

MTSU Walker Library
Criteria and Procedures
For Appointment, Continuing Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure
2005; revised 2007

(Approved by the Library Faculty - July 24, 2007)

(Pre-Tenure Appendix endorsed by Library Faculty - December 19, 2007)

(Review of Faculty Reporting to the Dean Appendix endorsed by
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I. INTRODUCTION

Library faculty members support the educational mission of the university through activities pertinent to teaching, research /scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach. They enjoy the same rights and bear the same responsibilities as other university faculty. As trustees of knowledge who ensure the availability of information, library faculty operate under the principles of academic freedom as defined by the university, the American Association of University Professors, and the Association of College and Research Libraries (*MTSU Policies and Procedures for Tenure - Sect. I, ACRL Model Statement of Criteria and Procedures for Appointment, Promotion in Academic Rank, and Tenure for College and University Librarians Sect. X and XI, AAUP Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*). Library faculty members have a right to academic freedom and bear the academic responsibilities implicit in that freedom.

This document outlines expectations for the library faculty and sets forth the process by which they are assessed for appointment, continuing appointment, promotion, and tenure. These criteria are intended to foster a faculty of the highest quality, which is essential to the intellectual and service functions of the university. Library promotion and tenure policies and procedures are in accordance with and operate under the aegis of university policies and procedures, which serve as the governing documents for the campus (II:01:05). Library faculty members are expected to familiarize themselves with library and university promotion and tenure policies, particularly those pertaining to appointment, continuing appointment, promotion, and tenure.

II. LIBRARY FACULTY IN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

Library faculty members contribute, along with other academic faculty, to the pursuit of the university's goals in the areas of instruction, research, and service. They also apply professional knowledge in a series of related functions: selecting, acquiring, and organizing materials; teaching in both formal and informal settings; and providing organization and management of the staff and resources that facilitate access to materials and services for students, faculty, and other researchers.

III. APPOINTMENTS

Although other types of appointment are available (as described in university policy II:01:05D), tenure-track appointments are the predominant type used in the library.

IV. CRITERIA

A. Criteria for Initial Rank

Initial appointment rank is based on criteria and expectations specified in university criteria (II:01:05B Sect. III.C. and D.). Rank is set by the university upon recommendation of the dean after a review of academic qualifications and experience. The ALA-accredited master's degree will normally be considered the terminal degree for faculty appointment in the library. The library recognizes that advanced degrees in other disciplines can complement the library master's degree. In certain circumstances, the individual's professional employment history may affect initial rank.

B. Criteria for Continuing Appointment in the Pre-Tenure Period

Tenure-track faculty members are hired on one-year renewable contracts. Reviews for renewal occur each year prior to the end of the contract. Renewal is based on the need of the library and the university for the individual's services and the quality of those services as determined by the annual performance review and progress toward tenure.

C. Criteria for Tenure

Faculty members considered for tenure will be reviewed with respect to their performance in 1) teaching, 2) research/scholarship/creative activity, and 3) service/outreach (see university policy II:01:05A Sect. IV).

D. Criteria for Promotion

Faculty members considered for promotion will meet the requirements for appointment to the new rank and will be evaluated with respect to their performance in 1) teaching, 2) research/scholarship/creative activity, and 3) service/ outreach (see university policy II:01:05B Sect. III.C. and D. and Sect. IV).

For the full professor rank, a candidate's work in research/ scholarship/ creative activity or service/outreach must attain national recognition. National recognition will be determined by an assessment of the individual's record of accomplishment.

For research/scholarship/creative activity, national recognition may include such achievements as publication of scholarly work in high quality professional journals, scholarship that has gained recognition beyond the region, invitations to publish, present, or review papers for major professional conferences or organizations, invitations to publish or review papers for peer reviewed professional publications, presentations at national or international conferences, external grants, letters of support from nationally recognized peers, and citations of the candidate's scholarly work.

For service/outreach, national recognition may encompass significant service assignments at the national level, invitations to share expertise on the national or international stage, significant partnerships resulting in national recognition, and outside letters of reference from recognized professionals in the field.

V. THE PROCESS FOR CONTINUING APPOINTMENT, TENURE, AND PROMOTION REVIEWS

A. Faculty Responsibilities and Rights

Faculty members under review for re-appointment, tenure, or promotion have responsibilities as well as rights. Faculty are responsible for submitting a current Outline of Faculty Data (OFD) and supporting materials for the formal pre-tenure, tenure, and promotion reviews. They are also responsible for knowing how library and university re-appointment, tenure, and promotion policies pertain to their particular circumstances. Faculty members requesting tenure or promotion are responsible for initiating tenure and promotion procedures by informing the appropriate coordinator and submitting a completed Request for Promotion/Tenure form.

