

GUIDELINES FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

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This document presents guidelines for the tenure and promotion process in a manner consistent with the Board of Regents regulations and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Specific criteria for tenure and promotion must be developed by individual colleges and departments.

A. TENURE

In order for the University to perform its functions effectively, it is essential that faculty members feel free to express new ideas and divergent viewpoints in their teaching and research. In the process of teaching and research, there must be freedom to question and challenge accepted "truths." A university must create an atmosphere that encourages faculty members to develop and share different ideas and divergent views and to make inquiries unbounded by present norms. Tenure contributes significantly to the creation of such an atmosphere.

BOARD RULE

The State University System guideline on tenure is contained in Regent's Rule 6C-5.940 Tenure and Permanent Status, which reads as follows:

Faculty tenure shall be administered consistent with the following provisions:

- (a) The award of tenure shall provide annual reappointment until voluntary resignation, retirement, removal for just cause, or layoff.
- (b) Tenure is awarded upon demonstration of highly competent performance. Tenure criteria shall address the areas of teaching; research and other scholarly activities; and service to the public, the discipline, and the university including those professional responsibilities consistent with faculty status. These criteria shall take into account the mission and needs of the institution and shall place appropriate emphasis upon teaching and teaching-related scholarship. In this regard, the institution shall ensure that teaching is evaluated broadly, including assessments by peers and students, and that teaching performance is prominently considered in the award of tenure.
- (c) Tenure shall be held as ranked faculty in an academic department/unit and shall not extend to administrative appointments.

UNIVERSITY CRITERIA

Proceeding from the framework of Rule 6C-5.940, the University of South Florida's University-wide guidelines on tenure and promotion states:

The University has established minimum criteria for tenure and promotion as follows. Tenure and promotion in the professorial ranks will be granted only to persons of significant achievement, especially in teaching, research/creative activity and service. As a minimum standard for tenure and/or promotion, there must be evidence of strong performance in both teaching and scholarship and outstanding achievement in at least one of these areas. Academic units in which public/professional service receives significant prominence may so recognize service contributions within unit guidelines.

The academic units of the University may further refine these criteria according to the standards of the respective disciplines.

Evaluation for Tenure. Evaluation for tenure involves three components: teaching (including advising) or comparable activity appropriate to the unit; research/creative work; and service to the University, profession, and the community. In addition, collegiality and participation as a citizen of the University are an integral part of faculty performance. Because the decision projects lifetime performance from the first few years of a faculty member's career, tenure must be awarded only as a result of careful assessment over a period of time sufficient to judge the faculty member's documented accomplishments, ability, and probable future productivity. A judgement must be made that the faculty member's record represents a pattern indicative of a lifetime of continued accomplishment and productivity. The probationary period stipulated by the BOR-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement will be utilized.

Teaching. The first step in the tenure decision process is an evaluation of effectiveness in teaching (or comparable activity appropriate for the unit). A record of effectiveness in teaching consistent with the University guidelines must be established. Unless a determination is made that the candidate is an effective teacher, whether at the departmental or discipline level, tenure will not be granted. Thus, it is vital that substantial and diverse information concerning teaching effectiveness be available as part of the tenure application.

Effective teaching requires a thorough knowledge of the subject, the ability to present material in a clear fashion, and the ability to work with, motivate, and serve as a positive role model for students. Like research/creative work, it is best judged by a peer review process, although it is essential that appropriate evaluative review by the chair and dean also be included. The peer review process may take many forms, for example: consideration of student evaluations of teaching; class visitations; examination of syllabi, course handouts, examinations and other course materials; examination of samples of student work, including abstracts of directed theses and dissertations; critiques of public lectures; and reviews of teaching-related books and articles. The teaching evaluation record must speak to the manner in which sought data have been examined.

Research/Creative Work. The purpose of research and creative activity at a university such as USF is to make a substantive contribution to the body of knowledge and understanding in one's discipline. For tenure to be granted, a faculty member must have established an original, coherent and meaningful program of research/creative activity, which is adding substantively to the body of knowledge within the discipline, and through which the faculty member is expected to make a continuing contribution throughout his or her career. A short period of intensive research/creative activity in the years immediately preceding tenure consideration is not an acceptable substitute for a continuous and progressive record.

The peer review process is the best means of judging significance and contribution of the candidate's research/creative work. Evaluation at the department level should take into account such information as reviews of books and articles, criticism of creative work, reviews of grant applications, citations of the candidate's work, and the quality of refereed journals and presses by which the candidate's work is published. Objective peer review of the candidate's work by scholars external to the University is required. In addition, evaluative review by the candidate's department chair or director and dean is required. The contribution of a candidate for tenure must be judged against the national standards in the discipline, focusing on the significance of the work and the quality of the contribution made, rather than on the quantity of publications. (See following sections regarding process for securing input from external reviewers.)

