The strength of a university rests on the quality of its faculty. Apart from hiring, no decisions we make are more important than those involving faculty tenure and promotion. Through hiring, tenure, and promotion, we ensure the sustained quality of our institution.

As you know, there are specific procedures for promotion and tenure review, some at the unit level, others at the university level, and still others at the system level. The procedures are designed to provide faculty with a fair review and to ensure that the standards of the institution are met. I count on the deans to make sure that proper procedures are followed and that promotion and tenure decisions are made exclusively on the basis of the applicant’s record. If at any point during the process you have any questions please do not hesitate to bring them to me.

This memorandum provides a timeline for the 2014-2015 promotion and tenure review process. The timeline is firm. Please remember that all promotion and tenure cases must be submitted to Ann Arbor electronically. Formatting of all documents we send must be perfect. Receiving properly formatted materials from your office, on time, will enable us to meet the February deadline set by Ann Arbor.

One critical part of the review process involves external letters. Please pay considerable attention to who is selected. Although letters may be secured from individuals who are “at arm’s length” and “not arm’s length,” I strongly encourage you to use reviewers who have not had a sustained relationship with the candidate (e.g., the candidate’s dissertation advisor, textbook co-author, or friend in graduate school). Please also note that the procedures specify: It is important that the candidates be allowed to give input concerning the selection of some external reviewers; however, this year we are required to include two that have been selected solely by the department. Another important consideration in selecting reviewers involves rank and institution. The guiding principle for reviewer selection must be their ability to submit a thoughtful and appropriate assessment of the candidate’s professorial record. Traditionally, our campus emphasizes to external reviewers that we are primarily a teaching institution and that we are more interested in the quality of the research than the quantity. Whenever possible, select full professors (remember that all reviewers must be of higher rank than the candidate). Also, consider institution type and prestige. Although letters from faculty at leading research universities can be impressive, the authors may not be in a position to understand the realities of the life of a teacher-scholar at an institution like ours. Similarly, letters from reviewers at universities of less prestige than ours may not be afforded sufficient credibility. Also, seek regional diversity when selecting reviewers. Please remember that you must provide a brief description of the credentials of external reviewers. Be sure that the brief description offers compelling information on the reviewer’s qualifications. You need to do more than to write: “Reviewer X does the same research as the candidate.” Finally, be sure that you send solicitation letters to external letters on a timely basis. My experience is that it is best to make initial requests via phone. That way you find out right away if the person is willing to write
the letter and can do it within the time required. You may also wish to seek at least eight reviewers rather than five so that you end up with at least five letters. (We are urging that all cases include a minimum of six letters.) All letters received must be forwarded with the recommendation. In other words, if you solicit and receive seven external review letters, all seven must be submitted.

Please note that Ann Arbor has specific guidelines for the letters to external reviewers and for other details of the promotion/tenure process. Documents updating these details for this promotion/tenure cycle will be forthcoming. In addition to any changes regarding your unit criteria for promotion and tenure, I am also requesting your guidelines with specific and detailed procedures regarding how you conduct your promotion/tenure reviews.

PROVOST OFFICE TIMELINE (Schools/college will need to set deadlines to meet this timeline.)

June, 2014
Identify faculty being recommended for promotion and/or tenure and submit names to the Provost Office.
Develop list of potential external reviewers for each candidate; submit said list to the body/committee within your unit for approval.

July, 2014 (or before)
Send solicitation letters to potential external reviewers.

August, 2014
Review tenure/promotion procedures at the unit, university, and system level.
Check to make sure appropriate committees are constituted.
Confirm external reviewers for each candidate.
Verify that external reviewers meet all criteria.

September 9, 2014
Send electronically to the Provost Office the sample letter to external reviewers.
Submit electronically to the Provost Office any changes in your unit Promotion and Tenure criteria as well as detailed guidelines regarding your promotion/tenure review process.
Send electronically to Provost Office:
• Updated vita for each promotion/tenure candidate.
• List of confirmed external reviewers for each candidate, with brief description of their credentials.

December 5, 2014
Send to the Provost Office the original external review letters and the status of any external review letters that have not been received. If any letter from an external reviewer is not yet on file, the Dean is to issue a reminder.
Submit electronically to Provost Office:
• Documentation of teaching effectiveness by both the Dean and the candidate
  ➢ Evaluation Template
  ➢ Evaluation Questions
  ➢ Peer Evaluations
  ➢ (2) Syllabi

January 5, 2015
Submit completed promotion packets to Provost Office.
Submit electronically to Provost Office:
• Summary Letter from Dean.
• Curriculum vitae (if updated from the one sent in September).
• Documentation of research.
• Documentation of service.
• Regents Communication.

This is a firm deadline. Early submission is encouraged.
February 1, 2015  Provost Office will submit recommendations approved by the Provost and overall summary to the Office of the Chancellor.

February, 2015  *(Specific date to be provided by Ann Arbor.)*  Provost Office, on behalf of the Chancellor, will submit the recommendations approved by the Chancellor to the Office of the Provost in Ann Arbor. UM-Flint Provost Office will have all documents posted to C-Tools as well as checksums and metadata information.

May, 2015  Office of the President will submit the recommendations to the Board of Regents for final approval. Approvals are effective as of September 1, 2015.

sf

cc:  Ruth J. Person, Chancellor  
Beth Manning, UM-Flint Human Resources  
Melissa Richardson, School of Education and Human Services  
Kristin Arntz, School of Management  
Sheena Lewis, College of Arts and Sciences  
Cheryl Szpaichler, School of Health Professions and Studies  
Becky Waller, Frances Willson Thompson Library