

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

## **Departmental Tenure and Promotion Guidelines**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to specify the procedures for recommending tenure and promotion within the Department of Communication at the University of Texas at Tyler. These guidelines are consistent with the provisions described in section 3.3.4 and 3.3.5 of the *University of Texas at Tyler's Handbook of Operating Procedures* and with the *College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Policy*. In the case that any discrepancies exist, the university and college policies and procedures supersede this document.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The University of Texas at Tyler is a comprehensive university with diverse programs and constituencies that require a dynamic and vital faculty dedicated to excellence. To preserve and strengthen the quality of the faculty, the University awards tenure and promotion in rank. Tenure carries a commitment by the University to the individual faculty member. Promotion recognizes academic achievement not only in the University, but in the profession at large.

Academic rank and tenure are awarded to those faculty members who make continuing contributions in three general areas: teaching, scholarly or creative activities, and professional service and collegiality. These categories are not unique to The University of Texas at Tyler; most universities have established these or their equivalent, and it is important that the faculty have a common understanding of the meaning of the criteria and their relative applicability.

These general areas apply in the review of both the pre-tenure, tenure, and promotion process.

*Teaching.* To qualify for tenure, faculty members must have a consistent pattern of effectiveness in teaching. Tenure will not be granted unless the candidate is deemed to be a strong teacher and demonstrates a commitment to lifelong improvement of his or her teaching skills. Thus, it is vital that information concerning teaching effectiveness, gathered from multiple and flexible assessment methods, be part of the tenure application.

*Research/Scholarship/Creative Activity.* The purpose of research/scholarship/creative activity is to make a substantive contribution to the body of knowledge and understanding in one's discipline. For tenure to be granted, a faculty member must have established a strong, consistent, and

progressive program of research/scholarship/creative activity and must exhibit a commitment to continue making contributions throughout his or her career.

*Service.* To qualify for tenure, the candidate must display evidence of commitment to service to the University and to the profession and/or civic community.

*Collegiality.* U.T. Tyler defends the concept of academic freedom, which assures each faculty member the freedom to criticize and advocate changes in existing theories, beliefs, programs, and policies, and guarantees faculty the right to support any colleague whose academic freedom is threatened. Collegiality is a professional, not personal, criterion relating to the performance of duties within a department. Collegiality should not be confused with sociability, likeability or conformity to certain views. Instead, collegiality addresses such issues as the faculty member's compatibility with department missions and goals, an ability and willingness to work cooperatively within the department and college, a willingness to engage in shared governance, and a high standard of professional integrity in dealing with colleagues and students on a professional and personal level.

The University subscribes to the following description of collegiality from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) statement on professional ethics:

As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas, professors show due respect for the opinions of others. Professors acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION**

Communication is a field of inquiry that produces a working understanding of the presuppositions, production, performance, and interpretation of written and oral forms of communication in its diverse forms. As a department, our guiding assumption is that Communication is a form of critical activity. In it, the "everyday" objectivity of human meaning production is called into question, scrutinized, and transformed. This work is done for a practical aim. Through our teaching, research, and service, we seek to develop and enhance the ability of students, fellow citizens, and communities to express their interests, understand others, and contribute to the aesthetic, political, social, and cultural environments in which they live.

The Department of Communication at the University of Texas at Tyler is comprised of the disciplines of Mass Communication and Speech Communication. The study of mass communication prepares students for careers in newspaper reporting and editing, video production and editing, graphic design, television, public relations, and other mass media. Graduates usually take jobs with businesses, government agencies, and professional and non-profit organizations. Other graduates enter advertising or specialized communication, such as writing about medicine, technology, or business. Others are choosing careers in "new media," particularly in relationship to public relations, interactive computer systems and information distribution. Major areas included in the discipline of Speech Communication focus on the unique characteristics of human communication. Interpersonal communication includes, but is not limited to, the study of symbolic behavior in dyadic relationships. Group communication concentrates on the small group of three to seven persons. Organizational communication examines the effects that organizational structure and membership have on human communication and vice versa. Rhetoric and public address is the study of discourse and its role in shaping public perceptions and practices. All areas emphasize effective oral and written communication. Additional content areas in Speech Communication include Health Communication, New Media Theory, Media Ecology, and Political Communication.

In these various curricula, the Department accomplishes its goals by (1) encouraging students to improve their writing and speaking skills by teaching methods designed to achieve qualitative improvement; and (2) representing Mass Communication and Speech as essential to an educated citizenry's understanding of the social, political, religious, and cultural traditions germane to Western and nonwestern modes of thought, principles, values, and institutions. In fulfilling its mission, the Department serves the missions of the University and the College of Arts and Sciences, respectively.

