

# Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures

## School of Journalism & Communication University of Oregon

**Purpose and Summary.** This document, reviewed by the faculty of the University of Oregon School of Journalism & Communication and adopted by its Faculty Personnel Committee, sets forth all policies and procedures for tenure and promotion in the School. It is intended to serve as a guide for all tenure-track faculty and for those faculty who are eligible for promotion in rank. It also is a policy statement for use by the University of Oregon's elected Faculty Personnel Committee, which advises the UO Provost on matters of tenure and promotion. Following a statement of School philosophy, this document offers three sections. Each section sets forth matters of specific policy and process. Candidates for promotion and tenure should also be aware of University guidelines and suggestions, listed at this UO website link:  
<http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/tenureguide/tenureguide.html>

**Philosophy of the School.** As one of the oldest freestanding and accredited schools of journalism and communication in the United States, the School enjoys a proud tradition of superior teaching, acclaimed research and publication, and inspiring outreach to a wide variety of community and media organizations. As a professional school with a faculty that represents a diverse range of scholarly, creative and media-specific interests and specialties, it occupies a valued position in a major research university. The School takes great pride in its liberal arts emphasis, adhering to its national accreditation standards. Our undergraduate students enjoy both breadth and depth in the humanities, social sciences and sciences, they also are given rigorous instruction in a wide range of media practices. Our graduate students receive excellent instruction through our professional and research programs. The School is dedicated to preparing students to be effective media practitioners as well as thoughtful analysts of media performance. Indeed, according to the School's mission statement, "We are a community of scholars and professionals dedicated to freedom of expression and public service. By integrating theory and practice, we prepare students to become professional communicators, critical thinkers and responsible citizens in a global society." It follows then, that the School desires a faculty whose academic training, professional experience and research and creative interests are in harmony with the wide range of its course offerings and the media and academic opportunities such a mix will provide.

## Section I **Academic Tenure**

The granting of indefinite tenure to a faculty member acknowledges high-level performance as well as confidence in his or her future work and contributions to the School. It affirms that a faculty member has met or surpassed the expectations that the School and the University place on its permanent professoriate. Tenure is an honor that should not be easily granted.

This section outlines the standards for attaining tenure in the School. These standards may also apply to the granting of promotion of rank, but they will be further explained in subsequent sections.

**Standards and expectations.** The academic and professional diversity of the School faculty is such that it is not possible, or even desirable, to create narrow "tenure tracks" for candidate evaluation. Given the student composition of the School, ranging from a professional focus for its undergraduates to its strong theoretical and research emphasis for its core of doctoral candidates, it is vital to have a faculty whose high-level accomplishments complement and enhance those directions. This said, the School does expect that all candidates for academic tenure present a record that reflects acknowledged strengths in the traditional areas of teaching, in scholarly, creative or professional work, and in service to the university, community and national/international organizations.

***Teaching.*** The School expects a dedication to effective teaching, which involves curricular preparation, instruction, testing, evaluation and mentoring and advising of students. To properly assess teaching performance, the following are taken into consideration: student evaluations, both quantitative and narrative; peer review of teaching and of other public presentations; record of mentoring and advising of students; centrality of the teaching to the mission of the School; teaching portfolio (detailed on page 5); and other evidence of success in teaching-related activities, including course development and awards.

For purposes of tenure, it is assumed that the first few years of teaching at one's initial rank are "works in progress" -- that is, student and peer evaluations should be weighed more heavily after one's third-year review. However, the School is firm in its conviction that a candidate for tenure whose overall teaching performance is regularly below the School average and who demonstrates a lack of improvement over the pre-tenure period should not be granted tenure -- no matter how strong the candidate is in the other areas of evaluation.

In measuring the candidate's level of teaching performance, the following factors are considered:

1. level, type and size of classes. Larger, introductory classes are generally assumed to result in lower quantitative evaluation scores than smaller, more tightly focused classes for the professor in the early stage of his or her career. That said, it is important for most, if not all, faculty to demonstrate teaching abilities at several different class sizes and levels.
2. variety of teaching assignments. The School values both breadth and depth. It is important for faculty to contribute to both the theoretical and applied aspects of its curriculum, and to help contribute, when possible, to teaching in the common core requirements. It is recognized, however, that teaching assignments are based on School needs.
3. advising undergraduates on projects/theses, portfolios and publications, and graduate students on their master's projects/theses and their dissertations.
4. directing students in such advanced student coursework and projects as Ad Team, Flux, Cyberjournalism, Oregon News telecasts, Mosaic, Etude, Oregon Documentary Project, etc.