In all reviews, faculty members have an unquestionable right to fair and equitable evaluations based on approved library and university criteria. They have a right to receive copies of annual evaluations written by the committee and coordinator. They have the right to meet with committee, coordinator or dean to discuss the review process and the information upon which the decision was made. They have the right to appeal decisions in accordance with university policy and can initiate an appeal without concern that such a request will prejudice subsequent re-appointment, tenure, and promotion decisions.

B. Documentation

Candidates for continuing appointment, promotion, and/or tenure should submit a file consisting of the OFD and, if necessary, supporting materials to the appropriate coordinator, who reviews these for order and completeness and then forwards these to the dean's office. Additional or supplemental documentation may be requested. In accordance with university policy (II:01:05A Sect. IV B.), annual performance appraisals and student evaluations (where relevant) will be added to the promotion/tenure candidate's file (by the dean's office).

Supporting materials should illustrate the candidate's contributions to teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach.

No material can be added to the OFD or supporting materials once review has formally begun. In the period after submission of the OFD and supporting materials--but before formal review has begun--candidates requesting tenure and/or promotion may learn of grant awards, publications, and other truly important accomplishments. As long as they do so in a timely manner, they can prepare an addenda memo noting these items and provide copies to their coordinator, the promotion and tenure committee chair, and the dean. Candidates requesting annual reappointment cannot take advantage of the addenda memo. They should simply include such items on their OFD for consideration the following year.

Candidates requesting tenure and/or promotion will be informed of the date formal review begins by the Promotion and Tenure Review Committee.

C. Pre-tenure Period and Re-appointment

Tenure-track faculty members are reviewed for continuing appointment annually and separately by their department coordinator, the promotion and tenure review committee, and the dean of the library. Assessments are based on the annual performance appraisal and the candidate's progress toward tenure. Faculty members on tenure-track appointments will not be terminated during the annual specified term of the appointment except for reasons that would be sufficient for the termination of tenured faculty.

1.) Calculating the Pre-tenure Period

When a faculty member's appointment begins after the month of July, the pre-tenure period is counted as follows:

an appointment in the months including August - January: service toward promotion and tenure will begin from the preceding July;

an appointment in the months including February - June: service toward promotion and tenure will begin from the forthcoming July.

Appointments beginning in July will count that month as the beginning of service.

Credit toward tenure may be provided in certain circumstances based on the individual's professional employment history.

2.) Mentoring

Tenure-track faculty members are encouraged to establish mentoring relationships with tenured faculty, who are expected to willingly serve as mentors.

D. Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, and Nepotism in the Review Process

All participants engaged in evaluation procedures are expected to observe appropriate standards of objectivity, ethics, and confidentiality concerning deliberations. Those who cannot observe such standards should voluntarily remove themselves from the proceedings. The committee chair may, after consulting with the committee, remove a member whose objectivity is or appears to be compromised.

E. Participants in the Review Process

The coordinator, promotion and tenure review committee, and the dean participate in reviews. They have access to the same record of the candidate's activities and accomplishments and separately consider the candidate's re-appointment or request for tenure and promotion using approved library and university criteria.

1.) Constitution of the Promotion and Tenure Review Committee

The committee is composed of seven tenured library faculty members elected each year by the tenured and tenure-track faculty: three from user services, three from collection management, and one at-large. Coordinators do not serve on the committee. The committee will use the library and university criteria to assess each candidate's credentials based upon documentation provided by the candidates and others in the

process, and annual performance appraisals since the candidate's last action (appointment, promotion, or final tenure).

F. Annual Review for Re-appointment (Pre-tenure)

Tenure-track faculty members will be evaluated in writing annually and separately by their coordinator and the promotion and tenure review committee. The OFD and job performance will be considered. Copies of these evaluations will be provided to tenure-track faculty, placed in their personnel files, and sent to the dean and the provost.

G. Pre-tenure Review

As described in university policy (II:01:05A Sect. III.B.1.c), the faculty member will receive two formal reviews for tenure: review of progress toward tenure and a final review. The pre-tenure review will follow the process of the final tenure review except that it will be more descriptive in nature since the purpose is to provide an evaluative report on progress toward tenure. The OFD and supporting materials as well as job performance will be considered. The candidate will receive written memos stating the review's findings from the coordinator, the promotion and tenure committee, and the dean. The pre-tenure review and the annual re-appointment review, it should be noted, are separate procedures.

