Section 4: Personnel Policies for Faculty

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Section 4: Personnel Policies for Faculty

Promotion & Tenure

Faculty Promotion and Tenure

The promotion and tenure procedure is a parallel structure allowing for faculty proposal, evaluation and appeal, as well as administrative evaluation at each level of organization of the University.

This document governs the University process of review at every level. Departments, units, and colleges may make additions to and clarifications of this document to address their special circumstances. These elaborations, which must be approved by the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure and by the Provost, will constitute the departmental document.

Departmental documents should also include the procedure for choosing the departmental promotion and tenure committee and should specify required levels of achievement for each rank, such as excellence in research or teaching or in both. Appropriate modes of scholarly publication may also be specified. Faculty candidates for promotion and/or tenure will be evaluated based on the criteria in their department's approved promotion and tenure guidelines appropriately weighted for their workload for the period under review. (Rev. 3/4/08)

The promotion steps appear in the chart below.

- Individual Prepares Dossier
  - Department
    1. Committee on Promotion and Tenure
    2. Chairperson
  - College
    1. Committee on Promotion and Tenure
    2. Dean
  - University Senate Committee on Promotion and Tenure
  - Provost
  - President
  - Board of Trustees

The ultimate objectives of promotion policies at the University of Delaware are faculty excellence and procedural fairness. In order to preserve and enhance its reputation as an institution of higher education, the University must establish and maintain high standards of teaching, scholarly and artistic activity, and service. At the same time, it must treat each faculty member with decency and respect. Thus, these procedures seek to promote the individual's welfare and professional development while at the same time fostering the University's growth toward excellence.
The process rests firmly on peer evaluations, for the faculty itself is best able to establish and apply promotion criteria. Furthermore, the promotion system recognizes the uniqueness of the disciplines that comprise the University faculty. Indeed, departments have the major responsibility for establishing and administering guidelines and making initial promotion and tenure recommendations.

Such departmental decisions affect the University as a whole, and consequently, college and University committees, together with appropriate administrators at each level, also play an important role. They insure that policies and decisions serve the interests of the University and are roughly comparable across its many divisions. (Note: this version of the policy was approved by the Faculty Senate on April 7, 1997. Faculty hired prior to that date may obtain a copy of the previous version of the policy from the Faculty Senate Office. The application procedures and deadlines will be as detailed below for all faculty applying for promotion and tenure). (Note revised 9/14/98.)
Promotion & Tenure

Minimum Standards for Promotion

Since the mission of the University encompasses teaching, scholarship and service, faculty members should strive for excellence in all three areas. Scholarship, whether in the form of research, publication, professional development, artistic creativity, or scholarship related to teaching or service is a significant part of each person's contribution to the academic community. Everyone must pursue some form of scholarly activity. How this work is made available to other scholars obviously depends upon the particular discipline, but promotion requires evidence that significant achievements have been and will continue to be made. (Rev. 3/4/08)

The University's obligation to scholarship notwithstanding, a major goal of any educational institution is to encourage and to demonstrate excellence in teaching. Hence, faculty members with teaching responsibilities must demonstrate high-quality teaching performance.

Service at all levels—department, college, University, community, profession, or nation—is also an integral part of the University's mission and must not be neglected on the grounds that scholarship and teaching have higher priority.

These considerations suggest University expectations for promotion to various academic ranks. Although departments may write specific criteria to fit their particular circumstances and needs, they must conform to the spirit of these standards. Unsatisfactory performance in any of the three areas, for example, precludes promotion. To provide comparability across the University, then, the following minimum achievements should be met for promotion to these ranks:

Assistant Professor: Apart from earning the doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree, the primary requirement is the demonstrated ability and desire to achieve excellence in scholarship and teaching and to make positive contributions in all three areas. For this rank, past achievements are not so important as evidence of future growth and accomplishment.

Associate Professor: Inasmuch as promotion within the University to this rank generally carries tenure—a binding commitment on the part of the University—the qualifications must be rigorous. At a minimum, the individual should show excellent achievement in scholarship or teaching and high quality performance in all areas. Furthermore, there should be unmistakable evidence that the individual has progressed and will continue to do so. A mere satisfactory or adequate record as an assistant professor is not sufficient; there must be very clear indication, based on hard evidence and outside peer evaluations, that the candidate has in fact attained high levels of accomplishment.

Professor: This rank is reserved for individuals who have established reputations in their fields and whose contributions to their profession and the University's mission are excellent. There should be unmistakable evidence of significant development and achievement in teaching, scholarship and service since the last promotion. Once again, the candidate's claim to have met these requirements must be thoroughly and completely documented by outside peer evaluations and other materials.

