

Committee on Qualifications Annual Report to the Senate, 2016-2017 Academic Year

Members of the Committee:

Abdi, Herve (BBS)	Ali, Ashiq (SOM)	Channell, David (A&H)
Dufour, Frank (ATEC)	Haas, Zygmunt (ECS)	Hart, John (BBS)
Hooshyar, Ali (NSM), Chair	Li, Dong (EPPS)	Lowry, Robert (EPPS)
Malina, Roger (ATEC/NSM)	Makris, Georgios (ECS)	Rebello, Mike (SOM)
Waligore, Marilyn (A&H), Vice-chair	Zhang, Chuanwei (NSM)	

Review Activity for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017

Type of review	2015-2016	2016-2017
Third-year, mid-probationary	24	26
Tenure review & Promotion to Assoc Prof	10	18
Assoc to Full Prof	12	10
Outside hires with tenure	10	7
Totals	56	61

The overall workload increased by about 9%, mainly due to the increase in number of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor reviews.

Meeting schedule, operating procedures, and workload:

Mid-probationary, tenure, and promotion reviews. Prior to CQ's evaluation, a candidate for promotion, is reviewed by an ad hoc committee, a faculty vote with recorded minutes, and a Dean's report. The components analyzed were research/creative activity, teaching effectiveness, and service. UTD policy requires excellence in either teaching or research/creative activity and if teaching is excellent, then the candidate should have performed well in research/creative activity.

CQ met as a committee on seven Fridays mornings: January 6, 13, and 20, and February 3, 10, 17, and 24. The expectation was that all CQ members read all the cases. Each CQ member was assigned one case to summarize per session, and one case to take notes on the CQ discussion. It takes several days to prepare for each weekly meeting. The chair merged the summary and discussion for a final report, which were usually one to two pages long. CQ considered the following factors for cases with tenure: (1) sufficient documentation to support the

recommendation for or against promotion; (2) independent letters from at least five external evaluators (independence was defined as not having a self-interested association with the candidate for promotion); (3) clear articulation of the strengths and weaknesses of each case; (4) school-specific guidelines; and (5) consistency within individual schools. Out of CQ's 54 recommendations, the President and the Interim Provost concurred with 52 of the recommendations. On March 31 the Interim Provost met with CQ to discuss the recommendations for the other two reviewed cases.

External hires with tenure. CQ evaluates all external hires with tenure. These evaluations are conducted mostly via email because they are often time-sensitive. The CQ has imposed a 48-hour turnover to complete evaluations for urgent cases. For external hires whose need for deliberation is less urgent (as determined by the Provost), CQ has imposed a 96-hour turnover. For hires at the same rank (e.g., an Associate Professor from another institution hired as an Associate Professor at UTD), our operating procedures allow the CQ Chair to determine how many CQ member responses are sufficient; after expiration of the turnover time. This process accommodates unusual times for the hires (e.g., summer). For hires that involve a promotion (e.g., an Associate Professor hire as a Full Professor), eight affirmative votes (a majority) are required. However, thanks to our dedicated CQ members and availability of Internet, almost all cases have been reviewed with 92%-100% of CQ members participating. The types of external hires are listed in the table below.

Previous rank	Proposed rank	Number
Assistant Prof w/o tenure	Associate Prof with tenure	one
Associate Prof with tenure	Associate Prof with tenure	three
Associate Prof with tenure	Full Prof with tenure	one
Full Prof with tenure	Full Prof with tenure	two

Observations and suggestions for improvements:

It is estimated that each case requires about one hour. Up to 12 cases per week may be considered, which can require at least two full days per week. The chair probably spends double the time. As the university expands, so will the number of cases reviewed. In the not distant future, assigning academic workload credit to CQ members may need to be taken into consideration.

Thanks to the continued efforts of Dr. Inga Musselman (Interim Provost) who holds annual meetings with the candidates for promotion and ad hoc committee chairs to discuss the review process and procedures, the usual issues that are of concerns in the review process: publication authorship (listing of all authors, determining contribution of candidate for evaluation), number

of PhD students supervised, indication of UTD student authorship, independent research done at UTD (as opposed to research done as a PhD or post-doctoral associate), including the mid-probationary report during tenure review, teaching evaluations, seem to have been effectively dealt with. The reports provided by the ad hoc committees were generally of high quality, reasons for their recommendations in general were well justified with supportive documents and details of their reasoning.

The most frequent concern raised for several cases involved the outside hires with tenure. In general for such cases, the external letters were not always independent/arms-length (e.g., PhD mentors or co-PIs on grants). The written policy for outside letters is stated in UTDPP1057:

For tenured appointments, the Search Committee should solicit at least five independent judgments of the candidate's qualifications (these may include, but must not be limited to, individuals recommended by the candidate).

Even so, the rules were not always met. CQ is mandated to not seek additional information beyond what is provided. We have the option of not voting, but standing on such a principle has not been considered productive, especially since many of these hires were time-sensitive. This lack of deference to the arms-length rule seems to have started to propagate to some ad hoc committees too. In one case we even had a Dean note that the candidate's file did not contain sufficient number of arms-length external review letters. However the Dean still had submitted the case to the Provost Office and CQ for review. The CQ had to return the file to the ad hoc committee for its completion. Such unnecessary delays are not fair to CQ and the candidates, since it may cause considerable delays in their tenure/promotions.

The followings are the issues that CQ finds are in need of improvement and CQ members recommend their implementation:

1. A check list page be included in any tenure/promotion file for indicating presence of all the needed documents, including at least five arms-length external letters. This should assist the respective Dean to quickly check a file for completion before it is sent to the Provost Office and CQ for further processing, or to return it to the ad hoc/search committee to obtain and include the needed documents before the announced deadlines.
2. The Provost Faculty review website contains the statistical summary of teaching for candidates under review. In addition to reporting student evaluations for courses taught by the candidate, another column needs to be added to this teaching summary that reports average GPA for the listed courses. It is true that this information is available in another part of the review website, but inclusion of it in the statistical summary of teaching will be more informative and will make it easier not only for CQ but also the ad hoc committees to better evaluate teaching effectiveness of a candidate.

3. CQ members believe it is very beneficial to have more information about what tier one schools consider as “excellence” in teaching when evaluating a faculty for tenure, and what measures do they use to arrive at such a designation. It is suggested that the “center of teaching excellence,” collect and provide CQ with such information.
4. CQ recommends its membership’s demographic mirror that of UTD’s Full Professor population in terms of gender and race/ethnicity.

A final comment concerns the participation of Dr. Joseph Pancrazio, who represents the Provost’s office at CQ meetings. He is not a voting member of the committee, and he does not participate in discussions, except to clarify matters of policy. Nonetheless, he has had an excellent impact on the quality of reviews within UTD. Also, Dr. Inga Musselman (Interim Provost) has continued to provide instructions to ad hoc committee chairs and candidates for promotion, with the result of higher quality information from both. She is very knowledgeable about CQ deliberations and historical reasons for existing procedures. It is felt that the conscientious efforts of Dr. Inga Musselman over the years have improved the review process by acting as an intermediary between the candidates for promotion, the ad hoc committees, and CQ. As a result CQ members continues to benefit from her vast experience and knowledge on CQ matters.