P&T COMMITTEE CHAIR'S SCRIPT

Welcome everyone to our annual promotion committee meeting. First, let me say a few words to remind us of our role here. We often say that handling promotion cases is "one of the most important things that we do as faculty." And indeed, as senior faculty in [Zoology] we hold the privilege of determining the future of our department by annually making promotion decisions. In doing this, remember that we are exercising authority delegated to us by the University's Board of Trustees and the Provost, who will ultimately have to approve our decisions. We are bound to exercise that authority in a manner consistent with university policy and procedure and, of course, any applicable state and federal laws.

My role is to moderate this meeting and ensure that we follow those procedures. I do not have a vote here.[1] Instead, University Policy and Procedures confer on me the responsibility to manage the process and to set the "rules of the table." These include:

First, we will discuss the cases before us, using each promotion document as the factual basis of that discussion. The documents have been checked for accuracy[2], and we will not discuss or consider questions based on hearsay that are outside of the documents, or irrelevant to the merits of each case. We are to respond to each candidate as an individual, interpreting their achievements described in the documents in the light of our established university and department Criteria for Tenure and Promotion.[3] If any document contains a Professional COVID Impact Statement, we will assess it using the university guidance[3a].

Second, as we do in many university processes, we will be careful to avoid conflicts of interest. Just as a reminder, these include various professional, personal, or financial relationships with a candidate. [Some of you have already declared potential conflicts to me;] I now invite anyone [else] who has a potential conflict with a particular case or feels the need to recuse themselves from a case to speak up.[4]

Third, we will conduct this meeting in a civil and collegial fashion. We will ensure sure that everyone who has questions to ask, or insights to offer, has the opportunity to speak. Please listen thoughtfully and respectfully; please speak thoughtfully and respectfully. Please do not interrupt a colleague who is speaking unless it is to ask for a clarification. Consider the time we have in this meeting when making your own comments. As the committee chair, I am charged with managing the meeting according to these principles, and I will do so.

Fourth, we must hold a full, fair, and candid discussion of the merits of each case. To ensure this, the confidentiality of remarks made here must be carefully preserved and restricted to those committee members present here today. I, and I alone, will report to each candidate the tenor of the conversation about their case. Our discussion here today and your written comments will guide me in this. But, unless compelled to do so by law or university processes, I will not repeat any part of our discussion outside of this room, nor will I attach any names to specific comments. You must do the same. Note that nothing in the provision of confidentiality allows participants in promotion committees to engage in illegal, unethical or inappropriate behavior with impunity.

At the conclusion of the discussion of each case, you will each cast an anonymous ballot. Only "yes" or "no" votes will be counted; abstentions are not recorded under university procedures. A simple majority of votes cast serves to automatically advance a case to the next level. I encourage each of you to add written comments to your anonymous ballot explaining the basis of your vote, especially if you vote "no." This information will be necessary for me both to communicate the outcome to the candidate, and to explain at the next level the specific strengths and weaknesses of each case that goes forward.

[1] *Note: Head votes at primary committee if there are <7 faculty eligible to vote*

[2] *The Cv information in the promotion document must be accurate. This is the responsibility of the candidate, but senior faculty or heads assist in developing the document and they should check on key items such as status of publications or role in grant awards, where there is any uncertainty or change with time. In some units, the document is available to members of the primary committee long in advance of the voting meeting, and they could also report errors to the head. It is essential that the unit ensures that the Cv information be accurate before the promotion document is sent to external referees.*

[3] *The Primary Committee should understand well in advance of the P&T meeting that the discussion will focus on the candidate's record as laid out in the promotion document and whether that record meets the promotion criteria. Personnel problems such as issues of behavior and collegiality must be addressed over time as they arise, for example with involvement of HR. The promotion committee table is not a fair or appropriate venue in which to air and adjudicate these issues. This can also be an equity issue: hearsay information about collegiality or "fit" is widely believed to have worked unfairly against women and minority candidates in the promotion process. For the future, we will work with heads and deans to consider an approach to the rare cases in which serious issues are raised that are outside of the promotion documents.*

[3a] *Comprehensive guidance and explanations for Professional COVID Impact Statements are fund at this site.*

[4] *Note that **not** all reported conflicts need result in disqualification; some are instead important simply to put a committee member's remarks into context (being a research collaborator of the candidate, for example). Members of the committee should understand that they can, if they choose, report conflicts to the head, in confidence. Also, they can recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest, without disclosing their reasons.*