

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

July 30, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tenure System Faculty, Deans, School Directors, and Chairpersons

FROM: Thomas D. Jeitschko, Ph.D., Interim Provost
and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs



SUBJECT: Companion Document to July 8, 2025, RPT Memo

To start, I would like to acknowledge the external pressures reshaping internal academic processes and affirm MSU's commitment to upholding fair, transparent, and mission-aligned evaluation standards. As federal guidance continues to evolve, MSU will remain adaptive and principled in ensuring that faculty advancement reflects both scholarly merit and the values that align with and demonstrate commitment to the university's land-grant mission.

Faculty members report uncertainty about how their work will be evaluated under new compliance frameworks. This document aims to provide guidance specific to faculty reappointment, promotion and tenure (RPT) and annual review processes.



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

In general, faculty who have submitted reappointment, promotion and tenure materials using the guidance in place before the provost's recent RPT memo should be evaluated in accordance with the original guidance. Similarly, annual reviews should be conducted based on guidance in place for the period being evaluated. This is also the case for academic specialists and fixed-term faculty, who will soon be getting a memo related to their coming review and promotion cycle.

2025-26 Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT):

- Changes noted in the RPT memo reflect what is expected going forward. Faculty do not need to make changes to RPT materials already submitted.
- Faculty submitting materials for the 2025-26 RPT cycle should be reviewed by all involved in the process on the expectations set for them before the July 2025 RPT memo.

2026-27 Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT):

- Faculty submitting materials for the 2026-27 RPT cycle should be reviewed on expectations set for them following the July 2025 RPT memo.
- Moving forward, evaluation processes should focus on allowing faculty to describe their scholarly contributions, teaching approaches and service activities through specific, substantive descriptions rather than categorical labels.

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- Units should continue to recognize faculty contributions that align with and demonstrate commitment to the university's land-grant mission, institutional values and strategic priorities while using language that focuses on measurable outcomes and concrete activities.

Annual Reviews conducted in 2025 for periods before adjusted guidance:

- The RPT memo indicates that “moving forward,” there will be changes.
- Faculty should be evaluated based on the guidance communicated to them as an expectation of their position. That guidance is what should be used until it has been adjusted.
- New guidance, consistent with the July 2025 RPT memo, should be implemented at the department or college level, whether through modifying bylaws or otherwise.

Descriptions of Work:

While diversity, equity and inclusion statements will not be submitted going forward, individuals will be expected to describe their full range of work within the noted pillars, which includes activities that further the university's mission, values and strategic priorities through a broad range of efforts. This may include but is not limited to advancements in inclusive pedagogy, performing cutting edge scholarship in under researched topics and subject groups, expanding access and opportunity for all, reviewing and revising practices to assure fairness for all, enhancing respectful dialogue to increase understanding across differences, creating spaces and programs that affirm and uplift often unheard voices, etc.

Additional Information: Naming of Programs and Positions

We ask for your continued patience as we assess compliance frameworks, as it relates to describing the breadth and depth of the work we do. Our commitment has not changed, and we appreciate your partnership and support to ensure compliance. To that end, General Counsel has asked that we not make title, program, and office name changes until further guidance is shared. Your ideas on this topic can be forwarded to the Office of the General Counsel and the Office for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion in the meantime.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in navigating these challenging times. To support you in these important efforts, we will continue to share guidance on these and other issues as further assessment occurs.