**General Tips and Considerations for Tenure**

***Office of Academic Affairs – Academic Administration and***

***Faculty Senate Retention, Tenure, Promotion & Appeals Committee***

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There are few, if any, career milestones as important and career-altering as that of tenure in academia. Here at UVU, we want to make sure that every deserving faculty member receives tenure and is able to enjoy the benefits of that milestone. It is with that goal in mind that we, a committee made up of members from Faculty Senate and the Office of Academic Administration, have prepared these guidelines for you to consider as you progress along the tenure process. While useful and important, following these guidelines will not guarantee tenure. However, following them may reduce the likelihood of a deserving faculty member being denied tenure.

* **Understand** – You, the faculty member, have the ultimate responsibility to present your case for tenure. Take the time to fully understand the University tenure policy, University policies, as well as your department tenure documents. If you are unclear as to what is expected of you, seek clarification from your department chair, your department RTP committee, or the SVPAA’s office. Not understanding the requirements for tenure is never a valid defense.
* **Be Proactive** – Don’t wait for someone to tell you to do something, you take charge of the process. If your department chair isn’t providing you the required feedback in the annual evaluation review, you should go to them and demand an evaluation. If they still do not provide it, you should talk to the Dean’s office and so on until it happens. Do not wait for tenure to come to you.
* **Document Everything** – You are putting together your own personal case for tenure. You alone are responsible to provide the necessary evidence to support your case. Per the tenure policy, only evidence provided in the tenure portfolio can be used in tenure decision and you have few opportunities to add evidence to clarify your argument for tenure. If something isn’t in the portfolio, in the eyes of the decision makers, it never happened. However, please understand negative information intentionally left out or unaddressed is a serious issue that may negatively affect the tenure bid. It is best to include negative evidence and address it.
* **Demand Critical Feedback** – Department leaders are our colleagues and often are close friends. This could make it difficult for them to give you honest and critical feedback. You should be very open and frank with your department chair and demand nothing less from them. No professor is perfect, so if your department chair says you have nothing to improve on, demand that they evaluate you more critically. Please remember that the department chair only provides a recommendation and does not make the ultimate tenure decision. You should ensure that the person who knows your work the best is also the most critical and honest about your progress towards tenure.
* **Aim High** – Don’t aim for the minimum, aim high and don’t leave anything to chance. We often comment that if the process is handled properly, the tenure outcome should never be a surprise to the faculty member. By aiming well above the minimum, the outcome will be far more likely to be positive.
* **Ask for Help** – If at any point in the process, you are unsure how to improve and get the needed results, ask for help. Your department chair, your department RTP committee, the Office of Teaching and Learning, and the SVPAA’s office stand ready and willing to help you make any improvements you need. However, don’t procrastinate getting the help. Improvement takes time and the tenure clock is always ticking. The sooner you ask for help, the better your chances of making the necessary improvements.

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Please note that the term “probationary faculty” is a common term in academe that refers to tenure-track faculty who are not yet tenured. It is not a term that applies to faculty members under disciplinary sanction.

This document is to clarify university-level midterm/tenure requirements and expectations only. It does not replace Policy 637, *Faculty Tenure*. Probationary faculty members must contact their Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) committees at least yearly to ensure their activities in teaching, scholarship/creative works, and service are consistent with department and university criteria. They must also make sure to comply with official UVU policies, practices, standards, and *Code of Conduct*. Following all tips and considerations herein does not explicitly or implicitly guarantee the earning of tenure.

