteria, especially with regard to teaching and professional development, is not always easily measured by the FPC. In several of our departments, faculty members are in sub-disciplines that

may be relatively unfamiliar to the members of FPC, and in some cases even other faculty within the department.

Having evaluations from off-campus colleagues with expertise shared by the person under review provides an important context for the evidence provided by the candidate, especially in regard to the content area of the candidate's teaching and what might be considered appropriate professional development.

4.4.1 Selection of the Off-campus Evaluator

Selection of off-campus evaluators occurs in the semester prior to review. The faculty member under review for tenure will provide the Academic Dean with the names of five possible off-campus evaluators, and the Academic Dean will select the evaluator. The faculty member under review for mid-probation who chooses to ask for an off-campus evaluator will provide the chair of the of their third-year review committee the names of three possible off-campus evaluators, and the chair will select the evaluator and provide the name to the Academic Dean to arrange the on-campus visit.

The prospective evaluator should be knowledgeable in the candidate's field and will normally come from a similar institution. The prospective evaluator should be tenured and hold regular faculty appointments. The prospective evaluator should be in a position to comment on the achievement of the candidate using one or more of the criteria established for tenure and/or promotion as described in the Faculty Handbook. The evaluator should be someone well informed about the specific discipline of the candidate under review and as such may be uniquely positioned to comment on things like the content of courses taught by the candidate and/or the candidate's scholarship, creative or other professional work. The evaluator should understand the challenges of being a faculty member at a place like Simpson College. The evaluator should not have a significant personal relationship with the candidate. It is important that the candidate under review disclose the depth and nature of any such previous relationship when presenting the chair of the mid-probationary review committee or the Academic Dean with the names of their off-campus colleagues who could be invited to evaluate the candidate on Campus. The actual invitation to the outside evaluator will be sent by the Academic Dean. The invitation will include the college's expectations for the review process, including a copy of the criteria for reappointment and tenure.

4.4.2 Content of Evaluation

The off-campus evaluator will normally be scheduled to visit campus for one or two days, though the visit may be remote if necessary. Before the visit, the evaluator will receive a copy of the candidate's self-evaluation, vitae, current syllabi, and any other materials (publications, photos of creative work, etc.) approved by the chair of the committee. The exact visit schedule (whether in person or remote) will be determined by the chair of the review committee.

Normally, the off-campus evaluator will:

- a. Meet with the candidate
- b. Meet with the review committee, or the two FPC members assigned to the candidate
- c. Attend at least one of the candidate's classes
- d. Review the candidate's file
- e. Meet with other members of the department
- f. Meet with the Academic Dean

Upon the conclusion of the visit, the off-campus evaluator will write a letter of evaluation of the candidate that addresses the criteria for reappointment and tenure. The letter should be essentially formative identifying areas of strength and areas of perceived weakness against the criteria (whether evaluating for mid-probation or tenure). It will be particularly important for the outside evaluator to put the candidate's professional expertise and continuing development into context for the committee. Is the content of the candidate's courses appropriate and up-to-date? Are the assignments and learning objectives appropriate? Is there evidence that the candidate's research, scholarship, and/or creative work is respected by others within the discipline? The letter should NOT include a recommendation on reappointment or tenure.

The letter from the off-campus evaluator will be included in the candidate's review file.

SECTION 5: AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

An individual faculty member or group of faculty members may propose an amendment to the Institutional Policies & Procedures. Amendments must be approved by a majority vote of the faculty. Amendments to the Institutional Policies & Procedures will become effective at the start of the next academic year, unless a different effective date is approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the faculty.