To accomplish its mission, the Department of Communication needs to recruit, retain, and reward faculty members who, by their teaching, their research activities, and their professional service and collegiality demonstrate an enthusiastic lifelong commitment to first-rate teaching and scholarship. The Department of Communication upholds the model of the teacher-scholar who successfully combines the teaching of Communication with scholarly productivity.

#### **DEPARTMENT TENURE AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE**

The Department of Communication's Tenure and Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured faculty in the Department who possess the rank equivalent to or higher than the rank being sought by the nominee. The Department Chair will not be a voting member of the Committee. Neither the candidate nor a person with whom he or she shares a significant personal relationship should be a voting member of the committee. The Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee will be elected by the Committee. If there is not a minimum number of three members of the Department who meet the above qualifications, the Dean, in consultation with the candidate and the Department

Chair, shall appoint sufficient faculty members of the appropriate rank from other departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. If there is only one or no qualified members of the Department, the Dean, in consultation with the candidate and the Department Chair, may waive the requirement for a departmental committee in a particular case.

#### **FACULTY STATUS FOR TENURE PURPOSES**

Lecturers, visiting lecturers, part-time faculty members, adjuncts, and graduate students serving as research assistants are specifically not entitled to tenure. Such appointments are awarded on a contractual basis subject to the needs and resources of the University and the qualifications of the applicants available for the position, normally for a specified time period. They are administered through normal administrative channels.

Administrative personnel, such as department heads, who hold academic rank in addition to their administrative titles, are considered faculty members for these purposes, but administrative assignments are not subject to tenure.

No faculty member may be hired with tenure without the approval of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, the President, and the Board of Regents.

#### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW**

In writing these Tenure and Promotion guidelines, the Department of Communication has followed the expectations established by the University and the College of Arts and Sciences.

- A. The development and future modification of the Departmental Tenure and Promotion Guidelines shall be done in consultation with the tenured and tenure-track faculty within the Department of Communication.
- B. These guidelines shall be reviewed every two years by the Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Chair to ensure that they are consistent with the University of Texas at Tyler's and the College of Arts and Sciences' expectations.

To be tenured, faculty must achieve a strong record in 1) teaching and 2) research/scholarship/creative activity. The faculty member is expected to demonstrate outstanding achievement in one of these areas. The faculty member is also expected to have a satisfactory record of service to the University, profession, and/or community. In addition to demonstrating quality in these traditional areas, the candidate for tenure must also demonstrate professional collegiality. No faculty member may be excluded from any of the required areas of evaluation. On a year-to-year basis a faculty member's commitment to each of the above areas may vary considerably, depending on his or her own interests and the University's needs.

## **TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES**

### **A. THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of all faculty to be aware of departmental, College, University and System rules and regulations regarding the pre-tenure review and the review for tenure and promotion. The pre-tenure review decision-making process begins with the candidate and ends with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The tenure and promotion decision-making process begins with the candidate and ends with the President. Candidates should consult the Dean regarding the timetable for the process. Faculty members at the tenure-track, assistant professor level must be considered for their pre-tenure review in their third year of the probationary (tenure-track) term. Faculty members at the tenure-track, assistant professor level will be considered for tenure by the end of their sixth year, unless a particular exception is made. The candidate should begin compiling his or her dossier for pre-tenure review in the summer for consideration in the Fall term, and the candidate for the tenure and promotion review should likewise begin compiling his or her dossier in the summer of his or her 5<sup>th</sup> year for consideration in the Fall term.

### **B. NOMINATION FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION**

The Dean will initiate the tenure and promotion process in the Spring of the candidate's 5<sup>th</sup> year. The nominee may withdraw his or her nomination at any stage of the review process without prejudice by submitting to the dean a written request for withdrawal. Withdrawal from consideration of tenure by a candidate who is in the sixth year of the probation period may be done only by formal resignation, which is effective no later than the end of the subsequent, or seventh, year.

## **TENURE AND PROMOTION ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

1. The Chair of the Department's Tenure and Promotion Committee will call a meeting of the Committee to discuss the qualifications of the candidate. The nominee will provide to the Committee, prior to the evaluation meeting, a portfolio that documents teaching, research, service contributions, and collegiality.
2. The Committee may ask the nominee to provide additional information and to respond to questions.
3. The Committee shall vote by secret ballot. According to Section 3.3.5.D.4 of the HOP, the decision to appoint a faculty member from one rank to the next is a recognition of the faculty member's accomplishments to date. However, a recommendation for promotion does not require a

recommendation for tenure. Recommendation for promotion and tenure must be voted separately.

