

Department Communication Studies

Policy on Faculty Evaluation for Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment and Merit
(Approved by COMM department, Nov. 5, 2018; Vote 11-0 to approve)

UPTRM Approved Revisions May 2020

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4. A faculty member shall be committed to collegiality and academic citizenship. *Collegiality and academic citizenship* refer to the role and responsibility of faculty in shared decision making through open and fair processes devised to provide timely advice and recommendations on matters that relate to curriculum, academic personnel, and the educational functions of the institution. The demonstration of high standards of humane, ethical, and professional behavior is fundamental to collegiality and academic citizenship. These concepts include mutual respect for similarities and differences among participants on the basis of background, expertise, opinions, and assigned responsibilities. Collegiality does not imply agreement; vibrant university communities must include the capacity for respectful disagreement among faculty members and administrators.
5. A faculty member shall share the responsibility of university, college, and/or department governance. Faculty members must make themselves available to participate in the work of the department, of assigned committees, or of college and university processes in which faculty play an essential role.
6. A faculty member shall participate each year in the faculty evaluation process as described in university, college, and department documents.

II. Committee Membership and Method of Selection. The COMM department will have two committees:

Reappointment and Merit Committee. The Reappointment, and Merit Committee *will hereafter be referred to as the Merit Committee.*

Tenure, Promotion, Third-year (pre-tenure) review, and Five year Post-Tenure review committee. The Tenure, Promotion, Third-year pre-tenure review, and Five Year Post-Tenure review committee *will hereafter be referred to as the Tenure committee.*

A. Reappointment and Merit Committee Structure

1. Membership of the Merit Committee consists of five members:
 - A. one Lecturer
 - B. one tenure-track faculty member
 - C. one tenured faculty member
 - D. one At-large member (from any rank)
 - E. COMM Department Chair who serves ex officio and does not vote. Non-voting status of the Department Chair will be indicated in the Merit deliberation letters.
2. Members of the Merit committee are elected to three-year terms by ballot of the full department faculty no later than the fourth Monday in April. Ballots will not require faculty voter identification.
3. *Full department faculty* is defined as full-time Communication Studies faculty in the ranks of lecturer, pre-tenure, and tenured professors.
4. A quorum of 75% of COMM faculty members is required for election of Merit members.
5. All committee members are elected by a simple majority vote.
6. All members with 2 years of full-time Department service are eligible for election. Nominations are by self-nomination or peer nomination from slate of eligible faculty members prepared by the Merit Chair and Department Chair.

12. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Merit committee are elected by separate paper ballot of the full department faculty after all committee members have been elected for the upcoming year.
13. The Merit Chair and Vice-

applicant's list

portfolio.

Evaluation Procedures

- L. Committee deliberations are considered confidential.
- M. A quorum of 75% of voting Merit committee members is required for committee deliberations. Votes should take place immediately following deliberations.
- N. Faculty members being evaluated shall be informed in writing of committee decisions by the fourth Friday in October. First year faculty shall be informed in writing of the committee's decisions by the third Friday in January.
- O. The COMM Chairperson may prepare an independent recommendation on merit and/or reappointment and include it in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio. The COMM Chairperson shall prepare an independent recommendation of each faculty member considered for promotion and/or tenure and include it in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio. The COMM Chairperson's recommendation letter will be added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio after Merit Committee or Tenure Committee deliberations.
- P. Negative decisions shall be delivered in person by the COMM Department Chairperson or sent by certified mail to the candidate's home by the fourth Friday in October.
- Q. All votes regarding tenure, promotion, reappointment, merit, three-year review, and five-year comprehensive post-tenure reviews taken by any committee shall be by confidential ballot, signed with the Towson University ID number, and dated by the voting member, and tallied by the Merit chair and Co-Chair or the Tenure committee chair. The Merit and Tenure chairpersons shall forward a signed, dated report of the results of the vote and the committee's recommendations to the next level of review. The confidential ballots shall not be included in the faculty evaluation portfolio, but shall be forwarded under separate cover to the Provost, to be preserved with the tenure and promotion file until three (3) years following the faculty member's termination or resignation from the University.
- R. No committee member shall abstain from a vote for tenure or promotion unless the Provost authorizes such abstention based for good cause, including an impermissible conflict of interest.
- S. Department committees should consistently and objectively evaluate faculty members on the standards listed in the department guidelines. Department committees should review and comment on numeric scores and student comments of course evaluations and report on them in a representative and proportional manner. Department committees may also review and comment on grade distribution data and on any correlation between grade distribution and course evaluations.
- T. Committee letters should reference (clearly cite, explain, and apply) department standards of teaching, scholarship, and service; connect them to a faculty member's

