I think this is a very clear document.

My only suggestion is an executive summary that could be used to clearly state the obligations of faculty, department and UND.

This would be useful for recruiting and to keep people on task.

I would like to know if there is no teaching option for tenure/promotion after this. I think some colleges/departments allow a great deal of flexibility in their page two and a pure teaching or research option is available for faculty.

Content and process

Content:

My focus is on the Professor level b/c every other level builds toward these standards.

The language under research gives clarity to expectation and represents a move toward a higher expectation of productivity. The language of “forefront of the discipline/field” and “at minimum national visibility and distinction” places a very specific standard for how to measure productivity. This is a significant shift. I am in favor of clarity. Under the current budget and reorganization (loss of faculty, loss of GRAs, loss of adjuncts, loss of staff, higher teaching loads, increase in class sizes) whether we can support this higher expectation is questionable.

The language under teaching remains vague as to how to define excellence with language such as “show advanced level of performance” and “contribute effectively.” Scholarship has been standardized to evidence of “national distinction” but there is no equivalent specificity in teaching. Would national distinction not be relevant in teaching to demonstrate excellence? Or what is the equivalent to serve as a standard? The same critique applies to service, where “excellence” is expected in 4 different areas that are sustained and significant. I question the actual ability to demonstrate “sustained and significant” in every area of service as a reasonable expectation (see earlier comment about viability under the current situation).

Faculty’s research, teaching, and service loads are based on percentages and yet there is no consideration of this in the policy. This policy seems to require the adoption of a 50/40/10 load. My question is, with the adoption of this policy will a standardized page 2 (40-40-20 or 50/40/10) be required to align to these standards?

I greatly appreciate the clarity in language in 2. Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity

The section 3. Teaching and Advising lacks any definition or clarity in “advising.” The majority of the section defines teaching down to the minutia of examples yet advising is tacked on to teaching as “it also may include such activities as student advising, the direction of graduate studies...” The lack of
detail further demotes the role of advising and devalues its contribution when it is not even defined in policy. Advising also differs between undergraduate and graduate levels.

When I advise these are my different activities: academic course scheduling, professional development or training direction, practicum or training oversight, oversight of student activities or student groups, independent course-related research or readings, reading and feedback on academic manuscripts not connected to course work or my own research, direction of research design and implementation, proposal feedback, data review (paper reviewer), dissertation feedback, IRB oversight for student projects, general mentorship in social and academic culture. At minimum some of these shoddy be defined so both the reality and value of advising is represented in the policy.

Process:

To be successful I would encourage there to be a clear timeline for implementation included when the policy is presented. I imagine faculty will want to know if the goal-post change is immediate or if they will have time to prepare for the new standards.

Required elements section should reference faculty handbook as a governing document with bearing on PT&E processes.

Section a. Professor: Tenured or Probationary, should acknowledge that colleges vary widely in terms of student advising responsibilities for faculty.

Section d. Special Appointments should recognize "Clinical Track" professors and other classifications.

The bullet points on page 8 might err on the side of being too descriptive. Arts and Sciences might be in a better position to define creative contributions for the field of music, for example.

If the document becomes has room for descriptiveness, perhaps add the production of quality open education resources (OER), especially text book creation, as something that counts for scholarly activity (rather than teaching or service). To that end, why include textbook publication as evidence of effective teaching? A textbook might easily be considered a scholarly contribution.

I have concerns on page 19 with blinding the external review process. I am not sure this would be compatible with open records laws in the state, unless the candidate for promotion signed a waiver, which is unreasonable and untenable. Any external reviewer would have the courage of his or her convictions if he or she is going to provide a review. Furthermore, more sunshine in this process may help prevent any undesirable charges of discrimination later.

Under A. Appointment, perhaps is should say "in consultation with the Department Chair, or equivalent, and as approved by the Provost." Not all colleges have traditional department structures. (see also under 7. on page 14).

1. Needs to be a document for all faculty, including SMHS and non-TT faculty which will require additional integration work.
2. Needs to re-order sections and use more section/bullet numbering for improving clarity.
3. Needs to include SBHE policies re non-performance criteria for tenure

Page 2, first paragraph under A, Can there be a minimum level of excellence (or more excellence)?; I think the sequencing of sections could improve clarity and use. For example, here we have many concepts introduced that won’t be well understood until we read later sections.

Page 2, under criteria, These are hard to define, do most dept/colleges define this aspect of expectation?

Page 2, sentence above B in reference to Provost: the document needs to reflect the existence of alternative procedures and administration of the SMHS.

Page 4, first paragraph under I.A. Think I understand but practically speaking, someone might have no service (clinical and research appts) and so either make this clearer or leave off. For example several dept chairs in SMHS awarded tenure once they arrive, all based on work elsewhere.

Page 4, third paragraph under I.A. As in old Handbook sections, I think academic freedom leads off the section and here we should reprint the SBHE policy and also give it central prominence.

Page 5, third bullet point. Does this mean that directing student research is optional but teaching is not?

Page 5, paragraph directly above section b. Is it possible to obtain excellence in service when contributing 10% or less of effort? Again, do we not need to consistently refer to effort allocation.

Page 5, heading a. Would it not be more typical to start at the asst professor level? Can a faculty member be probationary and apply for promotion to full prof? And does this mean that a non-TT faculty member cannot be a full professor?

Page 5, paragraph directly above section b. Is it possible to obtain excellence in service when contributing 10% or less of effort? Again, do we not need to consistently refer to effort allocations

Page 14, end of sentence, top of page. As before, this is not consistent with what happens when we hire advanced persons.

Page 19, third paragraph. Define that this means the candidate; forever blind to comments?

Page 20, second paragraph under section H. Although one could find this info if linking to SBHE policies, I think it needs to be clearly stated for tenure track faculty that excellence in performance does not guarantee tenure. This is clearly laid out in the current Handbook from 605.1, e.g.,

“ A favorable recommendation means that the applicant meets all of the prerequisites and criteria and the award of tenure is consistent with the sound fiscal management and academic priorities of the institution and the system of education under the control of the Board.”

And...“Although decisions to recommend tenure involve some of the criteria which apply to decisions involving salary adjustments and promotions, there are additional considerations which apply to tenure recommendations, such as budgetary concerns, balance within the departments, projected enrollments, retrenchment, etc. The award of salary increases and promotions should not necessarily lead a faculty member to expect tenure will be recommended.”