4. The recommendation for the tenure of an assistant professor may be concurrent with the recommendation for promotion to associate professor, but the two are separate issues and must be voted separately
5. The numerical results of the ballot, along with any written comments, shall be forwarded by the Committee Chair to the Department Chair. The Department Chair shall notify the nominee of the Committee vote and his or her own recommendation.
6. The Department Chair will forward the results of the vote along with his or her recommendation to the College of Arts and Sciences Evaluation Committee. If the Department Chair is the nominee, the Committee Chair will forward the results of the vote directly to the college committee. In cases where the Chair's recommendation and that of the departmental committee differ, the departmental committee may submit a dissenting report to the College Committee.

### ***Criteria Regarding Granting of Tenure***

The decision regarding the granting of tenure rests on assessment of performance in the following areas: teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, service and collegiality.

#### **TEACHING**

To qualify for tenure, faculty members must have a consistent pattern of effectiveness in teaching. Whereas teaching and research both should be strong, one must be outstanding. Service must be at least satisfactory. Evidence of demonstrated ability and potential for distinction in teaching could include (but is not limited to) the following:

- a. Conscientious performance as a classroom teacher, documented by student evaluations, with an overall ranking of good, very good, or outstanding; peer evaluations of classroom lectures or course materials, with a ranking of good, very good, or outstanding; and other relevant information. A candidate for promotion is encouraged to submit a written statement characterizing the nature of his or her teaching activities. This short statement might include a narrative of teaching accomplishments including teaching innovations, course and/or curriculum development, substantive course/curriculum revision, creative instructional strategies and materials, applied textbooks and workbooks, syllabi, bibliographies, test questions, grading policies and procedures, and work with graduate and undergraduate students, advising, mentoring, direction of research projects, papers, theses, use of technology, and other contacts and

relationships outside the classroom that are clearly related to the candidate's teaching.

- b. Recent and current course content, as documented by course syllabi, handouts, ancillary instructional methods, and tests.
- c. Demonstrated diligence in working with students includes working with undergraduate and graduate students as needed outside the classroom, which might include direction or membership on a thesis committee, directing collaborative research with students, directing students in creative presentations, and overseeing student-directed scholarly projects or creative presentations.
- d. Innovation in teaching enhancement methods including the use of the Learning Management System, the World Wide Web, and related new media technologies.
- e. Effective participation in other teaching-related activities; e.g., course and curricular initiation and review, program development, teaching seminars, and workshops in support of professional development in the area of teaching.
- f. Receipt of a competitive teaching or advising award.
- g. Demonstration of collegial and possibly interdisciplinary relationships to strengthen teaching.
- h. Evidence of currency in the candidate's area of instruction as provided, for example, through invitations to discuss or present on teaching panels, forums, or online contributions that address major issues of the discipline; through preparation of updated course materials; and through attendance at events related to the discipline.

After reviewing all these factors, the Tenure and Promotion Committee will determine if the performance is unsatisfactory, satisfactory, strong, or outstanding.

#### **METHODS FOR ASSESSING TEACHING**

The above criteria for outstanding teaching will be assessed using:

- student course evaluations;
- student comments (solicited and unsolicited);
- classroom observations by the department chair;
- annual evaluations, and;
- the third-year performance review.

These forms of evaluation will be analyzed by the Departmental T&P Committee and the Department Chair to get an overall picture of a candidate's teaching. These items will be used to determine a candidate's strengths, weaknesses, and progress in teaching. Careful attention will be paid to the candidate's numerical and narrative evaluations across the curriculum, from introductory to advanced courses. After considering all the evidence provided by a candidate, the T&P Committee will determine whether the candidate's performance in teaching is "Outstanding", "Strong", "Satisfactory", or "Unsatisfactory".

### **RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

Productive research is an integral part of expectations for tenure-track faculty. All tenure and tenure-track Communication faculty hold the Ph.D., a research doctorate or the equivalent; therefore, they have all met the test of ability to conduct independent research. Promotion to Associate Professor requires that the candidate is pursuing a research program, producing scholarly work that is potentially important to the field, and is beginning to achieve recognition and respect by his or her peers through this work. Demonstration of said research would amount to at least four peer-reviewed publications or peer-reviewed creative/professional exhibits or productions in a five-year period, along with an equal number of presentations at academic conferences.

