



## **Information on Tenure and Promotion Center for Faculty Development October 2023**

- Please also consult your College for current practices.
- Items in *italics* are quotes from the Faculty Handbook
- There will likely be minor changes and clarifications made in Faculty Handbook in the 2023-24 academic year.
- Please note that the following is advice given by the Center for Faculty Development. Although we strive to be accurate, the office is not part of the Promotion and Tenure process and we are only one point of view. We recommend getting information from multiple sources.

### **Where to Get Information**

To get a better understanding of the process and requirements we encourage you find information from multiple sources including:

- Faculty Handbook (link to P&T section of Faculty Handbook) - <https://www.uhcl.edu/provost/faculty-staff-resources/documents/promotion-tenure-policy.pdf>
- Senior Faculty in Your Area
- Department Chair, Associate Dean, and Dean
- Faculty who are applying for P&T at the same time
- Faculty who have recently earned promotion and tenure
- Center for Faculty Development
- Your Mentoring Network

The Provost has compiled a webpage with most of the university-level information:

<https://www.uhcl.edu/provost/faculty-staff-resources/faculty-resources/promotion-tenure>

### **Schedule**

*In the spring of each academic year, the Office of the Provost will publish and distribute to all full-time tenure track and tenured faculty, a schedule containing specific dates which shall govern the completion of the stages of the tenure and promotion evaluation process.*

#### **Typical Calendar (note dates will vary from year to year; exact dates are posted in the Spring)**

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| • Spring of 5 <sup>th</sup> year | Dean notifies individuals of dates for Promotion and Tenure |
| • Spring of 5 <sup>th</sup> year | Peer Review Committee is formed                             |
| • Spring of 5 <sup>th</sup> year | Selection of External Reviewers                             |
| • Early June                     | Turn in External Evaluation File                            |



- Early September Promotion and Tenure Files submitted to Workflow
- Early/Mid-September Evaluations from External Reviewers Due
- Mid-October Peer Review Committee's Recommendation Due to Department Chair
- Mid/Late November Department Chair's Recommendation Due to Dean\*
- Early January Dean's Recommendations Due to Provost\*
- Early February UPTC meets and Provost's Recommendations Due to President\*
- April President's Recommendation Due to Chancellor
- Summer of 6<sup>th</sup> year Board of Regents affirms decision on P&T

\* There is an opportunity for the candidate to rebut or appeal the decision after this step.

### **Is there any way to stop the tenure clock?**

#### **3.4 Extending the probationary period**

*Extensions to the probationary period may be granted upon formal written request by the faculty member with written recommendation of the Dean and Provost, and final written approval by the President. Documented extensions to the probationary period are also referred to as 'stopping the clock'.*

*3.4.1 Timing. Extensions are usually for one year, but a longer period may be requested in compelling circumstances. Any extension greater than one year must be recommended by the Dean and Provost and approved in writing by the President. The stop-the-clock period will be excluded from the probationary period and the probationary period will be extended accordingly.*

***Faculty members who intend to request an extension of the probationary period are encouraged to do so as early as the situation arises.***

*3.4.2 Qualifying Circumstances. Circumstances for which a faculty member may request an extension to the probationary period include, but are not limited to: the birth or adoption of a child; responsibility for managing the illness or disability of an immediate family member, parent or partner; serious persistent personal health issues; death of a parent, spouse, child, or domestic partner; military service; and significant delays in fulfillment of UHCL resources committed in the appointment letter.*

*Not having met Teaching, Scholarship, and Service expectations during a previous review period does not qualify as an extenuating circumstance for extension of the probationary period.*

## **Criteria**

### ***What criteria will I be judged by?***

You have a choice of being judged by the criteria in place since you started as an Assistant Professor. You indicate the criteria you will use in your Promotion and Tenure file. The "old criteria" should still be good for faculty submitting their application in Fall 2024, but would not be allowed after that.



***What ratings will I receive when evaluated on the criteria?***

If you choose the old criteria, you will be rated on the following scale: *poor, less than satisfactory, satisfactory, very good, or excellent* on each of the three areas of teaching, research, and service. Candidates for tenure can also receive a *very good with promise of becoming excellent*. To receive tenure, candidates have to have at least one category which is excellent or very good with promise of becoming excellent, another that is very good, and the third has to be satisfactory. Teaching has to be rated at least as very good.

With the new policy, candidates will be rated in each of the three areas as *recommend or do not recommend*. To be recommended for promotion and tenure, a candidate has to receive a *recommend* in all three areas.

***Can I get credit for items that came from a previous institution?***

You can only receive credit for items from a previous institution if it is listed in your offer letter.

## **Submitting Files**

***Is there is a new system to submit material?***

You will submit the system through “Workflow” which is the name of the application. The system is run by the same company that provides Digital Measures, and you access Workflow through the Digital Measures log in area.

Candidates will receive instructions on how to use this new application before they submit their Promotion and Tenure Document in September. You will have to upload all documents into the system. Currently, no information from Digital Measures will be directly placed into your Promotion and Tenure document. However, you can create printouts from Digital Measures and then upload those documents yourself.

For 2023, the system did not have a way to work directly with external reviewers. Therefore, external reviewers was handled the same way that has been done before in your college. Contact your college administration for what is expected in terms of an external review file. It is hoped for future years, a person will be able to enter their external review documents directly into Workflow.

***What is included in the Promotion and Tenure Document?***

*The Promotion and Tenure Document is the information that the candidate seeking promotion and/or tenure submits summarizing her/his case for promotion and/or tenure. It consists of the following items:*

- 1. A formal request for promotion and/or tenure in the university. (For Associate Professors reapplying for Professor see section 9.0) [The Provost’s promotion and tenure website provides a template.]*



2. *Applicable department/college promotion and/or tenure criteria.*
3. *Written notifications from the Dean of any approved extensions of the probationary period.*
4. *Annual evaluations from the Department Chair for each year during the evaluative period (e.g. the probationary for Assistant Professor promotion to Associate Professor).*
5. *Letters from the Third-Year Review peer committee and Department Chair (only for promotion to Associate Professor).*
6. *A current curriculum vita.*
7. *A narrative of the candidate's case for promotion and/or tenure. This material should be organized under the three categories of professorial responsibility: (1) Teaching and Educational Activities, (2) Research, Scholarly, or Artistic Activities, and (3) Service.*
8. *Item 7 may total no more than the lesser of 7,500 words or fifteen pages. Many Promotion and Tenure Documents by successful candidates are frequently much shorter than fifteen pages.*
9. *Additional material required by the college or department.*
10. *Appendix material: supporting materials may include but are not limited to: teaching evaluations, course summaries, published research, research summaries, artistic products, etc.*

***The narrative seems short. What should I focus on?***

*My recommendation is to focus on how you meet the criteria for Promotion and Tenure. Discussions that do not relate to the criteria and do not provide context do not need to be included or can be greatly de-emphasized. Also, you may want to see if you can move any items in your narrative into an Appendix.*

***How do I write a narrative/What do I include in a narrative?***

- Divide into teaching, research, and service
- Write using the Provost/President as the audience
- Main chance to describe items that a person cannot understand from one line in the vitae
- Should focus on what has been done at UHCL
- Don't be modest (but don't go over the top)
- Look at examples from somebody who has submitted since 2020
- Have somebody read it over before sending it in
- Look at each part of your Annual Reviews for ideas on what to include
- You signal how important something is by the amount of time you spend to discuss it
- If tables help you explain your information, use them (and may save room by putting Table into Appendix)
- Can have introduction and conclusion to narrative



***Is the Appendix material clearly defined or can one be flexible?***

One can be flexible with what will go in the Promotion and Tenure Document. In other words, you can choose what will go in the Appendix. We recommend referring to all appendix documents somewhere in your narrative.

## **External Reviewers**

***What do external reviewers evaluate?***

External evaluators will evaluate your research/scholarship. They are not for evaluating your teaching or service. Evaluators for Promotion and Tenure need to be at the rank of Associate Professor (or equivalent) or higher.

***Who creates the external reviewer list?***

*7.2.4 Selection Process. The candidate forwards a list of prospective external reviewers that includes the name, rank, discipline, and a justification for each of the nominees. The candidate and the PRC [peer review committee] shall agree on a list of individuals from whom letters of evaluation will be solicited.*

***Do I have to get a CV from the external reviewers?***

Unless your college requires, you only need to provide a general description of why the individual would be able to evaluate your scholarship.

***What happens if the peer review committee and I don't agree on external reviewers?***

Then conversations and collaboration need to continue until there is agreement.

***Can I ask my external reviewers if they will be my external reviewer?***

You will not write the official letter asking the candidate to be the reviewer. That will be done through your college. However, it is common, and the previous Provost has indicated it is OK, to cautiously, unofficially ask potential reviewers if they would be willing to review if they are officially asked. Some faculty do this throughout the year before they have to submit the list. However, some colleges have told faculty not to do this step. If you have been told not to contact your external reviewers by your Department Chair or Dean, you may want to ask for clarification.

***How can I find potential external reviewers?***

Here are some suggestions for finding potential external reviewers:

- Academic conferences
  - Individuals who see your work
  - Individuals who you go to see



- People who you know through publications
- People you've worked with on national organization committees
- Recommendations from
  - UHCL faculty
  - Non-UHCL research mentors
  - Other potential external reviewers

***How close to your research area do my external reviewers have to be?***

For an external reviewer, you want somebody who can discuss the quality and the impact of your research. The closer to your topic, the more likely they will be able to do it. However, a person who you are more collegial with who is a bit further away from your specific research area may write a better letter than a person who is research-wise very close, but is very aloof.

***How do I find external reviewers if my publications are multidisciplinary?***

One possibly strategy is to find complementary individuals that make-up your multi-disciplinary area. For example, if your scholarship covers two different disciplines, you can suggest at least one external reviewer from each area.

***Are there restrictions on who I can get to be an external reviewer? For example:***

- Can I have somebody from industry or outside of academia?
- Can I have somebody from a Research I institution? Can I have somebody from an institution such as UHCL?
- Can I have somebody from UH?
- Can I have somebody from a different discipline?
- Can I have somebody who has recently retired?
- Can I have somebody from similar affinity groups?

Generally, the answer for any of these are yes; however, each of these would be a conversation with your peer review committee in which you would describe why this individual would be a good person to evaluate your scholarship. The other consideration is that they need to be at "arms-length" from you personally. The policy states the following: *External reviewers must be scholars who are not current or former thesis/dissertation advisors, co-authors, students, relatives, co-investigators, mentors, or close personal friends of the candidate.*

***How will external reviewers know what type of university UHCL is?***

The university plans to or has created a standardized letter across the university for external reviewers. It includes a description of the university. Some past candidates have used a paragraph or two of their narrative to describe their teaching and service expectations to help provide context for their research productivity. In addition, external reviewers should receive a copy of the current policy and criteria.



***What if I have manuscripts that are (hopefully) about to be in press when I send the external file?***

You can put these works in a narrative and if the college allows, include them in the portfolio sent to the external reviewer. Each reviewer may weigh that information differently.

In your internal narrative you submit in September as part of your Promotion and Tenure file, you would likely want to point out any additions to your research products from what was given to your external reviewer.

## **Peer Review Committee**

*7.3.2 Qualifications. Candidates for promotion and/or tenure must be reviewed by a committee of their peers. The committee will consist of those tenured faculty in the same academic program as the candidate; their rank must be equal or be higher than the rank requested by the candidate. The committee must include a minimum of five faculty members.*

*7.3.3 Selection Process. If more than five faculty are eligible for the committee, they will decide: (1) to act as a committee of the whole or (2) to elect from among themselves a review committee.*

*In addition, a candidate may request that a faculty member from an appropriate related discipline or academic program from across the university be added to the PRC. This written request is to be provided to the Dean for approval. The Dean's decision and justification regarding PRC membership must be provided in writing to the candidate within 15 working days of receipt of the written request.*

*If fewer than five faculty from within the academic program are eligible for the PRC, faculty from the department, appropriate related disciplines, or academic programs from across the university will be added to form a five-person committee. These additional members will be identified by the candidate and shared with the PRC. The candidate must include the name, rank, discipline, and a justification for each of the nominees. The initial PRC members will forward these names to the Dean with their recommendations. At that point, the Dean will make the selection; however, prior to finalizing the members on the committee, the Dean will consult with the candidate and with the eligible individuals. The final membership of the PRC will be communicated in writing to all parties in the review process.*

<b>Summary of Peer Review Committee Selection</b>	<b>If academic program has 5 or more tenured faculty</b>	<b>If academic program has fewer than 5 tenured faculty</b>
<b>Program Faculty</b>	All program faculty can serve on the committee even if there are more than 5 individuals	All program faculty can serve on the committee
<b>Faculty from Outside the Program</b>	You may request a faculty member from another appropriate program	You will submit to the Dean a list of appropriate faculty from across the university to form a 5-person committee. Dean, after consulting, will choose.



***Can committee members on 3<sup>rd</sup>-Year Review also serve on my Tenure Committee?***

Yes, in fact, many of them will likely be on your tenure committee. However, newly tenured faculty may also be on your committee.

***When does the peer review committee have to be finalized?***

At this time there is no specific date for the peer review committee to be formed. You should be informed by your Dean when you have to submit any information. We recommend you think about it in early Spring of your 5<sup>th</sup> year so you are ready for any information requests.

***Does the peer review committee have to be the same as the third-year review committee?***

No. Although there is likely overlap, there is no requirement that the committees be identical.

***Is there a rebuttal to the peer review committee?***

No, rebuttals to the peer review committee are made at the same time as the rebuttals to the Department Chair and will all be in a single document.

## **Department Chair Review and Dean Review**

***Does the Department Chair get to see the Peer Review Committee recommendation?***

The Department Chair now reviews after the Peer Review Committee (and before the Dean). The Department Chair is now able to see the peer review committee letter. However, the candidate receives both letters at the same time in mid-November.

***If I see a mistake, what can I do?***

### ***3.2.5 Candidate Rebuttal Letter***

*A rebuttal or letter of information is an opportunity for the candidate to (a) challenge assertions or conclusions in the file or (b) report the acceptance or publication of a work of printed scholarship or the awarding of a grant. The letter and supporting evidence will be added to the candidate's Promotion and Tenure File and will be given full consideration at all subsequent stages of the promotion and tenure process. The letter and supporting evidence may not exceed fifteen pages, although it may reference additional items with instructions as to where and how they may be inspected. Rebuttal or letters of information may be submitted after the review of the Department Chair and after the review by the Dean.*

***When can I add items to the file?***

The system is set up for a candidate to add items of rebuttal and supporting evidence after the Department Chair review and the Dean review. Candidates are given 5 business days to provide this





information after receiving the Department Chair's review and the Dean's review. These are not part of the main file but rather a separate file after the reviews.

***Will it reflect badly on me if I don't add items throughout process?***

Items of rebuttal and supporting evidence are optional. There is no expectation to add any documentation once the Promotion and Tenure document is submitted in September.

## **University Promotion and Tenure Committee**

***What is this committee?***

This committee is new to the promotion and tenure system. Instead of the Provost doing a final review before making a recommendation to the President, a university-wide committee makes the recommendation. Membership includes the Dean and a faculty representative from each college.

***Can the person who serves on a peer review committee vote at the University Promotion and Tenure Committee (UPTC) meeting?***

Both the Dean and the Faculty Representative from the college of candidate can speak but cannot vote on candidates from their college at the UPTC meeting.

***How long is the term for the UPTC representative?***

One-year term, elected from the college and can serve 2 consecutive terms.

***What if I feel I've been unfairly judged at this stage?***

*10.0 Promotion and Tenure Appeals A candidate may appeal a University Promotion and Tenure Committee's recommendation on the grounds that (a) an error in the described procedures materially affected the outcome, (b) the decision was not based upon the applicable criteria included in the Promotion and Tenure File, or (c) the outcome was arbitrary, discriminatory or capricious. The Candidate will have no less than five working days after receiving written notification of the decision and vote of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee to notify in writing the Provost of her/his intent to file an appeal.*

***When can I celebrate?***

We encourage candidates to celebrate each time they receive a positive recommendation for tenure. However, typically the main celebration is after the President makes a positive recommendation to the Board of Regents. We would be shocked if the Board of Regents denied a candidate promotion and/or tenure after a positive recommendation by the UHCL President. Additionally, you can celebrate on September 1<sup>st</sup> when your title officially changes.



