

# Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences 2024-2025

## 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 for tenure and/or promotion should familiarize themselves with (a) the clarifications of criteria in their own unit, (b) college clarifications (**Appendix 1**), (c) college guidelines (the current document), (d) university criteria (**Appendix 2**) and (e) university guidelines (attached and also available through the following link: <http://aa.ufl.edu/policies/tenure-and-promotion-information/>).

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion are ultimately responsible for preparing the 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 Human Resources Director Carolyn Lebron ([clebron@ufl.edu](mailto:clebron@ufl.edu)) in the college office. Care should be taken by unit personnel to allow sufficient time for the college review. More general questions about the tenure and promotion process should be directed to Associate Dean Mary Watt ([marywatt@ufl.edu](mailto:marywatt@ufl.edu)).

The deadline for final packet submission to the College level is **Friday, October 4, 2024, at 5 PM**. Department votes should be conducted by mid-September in order to allow time for the chair'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 dossier must be complete at the time of the departmental review and vote.**

The college T & P Guidelines provides separate instructions for the handling of applications for tenure and/or promotion according to whether the faculty member has a tenure-track or non-tenure-track position.

## Guidelines for Tenure-Track Faculty

### 1) Chair's letter

The chair's letter should not be longer than three single-spaced pages. This letter should carefully review the candidate's various activities and the uniqueness of their record. Without being effusive or verbose, it should frankly assess the candidate's work in all three areas, including its strengths and weaknesses, and indicate how it contributes to and enhances the mission of the department and the university. The chair's letter should explain any unusual assignments (especially assignments made in the "other" category) as well as any significant change in assignment over the course of employment. The letter should also explain the role of graduate assistants, post-docs, residents, fellows, and/or interns in publication(s) and in research. The letter should address unit votes in which more than 20% of the votes are recorded as negative, abstaining, or absent.

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 sole-authored or edited books, chairs should comment on their significance and the quality of the presses where they were published. Include comments from any available published reviews. For articles, chairs should address their significance, including impact factors and the quality of journals or other publications in which they appeared. Any special situations regarding 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 they rank among the co-investigators and what was their level of contribution to the project?

The reviewers' names, together with a brief biosketch, must appear in the dossier. They should be duly marked as to whether they represent the candidate's list or the unit's list. Except where candidates do not waive their right to see the letters, the names of the referees should not be revealed to candidates. For this reason, the names of reviewers must be redacted from the chair's letter of transmission to the college. Please remind your faculty that revealing the identity of reviewers to candidates is considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

2) 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.

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

3) Publications

Publications that are in press or accepted must have their status verified by the inclusion of copies of letters from editors indicating acceptance for inclusion in section 34. Materials that are "in preparation," "under review," "under contract," etc., are not yet considered to be publications.

4) Updates to the dossier after submission

Updates for publications, grants, etc., can be provided at any time after submission of the dossier 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 publications 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 dossier.

5) 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/or promotion process at any time prior to the provost's final decision. 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.

6) Review Process

Packets submitted to the college by a department are reviewed by the CLAS Tenure and Promotion Committee, as governed by 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 department. All communication is done through the office of the cognizant associate dean. Candidates and chairs may not consult with 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. The opinions of individual committee members making the assessment 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.

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.

7) Procedures governing solicitation and inclusion of internal and external review letters for tenure-track faculty

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 is 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 thoroughly and consult them regularly to ensure that all applicable procedures are followed correctly.

Note that some departments prefer to contact potential reviewers in an informal way before issuing a formal letter of invitation.

Below we provide a sample letter of solicitation for tenure-track applications. Your proposed letters must be approved by CLAS Associate Dean Mary Watt before they are sent to prospective reviewers.

**The university criteria, CLAS clarifications, and departmental 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 letter below. You are of course free to make minor stylistic changes in the letter 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 as clarified by the college and the academic unit.<sup>2</sup> We would also like to know whether the research record 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 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 to 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)

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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 (i) below.

<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.

<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. Do not include annual letters of evaluation among the materials sent to reviewers.