Major indicators of scholarly potential include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a. Continuous involvement in the research process, including publication of original research germane to communication in reputable refereed journals, or in books from reputable, recognized academic publishers, either as chapters in edited volumes, or as complete monographs. The extent of the individual's contribution to a developing body of knowledge, rather than the proportion of single authored versus collaborative pieces, is the major consideration. Solo-authored monographs and publications in reputable communication journals shall be weighted most heavily; co-authored publications on which the candidate is first author shall be weighted next most heavily; and publications on which the candidate is 2<sup>nd</sup> or later author shall be weighted least heavily. The same weights shall apply with invited book chapters and professional or creative activities. Whenever a publication or creative activity is co-authored, the candidate shall indicate what his or her specific contribution was to the co-authored manuscript or presentation. Publications listed on the websites of the field's major professional organizations (e.g., AEJMC, BEA, ICA, NCA) or sponsored by them shall be regarded as reputable journals in the field of communication. The majority of the candidate's publications or creative presentations should be solo-authored or first-authored and should be placed in reputable communication journals or venues.



- b. The publication of other kinds of scholarly works that promote and/or advance knowledge in a particular area or areas. For example, outstanding compilations of the scholarly research of others that point a field in new directions, or scholarly efforts and outcomes in producing research databases via the Internet will also be considered evidence of scholarly potential.
- c. Annual research and/or theoretical presentations at regional, national, or international professional meetings.
- d. Seeking and receiving external grant support, especially from nationally competitive sources, and effectively managing, completing, and reporting the results of supported projects. While not required for promotion, these activities are considered as evidence of potential for distinction in research.
- e. Multiple citations of the individual's published work appearing in other refereed publication in the fields of Journalism and Communication (to include Mass Communication and PR/Advertising).
- f. Compilation and presentation of creative works such as films, radio/television, news stories in national media, magazine articles, web media and other emerging platforms.

A record of achievement in teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity requires evidence. Evidence of such research is documented, above all, through placement of, at minimum, four scholarly articles in a five-year period in reputable, peer-reviewed publications, such as those that appear on the National Communication Association website or the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication website, or creative works such as films, radio/television, national news stories, magazine articles, web media and other emerging platforms with the same expectation; four peer-reviewed creative/professional works in a five-year period. Additional evidence of scholarship that can supplement publication or creative works may include professional presentations, exhibits, performances, books, and book chapters in edited volumes by reputable publishers such as university presses.

After considering all the evidence provided by a candidate, the T&P Committee will determine whether the candidate's performance in research is "Outstanding", "Strong", "Satisfactory", or "Unsatisfactory".

### **SERVICE**

We support and promote colleagues who show evidence of service to the department, college, university, and to the broader local and professional community. For junior colleagues, priority is for the establishment of excellent teaching and for an active and successful research program. Service outside the department, therefore, will likely be

less of a focus. Candidate's should follow their interests in serving, striving for "satisfactory" performance. Demonstrating service is possible through a combination of the following activities:

- a. Active engagement in the operations of the Department.
- b. Sustained, conscientious participation through service as chair and/or member of active committee(s) in the Department and, more generally, in the university.
- c. Representing the university with local, state, or national groups or agencies.
- d. Making a broader public aware of scholarly research through popular publications or presentations.
- e. Participating in recruitment and retention of students.
- g. Review of manuscripts for refereed professional journals or publishers, book reviews published in refereed professional journals, and occasional reviews of grant proposals for foundations or major federal funding agencies.
- f. Outside activities that have a clear relationship to the candidate's professional duties.
- g. Sponsorship of a student group on campus including, but not limited to, the student newspaper and debate team.
- h. Effective service as an advisor to undergraduates and/or graduate students, including service as member, chair, or co-chair of graduate student thesis committees.

After considering all the evidence provided by a candidate, the T&P Committee will determine whether the candidate's performance in service is "Outstanding", "Strong", "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory".

### **COLLEGIALITY**

Collegiality is conduct that demonstrates the ability and willingness to work cooperatively within the Department and College, a willingness to engage in shared governance, and a high standard of professional integrity in dealing with colleagues and students.

As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars, such as:

- Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues.
- Professors respect and defend the free inquiry of associates.
- In the exchange of criticism and ideas, professors show due respect for the opinions of others.
- Professors acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues.
- Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.

