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MEMORANDUM TO THE VMI BOARD OF VISITORS THROUGH THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Approval of Changes to the Faculty Handbook

Background

The Board of Visitors is charged with the responsibility of approving changes in VMI regulations. The *Faculty Handbook* was last updated in January 2024. The following changes to the *Faculty Handbook – January 2024* have been approved by the Academic Board, and are submitted for the approval of the Board of Visitors:

- Tenure and Promotion Calendars – Enclosure (1);
- External Letters for Tenure and Promotion – Enclosure (2);
- Faculty Advisory Council Service Eligibility – Enclosure (3).

The *Faculty Handbook* with the proposed changes is renamed the *Faculty Handbook – May 2024*.

Recommended Motion

“The Academic Affairs Committee has considered the proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook, which now shall be entitled the *Faculty Handbook – May 2024*. I move that the Board of Visitors approve the *Faculty Handbook – May 2024* and that it be made part of the minutes.”



Cedric T. Wins '85
Major General, U.S. Army (Retired)
Superintendent

Tenure and Promotion Calendars

The following, proposed changes to the “Tenure and Promotion Review Process” in the Faculty Handbook (pp. 42-47) would (a) move the due date for the submission of draft materials by tenure and promotion candidates to the department from 1 November to 15 October, and (b) add an opportunity for a promotion candidate to rebut or challenge departmental recommendations or minority reports:

C. TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEW PROCESS...

2. The annual timetable for **tenure and mid-tenure review** is normally as follows:

~~November 1~~October 15 – Candidates submit draft materials to department for review.

Tenure and Mid-Tenure Calendar

Date	Event
Between August 30 and September 15	The Tenure and Promotions Committee hosts an open Faculty Informational Forum for Tenure and Promotions.
15 September	Dean Announces candidates for Tenure and Mid-Tenure Review
30 September	Department Head meets with candidate.
1 November <u>15 October</u>	Candidate submits draft materials to the Department.
15 November	Department tenured members complete review of candidate’s materials. Candidate receives department recommendations for review.
7 December	Candidate’s rebuttal due to the Department.
14 December	Department Head forwards recommendations to the Dean. Candidate submits final portfolio of materials to the Dean.
1 March	Tenure and Promotion Committee sends reports on each candidate to the Dean.
15 March	Superintendent receives Tenure and Promotions reports and the Dean’s recommendations.
1 May	Superintendent submits approved candidates to the Board of Visitors.

3. The annual timetable for **promotion** review is normally as follows:

~~November 1~~October 15 – Candidates submit draft materials to department for review.

November 15 – If the Department Head determines that the faculty member meets...

December 7 – The candidates submit to the department any rebuttal or challenge to the written department recommendations.

Promotion Calendar

Date	Event
Between August 30 and September 15	The Tenure and Promotions Committee hosts an open Faculty Informational Forum for Tenure and Promotions.
15 September	Dean informs Department Heads of those members eligible for promotion.
1 October	Department Heads notify Dean of intentions to recommend members for promotion.
1 November <u>15 October</u>	Candidates submit draft materials to department for review.
15 November	Department Heads complete reviews of promotion candidates with department tenured members.
<u>7 December</u>	<u>Candidate's rebuttal due to the Department.</u>
14 December	Department Heads forward written recommendations for promotion to the Dean. Candidates submit portfolio of materials to the Dean.
1 March	Tenure and Promotion Committee submits reports on each candidate to the Dean.
15 March	Superintendent receives Tenure and Promotion Committee's reports and the Dean's recommendations.
1 May	Superintendent submits approved candidates to the Board of Visitors.

External Letters for Tenure and Promotion

The following, additional language explicitly permitting tenure and promotion candidates to solicit and submit up to three letters of recommendation from experts external to VMI would be added under the December 14 entry in the annual timetable for tenure and mid-tenure review on p. 44:

December 14 – Department Heads submit to the Dean a written recommendation for each candidate for promotion.

Also by this date, the candidate for promotion will submit to the Dean a final portfolio of materials in support of his or her candidacy. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will provide official annual reviews for each candidate's portfolio. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs also will be responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining a security policy for electronically submitted materials.

At the end of business on December 14, candidate files are sealed and released to the Chair of the Tenure and Promotions Committee.

As part of their portfolio of materials for tenure or promotion consideration, the candidate may solicit and submit as many as three letters of recommendation from scholars or professional practitioners external to VMI who can speak from an informed position to the candidate's accomplishments. These letters should explicitly evaluate the candidate's professional achievement to date, particularly as it pertains to the Institute's Statement on Faculty Expectations in the domains of Scholarly Engagement and/or Professional Citizenship. The Tenure and Promotion Committee shall not consider the absence of such letters to be detrimental to a candidate's case for tenure or promotion.

Faculty Advisory Council Service Eligibility

The following revision to the “Service Eligibility” clause governing the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) (p. 8) would prohibit members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee from serving on the FAC, and would direct FAC members who are appointed as Department Heads/senior administrators or (s)electd to the Tenure and Promotion Committee to resign their seats on the FAC:

c. Service Eligibility

Every full-time tenured member of the faculty (associate and full professor) is eligible for election to the FAC from their respective academic division, with the exception of (a) current Department Heads; (b) faculty members holding full-time administrative positions (e.g., the Dean and Associate Dean); (c) sitting and elected/selected members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee; and ~~(e)~~ (d) incumbent members of the FAC who have reached their term limit (see below). The names of all faculty eligible for election to the FAC shall appear on the FAC election ballot for their respective divisions. Any member of the faculty who is elected to the FAC may subsequently decline to serve on the FAC. Sitting FAC members who are assigned to disqualifying duties as described in (a) through (c) above must resign their position on the FAC prior to assuming their new duties.