

Procedures and Criteria for Promotion and/or Tenure:¹
Guidelines for Deans, Department Chairs² and Faculty Members of
School and College Promotion and Tenure Committees³

These guidelines are intended to be consistent with the criteria and procedures that are outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the AAUP and USNH Trustees and with other University System policies.

All deans, department chairpersons, and members of promotion and tenure committees are expected to be thoroughly familiar with these policies and procedures and to undertake promotion and tenure evaluations with the utmost care and objectivity. Promotion and tenure decisions demand our best professional judgment based on the most complete factual data we can accumulate. It is vital that the evaluation of promotion and tenure cases follows the spirit and intent of these guidelines.

To maintain the integrity of the promotion and tenure process, confidentiality and discretion must be maintained at all times. Professional ethics and legal responsibilities require that no one publicly quote from documents prepared by any group or individual in connection with the process.

One great strength of the process of evaluation that has evolved at UNH is that a case originates in the written self-evaluation of the candidate and that the committees and administrators who review the case respond in turn. Candidates are invited to articulate the standards and criteria that apply, in their own judgment; this keeps the subject of promotion and tenure standards and criteria current in each department. A discursive self-evaluation on the part of the candidate also keeps evaluative categories—teaching, research, and service—from becoming rigid or exclusive. This is not to say that we lack standards that apply to all the cases coming forward or that criteria are redefined from one case to another. Rather, recognizing important differences among the cases, standards and criteria must be interpreted to be applied. Candidates should be encouraged to make the most of this occasion to take stock: the self-evaluation that is the basis for the case is a chance not only to justify past efforts but to set a professional agenda for the future.

¹ These guidelines pertain to tenure-track faculty. They also apply to the promotion of research faculty, who, by definition, are not eligible for tenure. For research faculty, the recommendation of the senior vice provost for research, economic engagement and outreach is also required. Special instructions for preparing the promotion statement for research faculty are available from the provost's office.

² Certain units of the University (Dimond Library, for example) are not organized into academic departments. Functions described herein as being the responsibility of chairs and/or departmental committees are understood to be the responsibility of the principal administrative officer and/or the school promotion and tenure committee as set forth in the by-laws of any such unit.

³ Special policies and procedures have been developed for individuals who hold faculty status within the University Libraries and the University of New Hampshire at Manchester. Pertinent guidelines are available from their appropriate dean or director.

In response, those who review the case should be especially attentive to potential long-term contributions of the candidate. Decisions about tenure, in particular, are long-term institutional commitments. We shape the future of the University by the decisions we make in these cases. Any questions that arise concerning personnel policies and procedures should be brought to the attention of the college dean and the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

These guidelines consist of four parts:

- I. Promotion and Tenure Criteria
- II. Annual Evaluation
- III. Promotion and/or Tenure Procedures
- IV. Provisions for Review

I. PROMOTION AND TENURE CRITERIA

A promotion or the award of tenure is an affirmative action by the Board of Trustees with respect to an individual faculty member. The Board acts on recommendations from the president. A promotion or tenure recommendation by the president is based on a written presentation of the individual case accompanied by written opinions on the case by appropriate faculty committees, the department chairperson, the college/school dean, the dean of the Graduate School (when appropriate), and the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The procedure followed in preparing a promotion or tenure recommendation is described in Section III below.

The ground rules are spelled out clearly in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. First, "recommendations for promotion and tenure are made without regard to the number of tenured faculty or number of faculty by rank in the department, college, or University" (13.2).

