

Administrative Policy on Promotion, Merit, and Tenure Review in Departments with Faculty Spouses or Partners

**College of Liberal Arts
Version Date August 17, 2011**

Purpose

In some cases, an academic department may include faculty spouses or partners. This creates perceived or actual conflicts of interests in the promotion, merit, or tenure review processes (including annual tenure review, third year tenure review, and final tenure review). To ensure fairness for all parties, this administrative policy sets expectations for, and provides guidance to, affected department chairs and faculty for handling these critical faculty processes.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the College of Liberal Arts that our faculty and department chairs comply with the university policies related to Nepotism, Individual Conflict of Interest and Commitment, and Consensual Relationships. This college administrative policy is intended to supplement and not supplant related university policies.

Process

1. When a department includes faculty spouses or partners, the department chair will submit to the dean a written management plan that outlines the specific mitigating steps that will be taken to ensure fairness in the promotion, merit, or tenure review (for pre-tenured faculty) processes for all affected individuals.
2. In all cases, the document will, at a minimum, state that spouses or partners will be explicitly prohibited from participating in promotion, merit, and tenure reviews that involve the other spouse or partner.
3. The dean and department chair will discuss and revise the proposed management plan as needed. The finalized plan will be signed by the dean, department chair and the affected faculty member(s) and filed in the personnel folder for the affected faculty member(s).
4. In cases where a faculty member's spouse or partner is chair of their department, extra care is needed to ensure fair treatment of all faculty in the department. In such cases, the dean will ensure that the management plan specifies who will take the place of the chair in the promotion, merit, and tenure review processes and any other steps that will be taken to ensure fairness for the faculty member under review. If the management plan specifies that the dean is replacing the department chair, the dean will submit the plan to the provost for review and approval.

Timeline

This policy will take effect June 15, 2011.