Post-tenure Reviews:
Current Policies, Practices, and Associated Challenges

10 October 2012
In the fall of 2011 the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) asked representatives on the Assistant and Associate Deans Committee (A&A Deans) to examine the ways in which academic units, schools, and colleges currently address post-tenure reviews of faculty in the context of documents governing the process. A subcommittee was formed to accomplish this task with the following members:

- Kris Henning (Assoc. Dean, College of Urban & Public Affairs), Chair
- Sarah Andrews-Collier (Assoc. Dean, Fine & Performing Arts)
- Thomas Bielavitz (Assistant University Librarian, Library)
- Gary Brown (Dir., Center for Online Learning)
- Pam Tierney (Assoc. Dean, School of Business)

To collect information on PSU’s current post-tenure review practices the A&A Deans subcommittee conducted formal interviews with 15 people managing these evaluations for their respective department/college/unit (e.g., associate deans, department chairs, P & T chair). Interviewees were first asked whether their department/college/unit was actually doing post-tenure reviews. Those that were doing the reviews (or at least attempting to do them) were then asked about the procedures used to form review committees, their protocol for conducting the reviews, and how the committee’s findings were documented. Everyone surveyed was also asked about the challenges faced in complying with university guidelines for post-tenure reviews, the potential value of peer evaluations for the unit and person involved, and what changes are needed to fully implement or maintain these reviews.

Members of the A&A Deans subcommittee also conducted numerous informal interviews with colleagues from across campus, we reviewed available documents governing the process, read general articles on the topic, and explored how reviews were conducted at peer institutions. At the end of the data collection process the subcommittee convened to discuss the findings and generate the recommendations documented in this report.

It is important to understand from the outset that the primary charge for our subcommittee was to examine PSU’s current guidelines for post-tenure reviews (i.e., Article 16 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement or CBA; OAR 580-021-0140) and to make recommendations that might improve the implementation of or adherence to these policies. The broader debate regarding the need for post-tenure reviews is not addressed in this report. Nevertheless, it might be useful for readers to know what justifications are provided for post-tenure reviews in Article 16 of the 2011/13 CBA (see below).

1. To promote and sustain high standards of performance and professional development.
2. To provide a positive and systematic process for career review and development planning, involving the member and a supportive group of peers.

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1 Chairs/directors/assoc. deans in over 45 units were originally emailed regarding the interviews. Fifteen responded and agreed to meet in-person or complete the interview by phone or online.
• To provide institutional support for the realization of a mutually agreed upon professional development plan.
• To assure a balance between the personal commitment to specific goals on the part of the member, the institutional support necessary to help achieve these professional goals, and the goals of the relevant department as formulated by its faculty.
• To provide recognition for demonstrated high standards of professional, institutional, and public service.

Post-tenure reviews are also mandated for all OUS institutions through Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 580-021-0140. This document identifies the following purposes for post-tenure reviews.

• Assure continued excellence in the academy.
• Offer appropriate feedback and professional development opportunities to tenured faculty.
• Clearly link the level of remuneration to faculty performance.
• Provide accountability to the institution, public, and Board.
A. Frequency of Post-tenure Reviews & Compliance

The first issue addressed by the A&A Deans subcommittee was the overall level of compliance with post-tenure review on campus. We wanted to know if colleges/departments/units were actually conducting the reviews and whether all tenured professors were being reviewed every three years as suggested in the CBA.

1. PSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement

The 2011/13 CBA specifies a three year-cycle for post-tenure reviews.

Reviews will normally take place every three (3) years with scheduling to be at departmental discretion. They may take place more often at the request of an individual or at the end of a planned period of professional activities and development, as determined jointly by the individual and the assigned committee. If a faculty member has indicated a definite retirement date, no review will take place within a three- (3) year period immediately preceding his date, unless it has been recommended by the committee as a result of a previous review or unless the faculty member requests it.

2. Implementation & Challenges

The committee identified a number of issues regarding the timing of post-tenure reviews at PSU and the overall compliance with the process.

First off, the wording in the current and prior CBAs (e.g., “normally”, “departmental discretion”) has led colleges/departments/units to interpret the passage in different ways. Some units have concluded that post-tenure reviews in themselves are optional while other units stick to a strict three-year rotation.

