

College of Arts & Sciences

Tenure and Promotion Procedures

I. The Mission of the College of Arts & Sciences

The College of Arts & Sciences is the intellectual heart of the University of South Florida. We are a community of teachers and scholars united in the belief that broadly educated people are the basis of a just, free and prosperous society. By focusing on the big questions facing all of humanity, we prepare students for successful personal and professional lives. By conducting innovative, interdisciplinary research and scholarship, we advance knowledge in ways that prepare us to address vexing social problems and enhance quality of life for people and communities.

II. Expectations for Tenure and Promotion Review

Fulfilling the mission of the College of Arts & Sciences depends chiefly upon the abilities, efforts, and accomplishments of its faculty members. Thus, decisions to recommend tenure and promotion are among the most critical in university life and are a significant responsibility for all involved in the process of review and recommendations:

- A. The candidate is expected to plan carefully and deliberately for the tenure process during all tenure-earning years; to understand her/his department's¹ criteria for tenure; to heed and account for peer evaluations throughout the probationary period; and to provide complete, clear, and accurate materials for review.
- B. Departmental faculty members and Chair are expected to counsel the candidate clearly, consistently, and candidly throughout the probationary period; to provide reviews that are balanced, rigorous, and supported by evidence; and to make tenure recommendations based on approved criteria.
- C. Members of School² and College tenure and promotion committees are expected to review thoroughly all cases under deliberation; to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of each application; and to write evaluative narratives that clearly justify the committee's recommendation.
- D. The College Dean and Campus Deans are expected to review all cases; to apply criteria, procedures, and guidelines consistently and fairly, and to write narratives that justify the recommendation. Regional Chancellors will provide a formal review in promotion

¹ Academic units in the College of Arts & Sciences are departments and schools. A school is a disciplinary aggregation equivalent to a department (School of Public Affairs, School of Geosciences, School of Information, etc.). Departments are led by Chairs; schools are led by Directors. Throughout this document, "department" and "chair" will serve as the labels for all academic units at this level.

² Here and throughout this document, "School" refers to the three Schools within the College of Arts & Sciences: the School of Humanities, the School of Social Sciences, and the School of Natural Sciences & Mathematics. These Schools are different from units equivalent to departments, as explained in footnote one.

and tenure cases for faculty members on branch campuses before the College Dean forwards a recommendation to the Provost.³

All levels of evaluation are independent reviews and recommendations. Each subsequent review may concur with previous recommendations or justify a different decision. All individuals involved in review, deliberation, and recommendations must maintain the confidentiality of all materials, discussions, and proceedings. Access to tenure and promotion materials is limited to the candidate, faculty responsible for evaluation, voting faculty, and staff responsible for submissions.

III. Criteria

The tenured and tenure-earning faculty of each department within the College of Arts and Sciences will formulate specific written criteria and procedures for tenure and promotion that are consistent with the University of South Florida's commitment to excellence in research, teaching, and service. These criteria and procedures will specify the department's expectations concerning 1) scholarly productivity, including the nature, quality, and quantity of scholarly activities necessary to be considered for tenure and promotion; 2) teaching effectiveness, including the types of teaching, measures of success, and documentation of learning outcomes necessary to be considered for tenure and promotion; and 3) performance of service, including the relative importance of kinds of service to the department and its mission.

These departmental criteria must be consistent with the University's Tenure and Promotion Guidelines and the College of Arts & Science's Tenure and Promotion Procedures. These criteria must be approved by the CAS Dean's Office and by the Provost's Office. Whenever a department revises its criteria, it must submit revisions to the College Dean for review and approval.

Tenure and promotion reviews, evaluations, and recommendations shall be based on department criteria, College Tenure and Promotion Procedures, University Tenure and Promotion Guidelines, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Each recommendation for tenure should be accompanied by a statement of the mission and goals of the department, and the importance of the contributions the candidate has made, and is expected to make in the future, toward achieving these goals.

