Promotion and Tenure:  
Guidelines for Faculty from the  
College Promotion and Tenure Committee—PART I  

Approved by the Faculty Assembly of the  
Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, April 2006  

I. Composition, Meetings and Responsibilities of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee  

A. Composition  

○ Tenured and tenure-track faculty of each department shall elect a tenured colleague to serve as representative to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. The term of service is two years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms, unless no other member of the department is eligible.  

○ Department chairs are excluded from serving on the College Committee unless no other member of the department is eligible.  

○ It is imperative that department representatives to the College P and T Committee acquaint themselves extremely well with department criteria for promotion and tenure, along with college, and university guidelines for promotion and tenure. Outgoing members of the College P and T Committee are responsible for briefing their successors before they begin their service on the Committee.  

○ Candidates for promotion or tenure from one of the partner campuses or whose primary assignment is in a non-degree granting program may request that a representative from that campus or program may attend the meeting of the Promotion and Tenure Committee at which their case is being discussed on an advisory basis.  

○ Members of the College P and T Committee must thoroughly read portfolios before they can be permitted to vote on them.  

B. Calendar  

○ The Committee will meet to review portfolios for promotion and tenure in the fall.  

○ The Committee will meet to review third year review portfolios in the spring.  

C. Responsibilities  

○ The Committee will periodically review guidelines for mentoring tenure-earning faculty, guidelines for the third year review, and guidelines for promotion and tenure so that candidates can present the best possible case for promotion and tenure.
The Committee will evaluate third year review portfolios. No vote is expected or required; the goal of the process is to provide candidates with useful information about their progress toward promotion and tenure.

The Committee will evaluate whether candidates for promotion and tenure have met the promotion and tenure criteria established by their departments and the college and university guidelines in the areas of teaching, research/creative activity and service.

The Committee will vote on applications for promotion and tenure.
- The department representative to the Committee will not vote on candidates from their department.
- It is important to recognize that the college vote for promotion and tenure is independent of the departmental evaluation. Thus, a positive vote for promotion and tenure at the department level does not guarantee or mandate a positive vote by the College Committee.

The Committee will periodically revisit College guidelines for promotion and tenure to ensure that they are in compliance with university guidelines.

Hence, the College Promotion and Tenure Committee strongly recommends that each department review its own promotion and tenure criteria every three years to make certain they conform to college and university promotion and tenure guidelines.

II. Composition of Department Promotion and Tenure Committee

The Department Promotion and Tenure Committee or relevant body of tenured faculty shall consist of at least two tenured faculty members elected by tenured and tenure-earning members of the department. The chair of the department promotion and tenure committee, or when such a committee does not exist, must be a faculty member selected from among the relevant body of faculty through a process developed by the faculty. The committee or relevant body of tenured faculty will be chaired by a tenured faculty member other than the department Chair.

The Chair of the Department shall serve as an ex officio member without voting rights. At the discretion of the department, tenure-earning faculty members may be present at meetings of the Department Committee, but they are not permitted to vote. The deliberations of this body shall be advisory to the Chair of the Department.

The College Committee recommends that the Department Promotion and Tenure Committees or the relevant body of tenured faculty accept the responsibility of mentoring tenure-earning faculty so that they can present the best possible case for promotion and tenure.

III. Annual Evaluations Procedures/Policies for Tenure-earning Faculty

The Department Promotion and Tenure Committee or relevant body of tenured faculty should be advisory to the chair on the annual evaluation of tenure-earning faculty and their progress towards promotion and tenure;
Annual Evaluations of tenure-earning faculty:
- Faculty members are evaluated in three general categories:
  - teaching (using SPOT reports and peer evaluation of classroom teaching, based on examination of teaching materials as specified by departments)
  - research, creative, and professional activity
  - service
- Department chairs are strongly urged to discuss the Annual Evaluation and Performance Appraisal with the tenure-earning faculty member before it is signed and forwarded to the Dean.

IV. Third-Year Review Procedures & Policies

- The third-year review will normally take place during the spring term of the faculty member’s contractual third year.

- For candidates who are granted years towards tenure, the timing of the third year review will be set at the time of hire in the letter of offer. Prior to sending the letter of offer, the Committee recommends that the department chair consult with the chair of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

- The evaluation process begins at the departmental level and consists of the following process:

  A. The Portfolio

- The candidate will assemble the Third Year review portfolio.
  - It will contain everything required in the University’s “Tenure Portfolio Guidelines” except for letters of evaluation.
  - It is recommended that the CV conform to the CV template provided to all candidates and located at the end of these guidelines.
  - Candidates should also include their SPOT summary sheets in the section on instruction and two peer evaluations of their teaching.

