

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

TENURE CRITERIA

This document sets forth the specific expectations for tenure in the Department of Communication at Utah Valley University. A tenure candidate should thoroughly review UVU Policy 637, Faculty Tenure (<http://uvu.edu/policies/officialpolicy/policies/show/policyid/185>), which provides many of the tenure requirements, expectations, and deadlines. In the event of a conflict between the criteria listed here and those in university policy, the university policy supersedes the provisions of this document.

General

Decisions to promote faculty members and to award tenure are the most important made by the Department, for they determine the quality of the faculty for decades to come. Because tenure has consequences of long life and great magnitude, **it should be awarded only when the best interest of the Department is clearly served by doing so.** This is the overriding criterion.

Questions to address in determining the best interest of the Department in regard to a particular candidate's application for tenure include:

- *Will the candidate improve the overall quality of the Department's faculty and program?*
- *Will the Department be better able to improve itself by granting tenure, or by hiring anew?*
- *Is the candidate likely to maintain or improve his or her contributions to the Department over the long period of time typically involved in a tenured appointment?*

The Department should not accept a lifetime obligation if there is serious doubt on any of these points.

As the expertise and abilities of faculty members are unique, their respective paths to retention, tenure, and promotion will be unique. The RTP Committee decision of whether to recommend retention, promotion, or tenure will be based on a holistic evaluation of the candidate's entire tenure file, not on a system of numerical points or percentages. The Committee may decide to consider work performed prior to hire, particularly (but not exclusively) if the candidate was granted credit for years worked toward tenure at the time of hire. This should be part of the negotiations the candidate carries out with the RTP Committee during the annual meeting.

The university mandates three general areas of tenure responsibility: teaching, service, and scholarship. **Applicants must be rated, at a minimum, "good" in two areas and "excellent" in a third in order to be awarded tenure.** The three areas need not be treated equally. Their relative weights should reflect the focus, role, and job description of the applicant.

Teaching

The department prides itself on the quality of its teaching and places a high priority on it. Following university-wide policy, every candidate must have every class evaluated through SRIs (student ratings of instructors) every semester. Additionally, the department offers its own, more tailored, intradepartmental student evaluations, which candidates may also utilize. (If student

evaluation systems break down, as they occasionally do, and student evaluations are missing from files, candidates should include explanations as to why.) Candidates should demonstrate, not only positive evaluations, but an earnest process of self-reflection and development over time which incorporates learning from the self-evaluation process.

Other evidence of achievement and professional growth in teaching might also include:

- SCOT evaluations. (Trained student evaluators offered by University development)
- Course-wide learning outcomes assessment
- Receipt of teaching awards.
- Receipt of faculty development grants to support innovations in teaching.
- Publication of teaching materials (including textbooks or book chapters)
- Development and management of seminars and workshops for colleagues who want to enhance or improve their teaching skills.
- Appointment/election to leadership roles in teaching- related activities of professional associations.
- Development/enrichment of new courses or programs.
- Being asked to serve as a visiting teacher at another institution.
- Annual peer or supervisor classroom evaluations
- Supervisor classroom observations
- Attending seminars/conferences aimed at improving pedagogy
- Unsolicited letters from former students

Collegiality in Teaching. Given that collegiality is necessary to forward the teaching objectives of the university, the RTP Committee and others reviewing the candidate's work should also consider the candidates commitment to the department's teaching objectives. Evidence of collegiality related to teaching should indicate that the candidate:

- Adheres to subject matter and course objectives as stated in course catalogs and syllabi
- Encourages the free pursuit of learning in an atmosphere of civility, and respect for the rights of all students
- Accepts reasonable teaching assignments
- Fulfilling requests to create new courses to meet department needs

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SERVICE

A principal expectation of all faculty members is that they make meaningful contributions to the wide range of constituencies of concern to the department. Criteria for judging such service contributions will include, but not be limited to:

