

Promotion, Tenure, and Advancement: Resources and Best Practices

Each promotion, tenure, and advancement cycle:

- Discuss promotion and advancement with faculty as a career goal.
- Communicate with the candidate throughout the process.
- Describe the process, materials required, expectations, and deadlines to faculty, review committees, and voting faculty.
- The college process for forwarding [late-developed information via a memo](#) to the next level of promotion and tenure review must be clarified and communicated to faculty.
- Strengthen confidentiality throughout the process.
- Clarify criteria for faculty, especially for promotion and advancement to professor.
- Include peer reviews of observation/teaching with cases for teaching faculty. Refer to [Faculty Handbook \(sections 5.2.2.3.1 Scholarly Teaching and 5.3.2.2.1 Teaching\)](#) and [Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching's Peer Review of Teaching website](#).

Chair roles and responsibilities:

- Initiate process at the department-level.
- Be proactive. Plan. Ask questions before taking action, if unsure.
- Clarify expectations for promotion and advancement to the candidate, voting faculty, and committees prior to the review of cases ([Faculty Handbook Chapter 5](#)).
- Collaborate with effective, supportive faculty mentors to review the candidate's promotion and advancement materials before the submission date to address clarity and accuracy.
- Oversee the process for soliciting external reviewer letters.
- Explicitly address the timing of each case and note the reason why the case is being considered in the chair's letter. (Refer to [Timing of Promotion and Tenure Review](#).)
- Review the list of cases before the process begins. Consider the following: Are there any conflicts of interest? Do you have enough faculty to vote at rank? Are there any other relevant considerations to plan for?
- Refer to the Promotion and Tenure Review website (e.g., [Process Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure Review](#), [Best Practices for Successful Preparation and Review of Promotion and Tenure](#), [Guidance for Determining Conflict of Interest in Faculty Review](#)

[Processes](#)), the [Term Faculty Advancement](#) website, and the [Faculty Handbook Chapter 5. Evaluation and Review](#).

Promotion, tenure, and advancement committee roles and responsibilities:

- All college-level Promotion and Tenure Committees are required to [complete annual training](#) before cases are reviewed. Departments are encouraged to follow this process.
- Deans or department chairs meet with committees to give the charge; review expectations, criteria, conflicts of interest, deadlines, and timelines; and de-brief about the process and identify opportunities for consistency, fairness, and excellence.

Guidance for letter writers including chairs, committees, and deans:

- Write an effective letter that documents the strengths and weaknesses of the case.
- Evaluate the case and focus on quality, reputation, impact, trajectory, and unique contributions to the discipline, where relevant.
- Avoid repeating facts listed in the cv.
- Guard against writing a “cheerleading letter.”
- Don’t say “yes” when you want to say “no.”
- Address significant, persistent issues that violate the expectations outlined in [the Faculty Handbook](#), the [Policy Library](#), or other institutional policies.
- Explain negative votes and provide context, where possible.
- Summarize key points from external reviewers to offer supporting details about the case; do not include quotes or block quotes or refer to names or institutions.
- Refer to [Best Practices for Successful Preparation and Review of Promotion and Tenure](#), a [Writing Effective Promotion and Tenure Letters recording](#), and the [Faculty Handbook Chapter 5. Evaluation and Review](#).

Sample errors that can compromise the process and lead to appeals:

- Persons do not follow governance documents and stated procedures and processes.
- Conflicts of interest are not addressed at department and college levels.
- There is a breach of confidentiality in the process.
- External letter writers are neither objective nor “at arm’s length.”
- External letters are forwarded and considered by some levels and not others; further, this divergence in procedure is not documented.
- Re-voting occurs within a department, committee, or a college.
- Late developed information is not forwarded in a timely manner.

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