**The following areas of emphasis pertain to the UVU Policy 637, *Faculty Tenure*, available at** [**https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/662ac7bc17f6d3cd0ab72374**](https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/662ac7bc17f6d3cd0ab72374) **Please also refer to all policies mentioned as references in Policy 637, i.e., Policy 633, Faculty Annual Reviews, available at** [**https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/662ac6a017f6d3cd0ab72373**](https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/662ac6a017f6d3cd0ab72373)**.**

**UVU policies are informed by the Utah System of Higher Education Board of Regents’ Policy R312, Configuration of the Utah System of Higher Education and Institutional Missions and Roles, available at** [**https://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/**](https://higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/)

**Probationary faculty must also follow the department criteria under which they were hired, unless they have elected to move to an updated criteria, evidenced by written documentation among the probationary faculty member, RTP chair, and department chair, followed by Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs’ (SVPAA) approval of the updated criteria.**

Neither the midterm nor tenure reviews are “hoops to jump through.” As stated in UVU Policy 637, tenure is “[a] condition of continuing employment awarded to qualified faculty members that promotes academic freedom, attracts professionals of ability, and enhances the quality of the University’s academic programs.” Reviews support that process. If there are questions about a faculty member’s fit with the university which have not, to date, been successfully remediated, midterm review becomes an opportunity for the department and the faculty member to separate and explore other opportunities. Those who pass midterm review should understand that tenure review similarly assesses the fit of the individual within the university and each is separate and distinct. One scenario, for example, is if there are questions about the suitability of the institution with the faculty member at the midterm review point, each may choose to continue the relation with the other to see if mutuality can be achieved, yet in some cases the faculty member and institution may instead opt to part ways at a future point.

If a faculty member is unready to submit a tenure portfolio due to extenuating circumstances, Policy 637, Section 5.10.1 allows the faculty member to write a formal request to their department chair to request an extension to the probationary period by March 15 of the faculty member's fifth probationary year. The chair, dean, and SVPAA will weigh in on the request by April 15. Other, extremely rare situations are covered by 637 Section 5.9.2. Please see 637 for further details.

At UVU, tenure is an approving or disapproving recommendation at each level:

* Changes to a probationary faculty member's teaching, research, or service requirements per the department/school/college criteria and university policy must be **in writing** and **approved** by the RTP committee, department chair, dean, SVPAA, and President **before the Board of Trustees’ last meeting of the academic year**.
* No one, not even the Trustees, can grant conditional tenure.
* No one, not even the Trustees, can *verbally* approve a change in tenure requirements, including an extension of the probationary period, for an individual faculty member.
* The SVPAA grants continuation to midterm probationary faculty. No other recommending level can guarantee a faculty member that they will receive continuation.
* The Board of Trustees grants tenure, not the SVPAA or President. No other body can guarantee a faculty member that they will receive tenure.

**The Portfolio (Specific section referrals from Policy 637 are in brackets)**

**Midterm and tenure review portfolios must be complete and organized, demonstrating sustained performance in all three areas and compliance with university policies over the probationary years**. All tabs must have required documents, required evidentiary materials, or an explanation for missing materials upon submission to the RTP committee for review; additional information cannot be added after the initial submission deadline to the RTP committee has passed. Organization of tabs and materials must follow Policy 637 and the tabs as given by Academic Affairs. All forms requiring signatures must have signatures from the date on which they took place.

* + Materials should fit in a four-inch binder. Faculty members should not feel as if they must give every possible piece of evidential minutiae *to Academic Affairs* to prove they improved teaching, submitted/published/performed scholarly/creative works, or served on committees. If a faculty member has an article published, for example, the acceptance letter OR the first few pages of the article is enough for *Academic Affairs*. Departments and programs may require additional materials as determined by their criteria, for example, entire articles [5.5.1]. We recommend these be placed in a flash drive attached securely to the portfolio with the faculty member maintaining back-up copies. At this time, security in the cloud is lacking.
	+ Do not use plastic sleeves unless holding non-standard sized/shaped evidence and even in that case use them sparingly. We recommend you instead tape the evidence to a standard sized piece of paper or find an alternative means of demonstration.