The criteria for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor are the same as those for the decision regarding the granting of tenure, although voting for tenure and promotion are separate functions

#### **GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR**

Candidates for promotion to full professor should demonstrate distinguished achievement in teaching, scholarship and service. Tenured faculty should continue to revise existing courses and develop new courses, as appropriate, to stay current with their discipline. It is expected that candidates for promotion will continue to be engaged in research productivity in line with the established Criteria for Tenure and Promotion listed above. While the expectation at the time of tenure is that a candidate should establish a trajectory that is likely to establish a record of repeated publication or presentation of creative/professional works, candidates for promotion to full professor must demonstrate the successful establishment of such a publication/presentation record. In contrast to minimal pre-tenure expectations for service, candidates for promotion to full professor must demonstrate active engagement in the life of the department, college, and university. This can be demonstrated, for example, by serving a full term on one of the major committees of the faculty, serving on multiple elected or appointed college or university committees, or by taking on some other appointed administrative role within the university. Serving on the faculty senate is recognized as valuable service and strongly encouraged. Serving as an officer in a regional or national organization, on a journal editorial review board, on grant proposal review panels or on external review/advisory committees of other institutions, departments or individuals is also recognized as valuable service contributions likely to be available to tenured members of the department.

After considering all the evidence provided by a candidate, the T&P Committee will determine whether the candidate's performance in teaching, research, and service is "Outstanding", "Strong", "Satisfactory", or "Unsatisfactory".

**EXTERNAL LETTERS OF REVIEW**

External letters of review from peers outside the University will be required for tenure-track faculty members applying for promotion and/or tenure. Guidelines for the external review process are provided in Section 3.3.5 D 6 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures. The Department of Communication will adhere to these guidelines.

Letters of review should be solicited from disinterested scholars of appropriate rank or stature not affiliated with U.T. Tyler who serve in the faculty member's field of training, specialty, or a closely related field. Individuals who may have a bias or perceived bias, such as dissertation committee members, co-authors, classmates, former students, research collaborators, departmental colleagues, and friends should not serve as external reviewers.

Reviewers will be nominated by the department chair and the candidate. The candidate should provide the department chair with the names of at least five (5) potential reviewers as well as a statement of their credentials and clarifying the nature of any prior contact the candidate has had with any suggested reviewer. The department chair will likewise compile a list of at least five (5) additional qualified reviewers. Chairs will also disclose their relationships with potential reviewers to the Dean of the College. The final selection will be made by the dean of the college. The dean will select three (3) potential reviewers from each list (candidate and chair), resulting in a total of six (6) potential reviewers. Understanding that not all reviewers will agree to participate or that reviews will not arrive in a timely manner, the final list will contain no fewer than five names. At least two (2) reviewers must be from the candidate's list. The final list of names of external reviewers is to be kept confidential from the candidate.

The department chair shall contact the external reviewers to request their willingness to participate in the external review process. If the reviewers agree to participate, the department chair shall prepare and mail letters requesting outside reviews. Letters shall follow the standard template approved by the University. In the case where an insufficient number of reviewers are unable to participate, alternate reviewers may be selected by the dean.

Reviewers will be provided with the candidate's c.v., appropriate reprints and other representations of the candidate's scholarship, and a summary of the candidate's teaching and service responsibilities since arriving at U.T. Tyler. The contents of all outside review letters will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and University regulations. Candidates will be informed when reviews are received and may have access to them. The department chair will place all reviews into the candidate's dossier before the departmental committee begins its review. Outside letters received after the departmental committee begins its deliberations will not be included in the review process without the approval of the dean.

The department chair shall prepare a summary of the outside review process that will be included in the candidate's dossier. This summary shall list the name, position, and organization of each person from whom evaluations were requested. For those whose letters are included in the dossier, the summary shall include relevant information about the reviewers' professional/academic qualifications for evaluating the candidate for tenure and/or promotion.

#### **PERIODIC PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF TENURED FACULTY**

Annual and comprehensive periodic evaluations will be conducted as described in the UT Tyler HOP, Section 3.3.6.

#### **PROCESS FOR APPOINTMENT WITH TENURE**

Appointment with tenure requires a thorough review of the candidate's CV, research output, and research and teaching record from previous institutions by the Departmental T&P Committee and the Department Chair. A recommendation will be made to the dean regarding the worthiness of the candidate for promotion to the rank of Associate or Full Professor with tenure. Because the external review process is usually not possible in these cases, a unanimous decision by all eligible voting members of the Departmental T&P Committee and the Chair is required. Approval must be granted by the dean, Provost, President and the Board of Regents.