Another problem with the current wording is that it offers no guidance for handling faculty members who decline to participate in the reviews. In some colleges this accounts for a majority of the tenured faculty. A number of colleges/departments/units handle this by moving the person to the list of candidates for next year, a process that continues each year until they finally participate. In other colleges/departments/units the procedures for handling refusals is not clearly documented (or even known by supervisors we interviewed in some cases).

A larger and more systemic problem with the timing and completion of post-tenure reviews is the lack of centralized records that could be used to assess overall compliance. OAA does not maintain a record of completed reviews nor a schedule for upcoming deadlines. Instead, each college and department/unit is responsible for tracking the rotation of their faculty. Some appear to do a good job of this: most others do not.

The only data consistently maintained by OAA that could be used to assess the institution’s overall compliance with the timing of post-tenure reviews is the annual list of professors requesting development funds through the post-tenure review process. Faculty members who complete a post-tenure review have the opportunity to request funding through OAA to support their scholarly agenda. Our interviews with unit chairs/directors/assoc. deans...
suggest that most of the people completing reviews do indeed ask for funding, particularly since this is the only monetary incentive available to encourage their participation.

OAA provided the committee with the names of people who requested development funds over the past four years. We combined this with a list of all tenured faculty members provided to us by OIRP. Overall, there were roughly 440 tenured professors at the institution in each of the prior four years. We used each person’s tenure award date to identify their theoretical three-year post-tenure review cycle. This gave us the estimated number of faculty needing a post-tenure review for each of the prior four years.

Findings from our analyses with these data are presented in Table 1. Once again, the numbers we present for “reviews completed” excludes people who participated in a review but did not formally request development funds from OAA. That said, we believe that only a small fraction of the tenured faculty needing post-tenure reviews are actually being evaluated each year. This was validated by the committee’s interviews with 15 departments/units across the campus: Six of the 15 are not doing post-tenure reviews at all and four are trying to do reviews but most faculty members decline to participate.

Table 1. Estimated Percent of Tenured Faculty Undergoing Post-Tenure Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Est. # Tenured Faculty Needing Review</th>
<th># Requesting Fac. Dev. Funds</th>
<th>% Requesting Fac. Dev. Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Summary & Recommendations

The A & A Deans subcommittee found strong evidence that the post-tenure review process at PSU has been poorly implemented or maintained over the years. With the exception of a minority of departments, the vast majority of tenured faculty members are probably not being reviewed on the 3-year schedule specified in the CBA. A number of recommendations can be offered if the ultimate goal for the university is to fully implement and enforce the current CBA’s policies regarding post-tenure reviews.

- **Centralized tracking system** – A number of the people interviewed reported that no one from OAA or their Dean’s office ever queried them about specific faculty needing a review. In most colleges this is not being tracked effectively. We recommend the development of a centralized system to monitor tenured professors and their periodic reviews. While the current CBA places a restriction on reporting the content of peer-
review meetings, we believe that the policy allows the administration to at least document participation with the process.

- **Clarify wording in future CBAs** – As noted previously, the current wording is unclear and may have contributed to some of the variability in compliance seen across the campus.

- **Training for new department chairs** – Several of the department chairs we interviewed were relatively new and no one from the OAA or their Dean’s office had communicated expectations or suggestions regarding compliance with post-tenure reviews. It would be helpful if materials were presented to new chairs that outline the institution’s expectations regarding post-tenure reviews.

- **Departmental policies & procedures** – Departmental/unit operating procedures do not consistently address post-tenure reviews. In particular, these documents should detail the procedures to be followed when a faculty member refuses to participate in a scheduled review (i.e., move to next year vs. reset clock to three years). Compliance with this could be enforced by OAA, who examine and approve all changes to local operating procedures.

- **Hold chairs/deans accountable** – The few department/units that have been successful in gaining faculty compliance with post-tenure reviews have created a culture where these evaluations are the norm. In most cases this appears to have resulted from the leadership of a current/prior chair or dean. Presently, however, deans and department chairs are not evaluated based on their compliance with post-tenure reviews. Adding this to their reviews might increase their commitment to this process.

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2 At least one relatively new chair had never heard about post-tenure reviews being conducted or expected at PSU.
B. Post-tenure Review Committees

The A&A Deans subcommittee interviewed department/college/unit leaders and examined documents relating to the formation of post-tenure review committees. We then compared this to the requirements outlined in the CBA.

1. PSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement

The 2011/13 CBA provides the following guidance on the formation of committees responsible for post-tenure reviews.