**Detailed table of contents listing every entry in the portfolio** [5.5.1 1] Faculty members do a lot of work leading up to the request for tenure. Portfolios must be organized well so that they’re readable to recommenders. It is not the responsibility of recommenders to search for and find information within a portfolio. Academic Affairs’ tabs are only a starting point, corresponding to the requirements of the portfolio. Most faculty members include sub-tabs such as, “Engaged Learning,” “Syllabi,” “Publications,” “Exhibits,” and “Departmental Service.” We highly recommend you include a table of contents as well as a short overview at the start of every chapter detailing what is found in that chapter, including an ordered list of the items therein.

**The “Brief Statement”** [5.5.1 2] requires faculty members to explain how they have contributed to their professions and to UVU, how well they met departmental expectations, issues that contributed to their success or posed particular difficulties, whether or not they have complied with all official policies/practices/standards and the *Code of Conduct*, and other information important to bring to the attention of readers. In terms of difficulties, do not include information on medical, family, or other protected issues, but only on general obstacles that had enough impact on the time during tenure to have become an issue.

**The CV** [5.5.1 3] needs to be complete (including dates when activities took place), up to date, and organized in an academic manner, geared toward a teaching institution. There are examples in the job advice categories of the Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Ed. CVs must never include protected personal information such as SSN, date of birth, family information, church status, etc.

**Evidence of Achievements in TEACHING** [5.5.1 4]

An less-than-effective teacher should not expect tenure at UVU. That would be contrary to the university’s state mandated mission. Examples of engaged teaching/learning are required per the SVPAA’s and President’s letter of February 2011. Faculty members must check with their school/college or departmental RTP for acceptable examples of engagement in their disciplines. If the criteria do not list any, faculty members must still include evidence of engaged pedagogy. Faculty must be sure to follow all UVU policies, procedures as well as college/school and department practices regarding teaching.

Faculty members must be committed to their positions at UVU. A faculty member who works at another college/university during the academic year is often considered to be involved in a conflict of commitment, especially if that faculty member has release time from UVU or is claiming difficulty in achieving tenure goals at UVU. Faculty members working at another institution (educational or otherwise) must contact the Compliance Office immediately to manage or resolve any conflict.

*Self-assessment of teaching performance and experience* is not a teaching philosophy, it is a reflection on the past years’ teaching performance and experience. Tenure candidates should take the opportunity to explain how they assess their teaching effectiveness, how their research has informed their teaching, and how and why their teaching has changed over the years—basically, how they have helped the university fulfill its mission and core themes.

*Supervisor assessment of the faculty member’s teaching* means the department chair conducts in-person reviews of and assesses the teaching of all probationary faculty members. Chairs cannot make only hearsay-based statements on the faculty member’s teaching, though chairs can report issues students bring to them about a faculty member’s teaching. Supervisor reviews of teaching can be included as part of the annual review providing the review of teaching is comprehensive. In such cases, faculty members must place a note in the “supervisor review” tab stating that the chair’s review of their teaching is in the annual review.

*Peer review of teaching* in each the midterm review and final portfolios. While Academic Affairs values teaching reviews from colleagues/peers, the Office of Teaching and Learning’s SCOT, POET, teaching mentors, and other programs providing unbiased reviews with constructive criticism are even more helpful. Currently, most colleague/peer reviews seem to be along the lines of “you write something nice about my class, I do the same for you.” The most legitimate peer or third-party evaluations are those that take place over several class periods over a course and/or use the last 10-15 minutes of class to hold a focus group with students. All peer reviews must include how the pedagogy fits or does not fit into the university, department, and discipline missions and outcomes, and areas in which the faculty member is succeeding and areas in which the faculty member can improve.

*Student Ratings of Instructor (SRIs) from all courses taught during the evaluation period means* that all individual course SRIs from all courses taught during the probationary years must be included. Portfolios must contain the individual SRIs as printed out in the university system. Faculty members cannot only submit aggregate course sections or leave out those they consider statistically insignificant. Faculty members may create tables, charts, or summaries, but those are not replacements for the actual University SRIs. In cases where course sections are so large that SRIs may take up hundreds of pages in the portfolio, the candidate may consider putting all SRIs on a flashdrive securely connected to the portfolio, ensuring they also keep a back-up.

