

University of Florida  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
2020-21

### Introduction

The tenure and promotion process at the University of Florida is governed by guidelines developed at the university, college, and unit levels. Lower-level guidelines must conform to those at higher levels. Accordingly, nothing in this document supersedes or replaces the procedures described in the university tenure and promotion guidelines or in the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Candidates should familiarize themselves with (a) the clarifications of criteria in their own unit, (b) college criteria (**Appendix 2**), (c) college guidelines (the current document), (d) university criteria (**Appendix 3**) and (e) university guidelines (attached and also available through the following link: <http://aa.ufl.edu/media/aaufledu/tenure-and-promotion/TP-Guidelines-2020-21final.pdf>).

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion are ultimately responsible for preparing their own packet, reviewing it for content and format, and approving its submission. However, prior to final submission, packets should also be reviewed by unit personnel and by CLAS Human Resources Director Carolyn Lebron (clebron@ufl.edu). More general questions about the tenure and promotion process should be directed to Associate Dean David Pharies (pharies@ufl.edu).

The deadline for final packet submission to the College level is **Monday, October 5, 2020 at 5 PM**. Unit votes should be conducted by mid-September in order to allow time for the chair's or director's letter of transmittal to be written and final editing of the packet to be completed prior to the deadline. **Except for the chair's letter, the tenure and promotion packet must be complete at the time of the unit review and vote.**

### Guidelines and Clarifications

1) For procedures governing solicitation and inclusion of external and internal review letters, see Appendix 1.

2) Chair's letter

The chair's letter should not be longer than three single-spaced pages. This letter should carefully review the candidate's activities and performance record. Without being effusive or verbose, it should assess frankly the candidate's work in all three areas, pointing out strengths and weaknesses and indicating how it contributes to and enhances the mission of the unit and the university. The chair's letter should explain any unusual assignments (e.g., "other") as well as any significant change in assignment over the course of employment. The letter should also explain the contributions to the candidate's publications and research by graduate assistants, post-docs, residents, fellows, and/or interns. The letter should address unit votes in which more than 20% of the votes are recorded as negative, abstaining, or absent. This component usually comprises a summary of comments made by faculty at the unit review meeting.

If the candidate is one of several joint authors on publications, the name of the senior author(s) should be underlined, and the chair should comment on the level of the candidate's contribution(s) to the extent possible. In the case of books (monographs), chairs should comment on their significance and the quality of the presses. Include summaries of reviews if possible. If the candidate has edited books or articles that are listed as publications, the chair's letter should comment on their significance, including the impact factor or quality of journals. Any special situations regarding reporting of publication authorship should be explained briefly in the chair's letter.

It is also important to have information in the chair's letter concerning the candidate's status in jointly held contracts and grants. Was the candidate a principal investigator? If not, where did she or he rank among the co-investigators and what was the level of contribution to the project?

Candidates have the right to provide a written response to the chair's letter within ten calendar days of the date when the letter is uploaded into the OPT system.

3) Teaching evaluations

This material should accurately represent the work of the candidate over a period of several years and should include all UF evaluations in accordance with the university tenure and promotion guidelines.

Units are expected to submit with their promotion/tenure materials at least one and generally more than one peer teaching evaluation for each candidate, as assigned and carried out by an appropriate committee or review team. Part of this evaluation must include classroom visitation(s). The teaching appraisal may also include a review of syllabuses, examinations, and other instructional materials.

4) Publications

Publications that are in press must have their status verified by the inclusion of letters from editors indicating acceptance. Materials that are "in preparation," "under review," "under contract," etc., are not yet considered to be publications.

5) Updates to the packet after submission

Updates for publications, grants, etc., can be provided at any time after submission of the packet to the college. Updated items should be uploaded into the OPT system for inclusion in section 34. Examples might include changing the status of a submitted publication to accepted, or announcing the awarding of a grant based on a submitted proposal. The updated listing should be given in the format required for the appropriate section in the packet.