- Serving on an editorial board of a scholarly journal
- Reviewing manuscripts considered for publication (journals, conference papers, or books) for academic or professional conferences
- Participating as a panelist at national, regional, or local conference
- Development of seminars and workshops pertaining to department disciplines
- Active participation in the appropriate academic or professional organizations
- Receipt of service grants, honors and awards
- Service to the department, college, and university in the form of committee membership or leadership

- Advising or assisting student organizations
- Community service within the disciplines encompassed by the department or college
- Professional contributions through services as an officer, committee chair or other administrative responsibility in appropriate scholarly and/or professional organizations
- Professional achievement in professional fields represented by department.
- Work in professional positions in the communications industry during summers or leave time or, with the approval of the dean, part-time during a regular term
- Textbooks (unless used as evidence of teaching)

Collegiality in Service. Collegiality may be considered as it relates to the service needs of the department and college. Candidates are encouraged to:

- Take one's "turn" in the committee assignments of the department and college.
- Show a willingness to serve on committees and task forces at the college or institutional level when called upon or when one's expertise can make a positive contribution
- Attend department and other required meetings regularly.
- Mentor junior faculty as needed in matters pertaining to retention and tenure

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In evaluating teaching and/or service, the following ratings will be used:

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| Superior: | Candidate's teaching/service is among the best in the unit. |
| Excellent: | Candidate's teaching/service is above the average for the unit. |
| Good: | Candidate's teaching is near or at the average for the unit. |
| Fair: | Candidate's teaching/service is lower than the average for the unit. |
| Unsatisfactory: | Candidate's teaching/service is well below the average for the unit. |

SCHOLARSHIP/CREATIVE WORK

Faculty members are expected to contribute to the knowledge base from which they teach, and research/creative contributions must be disseminated in order to have impact. Documentation of research/creative works and publication productivity includes, but is not limited to:

- Letters from outside reviewers (when assessing publications which are not peer-reviewed)
- Reprints and copies of work published, in press, or under review
- Copies of presentations given at academic or professional meetings
- Copies of research grants submitted (funded research grants will receive greater weight)
- Copies of proprietary research reports completed in the faculty member's role of consultant
- Awards and honors for research
 - Creative projects or publications that demonstrate innovative ideas or techniques and contribute to professional growth in the field
- Industry awards for creative work

The following general criteria influence the assessment of published scholarship:

- Quality and quantity are considered, but the minimum should reflect the workload of the faculty and the quantity of work at similar teaching universities
- Academic books (related to the discipline) rank higher than monographs, which are perceived as more significant than articles in journals and book chapters, which are deemed more important than papers/creative works presented at scholarly meetings
- Peer-reviewed publications rank higher than non-reviewed publications
- Creative professional work (such as published books, news reporting across media, or professional publications) may be ranked based on value to national or regional interests and as relevant to disciplines within the department

Collegiality in Scholarly and Creative Works. Collegiality may be considered as it relates to the scholarly objectives of the department and college. Candidates are encouraged to:

- Show due respect for the ideas, perspectives, experiences, and scholarly and creative work of others
- When called upon to evaluate the work of others, do so willingly and with professional objectivity

In evaluating research/creative work and publication, the following rankings will be used:

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| Superior: | Candidate's research/creative work and publication ranks in quality/quantity with that of the best colleagues of the same rank in the same discipline at like universities. |
| Excellent: | Candidate's research/creative work and publication is recognizably higher in quality/quantity than most colleagues of the same rank in the same discipline at like universities. |
| Good: | Candidate's research/creative work and publication compares favorably in quality/quantity with that of most colleagues of the same rank in the same discipline at like universities. |
| Fair: | Candidate's research/creative work and publication is recognizably less in quality/quantity than that of most colleagues of the same rank in the same discipline at like universities. |
| Unsatisfactory: | Candidate's research/creative work and publication ranks well below the quality/quantity of most colleagues of the same rank in the same discipline at like universities. |

It is recommended that applicants who's work is not peer-reviewed work with the T&P Committee to find qualified faculty at no fewer than three sister universities to assess the caliber of the candidate's research or creative works relative to what is expected at these other institutions. All solicited letters (whether or not feedback is positive) must be included in the file as evidence of the quality of candidate's work.