* If a course’s overall (SRI) score is below 4.3, the rating is not at or above the university course SRI average. The current university average for courses is 4.3. Anything under 4.0 is in a low percentile.

*Evidence of contributions to department curriculum and course development* means demonstrating that the probationary faculty member developed new courses (including internet, hybrid, or large-section courses), significantly re-created several older courses or a program/emphasis, or helped develop a new program, major, or emphasis.

*Professional development related to teaching*

* PD includes participating in such events as workshops, learning circles, orientations and trainings; regional, national, or international teaching conferences, institutes, workshops, and trainings; among others. PD may also include providing teaching "leadership" (e.g., revamping area curricula, leading an OTL event, organizing a teaching conference or workshop). Most faculty members reflect in their teaching statements on how these events have helped their pedagogy.
	+ Departments may differ between attendance at and participation in such events. Faculty members must consult their RTP criteria for details.
* Trying new pedagogies with new technologies or methods is valuable, particularly when the faculty member reflects thoughtfully upon student and peer feedback about the impact of these efforts. Faculty members should alert their RTP and department chairs when trying something radically new or innovative so that the chair can visit the course and provide feedback that helps put into context any negative student feedback.
* We understand that departments have specific criteria for research.  Faculty members who engage in pedagogical research are highly encouraged to consult with their RTP committees to determine whether such research falls under the teaching or research tabs.

*Other evidence related to teaching* Often, faculty members believe SRIs are the “end all and be all” of evidence of effective teaching. While SRIs are mentioned specifically in Policy 637, departments can request that faculty members show additional material demonstrating successful teaching or efforts to improve teaching. Examples of evidence that Academic Affairs considers seriously (various departmental RTP criteria may have additional examples or requirements):

* mentoring multiple students accepted to UCUR or NCUR or who co-present at national or international disciplinary conferences or require supervision and mentoring for honors, interdisciplinary studies, or capstone theses outside the candidate’s department/program
* teaching official internet, hybrid, or large courses; teaching at physical satellites; interdisciplinary teaching; teaching official service learning courses; or teaching in another program (e.g., Honors)
* teaching awards. Nominations for teaching awards are not enough evidence.

What it isn’t

* Teaching at other institutions *while at* UVU is not pedagogy related to UVU. All probationary activities in the portfolio must be directly related to the faculty member’s position at UVU. Faculty with years toward tenure must check with their RTP committee to determine whether they must include pre-UVU materials.
* Advising undergraduate or graduate theses at another university is not pedagogy related to UVU.
* Non-credit non-academic courses paid by CE or other non-academic units do not count as they are not taught as part of a workload or program.
* Substitute teaching, student teaching (as part of pursuing a degree), delivering a lecture to another faculty member’s course, etc. are not “teaching.”
* Thank you notes from students weigh very little in Academic Affairs’ evaluation process. Other forms of evidence of teaching effectiveness are far more helpful.

**Evidence of SCHOLARLY AND/OR CREATIVE WORKS** [5.5.1 5]

*such as publications, presentations, performances, exhibits*

* Research and creative works at UVU must pertain to the faculty member’s position AND discipline and “complement[] the teaching role” [Regents Policy R312.7.1.2]. In the rare cases where faculty members change disciplines, the faculty member must work very closely with the appropriate chair to ensure activities are appropriate.
* Research/scholarship/creative activities are identifiable by their ability to be measured through a legitimate peer-review process, e.g., conference presentation, juried performance, publication, juried exhibits, etc.
	+ There are increasing numbers of predatory journals/conferences. Candidates are responsible for publishing legitimate peer-reviewed materials and committees are responsible for knowing the legitimate sites/publishers for their disciplines.
	+ Academic Affairs doesn't read entire manuscripts of articles or books. We look at the first few pages at most. Before including an entire book, consult RTP criteria and ask the RTP committee whether it wants the book or a representative sample such as a chapter.