accomplishments with examples; and evaluate how the faculty member did not meet, met, or exceeded these department standards. Committee letters should reflect the main points of discussion, including dissent. Committee letters should employ a consistent format.

U. Tie Votes. Tie votes result in the following recommendations:

1. Promotion and Reappointment: tie votes for Promotion or reappointment result in a recommendation for Promotion or reappointment.
2. Tenure: A tie vote for Tenure results in a recommendation against tenure.
3. Merit: A tie vote for Merit results in a recommendation of the higher level of merit.

V. There are three kinds of appeals in the PTRM process: substantive, procedural, and appeals alleging discrimination. For a full discussion of appeals, see the University ART document.

1. Appeals of substantive matters for Department decisions on Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment, Merit and Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review should go to the COFAC Dean's office for the COFAC PTRM Committee and be copied to the COMM department chair and the department's Merit or Tenure committee chair. Appeals must be in writing, clearly stating the grounds for appeal, and must be accompanied by supporting documents. Appeals must be delivered by certified mail or in person to the college Dean within twenty-one (21) calendar days of notification of the negative recommendation.
2. Procedural appeals shall be made to the University PTRM committee. The appeal must be in writing, clearly stating the alleged procedural error(s). The appeal shall be accompanied by supporting documents and should be delivered by certified mail or in person to the UPTRM chair within twenty-one (21) calendar days of having been notified of the negative recommendation. Appeals of department recommendations shall be copied to the department chair, the department PTRM chair, the dean, and the university PTRM committee chair.
3. Appeals alleging unlawful discrimination in race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation and disability shall follow the specific procedures described in Towson University policy 06-01.00 "Prohibiting Discrimination on the basis of Race, Color, Religion, Age, National Origin, Sex and Disability."

V. Ratification and Amendment of COMM PTRM documents

1. Any amendment to the COMM PTRM documents will be developed by the Merit and Tenure committees.
2. All COMM PTRM documents must be distributed to full-time faculty in the

department faculty vote on the document.

3. Final approval of the department documents shall be by a 75% majority of the fulltime

- B. Faculty members will choose, in consultation with the COMM department chairperson, appropriate percentages of teaching, scholarship, and service dependent upon activities determined annually.
- C. The University currently specifies a three-category merit policy for lecturers, tenure-track and tenured faculty

Examples of

workload assignments, all faculty are responsible for continuing to develop disciplinary or interdisciplinary expertise and for providing evidence of professional growth in their annual reviews or review portfolios. Reports on thoughtful patterns of scholarly reading, museum-going, attendance at performances, research in preparation of new courses, or other documented activities, may contribute to demonstrating scholarly activity or professional growth during reviews.

Examples of *Excellent (Merit Plus) Teaching* may include but are not limited to:

- Outstanding scores on student reviews and course grade distributions that demonstrate rigor in the classroom
- achievement of a significant internal or external instructional grant or fellowship;
- supervision of a student research project that earns distinction outside the department;
- Teaching Awards or accolades from University and Professional Organizations;
- Demonstrated mentorship of student success in classes;
- Creation of new courses that advance the Department and University curricular mission;
- Demonstrated connection of classroom activities to community through civic engagement projects with community partners, local and state organizations, and other forms of deep engagement bridging course content and community action.

