

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
POLICY ON PROMOTION AND TENURE

Reviewed and Revised 04/15/2016

This policy statement defines the standards and procedures for promotion and tenure in the department of English. It supplements but does not supersede the policies and standards outlined by the Faculty Handbook and the College of Arts and Letters Policy on Tenure and Promotion. Candidates should refer to those documents for specific information regarding the preparation of dossiers, as well as issues concerning time in rank and early promotion. All University of Southern Mississippi personnel actions, including the awarding of promotion and tenure, are governed by the IHL Board of Trustees and are subject to its final approval.

The following guidelines are intended to aid faculty in their progress toward promotion and tenure. Candidates for promotion and tenure must demonstrate, at each rank, a sustained pattern of professional development in teaching, research, and service. The candidate's workload assignment will be taken into account in determining the weight placed on each category, but consistently unsatisfactory performance as defined by university policy, this document, and annual review evaluations in any area, will preclude promotion and tenure. In addition, candidates should note that while annual review documents are typically included in tenure and promotion materials, satisfactory annual reviews are not tantamount to the comprehensive evaluations of tenure and promotion. Annual renewals of employment contracts, satisfactory annual reviews, or a successful pre-tenure review are not a guarantee of tenure or promotion; however, a negative pre-tenure review may result in a terminal contract.

For tenure decisions, the Promotion and Tenure Committee is made up of all tenured faculty. For promotion decisions, the Promotion and Tenure Committee is made up of all faculty at or above the rank the candidate is seeking. The obligations of members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee are many, but foremost among them is fairness, so that criteria are applied with transparent appeal to standards of professional conduct.

**Promotion to Associate Professor**

**TEACHING:** The faculty member should demonstrate a commitment to and ability for teaching as evidenced by university-administered student evaluations, syllabi, writing assignments, innovative pedagogical strategies, and successful student production including papers placed in journals, awards won, etc. Evidence of effective teaching can include the following:

- Designing, innovating, and/or implementing courses and/or strategies to enhance learning
- Offering Special Problems courses and/or other additional teaching duties,
- Directing undergraduate and graduate theses and dissertations

Effective teaching is a necessary, but not in itself sufficient, condition for promotion. Ineffective teaching, on the other hand, constitutes grounds for denial of promotion.

**RESEARCH:** The faculty member should demonstrate a sustained pattern of career achievement and at minimum one of the following:

- Having a book-length monograph or collection of single-authored essays published or contracted for publication with a recognized university or commercial press that engages in rigorous professional review
- Having a novel, book-length collection of short stories, poetry, or nonfiction published or contracted for publication with a recognized university or commercial press that engages in rigorous professional review
- Having three or more substantial, peer-reviewed articles published or accepted in journals or edited collection significant in the candidate's area of research (including electronic journals)
- Having a half-dozen or more stories, poems, and/or essays published or accepted in nationally prominent literary journals
- Having an edited scholarly edition of an author's work published or accepted for publication with a recognized university or commercial press that engages in rigorous professional review
- Having two or more substantial, peer-reviewed articles published or accepted, plus one or more edited volumes of scholarly essays published or accepted for publication with a recognized university or commercial press that engages in rigorous professional review

Textbooks may be considered substantial when part of a larger pattern of publication. Book reviews, bibliographical entries, conference presentations, readings, and workshops all contribute to a candidate's achievements, but they do not substitute for the requirements listed above.

**SERVICE:** The faculty member should have made significant contributions toward departmental goals both by serving on committees and by contributing time and effort in other ways. Service to the college, the university, the community and the profession are also deemed important. Significant areas of service may include (but are not limited to):

- Advising undergraduate and graduate students
- Mentoring students and faculty
- Serving on undergraduate and graduate committees
- Organizing and facilitating undergraduate, graduate, and/or professional workshops
- Advising student-centered university-related clubs and/or publications

- Judging student writing for department, university, and/or community contests
- Serving on university committees
- Giving talks, lectures, or workshops in the university and/or community
- Serving on editorial boards or committees of professional organizations
- Reviewing manuscripts and articles for journals or commercial presses
- Assisting with recruitment and retention efforts

### **Promotion to Professor**

The Department's recommendation that a faculty member be promoted to the rank of Professor constitutes recognition of the faculty member's importance not just to the department, but also to the profession. It indicates that the faculty member is recognized for significant achievement both inside and outside the university, including by professors, scholars, editors, and/or other experts in the field. Expectations of achievement include those enumerated for promotion to associate, but such publications and other scholarly and creative accomplishments must have grown substantially, both in number and in significance to the profession. Continued publication is expected: at a minimum, the candidate for promotion to full professor should have an additional publication record since promotion to associate. The candidate should have cumulatively published at least three or more substantial, peer-reviewed articles in journals or edited collections significant in the candidate's area of research (including electronic journals) and one single-authored book-length monograph – before or after tenure – for promotion to full professor. To be recommended for the rank of Professor, the faculty member must have achieved demonstrable distinction in relation to others in the same academic or creative field. At the same time, the faculty member should have continued to develop and deepen her/his skills as a master teacher and as a vital part of the department's esprit de corps, maintaining a vital balance among the three areas of teaching, research, and service.

### **Tenure**

Recommendation for the awarding of tenure is an affirmation by the department of the faculty member's continuing place in the department's vision of its long-term goals. Normally, this means achievement in the three areas of teaching, research, and service commensurate with or exceeding requirements for promotion from assistant to associate professor. Meeting the expectations of promotion in academic rank does not necessarily imply the awarding of academic tenure. An award of tenure requires excellence in performance and the promise of continued excellence in teaching, research, and service. While the professional excellence required for the granting of tenure is reflected in the faculty member's teaching, research, and service, it is also reflected in a pattern of good working relationships with colleagues. Fostering good will and generally contributing to the pursuit of common goals, collegiality is an important part of department and university citizenship.

## **Timetable for Departmental Promotion Procedures\***

\*Subject to Dean's calendar in accordance with University calendar:  
<https://www.usm.edu/provost/provosts-calendar>