*discipline-related professional development*

* **Attending** conferences, seminars, webinars, including those at UVU, etc., do not generally count, according to the majority of departmental RTP documents. Please check RTP criteria and committee for further clarification as to how these fit into tenure.
* Membership in an organization doesn’t count as research or professional development, as being a member does not in itself demonstrate scholarly activity or development.
* IRB CITI training is professional development if part of a research project.

What it isn’t

* Creating content for new preps is part of teaching, not research, unless it is part of a larger research/scholarship/creative works agenda.
* Having a paid job at another company--excluding externships--is not research unless it contributes to a relevant and evidence-based research project related to UVU’s mission and has been approved through a conflict of interest and an appropriate management plan with UVU’s Office of Compliance.
* Guest lecturing or substituting for another faculty member is not research or service.
* Mandatory HR trainings are not scholarship or creative works or discipline-related professional development, they are legally required conditions of employment compliance.
* "Who's Who" or related types of directories are not research or awards.
* Any self-published manuscripts **shall** be vetted by the school/college or department RTP committee as part of the RTP process per UVU Policy 606.

**Evidence of Discipline-related SERVICE to Department, College/School, University, Profession, and Community** [5.5.1 6]

* Service must be “clearly related to the faculty role at UVU,” “in support of the mission of the University” and “complement the teaching role.”
	+ Service as members of religious institutions, civil institutions (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Russian Historians Imbibing Spirits), and other organizations directly unrelated to the University mission and/or the job as a faculty member at UVU are not service. Presenting to such organizations as a member of UVU may be considered community service under some RTP criteria. Faculty members must check with the committee before counting such service.
* There must be evidence of service at departmental, school/college, and university levels. “University level” serves the entire university, such as UPAC, Faculty Senate, University Communications Committee, Academic Technology Steering Committee, International Compliance Committee, etc.
	+ *Selection* to serve on a committee is not evidence of service. Faculty members on committees must have letters of service from the committee chair or provide other evidence of activity on a committee.
* Service to the profession/discipline includes sitting on editorial boards of legitimate peer-reviewed journals, participation in conference organization, holding a discipline related position in professional organization, etc.
	+ Memberships, except in distinguished cases that also represent awards (e.g., National Academy of Science, Nobel, etc.), rarely represent service to a discipline or organization. Activity as members (e.g. serving in office, on central committees) is more valuable.
* Academic Affairs doesn't read recommendation letters from religious personnel, business acquaintances, or other individuals unrelated to the faculty member's position at UVU. If they are part of a faculty member’s assigned service in community outreach, they should have a letter from the organizational leadership stating what service to the organization was provided and when.
* Coordinating a program or emphasis *may* be considered service. Departments distinguish between "active" programs (those with a large number of students in unique--not cross-listed--courses, several high enrolled courses per semester, etc.) and "non-active" programs (those with few students or with low-enrolled courses), awarding service to the heads of active programs. Check with the departmental RTP committee for clarification.

What it isn’t

* Attending faculty meetings (e.g., Convocation, graduation, department meetings) is not service; it is part of a faculty member’s responsibility as a member of a department and is more appropriately noted in annual reviews.
* Do not include peer reviews of colleagues. It is a violation of colleagues’ privacy.
* Mandatory sexual harassment, other HR-required training, and filling out the conflict of interest form is not service, it is compliance with the responsibilities of employment.
* Finding adjuncts when not a coordinator is not service. When done as coordinator, it is part of the release time or stipend for coordinating a program.
* Serving as an advisor for another college's/university's club is not service.
* Advising undergraduate theses at another university is rarely service unless part of an unpaid but official program evaluation team. Advising masters theses is considered professional service in some disciplines. Faculty with such service must check with the RTP committee to see whether it counts.
* Writing letters of recommendation for students is not service; departments report that it is considered part of the faculty member’s preparation and assessment workload.
* Non-credit CE courses aren’t service because they are compensated separately.