IV. Evaluation for Tenure

Evaluation for tenure involves three components appropriate to the department: 1) **Teaching**, or comparable activity, including advising and mentoring: A candidate must establish and document a record of excellence in teaching; 2) **Research/creative/scholarly work**: A candidate must establish and document a record of excellence in research/creative activity/scholarship; and 3) **Service**: A candidate must establish and document a record of substantive service

³ Faculty at USFSP and USFSM with three years of tenure-earning credit on July 1, 2019 (generally those hired in Fall 2016 or earlier) will be considered for tenure under their old regional campus guidelines unless they elect to use the new consolidated guidelines in writing 30 days prior to the beginning of tenure consideration. This is required in Article 15.4.B of the USF UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement. If a candidate chooses to use the older regional guidelines, their new consolidated academic unit's T&P committee and administration will still be responsible to carry out the process.

contributions to the University, profession, and/or community. This record of teaching, research, and service should predict continuing high productivity throughout the individual's career.

V. Evaluation for Promotion

Evaluation for promotion to associate professor is the same as for tenure. In cases where a candidate for tenure holds the rank of Assistant Professor, the recommendation for tenure must include a recommendation for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Conversely, a candidate who is not recommended for tenure cannot be recommended for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor.

For promotion to the rank of Professor, a candidate must provide compelling evidence of significant achievement among peers in the discipline or professional field at the national or international level. A record of excellence in teaching and research/creative activity/scholarship is expected, as well as a record of substantial contributions in service to the university, profession, and/or community. This record of significant achievement should predict continuing high productivity throughout the individual's career.

VI. Probationary Period

Following the USF Tenure and Promotion Guidelines, the College of Arts & Sciences sets the probationary period for tenure at four to seven years. A candidate must achieve tenure no earlier than the end of the fourth tenure-earning year and no later than the end of the seventh tenure-earning year. Should tenure be denied, the faculty member will be offered one additional year of employment.

Additional merit beyond departmental criteria is not required for a candidate to apply before the maximum probationary period. Regardless of the length of probationary period, candidates for tenure will be evaluated by approved departmental criteria. The approved departmental criteria remain the same regardless of length of probationary period.

VII. Application for Tenure and Promotion

A. Intent to Apply and Timeline

All applications for tenure and promotion begin with the candidate's statement of intent to the College Dean that he/she will apply. The Dean's Office makes available a timeline each year noting all specific dates in the process. The candidate's written intent to apply should be made in consultation with the chair. The College Dean will forward the statement to the Provost's Office for approval.

B. Application for tenure and promotion *before* the maximum probationary period includes the following considerations:

1. A candidate must have completed the mid-tenure process. In that review, all levels of evaluation should forecast that the candidate's record is appropriate for consideration before the maximum probationary period.
2. Following the Collective Bargaining Agreement, if a candidate applies before the maximum probationary period, he/she may withdraw from consideration without penalty at any time before the application is forwarded to the Provost's Office. Such withdrawal is permitted one time only. Should the candidate

choose to continue with the tenure and promotion process through the Provost's Office and be denied, the candidate will not have the option of submitting an application again.

- C. Following the CAS Governance Document, a candidate may request to be considered by a School Tenure and Promotion Committee other than the one in which her/his department is located. This request must be approved by the College Dean prior to the beginning of the tenure process.

VIII. Reviews

A. Annual Review of Progress toward Tenure

It is the responsibility of the department faculty review committee and department Chair to include a progress toward tenure review as part of the annual evaluation for all faculty in the probationary period for tenure. This yearly review should be a candid assessment of performance in teaching, research, and service assignments and should include specific recommendations for maintaining excellent progress and for improving in needed areas.

B. Mid-Tenure Review

An extensive mid-tenure review will be conducted, typically during the third tenure-earning 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-tenure review will be conducted by the department's tenure and promotion committee, the department Chair, the School Tenure and Promotion Committee, the College Tenure and Promotion Committee, Campus Deans, and the College Dean. The Dean's Office will forward the College Dean's mid-tenure reviews to the Provost's Office.

All mid-tenure 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 will refer to written department criteria and critically assess overall performance and contributions in light of mid-point expectations.

Departmental tenure and promotion criteria should outline the materials required for review, including, but not limited to, a current vita; annual evaluations; student/peer evaluation of teaching; selected examples of teaching materials; documentation of learning outcomes and measures of teaching success; products of research/scholarship/creative activity; service commitments and accomplishments; and a brief self-evaluation by the faculty member.