Exmples of

their evaluation of chairs a distribution of responsibilities and expectations consistent with the chair's workload agreements. Evaluators will recognize that chair responsibilities may involve personnel matters or dealings with students governed by confidentiality, as well as other activities not readily visible to colleagues; such matters may not be reported or documented in detail. Evaluators will nevertheless make judgments about the consistency, creativity, and fairness with which a chair has carried out the responsibilities of leadership, consistent with university policies and the responsibilities defined for the chair. Please consult University document 3-11-00 for guidance <https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/policies/03-11-00-academic-department-chairpersons-roles-and-responsibilities.pdf>. Program directors who supervise faculty and who prepare annual reports on their activities may also be evaluated for leadership consistent with the proportion of their time committed to such work under their workload agreements.

L. Merit evaluation for faculty administrative duties performed on reassigned time. All

3. Copies of signed reports from peer observations of teaching;
4. Comments on teaching from department and chair letters evaluating the candidate;
5. The candidate's reflective essay on his/her teaching (self-evaluation);
6. Evaluation of student learning outcomes;
7. Evidence of development of new courses, and/or new programs;
8. Evidence of the use of appropriate technologies to improve instruction;
9. Evidence of the use of contemporary theory and practice to improve instruction;
10. Professional awards for teaching excellence;

Evidence for New Instructional Procedures from the Annual Review form

C. Teaching Standards for *Reappointment*:

1. Knowledgeable of emerging needs in one's field;
2. Refinement, updating, and improvement of courses that one teaches;
3. Effective and successful participation in course and program development that is based on established scholarship, best practice, and/or one's sustained experience with practitioners in one's field;
4. Carefully planned and well-organized course syllabi;
5. Availability to students; and
6. Strong evidence of potential for meeting the standards for tenure at the time of the tenure decision.

D. Teaching Standards for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor:

1. Standards 1-6 listed under reappointment
2. Effective teaching, as evidenced by:
 - A. Appropriate and effective testing, evaluation, and grading of students' performance;
 - B. Creation of new courses, including those supporting the university's mission of interdisciplinary studies and Study Abroad experiences.
 - C. Content of courses and teaching processes are supportive of department mission;
 - D. Responsiveness to cultural and individual difference;
 - E. Effective instruction as measured by peer evaluation;
 - F. Effective instruction as measured by student evaluation;
 - G. Recognition in the department, College, University, and professional organizations of the quality of one's teaching.

E. Standards for promotion to Professor:

1. The standards listed for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor;
2. Excellence in teaching; and
3. Demonstrated leadership in mentoring colleagues, particularly junior faculty, in their own teaching.

F. Advising is an important faculty responsibility. The COMM department assigns academic advising to specific faculty as an administrative duty on reassigned time. Standards for all full-time faculty advisors should include:

1. Accessible to students for advising sessions;
2. Schedule formal advising hours each semester;
3. Be familiar with current policies and the department's website;

- E. The COMM Department seeks a minimum of five pieces of peer-reviewed published scholarship for a positive recommendation for tenure. While five pieces of peer-reviewed scholarship are the minimum requirements, the Department of Communication Studies emphasizes a holistic approach to the tenure package. The pieces of scholarship will also be considered in conjunction with the scholarly agenda and trajectory of the candidate, and the teaching and service components. The five pieces of peer-reviewed published scholarship are the foundation of a strong tenure case, but do not guarantee a successful case.
- F. Peer-reviewed publications include but are not limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, books, chapters in books, and exhibitions/performances in COMM and related Interdisciplinary fields.
- G. Additional kinds of scholarship. The following list scholarship/creative activity represent appropriate forms of scholarship for Tenure and Promotion including but not limited to:
1. Productions: Peer-reviewed performances, multi-media/digital projects.
 2. Successful awards of external grants and Fellowships in support of one's research and/or creative and performance activities
 3. Distinguished Scholarly Fellowship, Journal Editorial position, and visiting artist.
- H. Interdisciplinary work, which may also include both teaching and research, is a vital part of the activity of the modern university. The COMM Merit and Tenure Committees will evaluate interdisciplinary and International work as having equal weight with work done entirely within COMM.
- I. COMM also recognizes the University's support of the Boyer model—Scholarship of Application, Scholarship of Discovery, Scholarship of Integration, Scholarship of Teaching—as the broad range of appropriate scholarship at Towson University.

