



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

MSU College of Education

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2
3 **PROMOTION AND TENURE GUIDELINES**
4 **OF**
5 **THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

6 **General Criteria**

7 This policy is to complement the Mississippi State University Promotion and Tenure Policies as
8 stated in Section V of the *Faculty Handbook* (2022). The College of Education (COE) promotion
9 and tenure guidelines serve as the framework for the more specific departmental policies. These
10 guidelines were developed in accordance with the University Academic Promotion and Tenure
11 policies and procedures. The COE guidelines supplement, but do not supplant, the university
12 policies and procedures.

13
14 These guidelines for promotion and tenure are intended to convey in general terms the
15 expectations for faculty who are applying for promotion and/or tenure. Professional-track
16 positions include Teaching Professors, Professors of Practice, Clinical/Extension/Research
17 Professors, and Instructors. All tenure-track and professional-track positions include three
18 associated ranks (i.e., 1, 2, and 3). These positions and corresponding ranks are described below.

19
20 These should be considered general guidelines, rather than rigid and exact criteria. Each
21 department and academic unit within the COE must develop specific criteria for promotion and
22 tenure that expand upon and are consistent with university and COE guidelines.

23
24 It should be recognized that standards of performance and application criteria can and should be
25 revised periodically in accordance with evolving academic developments and changing
26 institutional expectations, so long as such changes take place through established procedures and
27 processes. Over time, performance standards have risen, and it is likely that standards will, with
28 faculty support and approval, continue to increase as the faculty continue to pursue excellence in
29 the areas of teaching, research, scholarly works and creative achievements, and service.

30
31 The guidelines in force at the time the applicant was hired in the COE shall be the basis for the
32 decision for the individual's application for promotion and/or tenure. If the faculty member is
33 awarded promotion and/or tenure to Rank 2 (e.g., Associate Professor, Associate
34 Teaching/Clinical Professor, Associate Professor of Practice, or Instructor 2), criteria for
35 promotion to Rank 3 (e.g., Professor, Teaching/Clinical Professor, Professor of Practice, or
36 Instructor 3) should be made in accordance with guidelines in force at the time the applicant
37 assumes the position.

38 **Academic Rank**

39 A faculty member of professorial rank must have a professional or terminal degree appropriate to
40 the discipline (or the equivalent in training and experience), a strong commitment to higher
41 education and to the mission of the COE and Mississippi State University, and a willingness to
42 assume the responsibilities and obligations appropriate to a university faculty member. As noted

43 below, faculty tracks at Mississippi State University include tenure-track positions and
44 professional-track positions.

45

46 **Tenure-Track Positions**

47

48 *Assistant Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member who has met the requirements in the previous
49 paragraph and has the potential to be successful in the areas of teaching, research and/or creative
50 achievement, and service.

51

52 *Associate Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for assistant professor,
53 who has consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory level in teaching,
54 research and/or creative achievement, and service, and who excels in at least one of these areas.
55 Based upon the criteria established in the department promotion and tenure documents, an
56 associate professor is developing a national and/or international reputation and is showing a
57 potential for making sustained contributions to the university and to their profession, field, or
58 discipline.

59

60 *Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate professor, who has
61 consistently demonstrated an ability to perform at a satisfactory level in teaching, research and/or
62 creative achievement, and service, and who excels in at least two of these areas. Based upon the
63 criteria established in the department promotion and tenure documents, a professor must have a
64 national and/or international reputation within their profession, area of expertise, or discipline.

65 **Professional-Track Positions**

66

67 **Teaching Professor Ranks:**

68

69 *Assistant Teaching Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a terminal degree in a discipline
70 appropriate for the position, who possesses the potential for successful performance in
71 instructional activities in a university environment, and who should contribute to the service
72 and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.

73

74 *Associate Teaching Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for assistant
75 teaching professor, who has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence
76 appropriate for the rank in instructional activities, and who significantly contributes to the service
77 and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.

78

79 *Teaching Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate teaching
80 professor, who has consistently demonstrated excellence in instructional activities, and who is
81 consistently contributing at a high level to the service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit,
82 university, and/or profession.

83

84

85 **Professor of Practice Ranks:**

86

87 *Assistant Professor of Practice (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a terminal degree in a discipline
88 appropriate for the position or its equivalent in professional achievement, who possesses the
89 potential for successful performance in instructional activities in a university environment, and
90 who should contribute to the service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university,
91 and/or profession.

92

93 *Associate Professor of Practice (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for
94 assistant professor of practice, has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence
95 appropriate for the rank in instructional activities, and who significantly contributes to the
96 service and/or other scholarly activities of the unit, university, and/or profession.

97

98 *Professor of Practice (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for associate
99 professor of practice, has consistently demonstrated excellence in instructional activities, and
100 who is consistently contributing at a high level to the service and/or other scholarly activities of
101 the unit, university, and/or profession.

102

103 **Clinical/Extension/Research Professor Ranks:**

104

105 **Some Extension and Research positions are tenure-track. Faculty holding a tenure-track*
106 *Extension or Research position should refer to the tenure-track guidance above.*

107

108 *Assistant Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a terminal
109 degree in the discipline, who possesses the potential for successful performance in
110 clinical/extension/research activities or creative achievement in a university environment, and
111 who should contribute to the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

112

113 *Associate Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the
114 criteria for assistant clinical/extension/research professor, has demonstrated an ability to perform
115 at a level of excellence appropriate for the rank in clinical/extension/research activities or
116 creative achievement, and who significantly contributes to the service of the unit, university,
117 and/or profession.

118

119 *Clinical/Extension/Research Professor (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has consistently
120 demonstrated excellence in clinical/extension/research activities or creative endeavors, and who
121 is consistently contributing at a high level to the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

122

123 **Instructor Ranks:**

124

125 *Instructor I (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a minimum of a Master's degree or higher, who
126 possesses teaching credentials appropriate for the position and the potential for successful
127 performance in instructional activities in a university environment, and who should contribute to
128 the service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

129 *Instructor II (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for Instructor I, has
130 demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence appropriate for the rank in
131 instructional activities, and who significantly contributes to the service of the unit, university,
132 and/or profession.

133
134 *Instructor III (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for Instructor II, has
135 consistently demonstrated excellence, and who is consistently contributing at a high level to the
136 service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

137

138 **Clinical/Extension Instructor Ranks:**

139

140 *Clinical/Extension Instructor I (Rank 1):* A faculty member with a minimum of a Master's
141 degree or higher as appropriate to the profession, in a discipline appropriate for the position, who
142 possesses the potential for successful performance in clinical/extension activities or creative
143 achievement in a university environment, and who should contribute to the service of the unit,
144 university, and/or profession.

145

146 *Clinical/Extension Instructor II (Rank 2):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for
147 Clinical/Extension Instructor I, has demonstrated an ability to perform at a level of excellence
148 appropriate for the rank in clinical/extension activities, and who significantly contributes to the
149 service of the unit, university, and/or profession.

150

151 *Clinical/Extension Instructor III (Rank 3):* A faculty member who has met the criteria for
152 Clinical/Extension Instructor II, has demonstrated excellence in clinical/extension activities, and
153 who is consistently contributing at a high level to the service of the unit, university, and/or
154 profession.

