

SDBOR Academic Leadership Training

Jason Zimmerman
Associate Dean

College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, SDSU

July 27, 2022





Topics for Discussion

- Mentorship and professional development of faculty
- The department head's role in the promotion and tenure process
- Building and maintaining collegial departments



Developing Faculty

Formal programs:

- New faculty orientation
- Assigned mentors
- Academic conferences
- Workshops, networking, retreats, etc.

Consider teaming up with another unit to take advantage of scale.



Developing Faculty

Quasi-formal faculty development

- Professional Development Plans (PDPs)
- Workload assignments
- Faculty Annual Reviews (FARs)
- IDEA student opinion surveys



Promotion & Tenure

For both parties (faculty member and university):

- The decision to grant tenure is of paramount importance.
- Progress toward tenure should inform every decision made during the probationary period.



Promotion & Tenure

SDSU Faculty Handbook:

The most important criterion for awarding tenure is whether it is in the best interests of SDSU to do so. One must pose important questions when considering tenure such as: Will the candidate improve the quality of the tenured faculty? Is the unit better able to improve itself by granting tenure and promotion or by hiring anew? Is the candidate likely to maintain or improve the quality of their contributions into the future? If there are serious doubts or concerns about any of these areas, the University should not promote or award tenure.



Promotion & Tenure

- Know your campus policy.
 - SDBOR Policy 4:10
<https://www.sdbor.edu/policy/documents/4-10.pdf>
 - SDSU Faculty Handbook
<https://insidestate.sdstate.edu/academics/FacultyHandbook/Pages/Main.aspx>
- Follow your campus policy
 - Timelines
 - Documentation
 - External letters



Promotion & Tenure

- Know your unit's P&T standards.
 - Teaching expectations – quantity (scope and depth) and quality
 - Research expectations – what counts, and how much?
 - Service – be judicious
- Focus on impact.
- Don't overlook specialty accreditation.



No Surprises

- Discuss progress toward tenure during every annual review. The FAR process requires this!
- Elevate this discussion during the third year review.
- PDPs, FARs, and the dossier should all paint a consistent picture for P&T committees.



No Surprises

Documentation of performance issues is essential.

- A bad hire is a mistake.
- A bad tenure decision is a worse mistake.



Collegiality

- Collegiality means that people cooperate and respect one another.
- It does not mean that everyone is best friends.
- Preventing even one toxic situation from developing can save you countless hours and assist with faculty hiring and retention.



Collegiality

- Make this a priority, explicitly.
- Be a role model.
 - Talk to faculty in the hallway and in their offices.
 - Navigate conflict respectfully.
 - Be honest and transparent, as appropriate.
 - Listen.
 - Look for ways to compliment others.
 - Don't take it personally.
- Hire the right people – do not select for dramatic personalities.



Collegiality

Do not let issues fester.

- Avoidance the problem generally doesn't work – interpersonal issues don't usually fix themselves.
- Avoiding the problem rewards bad behavior.
- Avoiding the problem will be perceived as ducking it.



Bullies

Common characteristics of workplace bullies:

- They will intentionally violate norms to get their way (e.g. violence, threats, shouting, personal insults, etc.)
- They do not feel guilty about violating norms
- They seek out and initiate conflict

All bullies are uncollegial, but not all uncollegial faculty are bullies.



Bullies

- Nip it in the bud.
- Avoidance *definitely* doesn't work with bullies.
- Communicate clearly, and document everything.
- Be prepared to be tested.
- Involve HR and your dean/provost.
 - Possible personnel action
 - Institutional memory

Thanks for Listening!