- Each member holding tenure shall be assigned a review committee, normally composed of three (3) persons.
- The faculty of each department (or other appropriate unit) shall adopt formal procedures for the selection of members of these committees. These procedures must be published and distributed to all members of the organizational unit to which they apply. They must also be filed and approved in the Office of Academic Affairs as part of the departmental guidelines.
- Members of review committees may be persons outside the department, and when appropriate, qualified persons outside the University.
- Alterations in the foregoing procedures may be necessary due to the special problems of small departments, of persons holding appointments in more than one department, etc. Such alterations shall be made in consultation with the Provost.

2. Implementation & Challenges

We found three distinct approaches to the formation and staffing of post-tenure committees among units conducting (or attempting to conduct) these reviews. Some department/units have their existing P&T committee conduct post-tenure reviews in addition to doing annual reviews of junior faculty and evaluations for promotion and tenure. Other departments/units create an ad-hoc committee unique to each person under review. The third approach involves the creation of a standing committee charged solely with responsibility for post-tenure reviews. One school for example, has a new standing committee that conducts all of the peer evaluations for lower organizational units.

In most cases the decision to move to a separate committee for post-tenure reviews resulted from excess work-load for the unit’s regular P&T group. Several of the people interviewed mentioned the increased demands placed on P&T committees resulting from the institution’s heightened focus on annual reviews and mentoring of junior faculty. The expanding workload for regular P&T committees was also cited by several departments/units as a factor contributing to their decision to forgo post-tenure reviews altogether.

Another challenge identified through our interviews was that some small departments find it difficult to staff the post-tenure review committee: they do not have enough tenured professors to conduct the reviews. And, while the 2011/13 CBA allows departments/units to staff these committees with external members, people are concerned that outsiders would lack the necessary content expertise to fairly evaluate their associate and full professors.
Finally, the A&A Deans subcommittee found a great deal of variability across campus in the degree to which current departmental/unit policies and procedures address the composition and functioning of post-tenure review committees. Some units have very detailed written procedures in place for creating committees and conducting reviews, whereas other units largely ignore post-tenure reviews in their operating procedures.

3. Summary & Recommendations

Overall, we found significant variation across campus in departmental/unit policies relating to the formation and staffing of post-tenure review committees. Most importantly, some units have written policies governing the creation of these committees and others apparently do not. Second, we found considerable differences among units with formal policies. Standing review committees are formed at the school level in some cases, whereas other units rely on ad-hoc committees that are tailored for each faculty member or they use their existing P&T committee to conduct the peer-reviews.

Two recommendations emerge from our review in this area.

- **Review existing procedures**– The current CBA requires that all departments/units adopt formal procedures for the creation and staffing of post-tenure review committees, procedures that must subsequently be approved by OAA. A more thorough review of unit operating procedures should be undertaken by OAA to ensure compliance with this component of the CBA. Units lacking formal procedures should be instructed to develop them and seek approval from OAA over the next year or two.

- **Standardization** - A certain degree of variability in approaches to post-tenure committees is to be expected given the unique nature of our departments/units and the organization of their respective schools and colleges. Moreover, the wording in the current CBA allows for considerable flexibility in staffing these committees (e.g., “normally composed of…”, “may be persons…”, “alterations may be necessary…”). At the same time, post-tenure reviews are in theory supposed to play a role in the distribution of merit pay and other incentives (see justifications/purposes on page 2), resources that are consistently in short supply at this institution. As such, there may be advantages for the university as a whole or for colleges/schools to reevaluate current procedures used for staffing post-tenure review committees. Moving all of these committees to the college/school level might reduce some of the workload for existing P&T committees, increase overall compliance with post-tenure reviews by reducing the diffusion of responsibility, and it might allow for a more equitable distribution of any incentives that become available.
C. Post-tenure Review Procedures

In this next section we examine the procedures stipulated in the CBA for conducting post-tenure reviews and identify challenges in the implementation of this policy.

1. PSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement

Provided below is a summary of the post-tenure review procedures outlined in the 2011/13 CBA. The actual text detailing these procedures is provided in the appendix.
2. Implementation & Challenges

The flowchart provided above identifies at least 23 distinct steps for the review process. Many of these steps are poorly detailed in the current CBA; something that may contribute to low level of compliance with reviews for the institution as a whole. Provided below is a step-by-step analysis of the process detailed in the 2011/13 CBA and the challenges presented at critical stages.

