



## Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures

Faculty performance at Valdosta State University (VSU) is expected to be consistent with the mission of the university. It follows from this that evaluation of faculty performance, including the awarding of tenure and promotion, should be conducted according to a set of policies and procedures that are adequate, appropriate and administered fairly across all units, as well as in accordance with VSU and University System of Georgia policies.

Each college or division and its respective academic units are expected to focus on particular aspects of the mission in ways which distinguish their contributions from others. However, the tenure and promotion practices of all academic units must be aligned and consistent with the overall mission of VSU as a University System of Georgia comprehensive university and should position Valdosta State University as a leader among similar universities.

The award of tenure constitutes permanent status as a member of the university faculty. Therefore, in developing standards for tenure, academic units may consider not only the candidate's accomplishments prior to applying for tenure but also what those accomplishments indicate about that candidate's potential future contributions to the mission.

### 1. University Tenure and Promotion Committee

#### 1.1 Committee Purview

The University Tenure and Promotion Committee (hereafter referred to as the UTPC) is charged with reviewing all tenure and promotion dossiers for **procedural** and **substantive** due-process errors as well as

- To regularly review and assess how tenure and promotion are awarded across campus, by establishing university-wide procedural standards to which all units will be subject, and in this capacity make recommendations to the Provost.
- To act as a process review committee at the university level that evaluates all tenure and promotion dossiers forwarded by a dean or director and makes a formal recommendation to the Provost.

#### 1.2 Committee Membership

The UTPC shall be a standing committee appointed by the Provost in consultation with the Deans' Council and shall be comprised of the following:

- The Dean of the Honors College, or designee, will serve as chair of the committee and



UTPC, to the Provost, to the President.

Each unit is responsible for the composition and requirements of its own tenure and promotion review committee in accordance with its tenure and promotion guidelines and/or by-laws. A review committee at a lower level can be as small as three or as large as the unit.

Where the unit is small, the committee may not be necessary, and the review function can be filled by the college or division committee. The unit head's recommendation, as well as that of the college or division committee and the dean or director, is required in such a case.

If a department's tenure and promotion guidelines allow for the creation of a personnel subcommittee to initially evaluate a candidate's dossier, the same subcommittee shall evaluate all of the candidates for the same rank within the department who are applying for tenure and promotion in a given year.

The UTPC shall review all dossiers under consideration for tenure, promotion or simultaneous tenure and promotion that have been forwarded by a dean or director. The UTPC will then make a recommendation to the Provost. The Provost is not bound to the UTPC's recommendation but is obligated to meet with the UTPC to discuss any differences in judgment which arise within 20 business days of receiving the UTPC's recommendation.

Candidates should be informed in writing at all levels of review about each committee's/individual's recommendation. If candidates do not receive a positive recommendation at the department head or dean level, they have two choices: (1) withdraw their packet from further consideration in a written request to the individual making the recommendation, or (2) request in writing that the packet be forwarded to the next level with further explanation/clarification. This further explanation should not include new material (for example: an additional publication, conference presentation or student opinions of instruction), but may include documentation justifying the reasons for further consideration. Candidates must make this request within 5 working days after notification of non-support. If candidates choose this latter option, their packets will be considered at the next level of review. If candidates make no written request at all, the packet will not be forwarded to the next level of review.

The final institutional decision rests with the President. Once the President has made a decision and provided a written notification to the candidate, the candidate can exercise the right to appeal. The appeal letter should not include new material (for example: an additional publication, conference presentation or student opinions of instruction), but may include documentation justifying the reasons for the appeal. This appeal must be filed within 20 working days after the candidate received the President's notification.

Further appeals, within the University System of Georgia, where applicable, are governed under the policies and bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and must be submitted within established timelines in accordance with Board of Regents policy, as published on the Board of Regents website and noted in the application for discretionary review (BoR 6.26).

## 2.1 Procedural Due-Process Errors

A procedural due-process error refers to a decision that has failed to comply with adequate and appropriate procedural steps or to fulfill procedural requirements stipulated at any level of the formal review process. Thus, these errors pertain to the formal *conduct* of the review.

Procedural due-process errors include but are not limited to:

- A review process that is inconsistent with university-wide procedural standards and practices.
- A recommendation which violates any explicit written criteria for tenure or promotion applicable to the candidate at any level of the review process.
- Any error or default in procedure when such error or default has had a prejudicial effect on the fair consideration of the candidate's case for tenure or promotion.