Normally the pre-tenure review occurs in the third year of the tenure-track appointment.

H. Tenure and Promotion Review

As noted above (Sect. V. A), it is the responsibility of faculty to initiate the promotion and tenure process by discussing this action with their coordinator, completing the Request for Promotion/Tenure Form, and by submitting the OFD and supporting materials.

As described in university policy, review for tenure or promotion consists of separate consideration of the candidate's documented activities and accomplishments by the coordinator, promotion and tenure committee, and dean using approved library and university criteria. After they have separately considered these activities and accomplishments and have written their recommendations, the coordinator, promotion and tenure committee, and dean will meet and, if their views are in concert, their recommendations will be submitted to the provost. If their views are in conflict, they will attempt to resolve their differences prior to submitting recommendations to the provost. If the conflicts cannot be resolved, recommendations submitted to the provost will include an additional section describing the points of conflict.

I. Appeals

The appeals process for official review by members of the University Grievance and Appeals Committee and others is outlined in university policy II:01:05C.

J. Policy Distribution and Amendment

This document will be posted on the library's internal web page. A print copy will be available in the dean's office. Changes to the document may be recommended by the library faculty, a library faculty committee, or the dean. Such changes will be presented in the form of

amendments and will require approval of the library faculty, dean, the provost, and the president.

The promotion and tenure review committee will host an annual forum with the library faculty early in the spring semester to discuss the review process.

K. Implementation

As directed by the Tennessee Board of Regents and MTSU, this policy is effective for all faculty members whose employment began on or after July 1, 2004. Faculty members appointed prior to July 1, 2004, may elect to be considered under the former policy (March 5, 2001) or under this policy. This policy will be applicable to all actions taken on or after July 1, 2008.

L. Basis for Policy

The policy and procedures set forth in this document are based on and operate under Tennessee Board of Regents policies (5:02:02:20, 5:02:03:30, 5:02:03:60, 5:02:07:10) and Middle Tennessee State University policy (II:01:05).

APPENDICES I - IV

Appendix I: The Outline of Faculty Data

The Provost's office provides a downloadable blank form for the Outline of Faculty Data at the following URL:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~provost/outline.html>

Appendix II: Miscellaneous Matters Pertaining to the Review Committee

I. Election of the Review Committee

Committee members are expected to regularly attend meetings and fully participate in the work of the committee. No abstentions from considering or voting on a case will be allowed except in the case of a conflict of interest (Sect. V. D).

Should an absence occur on the review committee, such as a resignation or an extended illness, a special election will be held to fill the remainder of the term.

The coordinators, the dean, and individuals being reviewed for promotion or tenure are ineligible to serve on the review committee. With the exception of these individuals, all other tenured faculty are expected to stand for election to the review committee. In rare cases, such as unusual workload or serious conflict of interest, faculty may petition the dean to have their name removed from the ballot.

The dean of the library will provide to the faculty senate president the names of those elected to the promotion and tenure review committee as called for in university procedures.

II. Procedural Guidelines for Initial Meeting of the Review Committee

The dean will call a meeting of the review committee to discuss staff needs, establish a calendar of activity deadlines, and provide dates by which final recommendations must be submitted. The dean provides the committee with the names of those faculty members about whom recommendations relative to continuing appointment, promotion, or tenure are sought. The dean will also provide the committee with the candidate performance appraisals since the last action and any relevant student evaluations. The dean will then leave the committee meeting. The committee will elect a chair and the chair will appoint a secretary. Normally, a quorum consists of all committee members who are eligible to vote. Under certain circumstances (for example, the extended illness of a committee member) the committee can vote and conduct other business with a quorum of six, but no fewer, members.

III. Voting on Candidates for Tenure and Promotion

Using a simple for/against ballot, the committee will secretly vote on each candidate to determine continuing appointment, promotion, or tenure. Votes will be counted during committee meetings by the secretary or a teller appointed by the chair. A tie vote is regarded as a negative recommendation. The committee has the discretion to include or not to include exact vote tallies in its recommendations, or to specify if a vote was or was not unanimous.

In the event that rank order is required by the university, any rank order of recommendations will be voted on by secret ballot or some other process approved by the committee. Mechanics, logistics and design of the ballot will be the responsibility of the chairperson and secretary.