In accordance with Article 13.10.1 in the Agreement, promotion and tenure materials are maintained in respective deans' offices. The evaluative portions of each case are kept confidential. In the words of the Agreement, "candidates, in the presence of the department chairperson or dean, may have access to the non-evaluative promotion and tenure materials. In order to encourage participation and assure candor, evaluations related to the promotion and tenure process are considered confidential and are not, therefore, available to the candidate" (13.10.1). Further, "with respect to letters of evaluation and other personal evaluations of a candidate, each evaluation must be accompanied by a statement indicating whether an evaluation was invited or not invited, and if invited, what process was used to determine from whom an evaluation was requested, in what manner an evaluation was requested, and other facts pertinent to the invitations" (13.10.2). "Once during the promotion and tenure process, the candidate may request a summary of the confidential materials. The summary will be prepared by a member of the faculty, other than the candidate, selected by the following procedure. The candidate will propose a list of at least three members of the faculty and the department chair will choose one of them. This summary must include the names of individuals whose evaluations are in the file, but they should not connect any particular idea or quote with any particular individual. Candidates (and only candidates) shall be entitled to submit a rebuttal to the summary statement of confidential material. If a rebuttal is submitted, the summary upon which it is based becomes a part of the promotion and tenure file. If the candidate does not submit a rebuttal, the summary does not become a part of the promotion and tenure file" (13.10.3). Finally, "any material in the file which the candidate can demonstrate to the University to be inaccurate or untrue shall be immediately removed" (13.10.4). The summary of confidential materials should not attribute summary statements by name.

"The areas of activity reviewed for promotion/tenure are teaching, scholarship (including comparable creative and/or professional activity) and service, together with University programmatic considerations" (13.3).

Teaching: An essential function of the University is the dissemination of knowledge, and an affirmative evaluation of faculty members' teaching represents the conclusion that they are an asset to the University in this regard. Merely "satisfactory" teaching has typically been judged inadequate performance.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement stipulates that "members of the bargaining unit will be expected to participate in required student evaluations of teaching" (13.13.1). Other potential sources of pertinent information about the quality of teaching include peer reviews by department chairs and others, reports of class visitations, evaluations of teaching syllabi and other teaching materials, and publications and presentations on teaching. Advising is a recognized element of teaching and should be judged for its effectiveness, in accordance with departmental policy on the assigning of advising duties. Where appropriate, the case should also include an assessment of teaching success in the supervision of graduate theses and dissertations.

Scholarship: Manifestations of scholarship vary widely in form from one discipline to another, from publications that report original discoveries in a field of knowledge, to artistic performances or products, to new applications of knowledge, as well as engaged scholarship. Engaged service scholarship is defined as the mutually beneficial collaboration between UNH and external partners (local, state, regional, national, global) for the purpose of creating and applying knowledge to address societal problems, and/or enriching student learning. Indeed, there are many examples of significant variations among specialized areas within an academic department. An affirmative evaluation of a faculty member's scholarship represents the conclusion that they are recognized as contributing positively and significantly to the University's reputation among peer institutions. Pertinent evidence includes evaluations by individual peers outside the University.

Service: Service activities include public service through the extension of teaching and research, service within the University, community service, outreach to primary and secondary schools, and service to professional organizations. Service shall also extend to participation in activities that promote diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) initiatives. The extent to which a faculty member is expected to be oriented to service activities varies from discipline to discipline; also, it is expected that the scope and significance of service activities will increase with experience and academic rank. In all cases, the extent, appropriateness and quality of service must be carefully considered. Thus, an affirmative evaluation of service activities represents the conclusion that the faculty member is making a positive contribution appropriate to their discipline.

A formula for weighing teaching, research, and service contributions relative to each other would be alien to the spirit of promotion and tenure recommendations. Faculty members are expected to pursue their own professional agendas and to excel in different ways, even as they enable the University to meet its broad institutional objectives. Therefore, assignments of faculty time vary, even within departments. Judgments of promotion and tenure cases should be based on the quality of the candidate's work, and by the time a case comes forward, expectations should be clear among the candidate, the department chair, and the dean as to how the elements of the case should be weighed.

Programmatic needs: An additional consideration in tenure cases is the programmatic needs of the department concerned. Initial appointments are made with a view to matching the interests and skills of faculty with the expectations of the program with which they will be associated. However, development plans sometimes change, and so do the interests of faculty members. Before the University makes the long-term commitment involved in the award of tenure, there is a renewed assessment of the match between perceived programmatic needs and probable contributions.

