

Cost Estimate for Implementation of PPP Reviews on the UTK Campus

*Based on Information provided by Professor Louis Gross,
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For the integrity of the review process, we might compare the proposed Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Reviews (PPPR) held on a six-year cycle to promotion and tenure reviews. These reviews conducted for other institutions by individual faculty typically require about two days reading the research/scholarship materials of the individual being reviewed, compiling comments and then another day putting it together in a cohesive way in a 2 to 4 page letter based on an institution's criteria. Because the evaluation narrative will require input from multiple internal reviewers, the time needed to complete the written evaluation may be longer. This is for consideration of an individual's scholarship in an area the reviewers have some background and the focus is mostly on just the scholarship, since reviewers for promotion and tenure reviews are rarely asked to comment on teaching or service.

If we wish to be fair and thorough, we need to spend a significant amount of time, at least at the level of what we would do for an external review. If the intention is to include a review of teaching (including classroom visits and syllabi review) and service, the amount of time needed to conduct a PPPR would be much greater than calculated here. Below is an estimate of the cost of implementation for a PPPR focused on scholarship using materials documented in a faculty member's annual APPR materials already compiled. In cases of interdisciplinary work, or for faculty who have joint appointments, additional effort would be required.

The calculations are made assuming that this review is in addition to any other reviews (e.g. for example it would exclude those for whom a promotion review has been held in the past 6 years). This calculation assumes that only half the associate professors would need a six-year review and all the full professors would need them. With 473 Full Professors and 345 Associate Professors, this means a total of $(473 + 345/2)/6 = 108$ reviews being done every year. For salaries, the assumption is there will be a 3-person review team with two being Full Professors and one being an Associate Professor so the average salary across the review team is $(2/3)*137,736 + (1/3)*93,288 = 122,920$. With 196 working days in the nine months from August through April, the average daily cost of a faculty member is \$627 and at the standard UTK fringe rate of 32% the cost to UT per faculty day is \$828.

This a PPPR review focused on research/scholarship/creative activity only, with 3 days of effort for each of the faculty members costs $9*828 = \$7452$ per review and the cost to UTK for 108 reviews is $108*7452 = \$804,816$. A "comprehensive peer review," one that includes evaluation of teaching and service could easily be twice this estimate.

This calculation does not include the administrative and staff time to set-up the review teams, compile the appropriate materials, distribute them to the faculty to do the review, or for any central effort at Dean or Provost level to organize and compile all this. I suspect across the entire campus this is at least a couple months of effort for a staff member.

One way to consider the cost is also in the form of scholarly and teaching productivity. The time and effort that faculty spend conducting peer reviews for this process is time that they are not writing grant proposals, recruiting the best post-docs and graduate students, doing field and lab work, preparing for classes, mentoring students, etc.