



Task Force on Post-Tenure Review Cycle  
Recommendation for Optional Alternative Review Cycle  
November 4, 2010

**Background:**

In September of 2010, Provost Liz Grobsmith requested the convening of a task force to consider the review cycle for faculty members who have been granted tenure, as well as for non-tenure track faculty members and academic professionals on continuing status. Prompted by requests from chairs to re-consider the cycle, Provost Grobsmith charged the Task Force with determining the parameters of current policy (ABOR and COFS) in order to recommend possible “alternatives to the current comprehensive annual review cycle that ensure a supportive, formative evaluative process” as well as other goals. The Task Force considered ABOR and NAU policies, as well as practices from peer institutions.

**Task Force Members:**

Bill Culbertson, Professor, Health Sciences; Paul Jagodzinski, Dean of the College of Engineering, Forestry and Natural Sciences; Gae Johnson, Professor, College of Education; Daniel Kain, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel; Cynthia Kosso, Acting Director, Honors; Fred Solop, Chair, Politics and International Affairs; Karen Underhill, Cline Library; Larry Watkins, Professor, Franke College of Business; Maribeth Watwood, Chair, Biological Sciences.

**Policy Issues:**

Careful examination of relevant policies in ABOR (6-201 and 6-211) and COFS revealed that the NAU COFS document is more prescriptive in the matter of post-tenure review than ABOR. In brief, COFS requires that every faculty member be evaluated annually by appropriate peer committees and administrators, though the exact requirements of the evaluation are not specified. The Task Force has designed its recommendations to conform with this limitation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ABOR policy states, “Annual performance evaluations for all tenured faculty members shall be conducted by unit heads **and/or** peer committees...” (ABOR Policy 6-201 H. 1. Post-Tenure Review; Elements of Post-Tenure Review Process). COFS states that the post-tenure review process begins with and is linked to the Annual Review for each tenured faculty member (COFS 1.4.7 and 1.4.7.1 b). “The Annual Review will be

### **Summary of Task Force Recommendation:**

The Task Force recommends a review cycle for departments/units with maximum periods between comprehensive reviews. *However, any department/unit may establish review cycles that have more frequent comprehensive reviews than the recommended cycles.* The Task Force recommends the use of expedited and comprehensive reviews, with the possibility of varying cycles, according to rank. Expedited reviews (E.R.) will be used for the periods between comprehensive reviews (C.R.); the merit rating of the comprehensive review will be affirmed by the expedited reviewers until a comprehensive review alters the rating. Comprehensive reviews will be scheduled for a portion of the faculty in each department each year, so that over the course of a rank-based cycle (e.g., five years), all faculty members will experience a comprehensive review.<sup>2</sup> In addition, comprehensive reviews may be triggered by changes in performance and upon agreement between the department Chair and the faculty chair of the Annual Review Committee (ARC)<sup>3</sup> or by request of the faculty member.

### **Recommended Periods for Review (by rank):**

- Tenured Full Professor: Comprehensive review at least every five years.
- Tenured Associate Professor: Comprehensive review at least every five years.
- Academic Professional on Continuing Status: Comprehensive review at least every five years.

Note: Persons in each of the categories above will undergo an annual expedited review when not participating in a comprehensive review.

### **Reviews off Cycle:**

**Chair-initiated C.R.:** Chair has evidence of significant change in performance level (e.g., dramatic change in course evaluations or in research productivity). After agreeing with the chair of the ARC on the need for a comprehensive review, the C.R. can be mandated either prior to the start of the review cycle or upon examination of E.R. materials. Result: faculty member required to submit materials for C.R. In the event this takes place during the review process, the calendar will be adjusted to allow appropriate response times.

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conducted by the Chair **and** either an Annual Review Committee or a Faculty Status Committee as determined by the academic unit structure” (COFS 1.4. 6.1.1). Thus, regarding post-tenure reviews, ABOR allows for unit heads **or** committees while COFS indicates reviews must done by the committee **and** the chair.

<sup>2</sup> Departments will be charged to initiate the calendar for the review cycle to spread the comprehensive reviews evenly over the time period. For example, approximately 1/5 of the faculty will be in year one, 1/5 in year two, etc. In addition, units will need to articulate the processes and materials (e.g., statement of accomplishments) required for comprehensive reviews.

<sup>3</sup> Annual Review Committee is used to represent the appropriate review committee in each unit, recognizing that some units utilize other committees for this purpose (see COFS 1.4.7).

**ARC-initiated C.R.:** The chair of the ARC informs faculty member and Chair that the committee cannot affirm the current rating, as established by last C.R. After reaching agreement with the department Chair on the need for a comprehensive review, the faculty member will be given two weeks to respond with C.R. materials. ARC follows normal review procedures, with calendar adjusted to allow appropriate response times. If faculty member does not provide C.R. materials, ARC and Chair make their judgments on the available materials.

**Faculty-initiated C.R.:** Faculty member requests C.R. of his or her record in writing to the Department Chair and chair of ARC, prior to the start of the review process. (Note: the appeal of a previous rating is addressed through normal appeal processes.) Faculty member provides materials required by the unit for C.R.

Appeals related to the time line for unscheduled comprehensive reviews will be directed to the Vice Provost for Academic Personnel.

**Definitions:**

**Expedited Review (E.R.):** Review conducted by Annual Review Committee (ARC) and Chair (or corresponding levels). Review consists of examination of the following:

- Statement Of Expectations (SOE)
- student evaluation materials
- vita, including (or listed separately)
  - evidence of scholarship, research, and/or creative activity
  - list of service activities. [COFS 1.4.5.3]
- other materials as required by the unit

Result is a letter confirming continuation at rating established at the last C.R. or recommendation for comprehensive review.

**Comprehensive Review (C.R.):** Review conducted by ARC and Chair (or corresponding levels). Thorough review of teaching, research, and service (or other relevant categories) of the years since the last comprehensive review, with substantial emphasis on the prior year's evaluation of teaching, as defined by unit policies and procedures (see COFS section D.1.a). Result is a merit rating, which continues as rating until next comprehensive review, if affirmed annually through the E.R.

**Note on the Expedited Review for Academic Professionals:**

Per the *Handbook for Academic Professionals* (approved May 2001, sections B and C), annual (expedited) reviews for academic professionals with continuing status will involve a supervisor's primary evaluation of job performance, professional development, and service; a supplementary review(s); and comment by an Associate University Librarian and/or the Dean and University Librarian. The Committee on Academic Professional Status (COAPS)—a formal peer review group—will participate in the comprehensive review and provide written evaluation to the Dean and University Librarian to enhance performance and to promote continuing professional growth and development in accordance with the mission and strategic directions of the library and university.

**Additional recommendation:**

The Task Force further recommends that the next revision of COFS examine the requirements for reviewing non-tenure track faculty members on multiple-year contracts. As currently written, COFS (1.4.6.2.2) requires an annual review of these individuals with attention to multiple years of data. With a revision of the COFS document, these faculty members could participate in expedited reviews annually, with comprehensive reviews occurring in the last year of multiple-year contracts.