Guidelines to send to Department Chairs as their departments move forward with T & P deliberations:

As your Department or Program moves forward with tenure and promotion (T & P) deliberations I thought that you might benefit from a few reminders and guidelines. I've attached some relevant material from UTEP’s Handbook of Operating Procedures. The material does not outline very specific criteria for T & P but the material can, nevertheless, provide some general guidance. Please share the information with faculty members on the review committee in your Department or Program. I’ve also attached a sheet that should be completed for each candidate. You can upload the sheet yourself to the appropriate folder in the candidate’s portfolio or forward the completed sheet to me and I will upload it for you.

A few reminders regarding past practices:

1) Department committee deliberations are private and confidential and should not be discussed with individuals who do not serve on the committee.

2) Department Chairs should attend but not actively participate in the Department’s T & P deliberations; nor should Department Chairs vote at the ‘department’ level because the Chairs will submit their own independent evaluation of each candidate. It’s fine for Department Chairs to respond to questions posed by the Department committee but Chairs should not become active participants or guide discussions except to respond to questions or correct misstatements of fact. Remember: the goal is to generate two independent evaluations of a candidate (the Chairs independent evaluation and the Department’s independent evaluation).

3) One member of the Department should be designated as the Committee Chair to help identify meeting times and facilitate the meetings themselves.

4) All members of the departmental committee should have the opportunity to express their opinions.

5) Faculty members who are ‘on leave’ from the University are not permitted to cast votes.

6) If a candidate is applying for tenure and promotion, then faculty members should vote separately on two issues: 1) recommend tenure (yes or no), and 2) recommend promotion (yes or no). I don’t know why two distinct votes are requested. You can have a single ‘ballot’ that addresses both issues. I've attached a sample ballot that some faculty have used in past years. Keep, revise, or jettison as you deem best.

7) NOTE: It is best to keep votes confidential so that faculty members are not hesitant about voting their best judgment. Ballots should be signed for legal reasons in case a vote is questioned (highly unlikely). To avoid violating confidentiality, the signatures are best placed at the bottom of the page so that the signature can be folder over while the actual vote is still visible for the tally.

8) Signed ballots should be forwarded to the Dean’s office.
9) The committee should designate a faculty member to take notes of the Departmental deliberations and then draft an accompanying narrative for review, revision, and eventual approval by the department. The narrative should address the candidate’s contributions to teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service. The memo containing the narrative should be addressed to the Dean through the Department/Program Chair. The narrative should indicate the date of the T & P meeting, who was present at the meeting, who was absent, who recused themselves, and who abstained from voting. Indicate if the Department Chair was present but not permitted to vote. The outcome of both votes (tenure, and promotion) should be reported (e.g., number of votes recommending tenure, number of votes opposed to tenure, and number of faculty recusing themselves and why, and number abstaining.

10) REMEMBER: NEITHER THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE, NOR THE CHAIR, NOR THE COLLEGE-WIDE COMMITTEE, NOR THE DEAN GRANT TENURE! We simply advise the Provost and President forward their recommendation to the Regents. There are multiple people at multiple levels who cast eyes on each T & P portfolio, a process that in principle protects the applicant and Institution from misguided judgments at all levels.

11) The Department Chair should inform a candidate of the Department’s tenure and promotion recommendation.

12) The Chair’s letter should indicate how the initial list of external evaluators was generated, how the final list was determined, and the number of potential evaluators who agreed to complete the task. Also describe why the current evaluators were chosen (1-2 sentence justification for each??)