Service. The third component to be evaluated includes service to both the University and the external community. In addition to listing administrative and other professional services to the University, an evaluation of the extent and quality of the services rendered should be included. External community service may include work for professional organizations and community, state and federal agencies. It must relate to the basic mission of the University and capitalize on the faculty member's special professional expertise; the normal service activities associated with good citizenship are not usually evaluated as part of the tenure and promotion process. Because of the diverse missions of different units and variations in the extent and character of their interaction with external groups, general standards of "external service" are difficult to formulate. However, colleagues and administrators in the field should be able to make and support a judgment about the appropriateness and value of the services rendered.

Each recommendation for tenure should be accompanied by a statement of the mission, goals and educational needs of the department, college, and/or regional campus, and the importance of the contributions the candidate has made and is expected to make in the future toward achieving the goals and meeting the needs. Consideration should be given to the candidate's ability and willingness to work cooperatively within the department, college, and/or campus.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARD TENURE

It is the responsibility of the department peer committee and department chair or other appropriate administrator to include a progress toward tenure review as part of the annual evaluation for all faculty in the probationary period for tenure. For those faculty appointed with the full probationary term a more extensive pre-tenure review will be conducted during the third year. If an individual is credited with tenure-earning service at the time of initial appointment, the review will be conducted at the approximate mid-point of the probationary period. The mid-point review will be conducted by the department's tenure and promotion committee, the department chairperson or other appropriate administrator, the college or

college/campus tenure and promotion committee, and the college/campus dean. Upon the request of the faculty member the review of progress toward tenure will include the Provost.

All mid-point reviews shall address the performance of annual assignments including teaching, research/creative activity, and service occurring during the preceding tenure-earning years of employment. In addition, all reviews should critically assess overall performance and contributions in light of mid-point expectations. The mid-point review will not be as extensive as the formal tenure review that occurs later but should be based on a set of documents which would include: a current vita; annual evaluations; student/peer evaluation of teaching; selected examples of teaching materials and scholarship; and a brief self-evaluation by the faculty member.

The mid-point review is intended to be informative, and to be encouraging to faculty who are making solid progress toward tenure, instructional to faculty who may need to improve in selected areas of performance, and cautionary to faculty where progress is significantly lacking.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE STANDARD PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Ordinarily, a faculty member in a tenure-earning position will either be awarded tenure at the end of the probationary period or be given notice that further employment will not be offered. However, exceptions to the tenure clock may be considered in some circumstances. A faculty member in a tenure earning position may request in writing to be appointed to a non-tenure earning position without loss of salary rate. Such circumstances might include medical exigencies or parental situations covered by FMLA or ADA legislation or other extenuating circumstances approved by the University. The request must be made in writing and approved by the chair of the department, dean, and Provost. Following the period of appointment to a non-tenure earning position, the faculty member will return to the tenure earning position without qualification and the tenure clock will resume.

TENURE UPON INITIAL APPOINTMENT

In determining the award of tenure upon initial appointment, the guiding principle will be to follow departmental and college, or campus procedures in an expedited process that will not inordinately delay hiring decisions. Specifically, there must be review of tenure eligibility at all levels. Approval must be obtained from the Office of the Provost prior to making an offer that includes tenure without a probationary period. The Provost should receive the following information:

- written statement(s) of review of tenure eligibility at all levels (dean, chair, department/campus faculty) - - these reviews should occur prior to a request to the Provost to make such an offer, although written statements may follow approval
- candidate's vita
- official starting date for the position a draft of the letter of offer, which has explicit mention of the tenure offer, pending BOR approval
- brief statement on the unique achievements of the faculty member which support the basis for tenure.

Upon approval the University will submit the tenure recommendation to the Board for approval at the earliest meeting at which tenure upon appointment is considered.

Persons being considered for administrative appointments accompanied by academic appointments with tenure will interview with the academic unit in which tenure would be considered and the appropriate dean; the appropriate faculty bodies and administrators will make recommendations on tenure to the Provost.