**Key points:**

- 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 as early as possible from qualified reviewers. This will allow nomination packets to move through unit review in a timely fashion.
- b. Candidates for promotion should be asked to provide a list of seven potential reviewers, and at least one-half of the review letters must come from this list.
- c. All candidates must complete the waiver election in the online promotion and tenure system (OPT) **prior to solicitation** of review letters.
- d. For candidates whose FTE appointment is split between two units, the person responsible for writing the chair's letter should seek advice from faculty in both units in assembling a list of potential departmental or unit reviewers.
- e. Chairs must solicit five or six review letters, including, ideally, three from the candidate's list and three from the unit's list. However, all letters received must be included in the dossier. If more than six letters are received, the chair's letter should explain the circumstances that led to this result.
- f. Note that candidates do not control the priority for requests to be made from their lists. The final selection of reviewers is made by the chair/director.
- g. Letters of evaluation should normally be solicited from reviewers whose academic rank is higher than that being sought by the candidate. This means that full professors are preferred. The university particularly values letters from eminent faculty at peer institutions.
- h. In choosing individuals to act as reviewers, chairs should closely observe university guidelines (section IV.6) regarding conflict of interest. Individuals who have or have had a personal or mentoring relationship with the candidate should not be chosen as reviewers. 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**. The guiding principle is whether the proposed reviewer stands to benefit from the success of the candidate, either professionally or personally. If a reviewer is chosen who has a potential or apparent conflict of interest, the circumstances should be explained by the chair in the reviewer's bio-sketch.
- i. If a candidate has at least three (3) years of employment as of the date on which new promotion criteria are adopted, including the discipline-specific departmental 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 promotion process. The date of adoption of the modification is the date on which the university President or designee (the Dean) approves the changes.

## Guidelines for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

### 1) Chair's letter

The chair's letter should not be longer than three single-spaced pages. This letter should carefully review the candidate's various activities and the uniqueness of their record. Without being effusive or verbose, it should frankly assess the candidate's work in all areas of their assignment, including its strengths and weaknesses, and indicate how it contributes to and enhances the mission of the department and the university. The chair's letter should explain any unusual assignments (especially assignments made in the "other" category) as well as any significant change in assignment over the course of employment. The letter should also explain the role of graduate assistants, post-docs, residents, fellows, and/or interns in publication(s) and in research. The letter should address unit votes in which more than 20% of the votes are recorded as negative, abstaining, or absent.

The reviewers' names, together with a brief biosketch, must appear in the dossier. They should be duly marked as to whether they represent the candidate's list or the unit's list. Except where candidates do not waive their right to see the letters, the **names of the referees should not be revealed to candidates**. For this reason, the names of reviewers **must be redacted** from the chair's letter of transmission to the college. Please remind your faculty that revealing the identity of reviewers to candidates is considered misconduct, and may result in disciplinary action.

### 2) Research

For candidates who have publications or grants, chairs should follow the relevant guidelines for tenure-track faculty shown above.

### 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 promotion guidelines.

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

### 4) Updates to the dossier after submission

Updates for publications, grants, etc., can be provided at any time after submission of the dossier to the college. Updated items should be uploaded into the OPT system for inclusion in section 34. Examples might include the announcement of a teaching award. The updated listing should be given in the format required for the appropriate section of the dossier.

### 5) Withdrawal from the Process

Candidates have the right to withdraw without prejudice from the promotion process at any time prior to the provost's decision. In the event that a candidate for 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.

### 6) Review Process

Packets submitted to the college by a department are reviewed by the CLAS Tenure and Promotion Committee, as governed by 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 department. All communication is done through the

office of the cognizant associate dean. Candidates and chairs may not consult with the Committee or discuss applications for 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 promotion within the college. The opinions of individual committee members making the assessment 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.

The provost then approves or disapproves promotion cases, with one exception: promotions for those holding faculty positions as Assistant-In and Associate-In are decided by the college dean and do not need to be forwarded to the provost.

7) Procedures governing solicitation and inclusion of internal and external review letters for non-tenure-track faculty

The following information is provided to assist chairs and other individuals who are soliciting letters for evaluation of promotion cases. Sample language for template letters requesting reviews is 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 promotion cases should read the UF guidelines and Article 19 of the current CBA thoroughly and consult them regularly to ensure that all applicable procedures are followed correctly.

Note that some departments prefer to contact potential reviewers in an informal way before issuing a formal letter of invitation.

Below we provide a sample letter of solicitation for non-tenure-track applications. Your proposed letters must be approved by CLAS Associate Dean Mary Watt before they are sent to prospective reviewers.

**The university criteria, CLAS clarifications, and departmental discipline-specific clarifications for 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 letter below. You are of course free to make minor stylistic changes in the letter as you see fit.

**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 their duties in order to determine the degree to which it satisfies the attached university criteria for tenure and promotion as clarified by the college and the academic unit.<sup>5</sup>

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.

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)

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<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 (k) below.

<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.