6) Withdrawal from the Process

Candidates who are not in the final year of their tenure probationary period have the right to withdraw without prejudice from the tenure and promotion process at any time prior to the provost's decision. Candidates who are in the final year of their tenure probationary period who elect to withdraw from the process must provide a letter of resignation along with the notification of withdrawal. In the event that a candidate for tenure and/or promotion elects to withdraw from the process before the nomination packet is complete, no further materials should be added to the file. Reviewers who have not yet responded should be notified immediately that their letters will not be required and that any letter *en route* will be returned.

7) Review Process

Packets submitted to the college by a unit are reviewed by the CLAS Tenure and Promotion Committee, as constituted through the CLAS constitution. This committee assesses all cases and makes a recommendation to the dean. During the assessment period in the fall, the committee may ask for clarification of the packet by the chair of the unit. All communication is done through the office of the associate dean. Candidates and chairs may not consult with members of the committee or discuss applications for tenure and promotion with them.

The members of the College Tenure and Promotion Committee record their individual assessments as part of their fact-finding and consultative role. An individual assessment shall consist of a committee member's opinion indicating whether or not the candidate meets the standards for tenure and/or promotion within the college. Individual committee members' assessments shall not be identified.

The dean reviews the application packets and assessments of the Tenure and Promotion Committee and writes a letter of evaluation for inclusion in the packet. The dean's letter is provided to the candidate and the candidate has the option of providing a response within ten calendar days of the date when the letter is uploaded.

The provost then approves or disapproves promotion cases and makes a recommendation for tenure. The Board of Trustees must give final approval for consideration of tenure.

- 8) Promotions for those holding faculty positions as **Assistant In** or **Associate In** are decided by the college dean and do not need to be forwarded to the provost.
- 9) Identification of proper criteria to be applied
  - If a candidate has at least three (3) years of tenure-earning credit as of the date on which new tenure and promotion criteria are adopted, including the discipline-specific unit clarifications of those criteria, the candidate must be evaluated under the criteria as they existed prior to modification, unless the candidate notifies the university otherwise prior to commencement of the tenure or promotion process. The date of adoption of the modification is the date on which the university President or designee (the Dean) approves the changes.
  - For example, if a candidate started a nine-month appointment in August 2009 and new unit clarifications were approved in March 2012, only two full years of tenure credit would have been earned as of the date of adoption; therefore, the default clarifications would be those in effect at the time of application for tenure. However, a candidate who started in that same unit in August 2008 would be evaluated under the clarifications in effect at the time of hire, unless the candidate asks in writing to be evaluated by the criteria adopted in March 2012.

## Appendix 1: Procedures governing solicitation and inclusion of internal and external review letters

The following information is provided to assist chairs and other individuals who are soliciting letters for evaluation of tenure and/or promotion cases. Sample language for template letters requesting reviews are provided, along with some key reminders. Additionally, some important guidelines excerpted from various sources are provided after the sample letters. This guidance does not replace or supersede the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) or UF guidelines and regulations. Any chair or director overseeing tenure and/or promotion cases should read the UF guidelines and Article 19 of the current CBA to ensure that all applicable procedures are followed correctly.

Note that some units prefer to contact potential reviewers in an informal way before issuing a formal letter of invitation. This usually takes the form of an email inquiry with an attached curriculum vitae provided by the candidate.

Below we provide sample letters of solicitation for both tenure-track and non-tenure-track applications. Your proposed letters must be approved by CLAS Associate Dean David Pharies before they are sent to prospective reviewers.

**The University criteria, CLAS criteria, and unit discipline-specific clarifications for tenure and promotion must be attached to the formal letters.** It is important that key information required by the guidelines appear in the formal letters of solicitation. These key points are included in the letters below. You are of course free to make minor stylistic changes in the letters as you see fit.