B. Evaluation of the Portfolio by the Department

- The portfolio will be evaluated by the departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee or the relevant body of tenured faculty within the department, which will hold a meeting to discuss the candidate’s progress toward tenure.
- The discussion shall use the relevant criteria for tenure and promotion to evaluate the candidate’s record.
- The chair of the departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee or the relevant body of tenured faculty within the department will write a narrative account of the discussion, addressed to the department chair.
The account should accurately summarize the different points of view expressed during the discussion and solicited from the department.
- It should describe the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the candidate’s record rather than reporting on who said what.

- The goal of the process is to provide useful information to the candidate about his/her progress. No departmental vote is expected or required.
- Copies of the narrative account will be given to the faculty member and the department chair.
  - The chair and the faculty member must sign the account, indicating that they have received it.
  - The chair shall write a letter evaluating the candidate’s progress towards tenure, considering the candidate’s record, the departmental evaluation, and the relevant criteria and guidelines.
  - If the candidate chooses, he/she may respond to the report in writing within 5 business days of receipt of the report and include the response in the portfolio.

C. Evaluation of the Third Year Review Portfolio by the College Committee

**The portfolio, with the departmental and chair’s letters added to it, will go to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. This Committee will examine the relevant criteria, the candidate’s record, and the departmental review.**

**A memorandum drafted by the chair of the Committee and acceptable to all members, will summarize the discussion about the case. No vote is expected or required.**

**A copy of the memorandum will be given to the faculty member and to the chair of the relevant department. Both will acknowledge receipt of the memorandum in writing.**

**The memorandum and file will go to the dean for his/her information**

**The candidate’s inclusion of the Third Year Review memorandum in his or her tenure application is optional.**

n.b. – Once a portfolio is submitted to the Dean’s office, it should not be removed or amended by the candidate for any reason. The department representative can add pertinent information, but only after securing permission from the Chair of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

V. Applications for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

A. The Review Process

Applications for promotion and tenure are evaluated at many points, and the recommendations of
many groups and persons are solicited.

The process begins at the department level at the beginning of the Fall term. Tenured members of the department discuss the case and vote via a secret ballot that conveys its recommendation on the case.

The chair of the department promotion and tenure committee or relevant body of faculty will write an account of deliberations and write a letter that accurately reflects the discussion of the case without revealing individuals’ positions. This memorandum will remain part of the portfolio until it reaches the university level.

Then, the chair writes a letter in which he or she evaluates the case in light of the departmental discussion and vote, the portfolio's evidence, and the relevant criteria; the chair must make a clear recommendation in favor of or against the application.

*The letters from the chair of the department promotion and tenure committee or relevant body of faculty and the letter from the chair of the department will then be given to the candidate, who will have 5 business days to respond to the letters, if he/she chooses to do so.*

Next, generally by the end of September, the portfolio goes to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee, which discusses the case and votes on it; the departmental representative abstains from voting. The College P&T Committee forwards its recommendation by sending a memorandum to the Dean that describes the vote and discusses the case. In November, the Dean reads the portfolio, considers the recommendations of the department, chair, and College P&T Committee, and writes a letter that recommends in favor of or against the application.

The portfolio then goes to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, consisting of the chairs of the college committees. That committee discusses the case and makes its recommendation in a vote. The vote and the portfolio go forward to the Provost. The Provost reviews the case and makes a recommendation to the President. The President considers the recommendations that have been made at other levels, reviews the case, and makes a final decision on promotion. In tenure cases, he makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees makes the final decision on tenure, generally near the end of Spring term.

**B. The Portfolio**

The candidate’s portfolio will contain everything required in the University’s “Tenure Portfolio Guidelines.” It is **recommended that the CV conform** to the CV template provided to all candidates.

Once a portfolio is submitted to the Dean’s office, it cannot be removed by the candidate for any reason. The department representative may add pertinent information only after securing permission from the Chair of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

**C. Role of Annual Evaluations in Promotion and Tenure Decisions**
Promotion and tenure decisions should not simply summarize annual evaluations. Promotion criteria should specify the role of annual evaluations in promotion decisions, while carefully specifying the additional considerations of such decisions.