University employees with professional contracts who also hold faculty appointments in academic units are eligible for promotion without tenure and will meet the same criteria for promotion as do members of the unit who hold academic appointments.
Promotion & Tenure

Candidate's Rights and Responsibilities

Faculty members have the right and responsibility to know all relevant departmental, college and University promotion criteria, policies, and practices. They should exercise this right at the earliest possible time and should plan their academic development and activities with the guidelines in mind.

A faculty member has the right to apply for promotion in any academic year (subject to the "Promotion Process Schedule"). However, tenure-track faculty in their terminal year may not apply for promotion. Time-in-rank is not a criterion for promotion. Candidates must compile a record sufficient to warrant promotion prior to starting this process. Each candidate will submit a promotion dossier to the department in accordance with the "Promotion Process Schedule." This dossier is the basis of promotion decisions and it is the responsibility of the candidate to prepare an organized and cogent dossier, representing the case for promotion as well as possible. The organization of the dossier is described in "Promotion Dossiers."

A candidate for promotion has the sole right to withdraw from the promotion process at any step. Otherwise, after review, the dossier is transmitted to the next level.

A candidate for promotion will be provided the written recommendations of each reviewing body--department committee, chairperson, college committee, dean, University Promotions and Tenure Committee, and Provost. All recommendations by such bodies must be justified as completely as possible.

Keeping in mind the "Promotion Process Schedule" which requires that dossiers be submitted for departmental review, a candidate has the responsibility to consult with the department chairperson, promotion committees or any other appropriate person regarding the content and preparation of the dossier.

Other than letters from solicited peer reviewers and those individuals in the promotion ladder shown above, only materials approved by the candidate may be added to the dossier after its submission by the candidate. These materials might be recent publications or journal acceptances and may be added to the dossier at any time during the promotion process.

Any appeals by the candidate will also be added to the dossier, along with any rebuttals from the appropriate committee or individual in the promotion ladder.
Promotion & Tenure

Department Responsibilities

(In colleges, schools, or divisions without departments, all of the requirements for department action devolve upon the college, school or division.)

The department bears the major burden of defining standards, specifying the procedures to be followed in deciding whether the standards are met, and judging the credentials submitted in support of each application for promotion. Minimum requirements for the satisfactory discharge of these department responsibilities include:

- After approval at all levels, any special interpretations specific to that discipline or unit must be published and distributed to all members of the department, to the appropriate committees and University officials, and to the University Faculty Senate through its Committee on Promotions and Tenure.

- Changes in promotion and tenure statements, which should be made only for compelling reasons, should first be sent to the appropriate college committee and dean. If approved, they should then be forwarded to the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure and to the Provost, both of whom will review the proposals for compliance with this document, and suggest revisions if necessary. Upon acceptance of the revised document, they will sign and date it to signify its approval. Proposed changes to existing statements must be submitted to the University Committee and Provost by March 1 to become effective by September 1.

- The specific criteria upon which recommendations are based must be clearly set forth in the formal statement of promotion policies and procedures of the University, college, and department. The qualities and achievements taken into account by the department in making its decisions should be explicitly described. The kinds of evidence by which the attainment of the stated criteria is to be judged should also be specified in the published statement, as should the specific weight given the various criteria and the kinds of evidence to be submitted in support of their having been met.

- Department promotion and tenure procedures must be democratic. Although the application of this principle will obviously vary from department to department, certain ground rules must be observed. The department's promotion and tenure committee should be constituted and operated in such a fashion that due respect is given to the opinions and advice of all faculty. Units which elect to include untenured faculty in the review process should ensure that individual participation is voluntary and that the interests of those who wish to participate are protected (for example by using secret ballots). A majority of the committee should consist of faculty who are at or above the rank to which a candidate seeks promotion. (Departments lacking a sufficient number of faculty at the appropriate rank should solicit participation of faculty from kindred departments. Procedures for this solicitation must be specified in the department's document.) The committee should also consult with the department chairperson, who should offer counsel but neither participate in its final deliberations nor vote on its recommendation. The committee should meet formally and follow established procedures. The department committee should insert a separate document in the external letters section of the dossier, identifying the specific external reviewers who were nominated by the candidate versus those nominated by the department, and the criteria used to request letters from specific reviewers.