B. PROMOTION IN ACADEMIC RANK

UNIVERSITY CRITERIA

As in the case of tenure, the judgement of readiness for promotion to higher academic rank is based upon a careful evaluation of a candidate's contributions in teaching (or comparable activity appropriate to the unit), research/creative work, and service: and the sections pertinent to evaluation of these factors for the tenure decision apply as well to promotion. Promotion will not be granted unless a determination of the candidate's effectiveness in teaching (or in comparable activity appropriate to the unit) has been made. Promotion also requires collegiality and participation as a citizen of the University, as this is an integral part of faculty performance.

Standards for the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor (or their equivalents) are as follows:

1. Assistant Professor (or Assistant University Librarian)

- a. Promise of continued growth as a teacher, or in comparable activity appropriate for the unit.
- b. Promise of independent and collaborative research/creative work, supported by publications or other appropriate evidence.
- c. Promise of substantive contributions in the area of service.
- d. The doctorate or the highest degree appropriate to the field (or, where appropriate, the equivalent based on professional experience).

2. Associate Professor (or Associate University Librarian)

- a. Acknowledged record of success in teaching, or other comparable activity appropriate for the unit, including a record of such activities as participation on thesis and/or dissertation committees, and successful direction of the work of master's and doctoral candidates, where applicable.
- b. Focused program of independent and collaborative research/creative work, supported by substantial publications or their equivalent. Original or creative work of a professional nature may be considered an equivalent. The record should be sufficient to predict, with a high degree of confidence, continuing productivity in research/creative work throughout the individual's career.
- c. Substantive contributions in the area of service.
- d. Ordinarily, the rank of Associate Professor is not granted in advance of the tenure judgement.

3. Professor (or University Librarian)

- a. Acknowledged record of success in teaching, or other comparable activity appropriate for the unit, such as a record of participation on thesis and/or dissertation committees, and successful direction of the work of master's and doctoral candidates, where applicable.
- b. Established record of productive research/creative work of at least national visibility, supported by a record of substantial publications or their equivalent. Original or creative work may be considered an equivalent. The record should predict continuing high productivity in research/creative work throughout the individual's career.
- c. Substantive contributions in the area of service.
- d. Unmistakable evidence of significant achievement among peers in one's discipline at the national or international level. True distinction is expected in at least one of the areas of teaching (or comparable activity appropriate to the unit); research/creative work; or service. Any recommendation for promotion to the rank of Professor (or University Librarian) must contain evidence that such distinction has been identified.
- e. As a general guideline a faculty member normally would not apply for promotion to rank of Professor without five years of service at the rank of Associate Professor.

C. TENURE AND PROMOTION

TENURE AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

When establishing Tenure and Promotion Committees, departments, schools, and colleges, whenever possible and practical, should adhere to the following criteria:

- a. Membership on committees should be (s)lected from faculty who have received tenure at the University of South Florida and have been appointed at the University for at least two years;
- b. Those eligible to elect committees should be department, school, college, or campus members who hold tenure-track appointments;
- c. Terms of committee members should be staggered and ordinarily should not exceed three years;
- d. Turnover of committee membership should be encouraged through restrictions on consecutive terms, if feasible;
- e. Individuals serving on more than one advisory committee (e.g., department, school, college, or campus) should vote at the department/school level on candidates from their home unit but not on these candidates at other committee levels. Chairs who serve on college committees should refrain from voting on candidates from their own units;
- f. Committees considering candidates for promotion to Professor should be comprised of individuals holding the rank of Professor, unless the faculty in the department/college determine otherwise and so describe another procedure in the appropriate governance document of the unit.

EXTERNAL LETTERS FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION APPLICATIONS

The department chair ordinarily will include in the tenure and promotion packet a minimum of three letters (but not exceeding six) from external reviewers who are expert in the individual's field or a related scholarly field. The candidate and the department chair will suggest external reviewers. The department Tenure and Promotion Committee may also suggest external reviewers. These reviewers should have no significant relationship to the candidate (e.g., major professor, co-author), unless there are mitigating circumstances that would indicate otherwise (e.g., to review scholarship so specialized that few expert reviewers exist). The chair and the candidate will jointly select the reviewers. In the event of disagreement each party will select one-half the number of qualified reviewers to be utilized. Letters from external reviewers should be in the candidate's file prior to the final recommendations by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. All solicited letters which are received must be included in the candidate's file.

EARLY TENURE AND PROMOTION CONSIDERATION

Decisions on tenure and promotion prior to the time recognized as normal should be considered "early decisions." Early decisions should be identified and justified as such at every review level. Truly exceptional performance should be required for a favorable early decision. Further, external reviewers should be advised of the University's expectations for a favorable early decision. As a general guideline a faculty member normally would not apply for promotion to rank of Professor without five years of service at the rank of Associate Professor.