The School depends on School and University student and peer evaluations of the candidate's work in this area. It is committed to a system of regular classroom visits for tenure-track faculty and for candidates seeking promotion and will encourage effective use of the university's Teaching Effectiveness Program.

***Scholarly, Creative or Professional Work.*** Because of the academic and professional diversity of its faculty and the School's broad mandate for outreach in such a wide range of areas, at least three tenure routes can be identified:

- **Scholarship.** This is generally work at the post-doctoral level that employs rigorous academic inquiry. The following work is valued and encouraged at the School: scholarly books, and invited chapters in such books; publication of work in peer-reviewed journals; competitively selected paper presentations and publication of the same; research projects (including surveys) that contribute to a specialized or public dialogue; textbooks that advance the field and that are well-received in the academic and professional communities; other invited research presentations; and invited reviews and entries in such specialized works as encyclopedias. The School is highly supportive of collaboration and interdisciplinary work.

- **Creative work and performance.** These are areas that may differ in form from work that emerges from traditional research. However, creative work often utilizes traditional research from a multitude of disciplines. In the School of Journalism and Communication, the following work is considered a proper fit for this category: Writing and production of videos and films; creation and exhibition of photographic and of multi-media works; writing for publication in popular markets, in books and in magazines and in internet publications; editing, design and production of media products in all forms; public presentations based on the candidate's current and published work; and invited presentations to festivals, conventions or other venues where such dissemination provides an opportunity for substantive review. Judging of contests and festivals, related to the creative work of the candidate, are also considered in this category.

- **Professional outreach and production.** This is a tenure route that acknowledges particular skills and connections of faculty members who possess a depth of experience that is closely aligned to the professional applications of the School's curricula. The obvious benefit of this outreach is greater visibility of, and appreciation for, the professional aspects of the School.

Applicable work includes the following, but may not be limited to: invited consulting on topics related to a candidate's professional and academic expertise; publication of articles, columns and commentary in the trade press, on topics related to the writer's professional expertise; freelance work in the candidate's area of expertise; and presentations to groups, associations and conventions on topics connected to the candidate's background and current areas of professional interest. Judging of contests and festivals, related to the professional work and outreach of the candidate, are also considered in this category. It should be noted that the School considers regular activity that provides assistance and education to media organizations and professional societies as professional outreach, not service, for purposes of tenure and promotion consideration.

A number of combinations of these so-called routes exist for successful tenure. For example, a journalism historian may publish in some traditional academic journals but also author a biography that is published as a popular trade book; in addition, or instead, he or she may have participated in the research and production of a number of documentary videos on some aspects of media history, e.g., the growing impact of web advertising.

*Service.* For purposes of tenure, the School expects adequate participation in appropriate School, University, association and media activities, when such service contributes to School visibility and to both the candidate's teaching and research/production areas. Candidates for tenure will be strongly advised not to take on too heavy a burden of committee and other assignments, as the factors of teaching and research/creative production/professional work take precedence. Tenured faculty members, of course, are expected to provide a much higher level of such service. (This is discussed under promotion in rank issues.) It should also be emphasized that a strong record of service cannot, in any circumstance, overcome the effects of weak performance in teaching and in research/creative/professional work in tenure consideration.

### **Tenure Process Issues**

Under normal circumstances, a candidate for academic tenure applies for consideration of tenure (and promotion, if applicable), toward the end of the fifth academic year of his or her series of tenure-track appointments. This is preceded by a third-year review (detailed in a separate document) that reports performance to date and that suggests areas for emphasis and improvement.

After the candidate has written to the Dean, requesting consideration for tenure, the chair of the School's Faculty Personnel Committee is notified. The chair appoints a special subcommittee (usually three tenured faculty members) to review the case, make a recommendation to the full FPC, and, in the case of a positive vote, to organize the case for outside review and eventual presentation to the Dean.

The case preparation committee reviews the following materials, prepared by the candidate and, in the case of all teaching evaluations, by the Office of the Dean:

- Personal statement. This document, in effect an essay by the candidate, outlines accomplishments, experiences and goals pursued and achieved during the tenure-track period. This statement provides an important summary to all reviewers during the tenure consideration process. It should be reflective of the candidate's vision of his or her place in academia.
- Curriculum vita. This is updated, as appropriate, during the process.
- Compilation of all published and presented work applicable under the so-called "tenure routes" listed above.
- Teaching portfolio. This consists of all course syllabi; examples of assignments and other course materials that will reflect the candidate's pedagogy; materials that demonstrate curricular development; all quantitative and narrative course evaluations; and reports of peer reviewers.
- Other materials that the candidate considers germane to his or her case.

