

**New language** to be inserted on page 31 of [RTP P&G document](#) (after 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph – see below screenshot):

<p><b>FORMAL APPEALS AND INFORMAL OPTIONAL WRITTEN RESPONSES</b></p> <p>A formal appeal is one that is made by the faculty member under review to the University RTP Appeals Board. There are no page limit restrictions for the formal appeal.</p> <p>An informal response is one that is made by the faculty member under review to <del>two</del> <b>any</b> <u>negative recommendations</u> at the departmental level for retention years 3, 5, 6, tenure year, or for promotion to Professor. Candidates seeking retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor may also write an informal response at the college level when the college committee and dean recommendations are negative. These responses are limited to two pages and are addressed to the next level of review.</p> <p>In retention years 3, 5, and 6, the Dean makes the final decision in the review. Therefore, in retention years 3, 5, and 6, there is no opportunity for an informal response to a negative decision from the Dean. The candidate, in these cases, may file a formal appeal with the University RTP Appeals Board after a negative decision from the Dean.</p> <p>However, in retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor, the Provost makes the decision, so the candidate may write an informal response to the negative recommendations of the college committee and the Dean. If the Provost's decision is negative, the candidate may file a formal appeal with the University RTP Appeals Board.</p> <p><b>Guidelines for Informal Optional Written Responses</b></p>
--

## Guidelines for Informal Optional Written Responses

### Definition

Recommendation: The department committee's report is a recommendation; the chair's report is a recommendation; the College Committee's report is a recommendation. However, depending upon the year of review the Dean's report may be either a recommendation or a final decision. See [APSU Calendar for Faculty Personnel Actions](#).

- 1) Are faculty permitted to write an Informal Optional Written Response after receiving one negative action? (Short answer: YES.)

In the interest of fairness, a faculty member under review is permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to any negative recommendations at the departmental level for retention years 3, 5, 6, tenure year, or for promotion to Professor. Candidates seeking retention for year 4, tenure, or promotion to Professor are also permitted to write an Informal Optional Written Response at the college level when either the college committee's or the dean's recommendation is negative. These responses are limited to two pages and are addressed to the next level of review.

- 2) Can a faculty member use an Informal Optional Written Response to address individual "negative" evaluative comments within a positive majority report?  
(Short answer: NO.)

Occasionally, a positive majority report at the departmental or college level might contain evaluative comments or opinions related to the three areas of review that might be

perceived by the faculty member under review as being negative. Faculty members are not permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to each and every "negative" opinion expressed within a majority report. For example, members of a review committee often have differing opinions about the **quality** of a published article in Area Two (2). In these cases, the faculty member may respond to those opinions or comments within a formal appeal.

- 3) What are the steps for rectifying any substantive inaccurate information using the Informal Optional Written Response?

Occasionally, personnel reports produced by a departmental committee, a chair, a college committee, or a dean may contain substantive inaccurate information about the faculty member under review. For example, a report might state that the faculty member attended four (4) conferences in the current cycle, when in fact the e-dossier documents establish that the faculty member presented papers at two (2) conferences. In a situation such as the one described above, the faculty member under review shall be permitted to submit an Informal Optional Written Response to rectify the inaccurate information. This Informal Optional Written Response cannot introduce anything new that has not already been included in the original e-dossier. In order for the Informal Optional Written Response to be included in the e-dossier for the next level of review, the faculty member shall contact the Office of Academic Affairs. Faculty are strongly urged to use the Informal Optional Written Response sparingly.