IV. Committee Records and Documents used in Reviews

The committee will keep a written record of decisions made and votes taken. Committee records are regarded as confidential. Only committee members may consult these records, but can only consult those records kept for their annual committee service. The committee secretary will maintain the confidentiality of these records until the work of an annual committee is closed. The secretary will then seal the records and they will remain sealed and retained in the central administration files for a period of five (5) years. The secretary of an annual committee will thereafter check all sealed records from time to time and report on their status to the annually elected members of the committee.

Documentation provided by the candidates will be returned in the spring after all decisions have been made.

Appendix III: Request for Promotion/Tenure form

I am requesting consideration for the following action(s) in this year's review cycle.

(Check all that apply) _____ Tenure consideration in the fifth year
_____ Tenure consideration in the sixth year
_____ Promotion to Associate Professor
_____ Promotion to Professor

Candidate

Date

Department Coordinator

Date

Please submit with the Outline of Faculty Data

Appendix IV: Pre-Tenure Review Process

The pre-tenure review--informally known as the "third-year review"--normally occurs at the mid-point of the probationary period. For most faculty, the review is conducted in the spring of the candidate's third year. It is relevant to all tenure-track faculty who have been recommended for reappointment in their third year and occurs after the reappointment review. Pre-tenure review is an expanded version of the assessment for continuing employment and is viewed as a mentoring as well as an assessment activity. Its conclusions do not ordinarily reach the Provost or President but the review serves as an important indicator of the candidate's progress toward tenure.

The candidate will submit to the Coordinator an Outline of Faculty Data (OFD) and a dossier of supporting materials. (Candidates should place support materials in plastic "pocket" binders so they can be easily removed) The dossier is reviewed by the Coordinator, Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, and Dean.

Activities and accomplishments that could not be anticipated by the candidate at the time of submitting the OFD and dossier should be noted in a separate written memo with accompanying documentation. It is the candidate's responsibility to provide this memo and documentation to the Coordinator, Chair of the Committee, and the Dean in a timely fashion that allows the reviewers to acknowledge the information in their written assessments.

The Coordinator, Committee, and Dean will separately consider the candidate's OFD and dossier in light of Library and University promotion and tenure criteria. They will assess the candidate's accomplishments and activities, explicitly noting the adequacy or inadequacy of the candidate's progress toward tenure and/or promotion.

The Coordinator, Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, and Dean will exchange and compare assessments. If conflicting recommendations result, they will meet to reconcile conflicts. Reconciliation is important to providing the candidate with a clear and consistent evaluation of progress toward tenure.

The Coordinator, Committee, and Dean will appoint a date and time to meet with the candidate for a formal review. They will address the candidate regarding progress toward tenure, providing specific information regarding strengths and weaknesses. The written assessments will be provided to the candidate shortly after the meeting's conclusion.

The candidate should thereafter include copies of the written assessment when submitting the OFD for annual reappointment. Presumably the post-review OFD will include activities and accomplishments that, if necessary, address the formal assessment. In instances where an item might not be apparent on the OFD, the candidate is encouraged to write and attach a clarifying memo to the OFD.

The pre-tenure review written assessment need not be included in the dossier a candidate submits for promotion and tenure.

Appendix V: Review of Faculty Reporting Directly to the Dean

For purposes of re-appointment, tenure, and promotion evaluations, a special review committee will be created to take the place and act in lieu of a coordinator. The special review committee is selected annually as needed and will consist of four tenured library faculty members - two from the administrative council and two at-large who are not current members of the promotion and tenure review committee or the council. The at-large members of the committee will be elected by the library faculty from all tenured Library faculty members eligible to serve. The dean and the promotion and tenure review committee will appoint the two Council members. Because the pool of faculty who can sit on the special review committee can only be known after the regular promotion and tenure committee is elected, the special review committee election is held shortly after the regular committee election. The dean and individuals being reviewed for promotion or tenure are ineligible to serve on the committee. Committee membership may include one coordinator.

In its deliberations, the special review committee will appoint a chair and the chair will represent its views in meetings with the promotion and tenure review committee and the dean.

Confidentiality of records from the special committee's proceedings will be maintained by the chair. Special review committee members may consult these records, but can only consult those records kept for their special review committee service. When the special review committee is dissolved, the chair will seal the records and give them to the secretary of the promotion and tenure review committee, who will maintain them along with the records of the promotion and tenure review committee in the manner described above in Appendix II, Sect. IV.