A. Promotion

The general qualifications expected for promotion to a given academic rank are the same as those expected for initial appointment to that rank.

Promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor - Assistant Professors shall have completed formal advanced study appropriate for their field and have had successful teaching or other relevant experience.

New tenure-track faculty members possessing the appropriate terminal degree will normally be hired as assistant professors. New tenure-track faculty members who have not completed the appropriate terminal degree will be hired as instructors. "The formal notice of appointment from the dean to a new instructor shall specify a time, not to exceed one (1) year from the date of the initial appointment, by which the terminal degree must be completed. If the degree is completed during that time, the dean shall have the authority to recommend to the president a change in title from instructor to assistant professor. If the degree is not completed during the specified time, the dean shall have the authority, subject to agreement by the appropriate area faculty and program director, to provide an additional one-year appointment as instructor. If the terminal degree is granted after the end of the grace period, promotion to assistant professor can only be accomplished through the regular promotion procedure" (13.4.1).

Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor - An associate professor shall have completed formal advanced study, have had several years of successful teaching experience or other relevant experience, and have shown evidence of professional development and scholarly interest as reflected in research or other individual creative effort.

The rank of associate professor is viewed as a senior rank, which carries tenure when it is achieved if the candidate has been a full-time member of the University faculty no less than three years. "Promotion to associate professor shall be accompanied by the granting of tenure, except in cases where a person has had relevant prior experience and is hired as an assistant professor. In such cases, promotion without tenure to associate professor during the first two years of University employment is permissible" (13.5.1). Such a promotion would not imply a commitment as to the future award of tenure. Because of the senior nature of this rank and the privilege of tenure normally attached to it, positive recommendations should be made only for those individuals who have demonstrated distinctive value to the University and who possess outstanding capability for further development and contributions.

Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor - A professor shall have a background of successful teaching and research, marked by the perspective of maturity and experience, or some outstanding creative attribute recognizable in the academic world as a special asset to a university faculty.

Since the rank of professor is the highest academic rank, recommendations for promotion to this rank must be in keeping with that distinction. Particular attention is to be paid to the candidate's professional stature, both within the University of New Hampshire and in the academic community at large. It is expected that specific evidence may vary from case to case, but in all instances documentation must be thorough and carefully presented. "No time limits are associated with recommendations for promotion to the rank of professor" (13.6.1).

B. Tenure

Tenure decisions are enormously important, both for the faculty member and for the University. Tenure is granted only by an affirmative decision on the part of the Board of Trustees and only in recognition of demonstrated merit. Tenure shall not be recommended routinely; rather, tenure is granted to those who, by reason of their excellent performance and promise of long-range contribution to the educational purposes of the institution, are deemed worthy of this important commitment.

"An instructor is not eligible for tenure" (13.7.2). "Tenure is not normally granted to faculty members who hold the rank of assistant professor. If a department chooses to recommend tenure for an assistant professor, that recommendation must clearly demonstrate why this proposed action is in the best interest of both the candidate and the University" (13.8.6).

The University's policies concerning tenure use the phrase "is eligible for tenure." It is our operating practice to interpret "eligible" as "requiring" a tenure decision by the time stated. "The University shall not defer a tenure decision beyond the time stated, even though the candidate and his/her colleagues may agree that a delay would be desirable, except as provided in Article 13.8.3" (13.8.2).

"Tenure is granted only to faculty members on 100% academic or fiscal year appointments" (13.7.1). "Any year of less than full-time service shall not count toward determining the timing of mandatory tenure decisions unless an agreement is reached between the faculty member and the dean in writing prior to the leave that the time on such leave will be counted. Time spent by full-time faculty on approved professional leave is considered full-time service and is counted toward the accumulation of time for a tenure decision unless the faculty member and the dean agree in writing prior to the leave that the time on leave will not be counted. Copies of all such agreements (with supporting justification) should be sent to the provost and vice president for academic affairs; also, they must be included in supporting materials when recommendations for tenure are made" (13.8.4).