The mid-tenure review is intended to be informative: to be encouraging to faculty who are making solid progress toward tenure and instructional to faculty who may need to improve in selected areas of performance. Where progress is significantly lacking and apparently unlikely, nonrenewal may result. The candidate and Chair should use the completed mid-tenure review as an opportunity for discussion and planning of work during the remainder of the probationary period.

C. Review of Progress toward Promotion

For faculty holding rank below that of full Professor, annual evaluations may include an evaluation of progress toward promotion. A mid-point, comprehensive review--in the typical interval between appointment to Associate Professor and promotion to full Professor--may be conducted by the department faculty committee eligible to review promotion to full Professor applications. This mid-point review is intended to be informative: encouraging to faculty making solid progress toward promotion and instructional to faculty who may need to improve in selected areas of performance.

D. External Reviews for Tenure and Promotion

1. Qualifications of external reviewers

A candidate's scholarship and creative works are to be evaluated by external reviewers with significant scholarly reputations in the substantive/methodological area of the candidate's work. Reviewers should be highly regarded and recognized scholars in the candidate's field and able to evaluate the quality, productivity, and significance of the candidate's research and/or creative activities. If possible, reviewers should hold senior appointments at aspirational peer institutions.

The reviewers are expected to familiarize themselves with the work of the candidate, to comment on the value of the candidate's work, and to place it in relation to the work of others in the field.

External reviewers should be selected so as to minimize the possibility of conflicts of interest - actual, potential, or apparent. If any reviewer is recommended who has had significant previous contact with the candidate, reasons for the choice should be presented in sufficient detail to allay concerns about conflicts of interest.

2. Compiled list of reviewers

A candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor should submit a list of six to ten suggested reviewers to his/her department Chair. A candidate for promotion to professor should submit a list of eight to twelve suggested reviewers to his/her department Chair. Each list must be accompanied by brief statements, including biographical sketches, to support the choices.

In the event that the Chair believes additional names are desirable or necessary, then a) the candidate should make supplementary recommendations, and b) the Chair may suggest additional reviewers to the candidate. In choosing reviewers, it is recommended that the Chair seek the counsel of the department tenure and promotion committee. Ordinarily, this process will result in a list of reviewers acceptable to the candidate and to the Chair.

Should agreement not be reached, the candidate and Chair will each contribute half of the names on the list in consultation with the College Dean. The final list of reviewers, however it is developed, will be submitted to the College Dean for approval and should be accompanied by brief statements, including biographical sketches, to support the choices.

3. **Soliciting reviews**

The candidate's Chair will solicit reviews from the approved list with the goal of obtaining *at least* three letters of evaluation from reviewers for a candidate applying for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor and *at least* five letters for applying for promotion to professor. USF T&P Guidelines state that no more than six letters are ordinarily included in the application. Although the Chair may contact the selected reviewers informally, an official request for an evaluation shall be in the form of a letter from the candidate's Chair composed in accordance with the model letter drafted by the Provost's Office. *It is inappropriate for a candidate to contact reviewers regarding promotion and/or tenure consideration.*

After ascertaining a reviewer's willingness to serve as an evaluator, the Chair will forward to the reviewer materials provided by the candidate, including a current vita and other materials the candidate chooses as appropriate. The process should be scheduled to ensure adequate time for the reviews to be returned and considered by the department, Chair, School, and College committees.

4. **Protecting Reviewers' Identities⁴**

Following the USF Tenure and Promotion Guidelines on the option of protecting the identity of reviewers, a candidate may choose to waive access to reviewers' identities. There shall be no penalty or presumption for or against a candidate on the basis of his/her decision to waive or not to waive the right of access to reviewers' identities.

The Chair will be responsible for redacting identifying information from the letters and providing a code list to be used in narrative evaluations. For example, the code list might identify each reviewer by a letter (Reviewer A, Reviewer B), and the evaluative narratives will refer to reviewers by this code. The identities of the reviewers and their assigned code will be available to all individuals responsible for evaluation; the candidate, however, will not have access to the code list when reviewing his/her application.