Contents of the portfolio:

- It will contain everything required in the University’s “Tenure Portfolio Guidelines”

- We recommend that the CV should conform to the CV template provided to all candidates and located at the end of these guidelines

- Candidates should also include their SPOT summary sheets in the section on instruction and two peer evaluations of their teaching

D. External Reviewers

External reviewers shall be selected and contacted according to University policy as articulated in the University Promotion and Tenure guidelines, which state that the candidate must have: “a minimum of two current letters from outside this university, who at the rank the candidate is aspiring to or higher. A list of potential referees should be compiled by the Chair/Director and the senior faculty in the discipline: the candidate should have the opportunity to review the list for any conflicts of interest. These experts should be letters from independent experts in the field who can evaluate the faculty member’s work; letters from co-authors, dissertation advisors or personal friends are rarely appropriate.”

E. College Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor and Tenure: Research and Creative Activity

The College Committee will use the following guidelines when evaluating a candidate’s viability for promotion to associate professor:

- Faculty who pursue scholarly research in print or online must demonstrate scholarly activity through publication of refereed books and articles.

- Faculty who pursue creative endeavors must demonstrate a consistent and high quality of creative achievement appropriate to the endeavor and to department criteria. In some cases, there is a direct relationship between the faculty member’s creative output and his/her teaching responsibilities (e.g. music conductors, theater directors, technicians, and the like). In such cases, the relationship must be clearly explained in the promotion and tenure portfolio.

- Assessment of scholarly productivity: While the College Committee will defer to the department criteria for the appropriate amount of scholarship, in keeping with the university guidelines, the College Committee will distinguish between peer-reviewed

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1 From [http://www.fiu.edu/academic/provost](http://www.fiu.edu/academic/provost)
(i.e., refereed) and non-peer-reviewed works. The latter will not be sufficient for a positive vote on promotion to associate professor. This being the case, candidates must describe the review process of each publication (i.e. blind peer review, editorial review board, editorial review).

F. College Promotion and Tenure Committee Guidelines for Tenure

The College Committee will use the following guidelines when evaluating a candidate’s viability for tenure:

The awarding of tenure is based upon the Committee’s judgment that the faculty member will have a lifelong commitment to scholarship (or creative/artistic work), excellence in instruction, and become a willing and effective participant in university governance and appropriate service.

Thus, the awarding of promotion is based upon past performance; the awarding of tenure also includes future performance potential.

G. College Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor and Tenure: Teaching

The Promotion and Tenure Committee will critically review student and (at least two) peer evaluations of the candidate’s teaching, along with any other relevant instructional material. The Committee understands that the SPOT evaluation form is a less than perfect and incomplete instrument for the evaluation of teaching, with many subjective factors playing into a student’s scoring of a teacher and the course. However, SPOT scores do reveal a pattern of teaching over a period of time (3 to 5 years). To isolate any one semester accentuates the imperfect nature of the SPOT score as a device for the evaluation of teaching. The Promotion and Tenure Committee looks at the mean of the SPOT scores for long term patterns weighed against the long term patterns of the department mean.

It is further understood that SPOT scores are only part of the equation of evaluation and that peer evaluation and other structural support materials expand the subjective understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a teacher. The effectiveness of the teaching profile is a combination of both objective and subjective considerations.

H. College Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor and Tenure: Service

Service constitutes a series of activities that further the mission of the University. Service includes, but is not limited to, membership on departmental, college and university committees, councils and senates. It also includes service in professional organizations, participation at professional meetings, symposia, conferences and workshops, service on governmental boards, agencies, commissions, and service to public schools.

Service assignments: The University’s Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Faculty state that “although the typical Assistant Professor will have only a modest assignment to service, promotion to Associate Professor requires that the candidate have a record of responsible and conscientious participation in some service activities.”
This being the case, the College Promotion and Tenure Committee recommends that assistant professors should serve mostly on departmental committees up to the time of the third year review. Thereafter, as appropriate to the discipline and department, assistant professors will be expected to be assigned to departmental responsibilities and/or to serve on departmental committees and college committees. Untenured faculty should not chair committees.

The Committee recommends that individual departments should revisit annual evaluation criteria with a goal of creating a sliding scale for service, so that more senior members of departments undertake leadership positions in their respective departments whenever possible. The Committee recommends that, in order to bring the College in line with University norms, more service will be expected for tenured faculty.

VI. Applications for Promotion to Professor

A. Progress of Associate Professors toward Promotion to Professor

Department chairs must apprise newly tenured faculty of expectations for promotion during the faculty members’ first year in rank as associate professors.

The College Promotion and Tenure Committee recommends that departments regularly review the progress of associate professors to the rank of professor. This review will be conducted by at least two full professors in their department, in consultation with the department chair.

If a department has fewer than two full professors, the evaluation of an associate professor may be conducted in consultation with a full professor in a complementary field of study at FAU or a professor at another university. Selection of the outside reviewer must follow the policy for selecting outside reviewers as stipulated in the University policy as articulated in the University P and T Guidelines.