### **Sample letter requesting reviews for tenure-track faculty:**

Professor Potential Evaluator  
Big Time University  
College Town, USA

Dear Professor Evaluator:

I write to ask if you would be willing to assist the University of Florida in assessing Professor A. Candidate's application for tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor.<sup>1</sup> To help you in your decision, Prof. Candidate's current CV is attached. If you are willing, we would ask that you assess the candidate's research performance in order to determine the degree to which it satisfies the attached university criteria for tenure and promotion<sup>2</sup> as clarified by the college and the academic unit. We would also like to know whether the candidate's research has had a substantial impact on the field both nationally and internationally, and whether it is comparable to that of successful candidates at the same stage of their careers at comparable public research universities.<sup>3</sup>

The candidate has waived / not waived the right to view the letters of evaluation. *If waived:* Please note

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<sup>1</sup> or promotion to the rank of \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>2</sup> These items **must** be attached to this formal letter, and you must be careful to send the correct guidelines for each candidate. If department clarifications have changed since the candidate's hire date – see point 9 above.

<sup>3</sup> You may want to insert a paragraph describing the candidate's field and specific criteria unique to that field. However, you must not be seen as leading to a particular conclusion or suggest either the departmental view or your own personal view of the case.

that, while the candidate has waived access to your letter for purposes of the normal review process, there are potential circumstances in which the candidate could gain access to your letter. *If not waived:* The candidate will therefore have access to your letter.

Should you agree to review this case, we will provide, in addition to the CV and the criteria and clarifications, the following materials:<sup>4</sup>

We are required to provide biographical information on reviewers, so I would ask you to submit a CV, résumé, or bio-sketch along with your review. It would also be helpful for us if you would characterize, in your letter, the nature of your relationship with the candidate, including previous professional interactions and collaborations.

I would very much appreciate your willingness to help the University of Florida and our discipline by taking the time to write this evaluation. Please note that, in order for your letter to be available for the review process, we must receive it no later than *Month XX, 20XX*. Please submit the letter on your university letterhead.

Sincerely,

Chair (or Chair's designee)

**Sample letter requesting reviews for non-tenure-track faculty:**

Dr. Potential Evaluator

Address

Dear Dr. Evaluator:

I write to ask if you would be willing to assist the University of Florida in assessing Dr. A. Candidate's application for promotion to the rank of senior (master) lecturer. To help you in your decision, Dr. Candidate's current CV is attached. If you are willing, we would ask that you assess the candidate's performance of his/her duties in order to determine the degree to which it satisfies the attached university criteria for promotion as clarified by the college and the academic unit.

To assist in your review, I have attached the university criteria, college criteria, and the unit's discipline-specific clarifications of the criteria.<sup>5</sup> Note that, at this time, the college criteria do not make specific reference to non-tenure-track promotions. However, the guidelines note that such promotions are to be treated as analogous to promotions to associate professor and to professor.

The candidate has waived / not waived the right to view the letters of evaluation. *If waived:* Please note that, while the candidate has waived access to your letter for purposes of the normal review process, there are potential circumstances in which the candidate could gain access to your letter. *If not waived:* The candidate will therefore have access to your letter.

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<sup>4</sup> List items that are usual in your discipline, such as publications, reprints of articles, books, etc. Do not provide these materials, other than the CV, until the reviewer has agreed to write a letter. It is customary to provide the materials in electronic form, when possible. Do not include annual letters of evaluation among the materials sent to reviewers.

<sup>5</sup> These items **must** be attached to this formal letter, and you must be careful to send the correct guidelines for each candidate. If department clarifications have changed since the candidate's hire date – see point 9 above.

Should you agree to review this case, we will provide, in addition to the CV and the criteria and clarifications, the following materials:<sup>6</sup>

We are required to provide biographical information on reviewers, so I would ask you to submit a CV, résumé, or bio-sketch along with your review. It would also be helpful for us if you would characterize, in your letter, the nature of your relationship with the candidate, including previous professional interactions and collaborations.