All members of the faculty without tenure shall be appointed for one academic or fiscal year term, which may be renewed following an annual review of individual performance. "At the time of initial appointment, a tenure-track faculty member shall be notified in writing that a decision on tenure in [their] case will be reached no later than the end of a certain number of years of full-time service. A tenure decision may be reached before the time so stated, but it shall not be deferred beyond that time. An affirmative tenure decision shall lead to the award of tenure, effective the first day of the following appointment year. A negative tenure decision in the mandatory year shall be followed by a notice of non-reappointment effective at the end of the following appointment year" (13.8.1). Termination by non-reappointment, for example by reason of a negative tenure decision, is not a dismissal. A dismissal refers to the termination of a

faculty member during the term of an appointment or the denial of reappointment of a faculty member (see 14.2.1).

“For a person with no prior full-time experience at an institution of higher education, a mandatory tenure decision must be made at the end of six (6) years of full-time service at the University, including years of service as an instructor. For the purposes of this section, full-time service shall not include any time when a faculty member is on interim disability or family/parental leave as defined in Article 17 of this Agreement, or any period of time during which the faculty member is on leave without pay for non-professional reasons. For extraordinary professional circumstances beyond the faculty member’s control, the provost and the faculty member may agree to exclude one (1) year from the total full-time years that count toward tenure. Exclusions of any years in excess of one (1) from the years counted toward tenure, or of one (1) year if it coincides with the mandatory decision year, must be approved by both the University and the AAUP. The dean and department chair shall be informed by the provost of any exclusions” (13.8.3).

"An instructor is not eligible for tenure. After no more than a total of four (4) years of full-time service in this rank [they] shall be promoted or notified that [their] appointment will not be renewed at the end of the fifth year” (13.8.5).

"For persons with prior full-time service at other institutions of higher education, the stated latest time for a tenure decision is negotiable at the time of initial appointment with the following conditions: (1) total full-time service at institutions of higher education before a tenure decision is required shall be at least six (6) years; (2) for a person appointed as an assistant or associate professor, a tenure decision shall be required no earlier than the end of the third appointment year; (3) for a person appointed as a professor, a tenure decision shall be required no earlier than the end of the second appointment year; (4) the arrangement is approved by the faculty of the department or other unit to which the appointment is made” (13.8.7).

II. Annual Evaluation

"Beginning with the first year of appointment, each non-tenured faculty member will receive from the dean, in concert with the appropriate chairperson, an annual written assessment of performance. The assessment must be completed by June 30 following the end of each academic year, and the assessment will be transmitted to the bargaining unit member” (11.1).

III. Promotion and/or Tenure Procedures

Promotion and/or tenure procedures are outlined in Article 13 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Articles 13.10 through 13.20.9. This section of the guidelines will address only matters not included in the Agreement and matters that may need clarification.

The chairperson and the department promotion and tenure committee are responsible for seeing that the assembly of documentation and the evaluation are accomplished in a thorough and professional manner. At issue are the personal and professional qualifications of the candidate, as well as programmatic considerations. Only those materials should be included that specifically bear

on the candidate's achievements, qualifications, prospects for the future, and relevance to the program.

If a chairperson, department committee, college committee, graduate dean, college dean, or the provost and vice president for academic affairs receives new information that directly bears on the promotion and/or tenure evaluation, such information must be documented and submitted to all preceding levels in the process and the candidate must be informed. A candidate's access to this new information will be on the same basis as that provided for other information in the file. Unless a review is requested (13.20), no new information will be accepted after the college dean transmits the promotion and tenure statement to the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Documentation will necessarily take many forms. Examples include materials relevant to teaching, scholarship and outreach contributions, course descriptions and syllabi, letters of recommendation or evaluation, student evaluation materials, faculty evaluation materials, etc. If review committees are expected to make a qualitative judgment about an activity, appropriate documentation must be provided (e.g., reprints, videotapes, audiotapes, slides, etc.). With respect to such documentation, the Agreement prescribes a procedure for distinguishing between "invited" and "not invited" evaluations (see 13.10.2). In all tenure and promotion cases, there is a standing request for letters of evaluation from UNH faculty members, whose letters are considered "invited" and confidential.