**Annual Reviews (see also Policy 633, Faculty Annual Reviews, available at** [**https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/5750dd3097e4c89872d9564b**](https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/662ac6a017f6d3cd0ab72373)**)**: The annual review process is the main method for the department to give probationary faculty members feedback as to whether they are on track for tenure. Faculty annual reviews must reflect the department’s and university’s tenure criteria and compliance with university policies and procedures. The annual review must be signed by the chair at the time of the review [5.5.2 1]. Rebuttals to annual reviews must also be included in the portfolio. A missing annual review may result in a negative tenure recommendation from the SVPAA. A Conflict of Interest Form must be attached to the appropriate annual review on file with the Compliance Office and a copy of the completion certificate for mandatory HR training on sexual harassment and discrimination. ***These are placed into the file by the RTP committee chair.***

* A missing or extremely late annual review is serious and should be addressed immediately. If a chair is unwilling or unable to fulfill their responsibility under Policy 633, Annual Review, Sections 4.1 and 5.1.6, the dean should be contacted immediately. If a faculty member refuses to participate in the annual review process by the deadline established, the review “does not meet expectations” because it does not exist [633 5.1.3].

**A copy of the department tenure criteria and a copy of the university tenure policy** [5.5.2 2] ***These are placed into the file by the RTP committee chair.***

**Solicited peer evaluations:** [5.5.2 3] Solicited and added by the RTP committee, (falling outside 5.5.1 4), these evaluations look at the whole career of the UVU faculty member but should focus on teaching, consistent with UVU’s mission. Some departments require that probationary faculty members have their portfolios go to peer-reviewers at other institutions. The reviewers’ identities may not be released to the faculty member unless during an appeal. Check with departmental RTP committee to determine whether a solicited peer review is required. ***These are placed into the file by the RTP committee chair.***

Many faculty members include “solicited peer evaluations” of friends and colleagues inside and outside UVU who support their bid for tenure. These are not appropriate because they were not solicited by the RTP committee. They should not be included.

* Some department criteria accept letters from collaborators on discipline-related projects as evidence of work in progress. Faculty members must consult their RTP criteria to determine whether this type of evidence is appropriate.

**All reviews of the candidate at each level**—RTP Chair through President—are added as each completes their review of the candidate’s portfolio.

**After the Dean’s review**, the dean shall send a copy of their recommendation along with all other recommendations to that point to the probationary faculty member, per Policy 637, Section 5.7.6. The candidate may respond in writing to any or all recommendations, due to the dean’s office by November 14. Any response shall be included in the portfolio as it goes to the SVPAA.

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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF RTP COMMITTEES, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS, AND DEANS WHEN LOOKING AT THE PORTFOLIO AND**

**WRITING THE RECOMMENDATION LETTERS**

Portfolios

* Each level has a responsibility to make sure that files are complete and contain all required materials per departmental/school criteria and university criteria. The Office of Academic Affairs will not ask for missing documents, as it is the responsibility of the candidate to make sure that all required and other evidentiary materials are present in the portfolios.
	+ Per Policy 637, Section 5.7.3, the RTP committee is the only body that may ask the candidate or peers for additional information clarifying the portfolio, but must do so in a timely manner so that the complete portfolio is given to the department chair by October 7.
	+ Per Section 5.7.6, a faculty member may respond to recommendations.
* Supervisor and faculty signatures on annual reviews must take place during the period they cover.
* Files must be well-organized. It is not the responsibility of any recommending level to search for materials that may or may not be there.
* Any required materials missing after the RTP committee’s report, such as SRIs, peer reviews, etc., will very likely result in a negative recommendation by a supervisory level.