I would very much appreciate your willingness to help the University of Florida and our discipline by taking the time to write this evaluation. Please note that, in order for your letter to be available for the review process, we must receive it no later than *Month XX, 20XX*. Please submit the letter on your university letterhead.

Sincerely,

Chair (or Chair's designee)

**Key points regarding the solicitation of evaluation letters:**

- a. Although candidates have until July 1 to declare their intention to seek tenure and/or promotion, it is preferable that they do so in April/May, so that letters of evaluation can be solicited from qualified reviewers as early as possible. This will allow nomination packets to move through unit review in a timely fashion.
- b. All candidates must complete the waiver election in the online promotion and tenure system (OPT) **prior to solicitation** of review letters.
- c. Tenure-track candidates for tenure and/or promotion should be asked to provide a list of seven potential reviewers; at least one-half of the external letters must come from this list.
- d. In assembling a list of potential reviewers, the chair should seek advice from faculty in the home department as well as in centers, if the candidate's FTE appointment is split between the two units.
- e. Chairs should pay close attention to university guidelines (section IV.6) regarding conflicts of interest. Note especially that review letters should not be solicited from individuals currently employed by the University of Florida or persons previously employed in the past 10 years. Additionally, the university cautions against selecting reviewers who have co-authored a publication or shared a grant with the candidate **during the last five years**. If a reviewer is chosen who has a potential or apparent conflict of interest, the circumstances should be explained by the chair.
- f. Letters of evaluation should normally be written by faculty whose rank is equal to or higher than that being sought by the candidate. The university particularly values letters from eminent faculty at peer institutions. Emeritus faculty at qualifying institutions may be chosen as tenure and promotion reviewers, though chairs should be mindful of the number of years emeritus faculty have been out of the academy and their level of their continued activity in the discipline.
- g. The final number of review letters will normally be five or six, including, ideally, three from the

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<sup>6</sup> List items that are usual in your discipline. Do not provide these materials, other than the CV, until the reviewer has agreed to write a letter. Do not include annual letters of evaluation among the materials sent to reviewers.

candidate's list and three from the unit list. However, all letters received must be included in the packet. If more than six letters are received, the chair's letter should explain the circumstances that led to this circumstance.

- h. Note that candidates do not control the priority for requests made from their lists. The final selection of reviewers is made by the chair.
- i. Chairs may solicit **letters from within the university** for candidates in non-tenure-accruing positions whose assignments have been solely in teaching and service, or whose promotion decision will be based almost solely on their performance in teaching and service. However, university guidelines caution that these letters should not come **solely** from within the unit.
- j. The reviewers' names, together with a brief biosketch, must appear in the packet. They should be duly marked as to whether they represent the candidate list or the unit list. Except where candidates refuse to waive their right to see the letters, the **names of the referees should never be revealed to the candidate**. For this reason, the names of reviewers **must be redacted** from the chair's letter of transmission to the college. Please remind your faculty of this requirement, informing them that revealing the identity of reviewers or reporting on the contents of the unit review meeting to candidates is considered misconduct, and may result in disciplinary action.

## Appendix 2: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Criteria (Clarifications)

*Note that current college clarifications do not expressly refer to non-tenure-track faculty. However, the college considers the promotion of non-tenure accruing titles to be analogous to promotion from assistant to associate professor or to professor, but without consideration of tenure.*

Tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and promotion to Full Professor are based on distinguished professional activities in the areas of teaching, research, and service. Candidates must exhibit “distinction” in two of these areas, and normally these are research and teaching. “Distinction” is defined in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as an excellent and sustained record as demonstrated by well-known evaluative measures in the disciplines and areas of the College. The distinction of a candidate is based on complex information that includes productivity, innovation and creativity, and positive impact on students, the community, and the academic discipline of the candidate. These criteria are evident in the evaluation of teaching through student class evaluations, contributions to Department and University curriculum, peer evaluations, and recognition of teaching. Distinction in research and scholarship is especially evident through the documentation of productivity included in the packet and the evaluation of that record by internal and external reviewers in light of expectations of productivity at major research universities.

