

## **Utah State University**

### **Responsibilities of Ombudspersons**

The ombudsperson attends a promotion and/or tenure meeting to ensure due process as defined by the university policy.

1. At the beginning of a meeting, the ombudsperson should ask if everyone has reviewed the file; if not, dismiss the meeting. 405.7.1 (2) The ombudsperson does not have to review the file.
2. Ascertain that there is a current role statement, signed by the candidate, department head or supervisor and dean or unit administrator. 405.6.1
3. All committee members must be present in person or by electronic conferencing or the meeting cannot proceed. The P/T chair and the Department Head are responsible for having a review meeting with a full committee. 405.7.1 (2) & 405.6.2 (1)
4. The ombudsperson is not to comment on the contents of the candidate's file. 405.6.5
5. The ombudsperson is responsible for making sure that the rights of the candidate and the University are protected and that due process is followed. Questions of a personal nature are inappropriate. Assure that the interests of the candidate as well as the University are fairly represented. 405.6.2 (1)
6. The ombudsperson may question any procedures that are out of the ordinary. In general, a typical procedure for the committee is:
  - (a) to meet first without the candidate to discuss procedure and any concerns,
  - (b) to ask the candidate in to make a statement about progress toward tenure and/or promotion and answer questions,
  - (c) to discuss without the candidate present what the evaluation will be for this review meeting, and
  - (d) to ask the candidate to return for a summation to share that evaluation with them
7. The level of documentation required for ombudspersons may be no more than "I certify that due process was followed at the meeting." The primary duty of the ombudsperson is to listen and to take notes about any concerns. 405.6.5
8. Any irregularities are to be described in a memo. The ombudsperson will report any irregularities to the department head and the dean. 405.6.5
9. Discussion is to include the candidate's role statement and how they have been meeting role statement assignments (405.2.2). Focus on the substance of the file is the committee's duty while focus on process is the responsibility of the ombudsperson.
10. If a second meeting is required to complete the committee's business, then it is preferable to have the same ombudsperson.
11. As stated in 405.6.5, "Committee reports shall be submitted to the department head or supervisor only if they include the ombudsperson's signed statement that due process has been followed." The ombudsperson is expected to sign the committee letter. The P/T chair will obtain the ombudsperson signature on the committee report.

## Utah State University Checklist for Ombudspersons

The ombudsperson is expected to:

- See that promotion and tenure committees follow due process at the meeting as defined in policy 405
- Protect the rights and interests of the candidate and the interests of the University
- Refrain from commenting on the contents of a candidate's file
- Stop any questions or discussions that focus on personal issues

\_\_\_\_\_ Are all committee members present in person or by electronic conferencing? 405.7.1 (2) & 405.6.2 (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ At the start of the meeting, ask if all committee members have reviewed the files. If not, stop the proceedings immediately and reschedule the meeting. 405.7.1 (2)

\_\_\_\_\_ Determine there is a current and signed role statement. 405.6.1

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee address questions of teaching? 405.2.2 (1) & 405.7.1 (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of role

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee address questions of research or creative endeavors? 405.2.2 (2) & 405.7.1 (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of role

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee address questions of service? 405.2.2 (4) & 405.7.1 (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of role

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee address questions of extension? 405.2.2 (3) & 405.7.1 (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of role

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee address questions of librarianship? 405.3.2 (1) & 406.7.1 (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of role

\_\_\_\_\_ When the candidate leaves the room and the committee discusses the case in private, do committee members keep the discussion focused on relevant issues? 405.6.2 (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the committee clearly state its expectations for the candidate, both in the short term and the long term? 405.7.1 (2)

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the candidate have the opportunity to respond to the committee's questions and concerns?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the candidate have the opportunity to ask the committee to clarify tenure and promotion standards, departmental or college expectations, and university procedures? 405.6.2 (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ In years prior to which a tenure decision is made, does the committee take a proper vote (taken while the candidate is out of room) on continuing the candidate's appointment for tenure track faculty? 405.7.1 (2).

\_\_\_\_\_ In the year in which a tenure and/or promotion decision is made for all faculty, does the committee take a proper vote (taken while the candidate is out of the room; 405.7.2(2) & 405.11.4(2)) on whether to recommend tenure and/or promotion (Note: votes are not taken at PAC only meetings that occur at any time other than the year the promotion decision is to be made.)

\_\_\_\_\_ The ombudsperson will inform the committee that after having a chance to review the letter, their signature on the letter will confirm that the committee's letter makes the points (and states the concerns) raised in the candidate's meeting and the meeting followed due process. 405.6.5 & 405.7.2 (2)