5. **Other Considerations**

All external reviews received must be included in the application. The Chair is responsible for safeguarding letters before they are placed in the application for faculty review.

IX. Tenure and Promotion Committee Procedures

A. At all Levels of Evaluation

⁴ This item will need to be bargained and then included in the CBA. The majority of CAS Faculty, who responded to the college-wide poll held in October of 2015, voted to allow this possibility. The Dean's Office includes this section here to indicate the will of the CAS faculty in the event the CBA is amended to protect reviewers' identities.

1. All Committees must comply with USF Tenure and Promotion Guidelines, specifically the ten criteria for tenure and promotion committee membership.
2. The Committee's deliberations will focus exclusively on how well a candidate meets and/or follows department criteria, College Procedures, and University Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion.
3. Committee members shall confine themselves to making recommendations based solely upon the information provided in a candidate's official tenure and promotion application. No committee member shall solicit or consider any additional information conveyed privately, through personal contact, by phone, letter, or any other means.
4. All voting must be by secret ballot. Ballots will be retained in the Department and the Dean's Office for a reasonable amount of time.
5. All evaluative narratives must clearly and substantively justify the recommendations. In the case of a split decision, the narrative should account for the reasons for both the positive and negative votes.
6. Committee narratives and recommendations must be signed by the Committee chair.

B. At the Department Level

Departmental recommendation for or against tenure is the prerogative of the tenured faculty. Chairs do not vote with the tenured faculty.

In the interest of effective review, departments should make the candidate's application and supplementary material available for review in a timely fashion.

The department Governance Document, or the department tenure and promotion criteria, must specify the procedures for evaluation, including

- 1) timing and levels of review (faculty evaluation committee, tenured faculty, and Chair);
- 2) constitution and responsibilities of the faculty committee;
- 3) how the faculty and/or chair evaluative narratives are created and their availability in the process;
- 4) eligibility, outcome, and recording of all votes at each level;
- 5) conditions in which recusals, abstentions, absences, and minority reports apply.

A copy of the department's criteria for tenure and promotion should be included when the application is forwarded to the School Committee.

C. At the School Level

Tenure and Promotion Committees of the School of Humanities, School of Social Sciences, and School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics are constituted according to the Governance Document of each School. If a School Tenure and Promotion Committee member is from the same department as a candidate for tenure and/or promotion, or if a member has a personal and/or professional association with a candidate that constitutes a conflict of interest, that committee member will recuse him/herself from the case.

D. At the College Level

The College Tenure and Promotion Committee will be made up of nine members, three from each of the respective Schools. If each level of review (Department, Chair, School) prior to the College Committee has recommended a candidate for tenure and/or promotion, the College committee will include the candidate on a consent agenda.

The College Tenure and Promotion Committee members should familiarize themselves with all cases on the consent agenda prior to voting on the School's decision.

Conversely, there will be a full review at the College Tenure and Promotion Committee level if any of the following occur:

- 1) The candidate requests full review by the College Tenure & Promotion Committee.
- 2) The candidate has not been recommended for Tenure and/or Promotion at one or more of the previous levels of review.
- 3) There is a split vote of one-third or more at any of the previous levels of review.
- 4) The College Tenure and Promotion Committee votes by simple majority to give full review to a particular case.

If a College Tenure and Promotion Committee member is from the same department as a candidate for tenure and/or promotion, or if a member has a personal and/or professional association with a candidate that constitutes a conflict of interest, that committee member will recuse him/herself from the case.

The entire committee may vote by a simple majority to authorize the College Tenure and Promotion Committee Chair to solicit additional and/or missing information if necessary to clarify an issue in the application. All requests for additional information must be in writing by the Tenure and Promotion Committee Chair, who will provide the candidate, the Chair of the candidate's department, and the College Dean with copies of the request.

Faculty Recommended to Dean to Approve and Forward to Provost's Office - October 28, 2015
Approved by Provost – June 1, 2016
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Faculty Recommended to Dean to Approve and Forward to Provost's office – May 6, 2020
Approved by Provost – May 19, 2020