The decision to move the tenure case forward is a two-step process; if the FPC votes to move the case forward, that comes as a recommendation to the Dean, who makes the final decision. If the case moves forward, six external reviewers will be selected -- four by the FPC and two by the candidate. The selected reviewers will be contacted by the Dean, who will first receive all the reports and then pass them on to the FPC. These reviewers will be asked to carefully follow the School's tenure and promotion criteria and then evaluate the candidate based on all submitted materials and on the reviewer's knowledge of the candidate's work and standing. When all reviewer comments are received (usually no later than early in Fall term), the FPC meets again to consider the case and make a recommendation to the Dean, based on the voting process listed on page 8. If the decision is affirmative, the Dean then prepares an independent review for the University's Faculty Personnel Committee and to the Provost. The School FPC report on the candidate is also included. That report evaluates all of the criteria listed above.

**Criteria for evaluation of tenure application.** In some cases, tenure is granted at a current rank (as in a tenure-track professor hired at the associate professor rank in recognition of high-level experience already attained at the time of hiring). Or, in certain cases, tenure may be awarded in a case in which a concurrent request for promotion in rank may not be granted. However, in most cases, application for tenure is accompanied by a request for promotion from assistant to associate professor. With that background, here is guidance for application of the School's criteria for achieving tenure: Tenure will be recommended to the University Provost when Teaching and Scholarship/Creative Production/Professional Work meet or exceed the stated expectations of the School.

**Teaching.** A candidate should demonstrate average to above-average quantitative scores in student evaluations, with an emphasis on more recent years of the candidate's teaching. It is important to note those classes (often those in the required core) that tend to achieve lower overall scores, regardless of the instructor. The narrative evaluations (FPC reviews only those that are signed by students) should provide a gauge of students' enthusiasm for the course and the instructor. Of somewhat higher importance are the quality

and depth of the candidate's required teaching portfolio, as well as peer evaluation reports. Taken as a whole, then, the candidate's teaching performance -- and his or her potential for growth and improvement -- must at least meet the "average" standard of the School for tenure consideration to go forward, no matter how high the level of scholarly, creative and professional work, or of service.

*Scholarly, Creative and Professional Work.* In all of the School's tenure "routes" (or a combination of them), selection of appropriate external peer reviewers is essential in properly evaluating a candidate's work. The reviewers, will be asked to evaluate this work according to these criteria:

- the level to which the work adds to the knowledge base of the academic discipline or to the appropriate professional area of expertise;
- the quantity and quality of the candidate's contribution to authorship or production;
- the nature of how the work was reviewed and assessed;
- awards and recognition received for such work; and
- the extent to which the work, individually or as a body, enhances the candidate's standing in his or her discipline or creative area and establishes national or international standing for the candidate;
- the relative reputations and reach of publications and other venues for a candidate's work in scholarship, creative and professional work.

As with the area of teaching, the candidate is expected to demonstrate average or above performance in his or her discipline or creative area.

When evaluating a candidate's "production" in this area of evaluation, it is important that such evaluation reflects the School's criteria on these issues:

Nature of authorship or production. Single-authored publications are generally valued more highly than than co-authored works, though collaboration to improve the publication and outreach is always worthy of merit. This is also true for a variety of creative output. In the case of documentary production, for example, it is important for the candidate to specify percentage of effort and creative leadership given to particular projects. The quantity and



quality of field research that underlies any creative production or authorship is important to specify and evaluate.

Re-publication or further development of original work. This is common for dissertations, but this can also occur in subsequent edited works and anthologies. These, too, are valued when such work clearly advances one's research, creative or professional production and impact. It is important for the candidate to explain the growth and further development of such work, from its original state. This includes, in the area of a number of publications, revisions and subsequent editions.

Service. As noted above, "adequate" service, especially as applied to School committees and any applicable association or media organizations, is seen as meeting this component of the tenure requirement. In no case, however, can an excellent, intensive record of service overcome any inadequacies in the candidate's teaching or scholarly, creative and/or professional work.