- The department's letter of recommendation, which must indicate the numerical vote, describe the committee's composition and explain the reasons for the decision, must be transmitted in full and in writing to the candidate and be signed by all committee members. The recommendations of the department committee shall be addressed to the department chairperson and inserted into the dossier. When they arise, signed minority opinions will be forwarded as appendices to the committee's recommendations.

- The department chairperson will review the dossier submitted by the candidate, the report of the committee, and the stated criteria, and make a recommendation supporting or failing to support the candidacy. The chairperson should explain, in writing, the decision to the candidate and to the department committee. The chairperson's recommendation is transmitted in full and in writing to the candidate and also inserted into the candidate's dossier. The chairperson's letter should include a description of the candidate's
workload distribution during the time in rank, and how that workload relates to his or her recommendation concerning tenure and/or promotion.
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Promotion Procedures at the College Level

In order to assure that both candidates and the University are well served, each college or division will establish and maintain a promotion and tenure committee.

A Promotion and Tenure Committee, elected by the faculty of the college (or its representatives), shall evaluate the merits of each candidate's dossier as well as review departmental criteria to insure reasonable uniformity. (In colleges, schools, or divisions lacking departments, this evaluation of the candidate's dossier will be the initial peer evaluation and will assume the responsibilities described for departments—see "Departmental Responsibilities.") The college committee should be broadly representative of the major fields within its purview. Not every discipline can be represented, of course, but the committee should be sufficiently large to encompass a wide range of viewpoints.

Like departmental committees, a college promotion and tenure committee should publish and distribute its policies and practices and make every effort to see that they are applied consistently from year to year. These policies must be approved by the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure and by the Provost.

Faculty members may participate and vote on either the department or the college level, but not on both.

The results of the review by the college committee shall be promptly reported in full and in writing to the candidate, department committee, and department chairperson and be forwarded with the dossier to the dean or director. Fairness to the candidate and department requires that the committee explain its disagreements (if any) with recommendations made at an earlier stage.

Before reaching a final decision the committee may consult with the candidate or department regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier. The committee should allow a reasonable amount of time for this purpose.

The dean or director shall review the dossier and shall either endorse or recommend against the promotion in a written notification to the candidate, department committee, chairperson and college committee. Before reaching a decision, the dean may solicit additional information from the candidate, the department promotion committee, the department chair, and the college committee regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier. The dean or director shall also forward the dossiers and statements of action on them to the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure and to the Provost.

Each college committee and dean will establish procedures and schedules (consistent with the "Promotion Process Schedule") for hearing appeals to their decisions. These procedures will be included in the College's document.
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University Committee on Promotions and Tenure

This committee serves two major functions. It recommends to and consults with the Provost concerning every candidacy for promotion and tenure. Just as departmental and college committees work in concert with chairs and deans, the University committee works with the Provost to oversee the promotion process from a faculty point of view. The committee also, together with the Provost, assists departments in developing or revising their criteria for promotion and tenure.

The committee receives from the deans and directors all promotion dossiers (except those withdrawn by candidates) and makes a recommendation on each. In reviewing applications for promotion, the committee judges the relevance and appropriateness of the credentials offered to support the request for promotion. In doing so, the committee exercises its best judgment as to the adequacy of the evidence in meeting the University, College, and Department published criteria.

Before reaching a final decision the committee may solicit additional information from the candidate, the department promotion committee, the department chair, the college committee, or the dean of the college regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier.

Committee members may neither participate in the discussion of, nor vote, on candidates from their own department at the University level.

Following its review, the committee will forward the dossier, together with its recommendations to the Provost and will notify, in full and in writing, the candidate, the department committee, the department chairperson, the college committee, and the dean or director of its recommendation and the reasons for it.

In addition, the committee shall receive, consider, and confer with the Provost and with the initiating unit on any proposed new statement or criteria for promotion or on any proposed changes in existing statements. No statement or revision shall become effective until approved by the Committee and the Provost.
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Provost's Review of Promotions

The final review of applications for promotion is made by the Provost. Before reaching a decision, the Provost may solicit additional information from the candidate, the department promotion committee, the department chair, the college committee, the dean of the college, or the university committee regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier. Before the Provost rejects recommendations made by the University committee, he or she must report to it the reasons for the rejection and will meet with the committee to try to resolve the disagreement.