If an uninvited letter is received, the author must be asked whether the letter may be seen by the candidate. If so, the candidate is entitled to submit a written comment on the statements in the letter, and both the letter and the comment are added to the promotion and tenure documentation. If the author of the uninvited letter denies permission for the candidate to see the letter, the letter is not added to the documentation and may not be considered in the promotion and tenure process.

Practices with respect to faculty evaluation of colleagues in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service vary widely. Some departments provide for committee interviews with students and colleagues; others rely on letters of recommendation from faculty colleagues or other methods of peer evaluation; others use in-class visitation with the agreement of the faculty member; some departments use self-evaluations, faculty seminars, etc. ***The authenticity of individual faculty or student statements that are made a part of the record must be confirmed with a signature or sender's email address. Such statements must visibly identify the author's full name; no anonymous statements may be included or attributed in the case materials.***

A copy of the department's guidelines for promotion and tenure should be included in each case that comes forward, as such guidelines can resolve questions about how the department values interdisciplinary work, for example, and judges co-authored vs. single authored writings. Sometimes department guidelines indicate standards for years in rank or other specific criteria that department members use to define the quality of the case. Explicitly specifying such standards is especially important if the case is an unusual one from the perspective of the school or college or the University. ***Note: A candidate who comes up early should be held to the same standards as the other candidates.***

The dean of the Graduate School shall review a candidate's promotion or tenure case when the candidate is a member of the graduate faculty.

IV. Provisions for Review

Provisions for review of tenure and promotion cases are described in detail in Article 13.20 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Agreement emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the dean to "provide the reasons for a negative recommendation at any step in the procedure" (13.20.1) and to "keep the candidate, graduate dean, college promotion and tenure committee, review committee and department chair informed of the outcome at each level of the evaluation" (13.20.9).

"If a negative recommendation was made by the College Promotion and Tenure Committee, by the graduate dean, or by the college dean, the request for review should be directed to the college dean (13.20.2). "The dean shall designate an appropriate college review panel, following procedures established by the college and consisting of members who did not participate in the original review" (13.20.3).

"If [a review is] justified, the review panel shall consider all promotion and tenure materials in the case, including those received subsequent to the initial evaluations of the case as well as the summary of confidential information provided to the candidate and the candidate's rebuttal statement if both are in the P&T file. The review panel shall have access to all previous recommendations made by the parties who considered the case" (13.20.3).

"Upon completing its review, the review panel shall promptly submit its recommendation to the college dean." (13.20.4).

The recommendations of the review panel, the graduate dean (when the candidate is a member of the graduate faculty), and the college dean, as well as any new materials in the case, shall be submitted by the college dean to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. No new information will be accepted after the college dean transmits the promotion and tenure statement to the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

If in the course of reviewing a case, the chair, a dean, or the provost becomes concerned about the fairness or integrity of the procedures used, the nature of the concern and relevant information should be discussed with the review panel.

Faculty who have a concern about the treatment of their promotion or tenure case after the process of review should express that concern to appropriate members of the University administration. The administration shall consider that concern and respond to the faculty member within a reasonable time period. There is a formal grievance procedure available to faculty who believe their concerns about procedures have not been addressed adequately or who believe they have been victims of discrimination. The faculty grievance procedure is found in Article 9 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The review described above is not a grievance. The review pertains to judgments concerning facts and opinions; a grievance pertains to alleged violations of procedures or rights.