## **The Voting Process**

Faculty members eligible to vote on tenure and promotion cases have three choices in "scaled" voting, as follows:

- **Exceeds Expectations.** Candidate's productivity and quality of work exceed standards of the School. Candidate has achieved an impressive level of recognition in his or her field.
- **Meets Expectations.** Candidate's productivity and performance meet standards of the School. This category correlates to the School's standard of "good." Effort is solid, with promise of greater impact to come.
- **No -- Unsatisfactory.** Candidate does not meet School's standards. Improvement and growth do not seem likely.

This voting scale also applies to all considerations for promotion in rank.

Voting for both tenure and promotion involves only three choices -- abstentions are not permitted. However, a faculty member must recuse himself or herself from all discussion and voting when a personal or professional conflict of interest might interfere with the deliberations and with an objective vote. Recusal may also be appropriate when a faculty member simply does not have adequate information and/or context on which to make a decision. Because the School expects all eligible voting faculty to fully participate in tenure and promotion discussions, one acceptable reason for not participating -- aside from the conflict of interest issue -- is that the faculty member has been on sabbatical or leave. All recusals will be indicated in committee minutes.

## Section II **Promotion in Rank**

This section outlines the standards and process for achieving promotion in academic rank. It first examines promotion to Associate Professor and then discusses promotion to Professor.

**Promotion to Associate Professor.** In the majority of cases, a candidate seeking tenure is also applying for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. As with tenure consideration, the normal interval between Assistant and Associate Professor is six years. However, whether the promotion issue is tied to tenure or not, the standards remain the same. At a minimum, the School expects that the candidate for promotion to Associate Professor will have a record that "meets School expectations" in teaching and scholarly, creative, or professional work. **If any of these categories falls below the School's stated expectations, the candidate should be denied promotion.** As with tenure consideration, service expectations are seen as relatively low. The School will look for evidence of "adequate" participation in relevant service areas; however, service below that level will not be cause for denial of promotion. And as with tenure, the School's affirmative decision should reflect high confidence in the candidate's potential to grow in all three categories of evaluation.

**Promotion to Professor.** This rank is awarded to candidates whose performance properly reflects the status of a senior faculty member, one who has

demonstrated continued growth, expertise and standing in his or her field from the time of promotion to Associate Professor. As with promotion to Associate Professor, the normal interval from Associate to "full" professor is six years. However, in extraordinary circumstances, with enthusiastic backing by the School, a candidate with a superlative record in all categories may seek early University consideration of promotion to Professor. **For so-called "on time" cases, the candidate's performance should exceed expectations or demonstrate exceptional performance in at least one of these two categories: teaching or scholarly/creative/professional work.** The School will take careful note of the candidate's standing and leadership in his or her field, as well as his or her teaching strengths. Service contributions should be considerably higher than those expected for promotion to Associate Professor and should exhibit a dedication to activities that serve the School, University and broader communities, both academic and professional. It should be noted that the School expects all of its tenured faculty to move through promotable ranks in as timely a fashion as possible; for example, staying permanently at the rank of associate professor is not generally seen as a positive sign for the scholarly/creative/professional reputation of the School.

### Section III

## **Other Tenure and Promotion Process Issues**

As with a tenure application, a candidate for promotion in rank first applies to the Dean of the School (usually early in Spring term) for consideration of promotion. The Dean then forwards that application to the Chair of the School's Faculty Personnel Committee, who appoints a three-person Case Preparation Committee to evaluate the case and make a recommendation to the entire FPC. After due consideration of all relevant information, the FPC makes a recommendation to the Dean to move the case forward or not. If the recommendation is affirmative, the process of selecting external reviewers begins. When the reviews are complete, the case preparation committee meets again to formulate a thorough report, which addresses all appropriate criteria for tenure and/or promotion in rank. That report is presented to the entire FPC, which discusses and then makes its recommendation on the case. The case preparation report and report of the FPC proceedings then is forwarded to the

Dean, who prepares a comprehensive report and recommendation to the University FPC and to the Provost.

Several areas are worth special emphasis here:

- in both tenure and promotion cases, the School FPC selects the four external reviewers; the candidate selects two;
- a candidate has the right to veto for cause, the selection of any member of the Case Preparation Committee;
- all tenured members of the School faculty, as members of the FPC, are eligible to vote on tenure cases;
- only tenured Professors (full) can vote on promotion to Professor cases; and
- all votes by the School FPC will be made in confidential, signed ballots, to be held in safekeeping by the Dean.

**(Adopted June 8, 2005)**