Recommendation Letters, General

* Candor is expected and critical. (5.5.4.5)
* Recommending a postponement of the continuation decision is not allowed under policy and will be rejected.
* Recommending a postponement of the tenure decision, remediation along with tenure, or conditional tenure are not allowed under policy and will be rejected.
* Do not rely on administration up the chain to “read between the lines” of a letter or “understand the backstory” and deny a candidate continuation or tenure. RTP committees, department chairs, and deans must make tough but necessary decisions.
	+ Many RTP committee members and chairs have reported that they’re nervous to deny and get sued by an angry former colleague. As long as RTP members, a chair, dean—or any decision-maker at UVU—act in good faith when making a tenure decision, the university provides the committee members and chairs with legal protection.
	+ If/when any level disagrees with the level preceding’s recommendation, the recommender **shall provide an explanation** as to why they have gone against a previous level’s recommendation. (5.6.5)
	+ If writing a negative recommendation, do not tell the next level that the committee or supervisor is sure the candidate will do a great job elsewhere or similar niceties—it can create confusion as to why they could not do a great job at UVU.
* Make sure that the letter is signed by the appropriate recommender

RTP Report, as stated in 637, Sections 5.6.4.3 - 5.6.4.5

* In the case of midterm review, the RTP committee shall recommend for or against retention of the faculty member in a **detailed** report.
* If the RTP committee has asked for additional clarifying documentation and the candidate did not provide it, the RTP letter may state as much.
* The report shall provide detailed comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the faculty member relative to the department tenure criteria (informed by University policies and Policy 637) in the three areas of teaching, scholarship/creative works, and service, and any other relevant departmental criteria.
* “Faculty are selected, retained, and promoted primarily on the basis of evidence of effective teaching. Additional criteria include scholarly, professional and creative achievements, and service that complements the teaching role.” [Regents Policy 312, Section 7.1.2]
* The report shall include the vote tally that led to the final decision.
* If the decision is to retain the probationary faculty member, the report shall provide comments and recommendations concerning the faculty member’s progress toward tenure. A lack of recommendations for improvement will be regarded suspiciously as all faculty members can make improvements, even if minor.
* Candor is expected and critical in the letters.

Chair and Dean Recommendation Letters

* Letters should not be a rehashing of the other levels’ letters. Each letter must represent an independent evaluation of the portfolio.
* Be clear in the first paragraph of the tenure recommendation letter as to whether the candidate is being recommended or denied for continuation (third year review) or tenure.
* Letters must be clear and detailed. The best way to achieve this is to give the recommendation and then paragraphs corresponding to compliance, teaching, scholarship/creative works, service, any department-specific criteria (if applicable), compliance with University policies, and finally a conclusion with the overall evaluation re-iterated. Letters must be definitive as they will not be allowed to be revised.
* Recommendations that disagree with those made at a previous level of review shall be explained, per Policy 637, Section 5.6.5.
* The dean must deliver a copy of the solicited peer evaluations (with names redacted) and the recommendations of the RTP committee, department chair, and dean to the candidate by November 7. “Delivery” typically means electronic copy sent on the appropriate date followed by hard copy or hard copy sent by certified mail. The candidate must respond by November 14.

**CHECKLIST BASED ON POLICY 637**

**Faculty member adds:**

\_\_\_\_\_ A detailed table of contents listing every entry in the portfolio

\_\_\_\_\_ Faculty member’s brief statement describing 1) the nature of their contribution to the profession and to the University, 2) the extent to which department expectations were met, 3) any circumstances that helped or hindered their progress, and 4) any other information that shall be beneficial to the reviewers in evaluating the material in the portfolio

\_\_\_\_\_ A current curriculum vitae

**TEACHING**

\_\_\_\_\_ Self-assessment of the faculty member’s teaching performance and experiences

\_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor assessment of teaching

\_\_\_\_\_ Peer assessments of teaching

\_\_\_\_\_ Students Ratings of Instructor (SRI) from all courses taught during evaluation period

\_\_\_\_\_ Evidence of contributions to curriculum and course development,

\_\_\_\_\_ Professional development related to teaching, and

\_\_\_\_\_ Any other evidence related to teaching, as determined by department criteria