155 **Probationary Period and Eligibility**

156

157 A tenure-track faculty member must apply for tenure by October 1 of their sixth contract year,
158 unless otherwise specified in their offer letter. Failure to earn tenure at the end of the sixth full
159 contract year by the president will result in a terminal contract in the seventh full contract year.
160 The probationary period for tenure-track faculty begins at the start of the faculty member's first
161 full contract year. A full contract year is defined as one that starts on August 16 for 9-month
162 employees and on July 1 for 12-month employees and continues until the next contract period. If
163 the initial contract is for the partial year, e.g., starts after August 16 for a 9-month employee or
164 after July 1 for a 12-month employee, that time is not included in the probationary period. Up to
165 five years of professional experience at other universities may be counted in this probationary
166 period, as determined and agreed upon by the department promotion and tenure committee, the
167 department head or director, the dean, and the faculty member in the letter of offer at the time of
168 initial appointment.

169

170 Consideration for promotion and/or tenure can be initiated by the department head or by the
171 individual faculty member who has met the minimum requirements. The appropriate

172 departmental, as well as the COE, promotion and tenure committee will base its decisions on all
173 available, pertinent, and documented evidence. It is the responsibility of the applicant to
174 document claims for satisfactory or excellent ratings in teaching, research and/or service.

175
176 For clearly stated personal reasons (e.g., emergencies related to health, activation of military
177 service, pregnancy, adoption, childcare, care of parents), a tenure-tracked faculty member may
178 request an extension of up to two years from the first five years of this probationary period for an
179 approved leave of absence or a modified assignment. Specific aspects of such an extension must
180 be established by the department head or director, the dean, the provost, and the faculty member.
181 Such an agreement must be in writing. The department promotion and tenure committee shall be
182 notified in writing of the extension and the revised probationary period.

183
184 IHL Board Policy 403.0101 allows an administrative employee who held faculty rank and tenure
185 at another institution to be awarded tenure at the time of initial appointment upon the
186 recommendation of the faculty of the tenuring department, the dean, the provost, and the
187 president, and awarded by the IHL Board.

188
189 For tenure-track faculty members with a shortened probationary period as specified in an offer
190 letter or an approved extended probationary period, the “third-year review” should be held at the
191 midpoint of the individual’s probationary period.

192 **Relationship Between Promotion and Tenure**

193
194 Tenure-track faculty members who have met the requirements for promotion, but who have not
195 fulfilled the probationary period for tenure, may be promoted without tenure. Tenure-track
196 faculty members who are granted tenure as Assistant Professor automatically meet the criteria
197 for promotion to Associate Professor.

198 **Faculty Workloads in Relationship to Expectation for Promotion and Tenure**

199
200 In reviewing an individual’s accomplishments, especially with respect to research and creative
201 achievements, departmental and the COE Promotion and Tenure committees should consider
202 faculty workload. Faculty workload usually relies upon what has become the nationally accepted
203 norm for universities with primarily a baccalaureate mission, which is based on the equivalent of
204 four courses per semester or approximately twelve credit hours. The number of courses that
205 faculty members are expected to teach may vary depending upon the level of degrees offered by
206 the department, the size of the classes being taught, the rank of the faculty member, the
207 experience of the faculty member, the number of preparations, the number of graduate students,
208 the development of new courses or other curricula, and the demands of the individual faculty
209 member’s research agenda. Adjustments to the teaching load of any individual faculty member
210 may be made in any semester depending upon the activity of the faculty member and/or the
211 needs of the program at that time.

212

213 **Tenure**

214

215 The granting of tenure is a faculty-driven process and is the academic community’s chief
216 guarantee of academic freedom for the faculty member to perform their academic duties without
217 undue or inappropriate external pressures.

218

219 Attainment of tenure in the COE at Mississippi State University is by no means automatic, based
220 on years of service, but is the result of a thorough evaluation of a faculty member’s performance
221 in the following core areas: teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service.

222

223 Tenure is granted with the university’s expectation that the faculty member will continue to
224 perform at or above the minimum standards set by the department or school, college, and
225 university.

226

227 The proportions of these activities may vary by discipline. Excellence in at least one area and
228 satisfactory performance in the other two are needed to qualify a faculty member for tenure, but
229 a department and/or college may require more rigorous standards. Along with the core areas, a
230 faculty member also needs to be certified satisfactory by the president of the university in the
231 following four areas:

232

- 233 • Professional training and experience;
- 234 • Effectiveness, accuracy, and integrity in communications;
- 235 • Effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, including collegiality, professional ethics,
236 cooperativeness, resourcefulness, and responsibility;
- 237 • The absence of malfeasance, inefficiency and contumacious conduct in the faculty
238 member’s performance of their faculty position at the university.

239

240 Performance will be assumed satisfactory in each of these four areas unless clear and consistent
241 evidence has been documented to the contrary.

242

243 Collegiality. For purposes of this document, collegiality is defined as the sharing of authority
244 and responsibility among colleagues while avoiding patterns of behavior that are of such a
245 disruptive nature as to hinder members of academic units from fulfilling their core duties or that
246 hinder academic units from their academic mission. Inherent in that definition is the
247 understanding that academic units and their members undertake the core duties of teaching,
248 research, and service that are associated with the university’s mission and seek to preserve the
249 well-being of the institution.

250

251 Further, collegiality:

- 252 • will not be associated with ensuring homogeneity and hence with practices that exclude
253 persons on the basis of their difference from a perceived norm.
- 254 • will not threaten academic freedom.
- 255 • will not be confused with the expectation that a faculty member display “enthusiasm” or
256 “dedication,” evince “a constructive attitude” that will “foster harmony,” or display an
257 excessive deference to administrative or faculty decisions where these may require
258 reasoned discussion.

- will not be confused with participation in social gatherings outside of the normal scope of the faculty member's roles related to research, teaching and service.
- will not necessarily be in conflict with criticism and opposition.

Eligibility. Tenure may be granted to professors, associate professors, and simultaneously to assistant professors upon promotion to Associate Professor. Faculty members of all professorial ranks in specifically designated tenure-track positions may work toward tenure. An employee cannot be promoted into a professorial position unless specified in the original offer letter. Professional-track faculty positions cannot be converted to tenure-track positions (IHL section 404.01).

The requirements for granting an individual tenure in the COE are identical to those for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. For most faculty members, consideration of promotion and tenure to Associate Professor will be done simultaneously. For those individuals hired at the rank of either Associate Professor or Professor, a tenure decision will be based on performance expected of one at that academic rank.

Promotion

Promotion is never granted routinely for simple satisfactory performance or for length of service but reflects progressively higher professional competence and accomplishment. No specific term in any rank is required for promotion to the next, but a reasonable time must elapse for the faculty member to demonstrate sustained productivity and have it confirmed by annual evaluations. Rank should reflect comparable stature with others in similar disciplines in other university settings. Professional achievement at another academic institution may be considered for promotion.

Progress Towards Tenure and Mid-Term Review

The faculty member shall be advised and counseled annually by the department head concerning their progress toward tenure. Non-tenured faculty also will be evaluated for progress toward tenure by the department promotion and tenure committee during the probationary period. Normally this will occur at the end of three years of service to Mississippi State University and/or one year before the earliest application for tenure can be initiated, whichever is more appropriate. Each department or academic unit must develop procedures and guidelines for the mid-term review. The promotion and tenure committee will discuss the materials, and the chair will summarize the opinions of the committee in letter to the applicant outlining both strengths and areas for improvement in the categories of research, teaching, and service. The letter will indicate whether the committee considers that the applicant is making satisfactory progress toward tenure. Copies of the letter will be provided to the applicant and to the department head who will place a copy in the applicant's personnel file.

General Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities

Every faculty member is expected to meet high standards of professional competence, integrity,

301 and collegiality and to further the goals of their department or unit. In every case, a faculty
302 member's performance in teaching, research/creative achievement (if applicable), and service will
303 be judged by all parties for promotion and/or tenure decisions on the basis of specific criteria in
304 written policy statements, developed by the appropriate academic units. It is important to note
305 that positions will be evaluated on different domains of performance standards dependent upon
306 responsibilities. All criteria should be based on the application of the highest professional
307 standards and must be consistent with the university standards and all the following COE
308 criteria.

309

310 • Teaching includes regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field
311 work, internships, performances, and fellowships; direction of theses and dissertations;
312 development of educational materials including books and websites, as well as
313 materials developed with educational grants; conduct of other academic programs that
314 confer university credit; presentation of non-credit and off-campus public lectures and
315 demonstration; and other teaching activities that could be defined by the academic units.

316

317 • Excellence in teaching includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods, and
318 standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with students by
319 counseling, advising, or motivating them, the ability to direct students in their own
320 research, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and fairly according to
321 prevailing academic standards of the discipline.

322

323 • Excellence in teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student evaluations,
324 sample course materials, graded student work, recordings of teaching sessions, graduate
325 student theses and dissertations, and any other documentary materials that demonstrate
326 teaching effectiveness.

327

328 Research, which also includes scholarly activity and/or creative achievement, includes
329 systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement or validation of human
330 knowledge, the solution of contemporary problems, or the exploration of creative forms that
331 bring greater meaning to life. Excellence in research or creative achievement must be
332 established by critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the discipline. Excellence
333 may be documented by books, articles, or reviews published by commercial or university
334 presses or in refereed journals of international, national, or regional prestige; research grants,
335 leading to high quality research; presentation of papers before professional groups; invited
336 participation in scholarly conferences; editorial work for professional journals or publishers; or
337 artistic or humanistic performances, presentations, or shows. Evidence of substantive progress
338 on long-term projects that meet the criteria above may be considered as specified by the
339 academic units.

340

341 Service includes activities which enhance the scholarly life of the university or the discipline,
342 improve the quality of life or society, or promote the general welfare of the institution, the
343 community, the state, or the nation. Thus, it includes extension of academic knowledge to the
344 public, participation on department, college, or university committees, or on regional, national,
345 or international scholarly committees, boards, or review panels, or on public boards as a
346 representative of the scholarly community. Membership or participation in professional

347 organizations may constitute satisfactory service, but excellence requires leadership or initiative
348 leading to substantial improvement or progress.

349
350 Professional-track faculty who are not in instructional tracks may be required to perform
351 research and/or creative achievement activities. Criteria for assessing research and/or creative
352 activities may include systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement or
353 validation of human knowledge, the solution of contemporary problems, or the exploration of
354 creative forms that bring greater meaning to life. Excellence in research and/or creative
355 achievement must be established by critical peer evaluation, using standards prevailing in the
356 discipline. Excellence may be documented by books, articles, or reviews published by
357 commercial or university presses or in refereed journals of international, national, or regional
358 prestige; research grants, leading to high quality research, intellectual property; presentation of
359 papers before professional groups; invited participation in scholarly conferences; editorial work
360 for professional journals or publishers; or artistic or humanistic performances, presentations, or
361 shows. Evidence of substantive progress on long-term projects that meet the criteria above may
362 be considered as specified by the academic units.

363 **Specific Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities: Promotion from**
364 **Rank 1 to Rank 2:**

365
366 For promotion from Rank 1 to Rank 2, the applicant should be developing a national reputation
367 in their field of scholarly activity. With regard to the applicant's record, minimum ratings of
368 satisfactory in research/creative achievement (if applicable), teaching, and service, as well as
369 excellence in either research/creative achievement (if applicable) or teaching are needed.

370
371 From the standpoint of research and creative achievement (if applicable), an individual must
372 initiate an active program of research, scholarly activity and creative achievement at Mississippi
373 State University. Demonstration of productivity may be based on publications in peer-reviewed
374 national and international journals of high quality and standards, presentation of research
375 findings at regional, national, and international meetings, research proposals submitted and
376 funded, and recruiting and direction of graduate student research. In accordance with university
377 guidelines, editorial work for scholarly or professional journals and texts will be considered as
378 part of the applicant's research record. No set number of published educational, research or
379 scientific articles form the basis for an excellent rating, but consistent productivity should be
380 apparent. Demonstration of productivity also may be based on creative achievement. Each
381 department within the COE must set more specific guidelines with regard to research, scholarly
382 activity and creative achievements. Departments also should develop listings of top-tier and
383 lower-tier educational, research and scientific journals. Although it is not expected that all
384 scholarly work be published in top-tier journals, some work should be published in such
385 journals.

386
387 Credit for "authorship" is not dependent upon the order or author credits. For example, a co-
388 author of a refereed manuscript in a scholarly journal receives no more or less credit than does
389 a sole author. However, it is reasonable for those reviewing the promotion and tenure package
390 to consider the extent of the contribution of an individual author when numerous (*ex.* four or
391

392 more) authors receive credit for a work. The applicant may provide an explanation of their role
393 on the project when a large number of authors are included on a publication.

394

395 From the standpoint of teaching, there should be a clear demonstration of quality teaching. The
396 validation of quality teaching may include letters from former students, submission of student
397 course evaluations, student interviews conducted by the committee, reviews of course content
398 and lecture presentations by peers, committee members and department head, and graduate
399 student theses. The applicant may submit course outlines and syllabi as well as the most recent
400 exams or other methods of assessment that are used to examine students' knowledge and
401 understanding of the course material in each course. If the applicant chooses to submit student
402 course evaluations, it is understood that evaluations of all undergraduate and graduate courses
403 will be requested for a period of time specified by the committee and department head.
404 Additional activities might include course revisions, developing new courses and innovative
405 teaching methods, revising and developing laboratory exercises and writing laboratory
406 manuals. Student advising is a vital part of our academic programs in the COE and will be
407 recognized as part of an individual's teaching activities.

408

409 All faculty members are expected to serve on departmental, college and university committees
410 in an effective and professional manner. Such contributions and conduct will constitute a
411 satisfactory rating in the service category. Service rendered to professional organizations, such
412 as manuscript review, is important relative to professional growth and development and will be
413 considered as part of research activities. However, service to professional organizations, such as
414 membership on committees and boards (excluding editorial/referee work) can be considered as
415 part of the faculty member's service.

416 **Specific Performance Standards and Evaluation of Professional Activities: Promotion from**
417 **Rank 2 to Rank 3:**

418

419 For promotion to Rank 3, substantial growth on the part of the faculty member beyond the level
420 that qualified them for promotion to Rank 2 must be clearly evident, and the applicant should
421 have a national and/or international (if applicable) reputation in their field of scholarly activity.
422 Promotion from Rank 2 to Rank 3 will require minimum ratings of satisfactory in
423 research/creative achievement (if applicable), teaching, and service, as well as excellence in at
424 least two of these areas. Usually, these two areas would be research/creative achievement (if
425 applicable) and teaching; however, in some cases promotion to Rank 3 may be granted for
426 excellence in service and either research/creative achievement (if applicable) or teaching. In
427 these cases, the applicant's record must include excellence in service to their department, college
428 and the university, as well as service external to the university that is especially meritorious.
429 The scholarly activities/creative achievements of an individual being considered for promotion
430 to Professor should be represented by an established research program with demonstrated
431 continuous productivity and recognition of this program on a national and international level.
432 Such recognition could include organizing symposia and presenting invited lectures at national
433 and international meetings, presenting invited seminars at research universities, contributing
434 invited chapters in books and symposium volumes, holding offices or committee memberships
435 in scientific societies, editorships, reviewing journal manuscripts and research proposals, and
436 awards received based on research activities. The individual must have an outstanding

437 publication record in peer-reviewed journals of high quality and standards and should have a
438 record of having directed the research of graduate students within their respective department
439 and/or having served on thesis and dissertation committees across the university. In some
440 departments of the COE, an outstanding record of creative achievement is expected.

441
442 Credit for “authorship” is not dependent upon the order or author credits. For example, a co-
443 author of a refereed manuscript in a scholarly journal receives no more or less credit than does a
444 sole author. However, it is reasonable for those reviewing the promotion and tenure package to
445 consider the extent of the contribution of an individual author when numerous (*ex.* four or more)
446 authors receive credit for a work. The applicant may provide an explanation of their role on the
447 project when a large number of authors are included on a publication.

448
449 In the area of teaching, the emphasis will be on quality. There should be a clear demonstration
450 of outstanding teaching associated with scholarly achievement. This could involve writing
451 textbooks, course revisions, developing new courses, innovative teaching methods, revising and
452 developing laboratory exercises and writing laboratory manuals. Other criteria, as detailed
453 above for promotion to Rank 2, will be used in the committee's rating of the applicant's teaching
454 abilities.

455
456 Service on departmental, college and university committees should involve some substantial
457 contributions on the part of the applicant for a satisfactory rating in the service category. Service
458 to an individual's professional societies (editorships, review of journal manuscripts and research
459 proposals) will be important in the total evaluation of the applicant's research record when
460 promotion to Rank 3 is sought. Service to professional organizations, such as membership on
461 committees and boards, excluding editorial/referee work, should be considered as part of the
462 faculty member's service.

463 **External Letters of Review**

464
465 The applicant for promotion and tenure should inform their department head of their intention
466 to apply for promotion and/or tenure. The applicant should do so in a timely manner, so that
467 there is adequate time to obtain letters of external review.

468
469 External letters will be solicited from professionals in the field who can provide an impartial
470 evaluation of the candidate's work and accomplishments.

471
472 In the case of professorial tracks, external reviewers should be faculty at peer to peer-plus
473 institutions, or peer to peer-plus departments. In the case of instructor tracks, external
474 reviewers must be external to the department but may be internal or external to the
475 university. External faculty reviewers should not include individuals who have a
476 professional or personal conflict of interest with the candidate. Conflict of interest in general
477 would include but not necessarily be restricted to previous mentors, previous graduate
478 students, collaborating co-authors, collaborating co-investigators, or relatives/past-relatives.
479 In disciplines or fields where the general conflict of interest definition commonly does not
480 apply, external reviewers normally excluded from the process can be utilized if complete
481 and adequate justification is provided.

482 The candidate, the department promotion and tenure committee, and department head will
483 each provide a list of names that will be used to create a master list of potential external
484 reviewers. The department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair will
485 jointly select the final list of external reviewers from whom letters of evaluation will be
486 requested and should include faculty names provided by all three sources. Both the
487 department head and department promotion and tenure committee chair are responsible for
488 eliminating, to the best of their knowledge, all external reviewers that have a conflict of
489 interest.

490

491 Dossiers must contain an explanation of the credentials and qualifications of each external
492 reviewer regarding their training/background (i.e., curriculum vita) in addition to the extent of
493 their contact, interaction or relationship with the candidate. External letters of evaluation must
494 be received from a minimum of four external reviewers for inclusion in the dossier of the
495 candidate. It is the responsibility of the chair of the department committee or the department
496 head to obtain at least the minimum number of letters of evaluation from external reviewers
497 who have agreed to function in this capacity. All letters received from external reviewers must
498 be included in the dossier of the candidate unless the department head and department
499 promotion and tenure committee collectively decide to withdraw a letter from the review
500 process if it contains information that refers to or describes a conflict of interest. In instances
501 when substantial modifications of the application have occurred (e.g., official notifications of
502 accepted publications or awarded grants) after documentation has been forwarded to the
503 external reviewers, these achievements can be communicated in a letter written by the candidate
504 and forwarded to the department head. The letter should be included in the section of the
505 dossier containing the external letters of review.

506

507 The identity of the external reviewers will not be revealed to the candidate and communications
508 must not include any information that might indicate the identity or location of any external
509 reviewer. Exceptions may include situations as may be required by law or ordered by a court of
510 competent jurisdiction. The specific procedures regarding solicitation and use of external letters
511 of evaluation are to be detailed in departmental policies.

512

513 The department head will arrange for the applicant's credentials to be evaluated by external
514 reviewers prior to the date by which the promotion and tenure application must be submitted to
515 the department head. The external reviewers will be made aware of the applicant's teaching and
516 service responsibilities so that a fair judgment may be rendered relative to the program and
517 environment in the COE and the department of the applicant at Mississippi State University.
518 The applicant will be asked to include up to five (5) reprints of their most significant
519 publications and/or creative achievements (if applicable) to be sent to the external reviewers.
520 External reviews should be returned to the department head, who will add them to the
521 promotion and/or tenure application. It is expected that four to six letters be included with the
522 promotion and/or tenure portfolio, but all external reviews that are received must be included.
523 At least four letters of external review should be included in the applicant's promotion package.
524 The external reviews will become a permanent part of the applicant's promotion packet.

525

526 **Promotion and Tenure Committees**

527

528 **College of Education Promotion and Tenure Committee**

529

530 Membership of the COE committee should reflect the composition of the full-time faculty in the
531 college.

532

533 A minimum of 12 members (two from each department) with at least three years of service as a
534 faculty member at Mississippi State University are to be elected to staggered two-year terms by
535 majority vote of all faculty members of their department by September 1, and one member is to
536 be appointed annually by the dean. As faculty titles are added, each department may choose to
537 elect an additional appropriate representative to serve on the COE committee. At least one
538 member from each department must be a tenured full professor, so that six tenured professors
539 serve on the COE committee. If a department does not have a full tenured professor, then that
540 department will still elect two members; however, both will be at Rank 2. The COE committee
541 must maintain a minimum of three tenured professors.

542

543 All faculty members on the committee with appropriate rank will vote on promotion to Rank 2
544 or Rank 3; however, only tenured faculty members on the committee vote on the tenure
545 decision. When a candidate is being considered for promotion to associate professor or to
546 professor and for tenure at the same time, any non-agreement of the promotion vote, and the
547 tenure vote will be resolved by vote of only the tenured faculty members of the committee.

548

549 Each spring semester, the COE will hold elections for the college promotion and tenure
550 committee and will make known the membership of the committee to the faculty. Faculty cannot
551 serve on both department and COE Promotion and Tenure Committees simultaneously, and
552 faculty cannot serve on department or college promotion and tenure committees during a year in
553 which they are applying for either tenure or promotion. Members can observe the proceedings
554 of the department promotion and tenure committee but cannot participate nor vote in a
555 candidate's promotion or tenure review at the department level. No member of the committee
556 will consider the application of a relative. Any appearance of conflict of interest should be
557 avoided. No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director, of an
558 academic unit will be a member of the committee. Members cannot serve consecutive terms
559 unless this would leave the department without representation. (If a faculty member serves one
560 year on a COE Promotion and Tenure Committee and cannot serve the next year because they
561 are applying for promotion, they can be elected to a new two-year term the following year. A
562 faculty member who serves out the term of another faculty member may be elected to serve a
563 two-year term beginning the following year).

564

565 The responsibilities of the COE Promotion and Tenure Committee will be to:

566

- 567 • Write the COE's promotion and tenure policies and procedures which must be
568 consistent with university promotion and tenure policies, include the mechanism for
569 their adoption and revision, describe the procedures that will be followed if sufficient

570 numbers of members are not available because of absences, recusal or insufficient
571 rank, and identify the participation of the different categories of faculty in the college
572 promotion and tenure process;

- 573
- 574 • Approve the promotion and tenure documents (and all subsequent changes) of
575 department committees within the COE and to ensure that such documents are
576 consistent with the mission of the university and the COE, and the university
577 promotion and tenure document;
 - 578
 - 579 • Assist departments in developing procedures for a third-year review of all non-
580 tenured, tenure-track faculty;
 - 581
 - 582 • Assist departments in developing criteria for external peer reviews, including the
583 identification of peer departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
 - 584
 - 585 • Assist departments in developing definitions of excellence, satisfactory, and
586 unsatisfactory as it pertains to the evaluation of candidates for promotion and tenure;
 - 587
 - 588 • Assist departments in developing definitions of teaching, research and/or creative
589 achievement, and service consistent with the mission of the department or school; and
590
 - 591 • Conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure, ensuring department standards
592 are fairly applied and university standards are maintained.
 - 593

594 The committee will serve as an advisory body to the dean. In that capacity, the committee will
595 review all recommendations transmitted from departmental promotion and tenure committees
596 and from department heads. The dean will make available to the appropriate COE committee
597 members all pertinent and available information. All committee members are responsible for
598 individually reviewing all such information, which will be securely electronically stored,
599 before voting on any application for promotion and tenure. The committee will meet and, by
600 majority vote, make its recommendations, with reasons, to the dean who will respond, in
601 writing, to the chair of the committee, indicating any future action to be taken, with
602 accompanying reasons.

603

604 Additionally, the COE Promotion and Tenure Committee will review all criteria, policies, and
605 procedures followed by the COE and by individual departments on an annual basis to ensure
606 that they are equitable and effective. This committee will also review any proposed changes in
607 departmental promotion and tenure guidelines and must approve of any changes before they can
608 take effect. The chair of the committee should be a Rank 3 tenured faculty member.

609

610

611 During the final college promotion and tenure committee meeting in the spring semester, the
612 committee will annually elect the chair and secretary for the upcoming year. The following year,
613 the chair will call the initial meeting of the academic year no later than October. Otherwise, this
614 responsibility will fall upon the member having the longest continuous service to the committee
615 and (in case of a tie) to the college. At the initial meeting of the academic year, a new chair and

616 secretary will be elected for the next year. The new members will be briefed at the initial
617 meeting on procedural matters, and any other necessary business will be conducted.

618
619 A request for modification of the COE promotion and tenure policy may be initiated by the
620 dean, the COE Promotion and Tenure Committee, and/or individual faculty members. Such
621 requests will be considered by the COE Promotion and Tenure Committee. The committee
622 recommendations will then be forwarded to the dean and placed before the full faculty for
623 final approval.

624 **Departmental Committees:**

625
626 Every department within the COE must have a promotion and tenure committee. The
627 department committee may include any faculty track. The promotion and tenure procedures
628 must specify the inclusiveness of the committee composition and clearly establish the eligibility
629 for voting and participation within the department promotion and tenure process. In departments
630 where there may be professional-track faculty of rank serving on department committees along
631 with tenured faculty, it is permissible for all faculty members on the committee of appropriate
632 rank to vote on promotion to Rank 2 or to Rank 3. Only tenured faculty members on the
633 committee can vote on the tenure decision. When a candidate is being considered for promotion
634 to associate professor or to professor and for tenure at the same time, any non-agreement of the
635 promotion vote, and the tenure vote will be resolved by vote of only the tenured faculty
636 members on the committee.

637
638 The faculty of each school or department will determine the structure of its promotion and
639 tenure committee, subject to the conditions that:

- 640 • A minimum of three tenured faculty must be available to vote on tenure decisions;
- 641
642 • Committee members must hold a rank at or above the candidate's aspirant rank to vote on
643 each case;
- 644
645 • Unless a unit uses a committee-of-the-whole (which is highly encouraged), the
646 members of the committee must be elected. The length of terms will be determined by
647 the unit;
- 648
649 • No member of the committee will consider the application of a relative. Appearance of
650 conflict of interest should be avoided;
- 651
652 • No faculty member functioning as an administrator, department head or director of an
653 academic unit will be a member of the committee;
- 654
655 • A faculty member serving on the college promotion and tenure committee may observe
656 but neither participate nor vote in a candidate's promotion or tenure review at the
657 department level;
- 658
659 • The committee will annually elect its chair;
- 660

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- The membership of the committee will be made known to the faculty; and
- An individual will not serve in a year that their promotion application is being considered.

Among the responsibilities of the department promotion and tenure committee are to:

- Establish procedures for a third-year review of all non-tenured, tenure-track faculty;
- Specify a mandatory date by which candidates must notify the department head of their intent to submit an application for tenure and/or promotion;
- Specify criteria for external peer reviews, including the identification of peer departments or schools at other colleges or universities;
- Facilitate all votes related to the promotion and tenure process, including the vote to approve the original promotion and tenure document and policies and all subsequent changes;
- Conduct a review by the end of the third year of all non-tenured, tenure-track faculty; and
- Conduct a vote on all dossiers for promotion and tenure.

Every department will write a promotion and tenure document, which is approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty. In comprehensive departments both tenured/tenure-track and professional-track faculty, the promotion section of the document will be approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty, while the tenure section of the document will be approved by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty. The department document must:

- Contain the criteria and procedures for promotion and tenure;
- Define teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service, consistent with the mission of the department, including criteria for developing a national reputation and an established national reputation;
- Specify criteria for excellence, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory as it pertains to the evaluation of candidates for promotion and/or tenure;
- Determine the structure of the department promotion and tenure committee;
- Specify the criteria for eligibility of full-time faculty to serve on the department promotion and tenure committee; and
- Describe any specifics, including any uniqueness, of the department or school in

707 which the individual is to be tenured.

708

709 Both the recommendation of the department committee and that of the department head will
710 be conveyed to both the dean and the promotion and tenure committee of the COE.

711 **Procedures Related to Hiring and Annual Faculty Evaluation and Review**

712

713 At the time of initial appointment, each faculty member will be informed in writing by the
714 department head or unit administrator whether the appointment is tenure-track or professional-
715 track. The faculty member will be given copies of the department and COE promotion and/or
716 tenure policies. The new faculty member should respond in writing that they understand and
717 agree with the terms of employment.

718

719 During the probationary period, the department head will counsel each faculty member annually
720 about progress toward promotion and/or tenure. This annual evaluation will include:

721

722 1. A written review of the previous calendar year's progress;

723

724 2. A written agreement about the faculty member's objectives, responsibilities, and
725 expectations for the coming calendar year; and

726

727 3. The department head's assessment of progress toward tenure (if applicable).

728

729 The written agreement about the coming year must be consistent with the promotion and/or
730 tenure criteria of the department, the college, and the university. If the department head and the
731 faculty member cannot reach agreement, the matter will be referred to the dean or director. The
732 annual evaluation, signed by both parties, will be sent to the dean or director. A copy will be
733 placed in the faculty member's personnel file. The faculty member has the right to attach a
734 dissenting statement to all copies of this evaluation.

735

736 College, school, or department promotion and tenure committees will consider, if submitted, but
737 are not bound by, the department head's annual review of a candidate's progress toward tenure
738 or promotion.

739

740 Prior to the offer of hire, the appropriate promotion and tenure committee will make a formal
741 recommendation about:

742

743 • The initial appointment of a faculty member or administrator at the level of Rank 2 or
744 Rank 3;

745

746 • The acceptance of experience as the equivalent of a terminal degree; and

747

748 • The acceptance of years of credit at another institution of higher education toward
749 fulfillment of the minimum probationary period for tenure.

750 **Procedures for Application for Promotion and/or Tenure**

751
752 A faculty member who intends to apply for promotion and/or tenure should notify their
753 department head of their intention by April 1. The applicant makes a formal application for
754 promotion and/or tenure by completing the MSU Promotion and Tenure Application form and
755 attaching supporting documentation. Each unit will specify the format and the level of detail for
756 the supporting documentation. A faculty member who wants to be considered for promotion
757 and/or tenure should submit their application to the department head no later than October 1 or
758 the nearest working day after October 1. The department head has the responsibility to assist,
759 where appropriate, the faculty member in preparing materials for tenure and promotion review.
760 Departments may set earlier deadlines for submission of an application for promotion and
761 tenure. The department head must solicit external reviews for the applicant.

762
763 The candidate should organize their promotion and tenure portfolio to include the following:

- 764
765 1. Completed promotion and tenure application (outlines from the Provost's Office);
- 766
767 2. *Curriculum vitae*;
- 768
769 3. Documentation of teaching effectiveness, such as teaching evaluations from courses
770 taught at Mississippi State University, course outlines or syllabi, letters from students,
771 other relevant materials;
- 772
773 4. Documentation of research and/or creative achievements, such as published manuscripts
774 (if applicable);
- 775
776 5. Documentation of service; and
- 777
778 6. External letters of review.

779
780 Items 1, 2, and 6 in the above list are required. The other items are recommended but optional.
781 Up to five example publications and/or creative achievements may be included (if applicable)
782 but should be packaged separately.

783
784 The candidate can add new material (e.g., papers accepted for publication or proposals funded) to
785 their application package after the departmental submission deadline; however, no material may
786 be added or removed from the application package file after a decision has been made at the
787 department level, unless the applicant, department head, and the department committee agree.

788
789 After submission of the application, the candidate customarily takes no further part in the
790 process until a decision has been announced by the president. No discussion of correspondence
791 relating to the application is to be initiated by the candidate with the reviewing authorities.
792 Deliberation at all levels must be confidential. The faculty member has the right to discontinue
793 the review process for promotion and/or tenure at any point before a decision has been made.
794 Their request must be made in writing to the department head or director before a final decision
795 has been rendered.

796 The department head should submit all application materials to the chair of the department
797 promotion and tenure committee. The department promotion and tenure committee reviews the
798 application materials and makes recommendation to the department head. The department head
799 must forward to the Dean of the COE a portfolio for each candidate consisting of materials as
800 defined in the university promotion and tenure document by November 15.

801
802 The candidate will be officially notified of the disposition of the application at each level of
803 the process. The written recommendations made at each level in the process will be provided
804 to the candidate, and placed on file by the department head, dean or director, and provost.
805 These recommendations will be the basis of future discussions of professional development
806 between the faculty member and the department head.

807 **Dossier Review**

808
809 The department promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the candidate's
810 promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation on the question of
811 promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the seven criteria (3 core –
812 teaching, research and/or creative achievement, and service + 4 IHL) required by the IHL as a
813 whole. In contrast, a teaching faculty member may only have 2 core areas - teaching and service + 4
814 IHL. The committee's recommendation will be based on a simple majority vote, conducted by
815 secret ballot. The committee chair will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale to be
816 included in the candidate's dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the committee's letter
817 of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the
818 identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments
819 that informed the committee's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale of the
820 committee will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The chair
821 will notify the department head of the committee's recommendation.

822
823 The department head or director will separately and independently review the dossier. Their
824 recommendations will be based on pertinent evidence documented in the faculty member's
825 dossier and information in the personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in
826 professional activities. The candidate will receive a copy of the department head's or director's
827 letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the
828 identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers' comments
829 that informed the department head's or director's decision. The letter of recommendation and
830 rationale of the department head or director will be included in the dossier as it proceeds
831 through the review process.

832
833 The candidate may respond to the department promotion and tenure committee's and/or the
834 department head's or director's letters to correct any factual errors represented therein within
835 five working days of the candidate's receipt of each letter. The candidate's letter(s) of factual
836 corrections must be sent to the review level to which the response was made. That level may
837 address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the application within five working days
838 of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be included in the
839 dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

840

841 The college promotion and tenure committee will review the information in the candidate's
842 promotion and tenure dossier. The committee will make a recommendation on the question of
843 promotion or promotion and tenure by a single vote evaluating the three areas (teaching,
844 research and/or creative achievement, and service) as a whole. The committee's
845 recommendation will be based on a simple majority vote, conducted by secret ballot. The
846 committee chair will submit a letter of recommendation and rationale to be included in the
847 candidate's dossier. The candidate will receive a copy of the college promotion and tenure
848 committee's letter of recommendation and rationale that is redacted only insofar as necessary to
849 conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale shall characterize external reviewers'
850 comments that informed the committee's decision. The letter of recommendation and rationale
851 of the committee will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process. The
852 candidate may respond to the college promotion and tenure committee's letter to correct any
853 factual errors represented therein within five working days of the candidate's receipt of the
854 letter. The committee may address the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier
855 within five working days of receipt of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters
856 shall be included in the dossier as it proceeds through the review process.

857
858 The dean will review the dossier and make a recommendation based on pertinent evidence
859 documented in the faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier and information in the
860 personnel file that is applicable to the candidate's performance in professional activities. The
861 candidate will receive a copy of the dean's letter of recommendation and rationale that is
862 redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers. The rationale
863 shall characterize external reviewers' comments that informed the dean's decision. The letter of
864 recommendation and rationale of the dean will be included in the dossier as it proceeds through
865 the review process. The candidate may respond to the dean's letter to correct any factual errors
866 represented therein within five working days of the candidate's receipt of the letter. The dean may
867 add the concerns in a new letter to be included in the dossier within five working days of receipt
868 of the candidate's letter of factual correction. All letters shall be included in the dossier as it
869 proceeds through the review process.

870
871 The faculty member has the right to discontinue the review process for tenure or promotion at
872 any point before a decision has been made. Their request must be made in writing to the
873 department head or director before a final decision has been rendered.

874
875 Department and college committees on promotion and tenure will assist their department head or
876 director and dean, respectively, in reviewing the eligibility of all faculty members who have met
877 the minimum requirements for advancement in rank or tenure.

878
879 On rare occasions and in exceptional circumstances when a variation of the process described in
880 this document needs to be initiated in order to be fair to the faculty member while still ensuring
881 a rigorous review of the candidate's dossier, the University Promotion and Tenure Committee
882 will review and approve any such appropriate requests during the review process. These
883 approved variations of the process described by this paragraph cannot be the sole basis for an
884 appeal.

885 **Chronology**

886

887 The receipt dates listed below for the department represent suggested guidelines intended to
888 facilitate an organized and efficient review of candidates' dossiers during each official phase of
889 the evaluation process. Minor chronological delays that may occur beyond these dates do not
890 represent a significant procedural error. Departments may specify deadlines that are earlier, but
891 not later, than those cited below.

892

893 On a date specified in the department promotion and tenure guidelines but no later than April 1,
894 the candidate for tenure and/or promotion will notify the department head and the chair of the
895 department promotion and tenure committee of their intent to submit their application for tenure
896 and/or promotion. The department head has the responsibility to assist, where appropriate, the
897 faculty member in preparing the application for tenure and promotion review.

898

899 By **October 1** (or first working day thereafter), or earlier if specified in the department
900 promotion and tenure document, a faculty member eligible for consideration for promotion
901 and/or tenure must have provided the department head with all pertinent and available
902 information to apply for consideration.

903

904 By **November 15** (or first working day thereafter), each faculty member's complete dossier will
905 be provided to the college promotion and tenure committee. This will include letters of
906 recommendation and rationale from both the department promotion and tenure committee and
907 the department head. Each of these letters of recommendation and rationale will be copied to the
908 candidate. The letters will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of
909 external reviewers. These letters must include a summary of the procedures followed by the
910 academic unit in evaluating the candidate and the committee's and head's independent
911 evaluation of the candidate's teaching effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and
912 service to the profession and university. The chair of the college promotion and tenure
913 committee is responsible for inserting letters of recommendation and rationale from the
914 department head and the department promotion and tenure committee, along with any letters
915 related to correction of factual errors at the department level, into the dossier of each candidate
916 reviewed by the college promotion and tenure committee.

917

918 By **December 15** (or first working day thereafter), the college promotion and tenure
919 committee's letter of recommendation and rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the
920 college dean. Letters of recommendation and rationale shall be copied to the candidate. The
921 letters will be redacted only insofar as necessary to conceal the identity of external reviewers.
922 The letter concerning each candidate must include the committee's summary of the procedures
923 followed by the college committee in evaluating the candidate and the committee's evaluation
924 of the candidate's teaching effectiveness, research and/or creative achievement, and service to
925 the profession and university. The college promotion and tenure committee chair is responsible
926 to provide the dean with each candidate's dossier including letters from previous stages of
927 review. For each candidate, the dean is responsible for collection and inclusion of any letters
928 related to correction of factual errors at the college level.

929

930

931 By **January 15** (or first working day thereafter), the dean's letter of recommendation and
932 rationale for each candidate shall be sent to the provost and copied to the candidate. The letter
933 concerning each candidate must include the dean's evaluation of the candidate's teaching
934 effectiveness, research and/or creating achievement, and service to the profession and university.
935 The dean is responsible to provide the provost with each candidate's dossier including letters
936 from previous stages of review. Copies of publications, works of art, etc., will be included only
937 if specifically requested by the provost.

938
939 By **March 10** (or first working day thereafter), the provost will have reviewed each candidate's
940 dossier and will make a recommendation to the university president. Copies of the provost's
941 recommendation will be sent to the candidate with copies to the dean, department head, and
942 chairs of college and department promotion and tenure committees.

943
944 The university president will review the recommendation of the provost and will decide to
945 accept or reject that recommendation. The decision to award tenure is made by the university
946 president. To grant tenure to a faculty member, the president will sign a written certification that
947 the faculty member has satisfactorily met all seven of the IHL required criteria. The university
948 president will transmit that decision, together with reasons for a negative decision, to the faculty
949 member directly, with copies to the dean, department head, and chairs of college and
950 department promotion and tenure committees. All judgments made at lower levels of the
951 university are recommendations to the university president.

952 **Appeals**

953
954 Faculty members who have been denied promotion or tenure may, within ten working days of
955 the notification of the decision from the president, request an appeal hearing before the
956 University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. The request must be made through the
957 provost who will forward the request to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure.
958 Grounds for requesting an appeal are:

- 959
- 960 1. The decision was prejudiced, arbitrary, or capricious.
 - 961
 - 962 2. The promotion and tenure procedures contained in this document were not properly
963 followed.
 - 964

965 For additional information regarding the appeal process, one should refer to the university
966 promotion and tenure policies and procedures.

967 **Post-Tenure Review** (see OP 01.21)

968
969 The faculty and the administration of Mississippi State University recognize the importance of
970 encouraging all professors to maintain appropriate levels of productivity in teaching, research,
971 and service. Accordingly, evaluation of the performance of the faculty does not cease with the
972 granting of tenure but continues with formal annual assessments of all components of a
973 professor's assignment.

974 The granting of tenure is the academic community’s chief guarantee of academic freedom –
975 both the freedom of the teacher to teach and the freedom of the researcher to research without
976 undue or inappropriate intramural and extramural pressures. Thus, it is ultimately a guarantee of
977 the student’s freedom to learn. Nothing in this procedure should be construed as an attempt to
978 alter the contractual relationship between the professor and the university or to alter the nature
979 of tenure as traditionally conceived and legally defined in the American academic community.
980 Nor is this procedure intended as a mechanism for re-evaluating or re-validating the granting of
981 tenure. Thus, a tenured professor cannot be required to remake their case for tenure or
982 otherwise to reassume the burden of proof that they bore in the original tenure proceedings. This
983 procedure is intended solely for assessing cases in which a tenured professor’s level of
984 performance may have decreased over a sustained period and for exploring ways in which that
985 level of performance might be improved by a mutually agreed-on plan of development. This
986 procedure is not disciplinary and thus is not appropriate for reviewing cases of alleged
987 malfeasance, dereliction, contumacy, or criminality.

988 **Procedures**

989
990 Comprehensive annual evaluations are conducted in the academic unit (in most cases, the
991 department) in which the professor resides. These evaluations are annually reviewed by the dean.
992 It is customary and appropriate that these evaluations lead to rewards or sanctions in the form of
993 raises, assignments, and material or financial support for research.
994

995 In every sixth year following the granting of tenure or following the most recent post-tenure
996 promotion, the five most recent annual reviews (complete with all faculty responses to each
997 annual review) for each tenured professor will again be reviewed by the dean to determine
998 whether there is cumulative prima facie evidence of low performance. In this context,
999 cumulative prima facie evidence of low performance is a rating equal to, or less than
1000 unsatisfactory overall in at least three of the five most recent annual evaluations detected during
1001 a post-tenure review. The dean may also conduct such a review at any point within this period
1002 when routine review of annual evaluations suggests a sustained pattern (normally three years) of
1003 low performance, or when other evidence suggests a marked decline in performance.
1004

1005 Once a dean has determined that there is prima facie evidence of low performance, they shall ask
1006 the tenured faculty of the professor’s academic unit, holding rank at or above the level of that
1007 professor, to empanel a post-tenure review committee, including at least one professor from
1008 outside the department, according to its own procedures. The committee will conduct an informal
1009 investigation to determine whether there is evidence of low productivity. It will follow procedures
1010 established by the tenured faculty of the department, interviewing the professor, the department
1011 head, and any other parties whose assistance it considers relevant. The committee will have the
1012 same access to university records as is granted to the University Promotion and Tenure
1013 Committee.
1014

1015 Faculty productivity must be measured as a function of qualitative and quantitative criteria that
1016 goes beyond simply the numerical tabulation of instructional course hours, annual rate of
1017 manuscript publication in peer-reviewed journals, time devoted to service work assignments, and
1018 amounts of extramural grant funding awarded. Evaluation of faculty productivity must be

1019 addressed in an appropriate context as a function of work assignment partitioning within each of
1020 the academic missions and correlations made with relevant parameters including professional
1021 training and specific field of specialization.

1022
1023 If the committee finds that there is insufficient evidence of low performance or that there is
1024 evidence of insufficiently recognized merit, it will report all of these findings to the dean. If the
1025 committee finds that there is sufficient evidence of low performance, then it will report to the
1026 dean all of these findings including but not limited to those which may be provided by the
1027 faculty member of any specific causes or reasons that may explain declines in faculty
1028 productivity. The committee will also meet with the professor and the department head to
1029 formulate a mutually acceptable plan of development to extend over one to three years. Such a
1030 plan may include re-structuring of the professor's workload assignments, enhancement of
1031 administrative support (e.g., supplement resource allocation), re-training, or other arrangements
1032 that could potentially re-stimulate or re-focus the professor's energies.

1033
1034 The post-tenure review committee will monitor the success of the development plan over its
1035 planned duration and will render progress reports to the dean at least annually. At the end of the
1036 development period (or earlier if performance has been raised to the level the committee
1037 targeted), the committee will report its conclusions to the dean.

1038
1039 If, at the end of the development period, the administration believes that a tenured faculty
1040 member's level of performance is so low that continued employment would be a detriment to the
1041 university's mission, then it is appropriate for it to institute formal dismissal hearings, under the
1042 authority of Policy 401.0102 of the Board of Trustees, Institutions of Higher Learning. In the
1043 case of termination of a tenured faculty member under the guidelines of this Post-Tenure
1044 Review policy, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action against
1045 them and that they have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense. Within ten (10)
1046 calendar days of notification of the proposed action, the faculty member will state in writing
1047 their desire to have a hearing. They will be permitted to have with them an adviser of their own
1048 choosing who may be an attorney. If an attorney is to be the adviser, the MSU Office of General
1049 Counsel is to be notified as soon as the faculty member makes known their intention to have a
1050 hearing. Failure to notify MSU of the intent to have an attorney present as an adviser will result
1051 in the postponement of the meeting for seven (7) calendar days. The institution shall record
1052 (suitable for transcription) all hearings. In the hearing of charges of incompetence, the testimony
1053 will include that of faculty and other scholars. Tenured faculty members who are dismissed will
1054 have their contracts terminated at any time subsequent to notice and hearing with no right to
1055 continued employment for any period of time. At the discretion of the Institutional Executive
1056 Officer, any faculty member's salary may be paid, and they may be relieved of all teaching
1057 duties, assignments, appointments, and privileges when they are dismissed.

1058 **Dismissal of Tenured Faculty**

1059
1060 Termination of service of a tenured faculty member is made only under these extraordinary
1061 circumstances (as outlined in IHL Board Policy 403.0104):

- 1062
1063
- Financial exigencies as declared by the Board;

- 1064 • Termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as approved by
- 1065 the Board;
- 1066 • Malfeasances, inefficiency, or contumacious conduct; or
- 1067 • For legitimate and justifiable cause.

1068
1069 Termination for cause of a tenured faculty member or the dismissal for cause of a faculty
1070 member prior to the expiration of a term appointment will not be recommended by the
1071 institutional executive officer until the faculty member has been afforded the opportunity for a
1072 hearing. In no event will the contract of a tenured faculty member be terminated for cause
1073 without the faculty member being afforded the opportunity for a hearing.

1074
1075 In all cases, the faculty member will be informed in writing of the proposed action against them
1076 and that they have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense. Within ten (10) working
1077 days from the date of the university president's decision, the faculty member will state in writing
1078 their desire to have a hearing. They will be permitted to have with them an adviser of their own
1079 choosing who may be an attorney. The institution is directed to record (suitable for
1080 transcription) all hearings. In the hearing of charges of incompetence, the testimony will include
1081 that of faculty and other scholars.

1082
1083 Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for financial exigencies or termination or
1084 reduction of program, academic or administrative units will remain employed for a minimum of
1085 9 to 12 months, consistent with current contract periods of time, from date of notification.
1086 Tenured faculty members, who are dismissed for malfeasance, inefficiency, contumacious
1087 conduct or for a legitimate and justifiable cause will have their contracts terminated at any time
1088 subsequent to notice and hearing with no right to continued employment for any period of time.
1089 At the discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer, any faculty member's salary may be
1090 paid, and they may be relieved of all teaching duties, assignments, appointments and privileges
1091 when they are dismissed for any reasons stated above or pending a termination hearing.

1092