Scholarship of Application: applying knowledge to consequential problems, either internal or external to the University, and including aspects of creative work in the visual and performing arts.

Scholarship of Discovery: traditional research, knowledge for its own sake, including aspects of creative work in the visual and performing arts.

Scholarship of Integration: applying knowledge in ways that overcome the isolation and fragmentation of the traditional disciplines.

Scholarship of Teaching: exploring ideas, methods and technologies that

Standards for Service

A. The evaluation of service for faculty members shall rely on evidence of service contributions consistent with the faculty member's workload agreements. Evaluation should consider the extent and quality of service, not the mere fact of membership on a committee or a position held. The faculty member should sufficiently explain the type or substance of service outside the University to allow colleagues a reasonable basis for judgment of its extent and its relation to the mission of the University. Although diverse profiles of service contributions are anticipated among candidates, it is expected that, over time, all candidates will demonstrate service in the three domains identified below: to the University, to the profession, and to the community. Outstanding contributions at one level can balance more routine service at another level. Service will be evaluated by following standards at different levels.

B. Service to the University

1. The standards for *reappointment* as instructor or Assistant Professor:

a.

3. Standard for promotion to Professor:
 - a. The standard for tenure and promotion;
 - b. Leadership in addressing issues in one's field; and
 - c. Distinction in the quality of one's service or performance.

D. Service to the community

1. Standard for *reappointment*: Involvement in and/or engagement of the larger community (local, regional, national, or global) outside the University in ways that may or may not be directly related to one's academic expertise, but in ways which advance the department's, college's, or university's mission.
2. Standard for *tenure and promotion to Associate Professor*: Sustained involvement in and/or engagement of the larger community in ways which advance the department's, college's, or university's mission.
3. Standards for promotion to Professor:
 - a. The standard for tenure and promotion;
 - b. Leadership in collaboratively addressing issues important to the community; and
 - c. Distinction in the quality of one's service or performance.

VI. The Role of Tenured Faculty and Procedures for Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Reviews

The Role of Tenured Faculty

- A. Tenured professors are a critical resource within the University community, possessing a range of skills and knowledge which can contribute significantly to the quality of the institution in a variety of ways. They are expected to provide guidance and assistance to more junior staff in developing their capacity for teaching and research.
- B. Tenured faculty at the rank of *Professor* provide academic leadership, primarily through demonstrating and fostering excellence in research, teaching, professional activities and

teaching and scholarly productivity with satisfactory service as determined by the department. This ranking indicates that the department has determined that progress towards tenure is satisfactory but improvements are needed.

3. Not satisfactory progress. This evaluation requires change by the faculty across one or more dimensions. This essentially means that continuance on this performance trajectory is unlikely to result in a favorable tenure decision.

E. All documentation is due to the COMM Department Chair by the third Friday in January.

F. Feedback should be both in writing and in a face-to-face meeting with the COMM chair and the COMM Tenure committee chair no later than the first Friday in March. The written report will be shared with the dean.

G. If a faculty member's

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VIII. PTRM Calend

Towson University Annual Review, Reappointment, Third-Year Review, Merit, Promotion, Tenure and Comprehensive Review Calendar (All deadlines are final deadlines)

Fourth Monday in April

Department-wide election held to form Promotion, Reappointment, Five-

recommendation(s) for tenure-track faculty in their second or subsequent academic year of service. Negative recommendations shall be delivered in person by the dean or sent by certified mail to the faculty member's home.

