

Grinnell College
REVIEWS OF FACULTY

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Grinnell College takes care to appoint to its faculty scholars who hold excellent credentials and who have a strong commitment to become excellent teachers in a residential liberal arts college. Newly appointed faculty members also prepare to join their colleagues in the governance of a nationally prominent, residential liberal arts college. The College normally conducts two pre-tenure reviews and the tenure review in the first six years of a faculty member's appointment. These reviews help the faculty member and the department identify strengths and weaknesses, and create a plan to address any weaknesses—while, of course, making possible a well-informed recommendation on whether the appointment should be renewed. In addition, Associate Professors and Professors are reviewed triennially by the Faculty Budget Committee for assessment of a merit score to be used in salary determination; Assistant Professors' merit scores are assigned by the Personnel Committee at the point of each contract renewal review. Merit scores may be assigned to faculty members by the Personnel Committee following the promotion reviews to the ranks of Associate Professor or Professor.

The substance of the review is an evaluation of the quality of teaching, scholarly achievement, and quality and quantity of service to the College. The goal of our review process is to provide timely and effective information to the faculty member and the department, leading to appropriate decisions regarding support for professional development, recognition of achievements, and contract renewal.

Note: This document summarizes, but does not supersede, provisions that are set forth in the Grinnell College Faculty Handbook. All faculty reviews must comply with procedures published in the Faculty Handbook, which is available at <http://web.grinnell.edu/dean/Handbook/FacultyHandbook.pdf>, and the Guidelines for Faculty Reviews, available at <http://web.grinnell.edu/Dean/Reviews/FacRevGuides.pdf>

Contract Sequence

Most new faculty members in tenure-track positions initially receive two-year contracts. An interim review is conducted in the fall of the second year. If the review leads to reappointment, the faculty member receives another two-year contract, extending the contract through the fourth year. The second review is a complete review, usually occurring in the third year of appointment to the faculty. This review is more extensive than the interim review. If the complete review is successful, the contract is renewed for three years, extending the appointment to seven years. The tenure review normally occurs in a faculty member's sixth year on the faculty of the College.

A variety of circumstances may modify the standard contract sequence. For example, a new faculty member with a terminal degree who arrives with previous teaching experience may be allowed to count up to two years of such service toward the six years of the pre-tenure probationary period. The rank for faculty members who have not completed the terminal degree at the time of initial appointment will be that of Instructor. The rank will be changed to Assistant Professor as soon as the Dean's Office receives documentation that all requirements for the terminal degree are satisfied. The review schedule for those individuals is similar to that of an Assistant Professor, but it is important to note that all requirements for the terminal degree must be completed by November 1st of the Instructor's third year on the faculty at Grinnell College, otherwise the contract will not be renewed. More specialized circumstances may be negotiated with the Dean of the College in accordance with provisions set forth in the Grinnell College Faculty Handbook.

General Provisions of Reviews

The department in which the faculty member is appointed usually initiates faculty reviews. The Office of the Dean provides detailed procedures for reviews to the department chair and to the faculty member under review considerably in advance of the review. In most cases, the department chair or another tenured department colleague gathers all information and conducts deliberations among the tenured faculty members in the department. The department is charged with making a clear and well-supported recommendation for or against reappointment, providing a thorough assessment of strengths and a careful analysis of concerns based on specific evidence from the dossier. Once that letter is complete, the designated materials are delivered to the Dean's Office.

The Dean's Office will assure that the review dossier is complete and that proper procedures are followed before passing it along to the next body to review the dossier. For interim and complete reviews, this body is the Faculty Personnel Committee; for reviews involving tenure or promotion or both, it is the Divisional Personnel Committee of the appropriate academic division. In tenure and promotion cases the Divisional Personnel Committee conveys its recommendation to the Faculty Personnel Committee. The Faculty Personnel Committee, which meets with the President and the Dean of the College, reviews each case. The Committee votes to make a positive or negative recommendation to the President. The President, in turn, makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees of all final action in the case of tenure and promotions.

Interim Reviews

Interim reviews are less comprehensive and detailed than other reviews. The outcome of an interim review must be either that the contract be renewed or that a complete review be conducted. In other words, an interim review may not recommend non-renewal of a contract. In an interim review, the tenured members of the department examine materials provided by the faculty member being reviewed. At least one tenured colleague will visit a minimum of three hours of class (that comprise at least two consecutive class visits) taught by the faculty member under review, and the Student Educational Policy Council (SEPC) provides a written or oral report to the department chair. Tenured members of the department prepare and agree upon a letter to be submitted to the Dean of the College (usually by the department chair), summarizing all the information that has been gathered. The dossier usually consists simply of this departmental letter, the most recent Faculty Activity Report, and the curriculum vitae of the faculty member, along with course lists, enrollments, and summary quantitative data from end-of-course evaluations provided by the Dean's office. In the case of interim reviews conducted at 6-year intervals for certain faculty, these materials will include the faculty member's context statement and Faculty Activity Reports from the past three years. At the conclusion of a successful review, the Dean will send a letter to the faculty member who was reviewed, summarizing salient strengths and weaknesses indicated by the review and perhaps suggesting strategies for improvement or further development.

Complete Reviews

A complete review is more thorough than an interim review. The basic procedure is similar to an interim review, but it is expected that there will be more instructional and scholarly materials to collect and analyze. As in the interim review, one or more tenured colleagues will visit a minimum of three hours of class (that comprise at least two consecutive class visits) taught by the faculty member under review. The Dean's Office sends a letter and a survey to students who completed classes taught by the professor during the previous three years, soliciting their comments. Members of the SEPC survey their peers and submit a written report to the department conducting the review. Summaries of numeric data from end-of-course evaluations are provided to the review chair and Personnel Committee for their use. Letters

from colleagues on and off campus may be solicited to document effective service. As in the interim review, tenured members of the department draft and agree upon a letter (addressed to the Dean of the College) summarizing the review and making a clear recommendation for or against contract renewal. After the Faculty Personnel Committee considers the review, the Dean notifies the faculty member of the Committee's recommendation. A letter from the Dean to the faculty member summarizes the strengths and weaknesses indicated by the successful complete review, and may suggest strategies for development and improvement.

Tenure Reviews

A tenure review resembles a complete review, with two additional steps: The Dean submits a selection of scholarly materials to three external reviewers who have agreed to assess the quality of the faculty member's scholarship. Also, the entire tenure dossier is reviewed by the Divisional Personnel Committee of the appropriate academic division. That committee makes an independent recommendation prior to review by the Faculty Personnel Committee. In other respects, the tenure review follows the procedure for complete reviews.

In a successful tenure review, the College expects demonstrated excellence in teaching. The College also expects that a faculty member will have brought scholarly work to completion, including professional peer review, by the time of a tenure review. The faculty member is further expected to have developed a record of service to the College in the form of administrative tasks, committee participation, and other venues of faculty governance.

Ranks

Faculty members who have not completed all requirements for the customary terminal degree in their field will be initially appointed as Instructors. Those who have attained the customary terminal degree usually receive their initial appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor. The College immediately promotes an Instructor to the rank of Assistant Professor upon completion of requirements for the terminal degree. For tenure-track faculty members, promotion to the rank of Associate Professor normally accompanies a successful tenure review.