

*This is a joint message from RIT's Faculty Senate and the Office of Faculty Affairs to  
RIT's Faculty*

November 7, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Since Spring 2020, the Faculty Senate and Office of Faculty Affairs have continuously assessed options to adjust policy to support faculty members' success during the pandemic. With the support of Provost Granberg, we are pleased to share that we are extending last year's COVID-19 policy adjustments and proposing that 2022 plans of work be streamlined. The Faculty Senate approved these adjustments at their November 3, 2022 meeting. Specific information on these adjustments can be found below.

**Annual Evaluation and Plans of Work.** This section reports on adjustments to Policy E07.0, Annual Review of Faculty. Policy E07.0 contains two major elements: the annual evaluation and faculty plan of work.

1. Annual Evaluation: In most colleges, faculty members complete extensive annual self-assessments of their success in meeting their approved plan of work goals. From that self-assessment, the department chair or school director prepares a formal evaluation, which can be equally extensive and includes an overall performance rating.

In 2020 and 2021, the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost proposed that all colleges adopt an approach to self-assessment and evaluation to minimize the time and effort required by all parties.

To meet this overarching objective again this year, the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost ask that all colleges extend the streamlined approach developed in 2020 for this year's annual evaluation process. RIT requires only that an annual rating be recorded in Oracle, that there be documentation available to support the rating, and that both the rating and the associated documentation be available to the faculty member. Keeping this in mind, the following will be required: (a) the faculty member will submit a brief report on accomplishments the specific form of which may vary and will be determined by the college; (b) the department chair/school director will prepare an equally brief statement with feedback that explains the basis for an overall annual rating. For faculty who are on the tenure track, feedback must also incorporate progress towards tenure and a statement as to whether the faculty member is still on track for tenure.

**2. Plan of Work:** In alignment with the goal to streamline the time and effort by all parties relative to annual review, the Faculty Senate and the Provost approved the use of an abbreviated plan of work for next year. The faculty member will submit a brief report on expected work activities and anticipated outcomes, the specific form of which may vary and will be determined by the college. RIT policy requires that plans of work are approved and signed by the faculty member, department head, and dean.

## **COVID Impact Statements**

Last year, faculty were allowed the option to provide COVID impact statements for tenure and promotion. We recognize the pandemic may have caused disruptions to faculty in their teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity and service goals. While we remain committed to recognizing and rewarding high standards of excellence in all three mission areas, we also acknowledge COVID-19 crisis may continue to impact faculty work in these areas. Accordingly, as was in place last year, faculty seeking tenure and promotion review in AY2023-24 have the option to include an impact statement as part of their dossier. Guidance to the content of impact statements for tenure and promotion can be found here - [COVID Impact Statement for PT Dossiers](#)

In addition, the optional Covid impact statement for *annual evaluation* has been discontinued as faculty can now submit an optional 'Life Circumstances' impact statement (see IIF.3 [E07.0 Annual Review of Faculty | University Policies | RIT](#)). The 'Life Circumstances' impact statement was approved by Faculty Senate and the provost last spring.

## **Addendum to External Letters for Tenure**

In April 2020, additional language was included in invitation letters to external reviewers to address COVID-19 and other impacts on the length of the tenure clock. As was in place last year, for tenure candidates undergoing review in AY2023-24, all invitations to external reviewers should include the addendum regardless of whether the candidate has taken an extension. The addendum can be found here – [Guidance for External Reviewers.](#)

## **Extension of the Tenure Clock**

In late April 2020, the Faculty Senate and Office of the Provost provided an automatic extension of the tenure clock upon request by any faculty member whose progress towards tenure was impacted by the pandemic. In December 2021, we announced that the automatic extension for COVID-19 would remain available until May 15, 2022. As a reminder, faculty who desire an extension can make application through the normal "Extraordinary Circumstances" justification in the current tenure policy ([Policy E05.2.c.4.d](#)).

We hope these extensions will be helpful as you move through the remainder of the year. Please continue to raise your questions and provide feedback as to what we can do to help you. Thank you, as always, for your dedication to RIT's students and to the intellectual and creative mission of our university.

Sincerely,

Atia Newman, Chair, Faculty Senate  
LaVerne McQuiller Williams, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs