

# Open Forum on Promotion and Tenure



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The University of Georgia

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Attracting, developing and retaining an outstanding faculty is critical to the success of the University of Georgia.

Processes for appointment, promotion and tenure must be fair, rigorous and discipline-appropriate if the University is to attract, retain and recognize excellent faculty.

The University's mission is “to teach, to inquire into the nature of things and to serve society.”

For purposes of promotion and tenure, faculty must demonstrate excellence in their areas of assignment.

Faculty workload is usually a mix of time assigned to teaching, research or other creative activities, and service.

Advisement about promotion and tenure processes is the responsibility of the promotion and tenure unit (PTU) head.

New faculty members should be given UGA's *Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure* as well as specific policies and criteria for the PTU.

The PTU head or designee should meet with a new faculty member to discuss the *Guidelines* and advise regarding criteria for promotion and tenure.

Each candidate for promotion and tenure must:

- 1) show evidence of scholarship through publication or other creative works in his/her area of expertise, and
- 2) attain a high level of performance in two of the three primary faculty responsibility areas specified in the University's mission: teaching, research and other creative activities, and service.

Faculty assigned exclusively to one area of responsibility should be advised accordingly.

# **Measuring progress toward promotion and tenure**

## **Annual review**

Every instructor, assistant professor and associate professor may request in writing an annual review. The review should include consultation with the PTU head and a written report to the faculty member, who may respond in writing.

## **Third-year review**

For assistant professors in their third year, the PTU head appoints a committee to thoroughly review the individual's achievement and performance.

- The committee reports its findings to the professors and associate professors of the PTU.
- The PTU recommends whether progress toward promotion is sufficient.
- The PTU head provides the written report to the faculty member, who is encouraged to reply in writing. The reply becomes part of the report.

## Promotion and tenure process steps:

- **Initiation of the process** (PTU level – simple majority vote – no reconsideration or appeal)
- **PTU evaluation** (simple majority vote – if denied, optional reconsideration – then appeal)
- **College/school review committee** (simple majority vote – if denied, optional reconsideration – then appeal)
- **University review committees** (2/3 majority vote to reverse earlier recommendation – optional reconsideration – then appeal)
- **\*\*University appeals committee** (simple majority vote – optional reconsideration)
- **Provost > President > Board of Regents**

# Starting the promotion process

Eligible faculty members must request to be considered for promotion.

PTU head convenes appropriate unit faculty to consider individuals who should be evaluated.

PTU faculty decides by formal vote whether or not to proceed with the process.

PTU head informs affected faculty of the outcome of the departmental vote within a week.

Assistant professors in their 6th probationary year who have not previously been turned down for tenure must be reviewed for promotion unless they request otherwise.

Tenured associate professors must be reviewed for promotion no later than their 5th year in rank unless they request otherwise.

Associate professors must be reviewed for promotion no later than the 4th year following a negative promotion decision unless they request otherwise.

# **Preparing for PTU evaluation**

Preparation and verification of the contents of the dossier is a joint effort between the PTU head and the faculty member being evaluated.

The PTU head prepares the narrative that evaluates achievements in teaching, research or service.

The PTU head also obtains objective and impersonal external appraisals.

The faculty member is responsible for preparing the vita and reviewing portions of the dossier.

\*If unit head is associate professor, then professor appointed to chair committee to review candidates for promotion to professor.

# **Contents of the Dossier**

Section 1: Regents Summary Sheet(s)

Section 2: Cover Letter(s)

Section 3: Vita

Section 4: Achievements (12 pages or less)

Section 5: External evaluations

# External evaluations

No more than 7 (preferably 4 or 5) letters from authorities outside the University.

Assessors should be disinterested individuals who know the candidate professionally.

Two letters should come from list of 6 potential assessors provided by candidate.

Candidate also designates 3 individuals who cannot be contacted as assessors.

PTU head provides external assessors with candidate's vita and examples of best scholarly work.

All letters become part of the candidate's file.

## **PTU vote**

PTU head convenes appropriate faculty to conduct evaluation. Sections 3, 4 & 5 of dossier must be available prior to meeting.

At least 2/3rd of eligible faculty must be present.

Absentee ballots permitted if received before the vote and counted with other votes.

All faculty expected to participate except those required to abstain. Those who abstain are not considered eligible voters.

Voting by secret ballot, counted by two faculty members, with results presented before adjournment.

## If PTU vote is positive:

- Candidate informed within 3 working days of vote.
- PTU head prepares Sections 1 & 2 of dossier.  
(If PTU head voted against promotion, senior faculty member designated by candidate prepares Sections 1 & 2.)
- Before dossier goes forward, candidate reviews Sections 1-4 for accuracy.
- Candidate can submit documentation of up to 5 achievements to add to dossier for school/college review.
- Dossier goes forward with cover letter. Candidate may read and respond in writing.

If PTU vote is negative:

- PTU vote summarizes faculty's rationale and conveys result to candidate within 3 working days of the vote.
- Within 7 working days of receiving rationale, candidate may request reconsideration.  
Request must address the rationale.
- Reconsideration must be given within 10 working days of receipt of request.
- Response to candidate within 3 working days of reconsideration.

## **Special cases**

### Two PTUs:

- PTU heads prepare common dossier for consideration by the separate faculties.
- Unit heads work jointly with candidate.
- To be considered at school/college level, votes of both PTUs must be positive.

### Schools without departments:

- Dean works with candidate to develop dossier for initial consideration and appoints committee to evaluate qualifications.
- Committee chair then acts as department head.

## **About tenure**

The University grants tenure to protect faculty from dismissal except for cause as determined by formal hearings.

Candidates for tenure must have a record of exemplary performance.

A recommendation for tenure must also address the University's continuing and long-range needs.

## **Probationary period**

Candidate must complete probationary period of at least 5 years of full-time service at the rank of assistant professor or higher.

Non-tenured faculty in 6th probationary year (and not turned down for tenure in 5th year) must be reviewed for tenure unless they request otherwise. Exceptions to this rule must be requested prior to end of 5th year.

# Initiating the tenure process

The PTU head or tenured faculty at the appropriate rank initiate the tenure process.

A faculty member who has served the probationary period may request consideration for tenure and provide evidence to support the request.

- Appropriate tenured faculty decide whether to agree to the request.

For faculty members with joint appointments, either PTU may initiate consideration for tenure and prepare documentation.

Recommendation for promotion and recommendation for tenure are separate recommendations and require separate votes.

Same procedures and materials can be used for each activity.

Same committees at the school/college and University levels review both promotion and tenure recommendations.

# Appeals

Appeals must be in writing and based on one or more of the following:

- significant procedural irregularities or inadequacies in periodic review and advisement or in the review process for promotion or tenure,
- significant inaccuracies in information presented to the review committee,
- failure of review committee to apply standards of the department, school/college or University.

## University Appeals Committee judges:

- the existence of material failures, inaccuracies or procedural irregularities
- whether or not these prevented candidates from getting a full and appropriate review

If University Appeals Committee finds grounds for appeal insufficient, then Provost informs candidate, PTU head and dean. Negative recommendation stands.

If University Appeals Committee finds procedural problems may have interfered with appropriate vote, Provost takes appropriate steps. These may include:

- referral back to PTU or next review committee
- formation of ad hoc committee to make substantive review and recommendation
- direct recommendation for promotion/tenure to the President
- consultation with internal or external authorities

Promotion and tenure guidelines are available on the Provost's Office web site:

**[www.uga.edu/provost](http://www.uga.edu/provost)**

Click on “Policies and Procedures.”