**SCHOLARSHIP/CREATIVE WORKS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Evidence of scholarly and/or creative works, such as publications, presentations, performances, and discipline-related professional development

**DISCIPLINE RELATED SERVICE**

\_\_\_\_\_ department

\_\_\_\_\_ college/school

\_\_\_\_\_ University

\_\_\_\_\_ profession

\_\_\_\_\_ community

**The RTP committee chair adds**:

\_\_\_\_\_ Copies of the faculty member’s annual reviews from the evaluation period,

\_\_\_\_\_ Departmental and University tenure criteria

\_\_\_\_\_ all solicited peer evaluations (these are NOT to be known by the faculty member, per Policy 637, Section 5.6.4.2)

**Reviews of the candidate**

\_\_\_\_\_ RTP committee, with vote tally \_\_\_\_\_ department chair

\_\_\_\_\_ dean \_\_\_\_\_ SVPAA

\_\_\_\_\_ President of the University

**FAQ**

What if no one ever assigned me a mentor?

While departments should assign a mentor to new faculty members, it is not a requirement. It is also incumbent upon probationary faculty members to ask the department chair and RTP chair or committee members for guidance on finding individuals who can help the probationary faculty member navigate the tenure process.

What if the chair or RTP committee never reached out to me to help me?

Chairs are reminded to reach out per UVU Policy 637, however, after that initial period may not be as helpful as candidates would like. It is also incumbent upon probationary faculty members to ask the department chair and RTP chair or committee members for guidance. If the department chair is unwilling to help, the probationary faculty member should reach out to their dean and SVPAA for assistance.

What happens if I do not have or cannot find required documents?

Missing required documents will result in recommendations against continuation or tenure. That said, if a document was completed when required, but cannot be found, please contact the individual who has the original to reproduce the document. If that individual does not have a copy, it falls to the probationary faculty member for failing to preserve the document.

What happens if I cannot meet the deadline date?

Continuation or tenure will be denied unless approved far ahead of the due date per 637, Sections 5.9.2 or 5.10. There are no extensions granted outside these parameters.

What happens if my chair does not conduct an annual review and sign it during the appropriate year?

Chairs are required to conduct annual reviews per Policy 633, Faculty Annual Reviews, Section 4.1. If a chair refuses to conduct an annual review by the due date in 633, the probationary faculty member should report the issue immediately to the dean, who has the responsibility to hold the chair accountable, as appropriate.

What happens if the RTP committee disagrees on my file and gives me a split vote?

The vote is tallied and presented in the committee’s report. Subsequent recommending levels will read the report and take it into account, but each level determines its recommendation independently.

What happens if any level recommends against me earning tenure?

If it’s at the dean’s level or below, you will have the opportunity to respond in writing, per Policy 637, Section 5.7.6. If the SVPAA and/or president recommends against granting tenure, but the Board of Trustees grants tenure, there is nothing more to do--you have earned tenure. If the Board denies tenure, even if it is the only body to do so, you may appeal per Policy 646, Faculty Appeals for Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (see below).

Why would levels above the RTP committee disagree with the RTP committee?

Recommending levels are not bound to agree with any previous level. Each level has a different role to play in ensuring probationary faculty have fulfilled their departmental, college/school, and university criteria and policy-related responsibilities.

What happens if there is disagreement about my file among the levels?

Once the dean has completed their recommendation, such files will be given to the Faculty Senate Tenure Advisory Committee to give their advisement to the Senior Vice President of Academic Administration, per Policy 637, Sections 5.7.8 - 5.7.10. The advice of the Committee is not binding, but is taken seriously in the SVPAA’s decision to recommend for or against tenure.

What is my recourse if the Board of Trustees denies me tenure?

You may appeal via Policy 646, available at [https://policy.uvu.edu/getPolicyFile/646\_Faculty%20Appeals%20for%20Retention%20Tenure%20and%20Promotion\_04-15-2010\_563a42fc65db23201153c286.pdf](https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/66e375de7d8aab1f7a68d367)