## **Feedback Prior to Promotion and Tenure**

### ***What feedback should I have received prior to submitting for promotion and tenure?***

- Annual Reviews

*Every tenure-track faculty will undergo an annual performance review conducted by the department chair, appropriate administrator, or committee according to College procedures.*

- Third-Year Review

*The third-year review process is similar to a promotion and tenure review. Its purpose is to provide guidance to the tenure-track faculty member regarding future directions and activities. To provide the most effective and clear feedback, the dean and the chair of the peer review committee will be responsible for communicating to the individual the review's assessments and recommendations for future directions. The faculty member will receive copies of all assessments and recommendations at the time of the meeting with the dean and chair of the peer review committee.*

- Individual Discussions

### ***Do scores on annual reviews correspond with ratings on Promotion and Tenure?***

Not necessarily. Although they are likely related, they are on different scales and annual reviews focus on individual years while P&T focuses on your entire UHCL career.

### ***How do I know my progress based on third-year reviews?***

During the third-year review, the committee should let you know how you are doing in terms of progress towards promotion and tenure. If after the process, you do not have a good idea, you should talk to your Department Chair and other senior faculty in your area.

### ***How binding is the feedback we received from 3<sup>rd</sup>-Year Review?***

It is not binding, but it can be very important. If there is a specific recommendation (e.g., send out at least two papers in the next year), reviewers may see whether you followed it. If you choose not to follow it, then you will have to have a good reason why you did not. You can also ask the Dean when you meet with the Dean and the chair of the peer review committee. If the Dean goes against a committee's 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Review recommendation, it would be good to get that feedback in writing (or email).

## **Who to See if there are Problems**

If you have problems, there are places you can go for assistance. Here are some common types of questions and individuals who would be in a position to assist.



**Developing and organizing your material** – Center for Faculty Development, your mentoring network, Department Chair

**Writing your narratives** – Center for Faculty Development, your mentoring network, (Note: it is recommended that you do not seek advice from members of your Peer Review Committee)

**Deadlines** – Department Chair, Dean

**How to operate Workflow** – [workflow@uhcl.edu](mailto:workflow@uhcl.edu)

**Questions whether individuals are following policy or procedure** – Department Chair, Dean, Provost, and the Faculty Ombudsperson

However, my main recommendation is to seek assistance or guidance if you have a problem, from somebody, even if it isn't somebody listed above. They can assist or hopefully point you to somebody who can help.

## **Miscellaneous Questions**

### ***How should I discuss community and professional service?***

One important element for community and professional service is that people who review your material may not know how much work or how involved service can be. For example, being on a Board of Directors may only have a short, annual meeting, or may be very time consuming. For items that a Dean, Provost, or President are not familiar with, you need to be specific about major accomplishments.

### ***What if I have an activity that counts in more than one area?***

Generally, one should not "double-dip" and put items down in more than one area. Typically, I recommend putting the item in one area and then if a reviewer needs to, the reviewer will re-classify it. However, I have seen some narratives that refer to accomplishments in multiple sections, narratives that attempt to split the accomplishment (e.g., publishing with students could include the publications in the research narrative and working with students in the teaching narrative), and narratives that have an additional section describing the overlap of teaching, research, and service.

### ***What if the students' evaluations are variable? (e.g., many very good and a couple of bad ones due to certain, specific reasons?)***

The narrative is the key here. With the narrative you can explain your typical scores as well as the reasons for some low scores. You can also show the trend for your course evaluations over time (if they get higher) or the trend for each particular class. Furthermore, if you are trying to combine all the evaluations into one statistic, you may want to use the median, instead of the mean. The mean is susceptible to outliers while the median looks at the middle score.



***What is the best way to present digital research? (e.g., online and multimodal in such a way that physical prints sacrifice formatting)***

You will want to work with your college and the UHCL staff supporting Workflow to see what the best option would be.