Following consultation with the University committee, the Provost forwards approved recommendations to the President for approval by the Board of Trustees. Should the Provost fail to support an application for promotion, the Provost will supply reasons for the decision which will be given to the candidate, the department committee, the department chairperson, the college committee, the dean or director, and the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure.
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Promotion Process Schedule

The time schedule for the promotion process is shown below. Whenever possible, these deadlines should be anticipated and dossiers forwarded (with recommendations) at an earlier date. (Note: Candidates can be required by department policy to submit dossiers before September 1.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 March</td>
<td>Candidate notifies chair of intention to apply for promotion in writing. Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee begins the process of soliciting peer evaluations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September</td>
<td>Dossier to Department Committee and Chairperson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October</td>
<td>Department's recommendation to the Chairperson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October</td>
<td>Chairperson's recommendation to the College Committee and Dean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 December</td>
<td>College Committee's recommendation to the Dean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 January</td>
<td>Dean's recommendation to the University Promotions and Tenure Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 February</td>
<td>University Promotions and Tenure Committee recommendations to Provost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 February</td>
<td>Provost's recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appeals are possible at every level, but must be made to the committee or administrator whose decision is being appealed. An intention to appeal must be given to the appropriate body within five working days of notification of the decision. An appeal includes: (1) a letter documenting the basis of the appeal, usually written by the candidate; and (2) a scheduled meeting with the appropriate person or committee. It is strongly recommended that the candidate attend the appeal meeting. Representatives of the candidate can also attend and participate in the appeal meeting. Appeals must be handled within two weeks, except under extenuating circumstances. The University Faculty Senate Committee on Promotions and Tenure will hear no appeals beyond March 1, and the Provost's Office will hear no appeals beyond March 15. Any appeals not heard by these dates must be carried over to the following academic year. (Rev. Fac. Sen 2/98)
Promotion & Tenure

Promotion Dossiers

It is the individual's responsibility to present the best case for promotion since he or she is most clearly involved in the outcome. It is extremely important that the dossier be well organized and carefully prepared because superfluous or confusing information may obscure more than it enhances one's qualifications and achievements. Unless otherwise noted in the faculty appointment letter, all work in rank, even if conducted at other institutions of higher education, shall be considered for promotion and tenure. It shall be the faculty's responsibility to include evidence of this work in his/her dossier and to clearly identify when and where this work was performed. (Rev. 5/10/07).

All dossiers should be organized under the following headings in this order:

I. Introductory Material
   A. Contents and Guidelines
      1. Recommendation for Promotion Form
      2. A table of contents
      3. A copy of the University, college, and department promotion and tenure criteria
   B. Application for Promotion
      1. Candidate's letter requesting promotion
      2. A curriculum vitae
      3. Candidate's statement (optional)
   C. Two and Four Year Reviews for Faculty Seeking Promotion to Associate Professor
      1. Reviews conducted by the corresponding department committee
      2. Reviews or evaluations conducted by the department chair
   D. Internal Recommendations
      1. The department committee's recommendation
      2. The chairperson's recommendation
      3. College committee's recommendation (if any)
      4. Dean or director's recommendation or endorsement
      5. University committee's recommendation
      6. Any appeal materials (appeals and rebuttals)
   E. External Recommendations
      1. Letters of evaluation from peer reviewers together with supporting material. These letters will be numbered sequentially for reference.
      2. Candidate's statement (optional)

II. Evidential Materials
   A. Teaching

   Teaching is an extremely important factor in promotion decisions and one must incorporate into the dossier several kinds of evidence. Possibilities Include:

   1. Peer evaluations that attest to the candidate's pedagogical competence, knowledge of the subject matter, organization and preparation, ability to stimulate intellectual curiosity and willingness to work, innovative capacity, and such. These evaluations will be solicited by the departmental Promotion and Tenure committee.
   2. Student evaluations, properly tabulated and summarized. The procedures used in administering the evaluations should also be described. Where available comparable departmental evaluations and past measures of the candidate's performance should be provided. (Note: Student evaluations should only be used in conjunction with other indicators to measure teaching competence, not just popularity. The type and size of courses should be taken into account).
   3. Samples of student comments from student evaluations. The means by which these samples were selected should be provided.
      a. Testimonials from a selection of former and current undergraduate and graduate students. The procedures for drawing the sample should be clearly described.
   4. Course portfolio evaluation
a department, should be indicated in the department's promotion and tenure document.