- **Step 2** – The CBA requires people undergoing review to submit their updated CV and a narrative review documenting their prior scholarly accomplishments and plans for future activities. Our interviews suggest a lack of standardization across campus in the content and format of the latter. Other institutions and some departments/units at PSU provide faculty with detailed forms for documenting this information.

- **Step 3** – The current CBA stipulates that the faculty member’s meeting with his/her review committee is “informal”, “confidential”, and that “no record of the substance of this meeting will be kept.” First off, this wording contributes to a disconnection between the CBA and the goals for post-tenure review outlined in OAR #580-021-0140 where “accountability to the institution, public, and Board” is an expected outcome. Second, the phrasing in combination with a later section in the CBA\(^3\) has contributed to uncertainty on campus regarding what is reportable from the meeting. Are committees allowed to report to their Dean and OAA the professor’s participation in the peer conference and whether the material requested in step #2 above was actually submitted?

- **Step 4** – After the initial committee meeting, the professor under review has a simple choice: 1) he/she can request institutional funds to support his/her future scholarship (funds addressed later in this report), in which case a full professional development plan must be submitted and processed through subsequent stages, or 2) she/he can skip these funds and opt for ending the review process. Our interviews suggest that most people end up choosing the first option, usually because the promise of supplemental funding motivates them to participate in the first place. What the current CBA fails to clarify, however, is what happens when people choose option 2. Does this get reported to the department Chair, Dean, or OAA and are these people/units actually documenting this in writing?\(^2\)

- **Step 5** – The 2011/13 CBA has a provision for committees to independently request a development plan and follow-up review for the professor being evaluated if they deem that it would be “beneficial.” There are several challenges regarding the current wording of this provision. First, it is unclear whether this provision is contingent upon faculty participation in items 2 & 3 above. Second, as currently worded, it is not entirely clear whether the committee can demand a development plan if the person undergoing review explicitly states he/she does not want to continue with review process. A third issue relates to the earlier restriction on documenting anything of substance from the in-person meeting with the professor under review. It is reasonable to assume that committees will be hesitant to mandate a development plan and ongoing review for a colleague against his/her will when at the same time they are restricted from fully

\(^3\)“Refusal of a tenured professor to present a plan for professional development to the assigned review committee or to otherwise cooperate with the committee shall not be used as prima facie evidence of failure to perform academic responsibilities.”
documenting any content from the peer conference. Consistent with this, we did not find any evidence in our interviews that this provision of the CBA is currently being used.

- **Step 6** – The existing procedures documented in the CBA fail to mention what happens when a faculty member and her/his review committee both decide to forgo a faculty development plan.

- **Steps 7 to 12** – Several steps are outlined in the CBA regarding the creation of a faculty development plan for people interested in accessing funds administered by OAA. Two minor critiques can be offered regarding these steps. First, there is no standardization regarding the content or formatting for development plans. This makes it more difficult for the Faculty Development committee, the group charged with awarding OAA’s post-tenure review development funds, to objectively review proposals and assign awards. Second, the current CBA requires the appropriate school or college office add an “evaluation” before forwarding the development plan to OAA. The content and general purpose of this evaluation is not specified. Is the Dean/Chair supposed to provide a substantive review of the professor’s scholarly activities and plans or more simply evaluate whether the funds requested are justified?4

- **Step 13** – The CBA specifies that OAA will “notify the faculty member being reviewed by April 1 whether the institutional support requested in (his) plan will be provided.” What is not detailed in this language is the current process used to make these decisions. OAA forwards the collected applications to the Faculty Development committee, a constitutional committee of the Faculty Senate. The committee reviews the plan and makes a recommendation to OAA regarding the allocation of the $50,000 available for post-tenure development each year. OAA then makes a final determination on the awards to faculty. Provided in Table 2 are details on the funds requested and awarded as a result of post-tenure reviews. The average award offered across the four most recent years was $2,094, which amounts to 41% of the initial amount requested by faculty.