### **Key points**

- a. Although candidates have until July 1 to declare their intention to seek promotion, it is preferable that they do so in April/May, so that letters of evaluation can be solicited as early as possible from qualified reviewers. This will allow nomination packets to move through unit review in a timely fashion.
- b. Candidates for promotion should be asked to provide a list of seven potential reviewers, and at least one-half of the review letters must come from this list.
- c. All candidates must complete the waiver election in the online promotion and tenure system (OPT) **prior to solicitation** of review letters.
- d. For candidates whose FTE appointment is split between two units, the person responsible for writing the chair's letter should seek advice from faculty in both units in assembling a list of potential departmental or unit reviewers.
- e. Chairs must solicit five or six review letters, including, ideally, three from the candidate's list and three from the unit list. However, all letters received must be included in the dossier. If more than six letters are received, the chair's letter should explain the circumstances that led to this circumstance.
- f. Note that candidates do not control the priority for requests to be made from their lists. The final selection of reviewers is made by the chair/director.
- g. Letters of evaluation should normally be solicited from reviewers whose academic rank is higher than that being sought by the candidate.
- h. 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, review letters may be from either internal or external sources. However, in the case of research scientists or other faculty with significant research assignments, some or all of the letters should be external.
- i. Where internal reviewers are allowed, they may be from within the applicant's academic unit; however, both chairs and candidates should strive to include reviewers external to the unit, either from sister units in the college or university, or from outside the university. This will strengthen promotion cases by minimizing the perception of conflict of interest.
- j. University guidelines (section IV.6) on conflict of interest specify that individuals who have or have had a personal or mentoring relationship with the candidate should not be chosen as reviewers. The guiding principle is whether the proposed reviewer stands to benefit from the success of the candidate, either professionally or personally. If a reviewer is chosen who has a potential or apparent conflict of interest, the circumstances should be explained by the chair in the reviewer's bio-sketch.
- k. If a candidate has at least three (3) years of employment as of the date on which new promotion criteria are adopted, including the discipline-specific departmental 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 promotion process. The date of adoption of the modification is the date on which the university President or designee (the Dean) approves the changes.

## **Appendix 1: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Clarifications of University of Florida Criteria for Promotion and Tenure (Effective 2021-2022)**

Consistent with the university's criteria, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences recognizes that the granting of promotion and tenure is based on a faculty member's performance of duties and responsibilities in the three broad categories of research, teaching, and service.

Successful candidates for tenure and/or promotion must demonstrate distinction in the performance of their assigned duties. **Distinction is defined by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as an excellent and sustained record commensurate with the academic standards of top-tier research universities.** The determination of whether a candidate has achieved distinction in any category of activity is based on information that includes, but is not limited to, productivity, innovation, creativity, and contributions to student education, the unit(s), the college, the university, and the profession.

General guidelines for identifying distinction in research, teaching, and service:

**RESEARCH.** Identification of distinction in research and scholarship is based on a faculty member's accomplishments as documented in the dossier and on the internal and external evaluation of that record in the context of expectations for research productivity and quality at top-tier research universities. There must be evidence of a significant and creative body of work in the candidate's field of research that is commensurate with the faculty rank and/or tenure status to which the candidate aspires. In addition, there must be evidence of continuing intellectual growth, innovation, and productivity. The expectations and assessment of research productivity and quality vary by discipline, as specified by individual units' published clarifications.

**TEACHING.** Distinction in teaching is demonstrated through evidence of a sustained and successful commitment to excellence in instruction, mentoring, and other instructional activities as documented in the dossier through the teaching statement, student teaching evaluations, faculty peer evaluations, instructional materials, and other pertinent information.

**SERVICE.** Distinction in service is demonstrated through evidence in the dossier of significant service contributions to the needs of the unit, college, university, profession, and other constituencies, as appropriate for the faculty member's discipline, assignments, and rank.

Specific clarifications pertaining to promotion for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members:

**FOR TENURE-TRACK FACULTY MEMBERS,** promotion requires distinction in two of the three categories of research, teaching, and service.

For promotion from assistant professor to associate professor, distinction must be achieved in research and teaching. For research, there should be evidence of an emerging national reputation for significant contributions to the candidate's scholarly field. A candidate who shows distinction in research and teaching is also expected to make a positive, sustained contribution to the unit, college, university, and profession through service, as appropriate for the current rank and service assignments.

For promotion from associate professor to professor, distinction is normally required in the areas of research and teaching. In the category of research, an established national and international reputation and sustained high impact scholarship are required. In the category of teaching, there should be evidence of achievements beyond those required for the lower rank as specified in individual units' published clarifications. A candidate who shows distinction in research and teaching is also expected to make a positive, sustained contribution to the unit, college, university, and profession through service.

**FOR NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY MEMBERS**, promotion to the rank of Senior Lecturer, Clinical Associate Professor, Associate Scientist, Associate In, and analogous titles requires distinction in two of the three categories of research, teaching, and service. However, when a faculty member's assignment is exclusively in one category, distinction must be demonstrated in this category alone. In all cases, distinction should be in the categories that most accurately reflect assigned duties with due consideration of proportional effort.

For promotion to a rank of Master Lecturer, Clinical Professor, Scientist, Senior Associate In, or analogous titles, distinction of a higher order than that required for the lower rank must be demonstrated in terms of quantity and quality of achievements and an institutional and/or national impact. The types of achievements and activities that might satisfy this requirement vary by discipline, as specified by individual units' published clarifications.

## **Appendix 2: 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 their 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, online/distance/executive/continuing education/laboratory/field/ clinical/performance instruction, 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 department disciplines consistent with University standards.