C. Service

1. Service includes innumerable types of activities rendered for the benefit of the department, college, university, community, profession, or nation. Willingness to undertake such work and competence in performing it are taken into account in the promotion process. Evaluating service is difficult. Promotion and tenure committees need to know when there has been an outstanding level of service that has taken appreciable effort or service that has been done in some way that can be noted as excellent. Other than that, the main concern is that a person has fulfilled his or her service commitment under the criteria of the academic unit concerned and that the unit is satisfied. Administrative responsibilities can be considered as part of the service component, but they may not be used as a substitute for accomplishment in a scholarly discipline.
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Career Development of Assistant Professors

There should be a major plan worked out with every new arrival to a unit so that there is an orderly progression to promotion, within a reasonable time. Participation should be offered in a number of activities, and help and assistance given as needed. A coordinated plan of development suited to the academic unit and the candidate concerned should be devised and updated annually. In units that have a considered plan for their members, this progression is worked out in detail with allowance for an orderly development in all of the three categories that are concerned in promotion. Teaching functions and the setting up of courses should take priority. Then a research program should be mounted and, finally, some shouldering of service responsibilities should be undertaken. A new assistant professor should not be heavily laden with service commitments in the first year. The entire commitment should be under the guidance of senior people, or a single designated mentor, who should take an active role in career development.
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Changes in Departmental Priorities

When departments and colleges change priorities (e.g., development of a graduate program, reorientation of the direction of departmental teaching at all levels) there are faculty members hired when their departments had one set of priorities that are now at some disadvantage because of the change. Departments have clear obligations to recognize such situations and to provide such faculty members with both the time and the resources to accommodate themselves to the new priorities. Those faculty during the probationary period prior to the granting of tenure have the right to be reviewed under the policy and procedure in force at the time of hiring, rather than under any revised policy or procedure subsequently adopted. Any candidate for tenure who wishes to be considered under the policy and procedure in force at the time of hiring must do so by informing the Department Chair of his or her desire at the time of the initial written application for promotion. (Revised by the Faculty Senate 4/7/80; Approved by the Board of Trustees 12/10/80; Revised by the Faculty Senate 4/97 and 2/98.) (Last update 9/14/98.)
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Tenure (Revised by Board of Trustees 12/78)

All decisions to grant tenure shall follow review of credentials both by appropriate faculty committees and by administrative officers. Academic units are responsible for developing and applying written criteria for promotion and tenure that have been reviewed and approved by the College Promotion and Tenure Committee, Dean, University Promotion and Tenure Committee, and Provost.

Tenure is granted or withheld solely on the basis of merit as determined both by appropriate faculty committees and by administrative officers.

With the exception of visiting professors, tenure is awarded to tenure-track full professors on initial appointment or on promotion to this rank.

Tenure-track associate professors appointed from outside the University will normally receive an initial three-year contract without tenure. Reappointments at this rank, unless terminal, will carry tenure. Promotion of tenure-track assistant professors to the rank of associate professor from within the University will carry tenure.

Tenure-track assistant professors are appointed to full-time faculty positions for an initial term of two years without tenure. Reappointments at this rank are for a two-year term. The probationary period for assistant professors is six years, divided into three successive two-year contracts. The start of the probationary period coincides with the effective date of initial appointment as assistant professor. This date governs the timetables for peer review for contract renewal and for review for promotion and tenure. Assistant professors are expected to be considered for promotion and tenure not later than the sixth year of full-time academic service, with tenure effective if the decision is favorable-starting with the fall semester of the seventh academic year. If the decision on promotion and tenure is negative, the seventh year of academic service will be a terminal year. Separate and apart from annual performance appraisal by the departmental chair, assistant professors will be evaluated through peer review regarding progress toward tenure according to the procedures and timetable set forth in the Faculty Handbook. Lack of progress toward promotion and tenure may result in contract non-renewal.

An untenured faculty member who becomes the parent of a newborn or newly adopted child may choose to take a one-year extension of the pre-tenure probationary period for each child, up to a maximum of two years. The notification for such an extension should be made in the year in which the faculty member becomes a parent or adopts a child. The extension shall be granted upon written notification to the department chair or program director, with notification to the Dean of the College and the Office of the University Provost. Faculty who choose this option must indicate in writing that they have done so in their dossier. (Rev. 10/7/91, 11/20/08)

Except as stated in "Non-Tenure Track Faculty," appointments and reappointments for instructors shall be on annual contract only. Tenure is not awarded to instructors. (Editorial revision 6/00)

Whether a faculty position is tenure-track or non tenue-track must be stipulated in the initial letter of appointment, regardless of funding source for the position. For faculty hired on a non-tenure-track appointment who are subsequently appointed to a tenure-track appointment, the probationary period for promotion and tenure begins with the date of initial appointment as a tenure-track assistant professor.

The policy provisions stated above shall apply to both continuous and discontinuous faculty appointments. (Revised by Board of Trustees, 12/78.) (Last Revision 05/03/2002.)