### Table 2. Funding Awards for Faculty Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
<th>2011/12</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty Request</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$90,845</td>
<td>$147,871</td>
<td>$90,874</td>
<td>$166,023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>$3,950</td>
<td>$5,687</td>
<td>$4,783</td>
<td>$5,534</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dean's Recommendation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$66,796</td>
<td>$89,213</td>
<td>$79,462</td>
<td>$147,973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg.</td>
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<td>$3,431</td>
<td>$4,182</td>
<td>$4,932</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FD Committee Recommendation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$1,923</td>
<td>$2,632</td>
<td>$1,667</td>
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<td><strong>Awards Approved by OAA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>$55,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>$2,174</td>
<td>$1,923</td>
<td>$2,905</td>
<td>$1,667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Use of “evaluative” or “evaluation” in any aspect of the post-tenure review process is also widely discussed across campus. As currently worded the CBA specifies that the process “provide a positive and systematic process for career review and development planning, involving the member and a supportive group of peers.” People have inferred from this and other language in the CBA that nothing evaluative can be documented in writing or offered verbally to the person being reviewed.
• **Step 14** – The current CBA stipulates that, “If the support required to carry out the plan is not provided, the individual will not be held responsible for failure to complete the plan.” What is unclear from this statement is the threshold under which this clause may be enacted. Are faculty members allowed to “opt out” if they receive anything less than 100% of the funding they requested? Currently less than 10% of requests are fully funded. Also, it remains unclear whether professors still receive partial funding even though they choose to forgo enacting their development plan.

• **Step 15** – This step allows for a reviewed professor and his/her committee to reevaluate the development plan and resubmit the plan to OAA for funding. The current review process, however, allocates the full $50,000 available each year meaning that resubmissions would have to be moved to the next year. It is unclear whether this also means that the 3-year review cycle also gets pushed forward another year.

• **Steps 16 to 23** – The remaining steps in the CBA detail the process of enacting the development plan, supporting the faculty member in his/her work, evaluating whether the plan was successfully completed, and documenting the outcome to some degree. At this point we have very little confidence that these steps are actually being implemented broadly across campus. Nor does OAA do any follow-up with review committees to ensure that funds were used appropriately or to document the outcomes of the development plan. In theory the CBA allows for the outcomes of the development plan to be used for promotion and/or merit pay decisions. Whether this actually happens is debatable: most units have a separate process for making decisions regarding merit pay if/when these funds are available and to our knowledge these policies are not required to mention the outcomes of faculty development plans.

3. **Summary & Recommendations**

The CBA’s current written guidelines lack the specificity needed to ensure adequate implementation and compliance with post-tenure reviews. We believe that major revisions are needed in the policy to address the many issues noted above. Several additional recommendations follow:

• **Standardized forms** – OAA, with input of the Faculty Senate, should provide a standardized format or model for the narrative reviews and other materials submitted by faculty at the preliminary stage of the review process. Likewise, it would be helpful for all involved if there was some standardization or guidance provided regarding the content and structure to be used with faculty development plans.

• **Clarify what is reportable** – Maintaining an accurate schedule for post-tenure reviews and documenting these evaluations for potential auditors requires that something gets reported to department chairs, deans, and OAA. The current wording of the CBA has created confusion over what, if anything, can be reported from the process when the person involved refuses to cooperate from the start or elects to forgo development funding.

• **Clarify if the reviews are “evaluative”** – Most of the people interviewed believe that post-tenure reviews cannot include any written or oral evaluation of the person’s scholarly contributions. Whether this is actually consistent with the current CBA’s
language is debatable. The complete absence of any evaluative summary also seems contradictory to the objectives for post-tenure reviews stated in the CBA (e.g., “to assure a balance between the personal commitment to specific goals on the part of the member…. and the goals of the relevant department as formulated by its faculty”, “to provide recognition for demonstrated high standards of professional, institutional, and public service”) and OAR 580-021-0140 (e.g., “offer appropriate feedback and professional development opportunities to tenured faculty”, “clearly link the level of remuneration to faculty performance”, “provide accountability to the institution, public, and Board”).

- **Ensure consistency** – Departments/units should review their operating procedures to ensure consistency with all aspects of the current CBA. Likewise, OAA should develop a process to ensure compliance with the CBA when revised operating procedures are submitted for approval.

- **Follow-up** – Review committees, department chairs, and the faculty receiving funds should document the successful/unsuccesful completion of formal development plans, detail how funds were spent, and ensure that this documentation is forwarded to their respective dean and OAA.
D. Rewards/Incentives Available for Participating in Post-tenure Reviews

1. PSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 580-021-0140 states that post-tenure reviews should, “Clearly link the level of remuneration to faculty performance.” Likewise, the 2011/13 CBA identifies the following incentive for faculty participation with post-tenure reviews at PSU.

