B.9. The Promotion and Tenure Committee

The principal responsibility of the P&T Committee is to advise the president about all proposals for promotion and tenure that have been forwarded to the provost’s office for review. During its deliberations, the Committee may invite the deans and department chairs individually to discuss their recommendations. The Committee may also call internal reviewers or any other person that it feels may provide information considered vital to a fair and thorough review. Rules of confidentiality do not prevent the Committee, on its own initiative, from addressing questions to the internal reviewer about materials in the dossier, thereby conveying at least the substance of particular issues that have been raised in its deliberations.

Prior to beginning its deliberations, the Committee will ask the Teaching Committee to prepare summaries of the teaching record of each of the candidates under review. These summaries will be sent to the candidates prior to the review with a copy to their department chair and dean.

It is best practice of P&T Committees that all members of the committee read every case dossier. For each case, one member of the Committee is picked by the Provost to "present the case," i.e., to provide a summary of the contents of the dossier. Deliberations then begin, and every committee member is given the opportunity to comment on the case. Further evidence is requested, as needed, to address open questions that arise during these deliberations.

For each case, at the conclusion of the deliberations, a member of the Committee will be assigned by the Provost the task of authoring an ‘Executive Summary’ of the committee deliberations. The final draft of the Executive Summary, including summary statistics of the committee vote, should be approved by the Committee and added to the dossier.

Under certain conditions, specific members of the P&T committee should be recused from considering all or part of a specific case:

- A member of the P&T Committee who is in the candidate’s Department should not vote twice and must be recused in one or the other.

- A member of the P&T Committee who is the candidate’s Department Chair has already made her/his recommendation, contained in the dossier, and therefore should abstain from voting and deliberations in the Committee, but may answer other Committee members’ questions as needed.

- A member of the P&T Committee who has a conflict of interest or who feels he or she may not be able objectively to evaluate the candidate has the responsibility to disclose the nature of the conflict to the Provost or General Counsel prior to deliberations and, if deemed appropriate, will be recused from deliberations and voting.
The membership of the P & T Committee should be available to all candidates before the Provost forwards the dossiers to the P & T Committee. If a candidate believes there is a potential conflict of interest or asserts an inappropriate bias involving a member of the P & T Committee, the candidate must raise it prior to deliberations on the case so that the P & T Committee can evaluate the claim and act appropriately.

After completing its review, the provost, as chair of the Committee, communicates the Committee's recommendations along with his or her own to the president. In making a decision, the president may call on other persons who might provide information considered vital to a fair and thorough review. Once each case has been reviewed, the President then meets with the Committee to discuss the decisions before transmitting them to the Rice Board of Trustees.

All candidates who are reviewed by the P&T Committee, whether successful or unsuccessful, will be notified by the president of the decision. This communication is made immediately following the president’s decision and precedes the formal approval of the Rice Board of Trustees. Unsuccessful candidates will be informed by the president of their right to an appeal. (See section D.4 for specifics of the appeal process.)

In addition to discussing candidates for promotion, the Committee also discusses with each dean those individuals in their school who are eligible for promotion in the current year but are not being reviewed (the "promotables"). These are all associate professors with tenure who have been in that rank for a total of nine or more years.