

Stephen F. Austin State University
College of Fine Arts

Promotion and Tenure

March 2019 (Previously revised 2012)

Candidates for promotion or tenure should also refer to the following documents that parallel this policy-

Tenure (7.29) <<http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/tenure.pdf>>
Academic Promotion (7.4) <<http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-promotion.pdf>>,
and Timetables and Action Protocols <http://finearts.sfasu.edu/faculty_info.php>

Philosophy:

Promotion and tenure are two of the most important processes for defining the nature and profile of a school, a college, and a university. As a faculty deliberates and debates the value of granting tenure and/or awarding an academic promotion to a colleague—the process, the debate, and the recommendation must be fair, equitable, reasoned, and justifiable. To these ends, the following expectations are held for all ranks:

The dean will make a positive recommendation to the provost/vice president for academic affairs only after a positive assessment of the candidate's conformance to "Standards for Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work; and Service for Use in Decisions Regarding Merit, Tenure and Promotion" as defined respectively by the Schools of Art, Music, or Theatre. In the process of achieving these School standards, candidates are also expected to simultaneously demonstrate excellence in the following College standards:

1. Currency in the field of instruction.

Evidence of currency may be demonstrated in various ways including, but not limited to:

- a. Juried exhibitions.
- b. Invitations by a professional organization to perform, lead, direct, discuss, present, moderate, serve as panelist, etc.
- c. Publication in professional newsletter or journal.

The following also demonstrate currency, although these lack the stature of those above:

- a. Attendance at conferences.
- b. Reading professional journals.
- c. Attending events related to the discipline.

2. **Teaching effectiveness.**

Evidence of teaching effectiveness may be demonstrated in various ways including, but not limited to:

- a. Student evaluations.
- b. Student achievement (performances, productions, shows, etc.) resulting from instruction, or success of graduates.
- c. Success of students in honors and awards (Dean's Award, Aria/Concerto Competition, Undergraduate Research Top Scholar, etc.)

Evidence of teaching effectiveness may also be demonstrated through knowledge obtained by the director and/or dean through various means including video recordings of teaching, direct observations, or mentor evaluations.

The purpose of mentor evaluations and/or observation is to confirm, first hand, the level of quality as reported in student and colleague evaluations. If direct observation of teaching is called for, this will be scheduled in advance (by the mentor, director, or dean). Scheduling will include discussion of the nature of teaching to be observed, the goals of the instructor, and the pedagogical strategies intended. After the observation, the observer(s) will meet again with the instructor to discuss the extent to which instructional goals were accomplished. In no case shall these observations be the sole means of assessing teaching effectiveness.

3. **Supporting the mission** of the candidate's school, the College of Fine Arts, and the University. This may be demonstrated through a host of achievements, including acceptance into SFA's Bright Ideas Conference (or SOAR Conference), election or appointment to School committees, College committees (Fine Arts Council), and University committees (Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, etc.).
4. **Engagement in one's discipline** as demonstrated by THREE external evaluations. Processes for identifying external evaluators are outlined below in "Procedure 2." Instructions and questions submitted to external evaluators are summarized below in "Procedure 3" and available in detail from the dean. Note that this criterion is only for tenure applications, or for promotion to the rank of associate professor or professor.

Expectations for Specific Ranks

Also see Academic Appointments and Titles, policy 7.2

<http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appointments-and-titles.pdf>

| Rank | Expectations | Eligibility for | |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| | | Tenure | Promotion |
| Professor | <p>A sustained and distinguished record of significant scholarly/creative accomplishments, effective teaching, and service to the academic and general communities.</p> <p>Must demonstrate excellence in all categories appropriate to promotion: teaching, research and/or scholarly/creative accomplishments, and service.</p> <p>The individual is recognized as an authority within the profession as demonstrated by his/her credentials and wide recognition of his/her work.</p> | If appointed at this rank- mandatory application for tenure as specified in contract. | N/A |
| Associate Professor | <p>A proven record of research/creative accomplishments, effective teaching, and service to the academic and general communities.</p> <p>Must demonstrate excellence in teaching and excellence in either research /scholarly/creative accomplishments or in service. At least satisfactory performance shall be demonstrated in the other category.</p> <p>Associate professors typically have national recognition, although they may not yet be considered an authority.</p> | If appointed at this rank- mandatory application for tenure as specified in contract. | May apply for promotion after five successful years at this rank. |
| Assistant Professor | <p>Demonstration of the capability to produce research/creative accomplishments, teach effectively, and provide service to the academic and general communities.</p> <p>Usually, this is the entry-level rank for the individual holding a terminal degree. Credentials at this rank typically demonstrate membership in national organizations and achievement regionally that has potential and aspirations of national visibility.</p> | If appointed at this rank or promoted from instructor- mandatory application for tenure as specified in contract. | May apply for promotion concurrently with tenure. |
| Instructor | <p>May be appointed without a terminal degree but with contract provisions specifying completion date.</p> <p>Credentials at this rank also typically demonstrate membership in national organizations. However, work may be more directed toward completion of the terminal degree, and be more locally or regional oriented.</p> | Not eligible for tenure. | May be promoted after completion of terminal degree. |
| Lecturer | <p>A full-time, nine-month appointment for an individual who has not completed a terminal degree.</p> | Not eligible. | Not eligible to apply for promotion. But, may be reappointed at higher rank. |
| Adjunct | <p>A full-time or part-time appointment on a semester-by-semester basis. This category is used to fill temporary vacancies, or fill instructional needs beyond what can be covered by standard faculty loads.</p> | Not eligible. | Not eligible. |