It will be the responsibility of the departmental Promotion, Tenure, and Salary Committee(s) and/or the department chair, the appropriate dean, the Provost, and the President to ensure that the promotion/merit reward system be maintained and supported so as to provide recognition for excellence. In addition, the University agrees to establish a career support fund in the amount of $50,000 per year during the term of this Agreement for the purpose of supporting development plans consistent with this Article.

2. Implementation & Challenges

The CBA and OAR 580-021-0140 clearly specify that PSU’s post-tenure review process should be integrally connected to appropriate financial incentives. Our interviews with chairs/assoc. deans/directors raised considerable doubts about whether this was really being done at PSU.

Starting with the $50,000 per year in Faculty Development funds, we found that the average award is roughly $2,000 (see Table 2). Most of the chairs/directors we interviewed stated that this amount was way too low to entice faculty cooperation with the review process. Further decreasing the value of these funds, is the fact that the money can be only used for one-time expenses (e.g., conference travel, equipment, books, teaching materials). It cannot be used to supplement an individual’s salary. Finally, if everyone at the institution participated in post-tenure reviews on the 3-year recommended schedule and they requested funding, the average Faculty Development award would drop to around $375 per person. In short, everyone we interviewed agreed that the funds currently available to support faculty development and incentivize participation in post-tenure reviews are grossly insufficient.

Both the CBA and OAR mentioned above also suggest that merit pay or salary increases could result from participation in the post-tenure review process. Our committee found no evidence that this was indeed happening at PSU. First off, merit pay is determined through contract negotiations between the administration and AAUP and has not always been available in recent agreements. Second, even when merit pay has been available, both the amount and distribution methods have been inconsistent. More importantly, we found no evidence that clearly linked distribution of merit pay to the existing process for post-tenure reviews. Most departments, schools and colleges have developed (or are developing) procedures for allocating merit pay, but we have reason to believe that many of these policies are independent of post-tenure reviews.

During our interviews we also questioned chairs/assoc. deans/directors about possible sanctions that could be applied to faculty members who refuse to participate in post-tenure reviews. Whereas everyone we talked to was in agreement regarding the lack of appropriate
incentives, people had different opinions regarding the use of sanctions to enforce compliance with post-tenure reviews. Several arguments were offered against sanctions. First, a couple of people stated that sanctions are not necessary because tenured faculty in their unit all very productive and self-directed. Second, the motivational value of punishments versus rewards was raised as a concern. Third, the application of sanctions would undermine the meaning and value of tenure. Roughly half of the people we interviewed felt that some form of sanctions were necessary, both to gain compliance with post-tenure reviews and to deal with faculty members who fail to meet departmental/unit expectations. A common expression we heard was that current post-tenure reviews “lacked any teeth”.

3. Summary & Recommendations

Our investigation found unanimous agreement across campus that the incentives currently available to support post-tenure reviews are grossly insufficient. The chairs/assoc. deans/directors we interviewed reported that it is extremely difficulty to gain faculty cooperation in the absence of a good justification for the reviews. Doing the reviews simply to be in compliance with the CBA and OARs is not enough, particularly given the amount of work involved. Even most of the units with good compliance right now question the value of this process: they know other units skip the reviews without consequences, they face growing pressures to focus on junior faculty, and no one ever provides feedback or acknowledgement of the reports they pass along to their dean and OAA. Several recommendations to consider include:

- **Increase Faculty Development funds** – The $50,000 available annually to support post-tenure reviews is insufficient. We estimate that there are 134 tenured professors needing a review per year, dropping the potential average award to $375 per person if we obtained full compliance.

- **Broaden ways Faculty Development funds can be spent** – The current incentive value of Faculty Development funds is limited by restricting their use to travel, supplies, equipment, etc.

- **Evaluate procedures for allocating Faculty Development funds** – Funding awards are currently recommended by the Faculty Development Committee and approved by OAA. This committee recently implemented a rating system to evaluate proposed plans that should increase consistency in their decisions. It is unclear, however, whether the criteria used in determining the amounts awarded are consistent with the spirit of these funds as detailed in the CBA.

- **Connect post-tenure reviews to merit pay** – Dramatic improvements in faculty compliance with post-tenure reviews will likely require greater consistency in the availability and amount of merit pay. One step in preparing for this eventuality is for OAA to review all current and pending operating procedures to ensure that post-tenure reviews are included in decisions regarding the allocation of these funds.