If the department chair is not a full professor, he/she may elect to have his/her progress towards promotion to professor reviewed by the Dean.

B. Timing of the Application for Promotion to Professor

No earlier than five years completed in rank from the year that the promotion to Associate Professor became effective may be considered the minimum norm for promotion from Associate to Professor.

C. Multiple Routes to Professor

"The traditional route to Professor emphasizes distinction in research and other appropriate forms of scholarly and creative activity, and this will remain one of the primary routes to promotion.

At the discretion of the department, a candidate may be recommended for promotion to Professor
on the basis of a record of distinguished instructional or service/administrative accomplishments, provided that he or she can also meet the relevant criteria for demonstrating continued competency in and commitment to research, scholarship, and other creative activities in the discipline.2

Promotion to Professor requires significant cumulative accomplishments demonstrating that the candidate has achieved a high level of professional maturity and accomplishment. Such a record, particularly for those whose primary distinction is in instruction or service/administration, typically requires a significant number of years in rank in order to build the sustained record of documented accomplishment that is necessary.

D. Guidelines for Promotion to Professor—Research and Creative Activity

The College Promotion and Tenure Committee recommends that candidates for Professor have a consistent record of distinguished peer-reviewed publications, or, as appropriate, demonstrate consistent and high-quality artistic accomplishment during their time in rank as associate professors. Departments must specify the criteria for recognizing distinction in research, scholarly and creative activity.

--Candidates who seek promotion to the rank of Professor primarily on the basis of distinction in research must demonstrate competency in other aspects of the faculty role.

--Although departments may set additional requirements, candidates must have fulfilled at least two of the criteria for instructional excellence outlined in the section on Teaching.

---Candidates must also demonstrate consistent involvement in service to department, college and university during their time in rank as associate professors.

E. Guidelines for Promotion to Professor—Teaching

If the department has approved criteria that permit promotion to Professor on the basis of distinction in teaching and competency in the other dimensions of the faculty role, the candidate demonstrates distinction if he/she fulfills a majority of the following:

1. Substantial involvement in studying pedagogy application in his/her respective field through participation in teaching workshops
2. Publication on the subject of teaching in respective content areas/disciplines is highly recommended
3. Involvement in curricular development in his/her area of specialization
4. designing programs and curricula
5. taking a leadership role on curriculum and related committees
6. Consistent record of excellent student and peer evaluations
7. Other instructional activities as appropriate to the department and discipline

2 From http://www.fau.edu/academic/provost/criteria.htm
Candidates who seek promotion to the rank of Professor primarily on the basis of distinction in teaching must demonstrate competency in other aspects of the faculty role.

They must demonstrate consistent involvement in scholarly work and produce an appropriate level of peer reviewed publications during their time in rank as associate professors or, as appropriate, demonstrate consistent and high-quality artistic accomplishment during their time in rank as associate professors.

They must also demonstrate consistent involvement in service to department, college and university during their time in rank as associate professors.

F. Guidelines for Promotion to Professor—Service

If the department has approved criteria that permit promotion to Professor on the basis of distinction in service and competency in the other dimensions of the faculty role, candidates should base their case for promotion on basis of distinguished service through a sustained and substantial record of accomplishment in leadership roles in their departments, university and college level committees and other administrative or service work.

Such candidates should keep a comprehensive record to document their claims of outstanding accomplishments in service, and all such service should be formally assigned over the period in rank as an Associate Professor.

In such cases, internal letters for candidates should be as comprehensive as is traditional for outside letters of review. Additional letters of evaluation, beyond the maximum of two permitted by the University, may be required by the department or the College for applications for promotion that rest heavily on a service/administrative record. If more than two internal letters are solicited to support a claim of distinction in service/administration, all letters beyond the University’s maximum of two should be included in the supplementary portfolio.

Candidates who seek promotion to the rank of Professor primarily on the basis of distinction in institutional service or administration must demonstrate competency in other aspects of the faculty role.

Although departments may set additional requirements, they must have fulfilled at least two of the criteria for instructional excellence outlined in the section on Teaching. They must demonstrate consistent involvement in scholarly work and produce an appropriate level of peer-reviewed publications during their time in rank as associate professors or, as appropriate, demonstrate consistent and high-quality artistic accomplishment during their time in rank as associate professors.

Accumulation of evidence of distinction in service/administration may require a longer span of years than the demonstration of distinction in scholarly or artistic work, as service/administrative work does not have a well-developed equivalent to peer review.