**TEACHING** - There should be evidence of a sustained commitment to excellence in teaching by the candidate as reflected in student teaching evaluations, faculty/departmental peer evaluations, and instructional materials. Peer evaluations are expected for promotion and tenure to Associate Professor as well as promotion to Full Professor. If student or peer evaluations are not present in the packet, their lack must be explained by the candidate and/or chair/director.

**RESEARCH** - There should be evidence of a body of work of sufficient quality and quantity that has produced at least the beginning of a national reputation for significant and creative contributions to the candidate's field of research for the promotion to Associate Professor with tenure. In addition, there should be evidence of the promise of continued intellectual growth and productivity. For promotion to Professor, an established national and/or international reputation is expected, as well as the indication of sustained high quality work.

The expectations of research productivity vary by the major areas of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural/Mathematical Sciences) as well as by each discipline within these broad areas. Each department has published guidelines that detail these expectations. In general, candidates for promotion to Associate Professor/tenure in the humanities are normally expected to have a book-length scholarly manuscript completed and accepted for publication by a press recognized in the field. Candidates for promotion to Professor in the humanities are normally expected to have two scholarly books in published form available for departmental/college review. The expectations in some fields may, however, be closer to those in natural and social science disciplines. The natural and laboratory sciences are focused primarily on a substantial record of refereed articles in visible journals and evidence of the viability of a research program, often reflected in successful external funding. The mathematical and natural sciences regard refereed articles in important journals appropriate to the field as primary publication outlets. Social science fields vary according to discipline and even sub-field within them. A scholarly record of research resulting in several peer-reviewed articles published each probationary year is expected, and in some cases, a scholarly book on that research is deemed appropriate for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure. Candidates for promotion to Professor in the social sciences are generally

expected to have a second book, when appropriate, or a similar record of articles with recognized impact on the field or profession.

**SERVICE** - For promotion to Associate Professor/tenure, there should be evidence of a positive contribution to the life of the department, college, and university. For promotion to full Professor, a candidate is expected to make a positive contribution to the department through service on key committees as well as participation in university and professional service. A candidate's service record may also include service to the state and the nation.

These three areas of activity should conform to the annual assignment of duties, and the tenure and promotion evaluation should be a reflection of these annual assignments. For this reason, annual letters of evaluation of the faculty should make note of any exceptional assignments in teaching, research, or service and the resulting productivity in any area that goes beyond that of other faculty members in the unit.

### Appendix 3: University of Florida Tenure and Promotion Criteria

The University's criteria for granting tenure, promotion, or permanent status shall be relevant to the faculty member's assignment and to his/her performance of the duties and responsibilities expected of a member of the university community. These criteria recognize three broad categories of academic engagement:

- (A) Teaching – Instruction, including in person classroom teaching, distance/executive/continuing education, direction of theses and dissertations, and extension education programs.
- (B) Research – Research or other scholarship and creative activities. Reminder: All tenure track faculty must have a minimum of 10 percent of their time assigned to research.
- (C) Service – Public and professional.

Each faculty member shall be given assignments that provide equitable opportunities, in relation to other faculty members in the same department, to meet the required criteria for promotion, tenure, and permanent status. Extension contributions in academic service may be inclusive of the three broad categories described above.

In most cases, tenure and promotion require "distinction" in at least two areas, teaching and research, unless the faculty member has an assignment that primarily reflects other responsibilities, such as the Cooperative Extension Service or a clinical assignment. Merit should be regarded more important than variety of activity. "Distinction" is defined by the University and clarified by each college and department in terms tailored to the college and to department disciplines and consistent with University standards.