The First Friday in December

Department PTRM documents are delivered to the college PTRM committee if any changes have been made.

The Second Friday in December

First-year tenure-track faculty submit an evaluation portfolio for the fall semester to the department chairperson.

December 15th (USM mandated date)

Tenure-track faculty in the second academic year of service must be notified by the President in writing of non-reappointment for the next academic year.

The First Friday in January

- A. The department Merit committee reports with recommendations and vote count on all first-year tenure-track faculty are submitted to the department chairperson.
- B. The college PTRM committee reports with vote counts and recommendations for faculty reviewed for tenure and/or promotion are submitted to the dean.

The Third Friday in January

- A. The dean's written evaluation regarding promotion and/or tenure with recommendation is added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio.
- B. The college PTRM committee's report with vote counts and recommendations and the dean's recommendation are conveyed in writing to the faculty member.
- C. The department Merit committee and chairperson recommendations concerning reappointment for first-year tenure-track faculty are delivered to the faculty member and the dean.
- D. All documentation for the third year review of tenure-track faculty is submitted by the faculty member to the department chairperson.
- E. Department chair recommendations on reappointment of first-year faculty must be added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio.

The First Friday in February

- A. The college dean forwards the summative portfolio inclusive of the committee's and the dean's recommendations of each faculty member with a recommendation concerning promotion and/or tenure or five-year comprehensive post-tenure review to

the Provost.

- B. The dean forwards all recommendations regarding reappointment/non-reappointment to the Provost. If the dean disagrees with the department recommendation, the dean shall prepare his/her own recommendation and send a copy to the faculty member and add this recommendation to the summative portfolio.

The Second Friday in February

- A. The dean will, following his/her review, forward department recommendations for faculty merit to the Provost. If the dean disagrees with the department recommendation, the dean shall add his/her recommendation to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio and deliver the negative decision in person or by certified mail to the faculty member's home.
- B. Department documents concerning promotion, tenure/reappointment, and merit (with an approval form signed by all current faculty members) are submitted to the University PTRM committee.
- C. Negative reappointment recommendations for first-year faculty are forwarded from the Provost to the President.

March 1

First year faculty must be notified of non-reappointment by written notification from the University President.

First Friday in March

Faculty under third-year review must be provided with written and face-to-face feedback on their performance toward tenure.

Third Friday in March

Provost's letter of decision is conveyed to the faculty member, department and college PTRM committee chairpersons, department chairperson, and dean of the college.

IX.

- D. A minimum of two peer observations shall be conducted during the Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review period.
- E. The COMM Department Chairperson in consultation with the Administrative Assistant will assign reviewers on a yearly basis. The COMM department chairperson should strive for diversity of reviewers for each candidate so that a candidate has a variety of reviewers over the years leading up to application for tenure and/or promotion.
- F. Faculty member and reviewers should coordinate a mutually acceptable date for the peer review. No peer review should take place without advance notice.
- G. Criteria for peer evaluations include, but are not limited to, class format, class objectives, class organization and management, clarity of syllabus, creative pedagogy, and effective presentation of appropriate course content.
- H. After the faculty member receives the completed evaluation, a conference must be scheduled, unless it is waived by the person being evaluated.
- I. The written evaluation can be modified after the conference, if both faculty members involved agree.
- J. The faculty member being evaluated can append a response to the evaluation.
- K. The faculty member being evaluated can also request an additional evaluation (from a different evaluator).
- L. Two signed copies of the evaluation must be made: one for the person being evaluated; and one for the Department Chair to

3. The visiting faculty member will observe one class session (or at least 50% of a three-hour class session).
4. Within one week after the visit, an open and professional post-visit conference will be held to discuss the observations made by the visiting faculty members.
5. Within two weeks after the visit, each faculty member will

- c. A post-observation debriefing (in-person meeting where discussion centers on the pre-observation discussion notes and class observation notes)
- d.

14.

(This summary does not replace the university requirements for milestone years [tenure, promotion, 5-

-Year

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