Procedure

Also see Timetables and Action Protocols <http://finearts.sfasu.edu/faculty_info.php>

- 1) By March 31 of the spring semester preceding the submission of application for promotion or tenure, the faculty candidate will submit a draft portfolio to the director. Soon after this (and before the end of the academic year), the director will initiate a meeting with the candidate and the dean. The purpose of the meeting is to informally discuss and openly examine the process. In addition, the director and the dean will discuss further requirements for preparation of the promotion/tenure portfolio, and the preparation of the three portfolios (to be sent to external evaluators). The dean will review the candidate's portfolio in detail and present suggestions for refinement.

Each candidate must apply for tenure according to the date specified on the initial contract from the provost's office. Applicants have the option of also applying for promotion, although consideration for tenure and promotion are considered separately.

- 2) By August 15 preceding the submission of the application for promotion or tenure, the candidate will submit to the school director the names and contact information for five external professionals in the same field as the candidate.

The intent of the external evaluations is to obtain an objective assessment of the candidate's credentials. The external reviewers should be professionals in the field or be teaching (or have taught) art, music, or theater at academic units similar in size and scope to that of SFASU, and be located at institutions with missions similar to that of SFASU. Moreover, the external reviewers should already be tenured and be at (or above) the rank to which the candidate is applying, or have professional experience deemed to be commensurate with this rank by the director and dean. While personal friends or former teachers are not expressly prohibited (provided they could be objective), peers and colleagues at other institutions are preferred. The school director may delete and/or add up to two names of potential evaluators, will rank the list in order of preference, and will send the list to the dean (with a copy to the candidate). Further, the dean has the discretion of using any or all of the candidate's external reviewers. Or, the dean may contact external reviewers of his/her own choosing if deemed to be warranted for obtaining competent, qualified, and objective reviews appropriate for the status and rank for which the candidate is applying.

Candidates will be notified by the dean after October 1 as to the identity of the external reviewers.

- 3) By September 1, the candidate will submit to the dean THREE copies of the application portfolio to be sent to the external evaluators. In all cases the portfolio should contain materials that will enable the external evaluator to answer the question: "To what extent does the candidate appear to be actively engaged in his/her discipline and what is your assessment of the quality of that work?"

The dean will obtain commitments from three external evaluators to provide written reports by October 1 and ship the portfolios.

- 4) By September 15, the candidate will submit the application portfolio to the director.
- 5) By October 1, the external reviewers' reports will be received. The dean will forward them to the respective director.

Soon after this, the director will review the reports and make the portfolio and the external reviewers' reports available to the school tenure/promotion committee. Members of this, or any committee reviewing personnel, are reminded that confidentiality is an important trust and that committee discussions shall not be shared with any parties outside of the committee.

Further, when an application for tenure has a simultaneous application for promotion, the committee's charge is to consider the application for tenure separately from that for promotion.

- 6) By November 1, the director will submit the application portfolio, and committee reviews to the dean, who will forward materials to the associate dean for review by college committee. In addition, the director will report to the candidate the results of the School committee recommendation and his/her recommendation, in accordance with university policy.
- 7) The associate dean will establish two college review panels. One panel will consider applications for promotion to the rank of professor. This will consist of one professor elected from each school and one professor from outside the college.

The other panel will consider applications for promotion to assistant professor or associate professor, and all applications for tenure. This panel will consist of one associate professor or professor elected from each school and one associate professor or professor from outside the college.

All members of both panels must be tenured.

- 8) The associate dean will make candidates' portfolios available to the members of the appropriate college review committee(s). The committees will review each portfolio. After committee members have reviewed each candidate's portfolio, the associate dean will schedule a meeting of the committee. The committee will elect a member to chair the committee and give full consideration to each portfolio. Following this, each member will submit a written recommendation to the chair. This recommendation must include a vote of confidence (or no confidence) for the candidate's application.

The chair will collect all recommendations, votes, and written comments and formulate a recommendation that represents the committee (with any dissenting comments being duly noted).

- 9) By December 1, all college committee materials will be forwarded to the associate dean, who forwards the committee results to the dean.
- 10) By February 15, the dean will forward a recommendation and all application materials to the provost. This will be the dean's own recommendation based on his/her observations, the candidate's portfolio, recommendations of the school committee, the director, and the college committee. In addition, the dean will report to the candidate the results of the college committee recommendation and his/her recommendation, in accordance with university policy.