## 2.2 Substantive Due-Process Errors

A substantive due-process error refers to a decision made at a lower level where there has been inadequate consideration of the candidate's qualifications for tenure or promotion, or where the decision is deemed to be arbitrary or capricious.

A substantive due-process error may also refer to an illegal or constitutionally impermissible consideration, such as that which has unlawfully taken into consideration a candidate's gender, race, age, nationality, handicap, sexual orientation, or which has violated the candidate's exercise of his or her protected First Amendment rights.

Substantive due-process errors include but are not limited to:

- A failure to give adequate consideration either to the candidate's qualifications or to the relevant criteria for tenure when such failure has had a prejudicial effect on fair consideration of the candidate's case for tenure or promotion.
- A recommendation significantly based on any consideration which violates academic freedom or which involves discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.
- A recommendation at a lower level that is deemed arbitrary, capricious or not supported by factual data.

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university.



## **Instructors**

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**Associate Professors** - The areas of expertise and professional activities of associate professors should be more advanced, more clearly-defined, and more widely-recognized as their academic careers progress. Typically, as the faculty member's roles and contributions grow in significance, leadership, and initiative, the faculty member will have established a strong record of accomplishment in at least two of the following three areas: teaching and student learning (or alternative for those whose primary faculty assignment is not teaching); research, scholarship, professional growth, and creative production, and service. Since all three areas are informed by scholarship, the ability to conduct and disseminate scholarship or creative production grounded in their area of expertise are important to the work of associate professors.

**Promotion to Professor** - Appointment to associate professor does not entail eventual promotion to Professor. The rank of Professor is reserved for those who have demonstrated continuous intellectual development and academic leadership. Candidates for promotion to professor shall have established themselves as leaders, mentors, and scholars, and contributed to the discipline. Typical expectations for professors include: 1) excellence and effectiveness in teaching and instruction (or alternative for those whose primary faculty assignment is not teaching), 2) preparation of and dissemination of significant scholarship or creative production grounded in their areas of expertise, and 3) noteworthy professional service to the institution, discipline, or the community. Evidence of outstanding engagement in student success activities in any of these categories should be emphasized. An eligible candidate must present a portfolio which includes the items outlined in section 3.2 of this document.

**Professors** - As faculty members whose careers have advanced to extremely high levels of effectiveness and productivity, professors are typically characterized as leaders, mentors, scholars, experts, and distinguished colleagues.

### **NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY RANKS AND PATHWAYS**

**Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Faculty** While tenure is not an option for faculty members in these positions, the possibility of promotion is available through two possible pathways: for those hired as lecturers or for those hired in the non-tenured professorial ranks.

#### **Pathways and Timelines for Lecturers**

<b>TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF MINIMUM YEARS IN RANK AT VSU NON-TENURE TRACK FULL-TIME FACULTY RANKED AS LECTURERS</b>	
<b>For Promotion to</b>	<b>Minimum Service in Previous Rank</b>
Lecturer	Entry-Level Position
Senior Lecturer	6 Years as Lecturer*
Principal Lecturer	6 Years as Senior Lecturer
	*In exceptional cases, candidates may apply in 3 years. (Academic and Student Affairs Handbook 4.6). Candidates hired at a date later than August 1 <sup>st</sup> t should address to their dean any requests for slight exceptions to years in rank.



**Lecturers** – The units of VSU are permitted to employ full-time lecturers “to carry out special instructional functions such as basic skills instruction.” Lecturers are an integral part of the teaching corps of many VSU departments, teaching primarily core and lower-division courses. The Lecturer position is not a tenure-track position, and the holder is not eligible for consideration for the award of tenure. Full-time lecturers are appointed by the institution on a year-to-year basis. Each unit must establish a policy that governs the review of Lecturer as well as procedures for retention and possible promotion of a Lecturer to Senior Lecturer and Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer. These policies must include two types of reviews: an initial third-year review and subsequent and recurring fifth-year reviews, if not interrupted by an application for promotion. In these reviews, the primary consideration will be contributions in instruction and service, including the faculty member’s engagement in student success activities. Lecturers whose reviews do not demonstrate exceptional teaching ability and extraordinary value may be terminated at the end of their sixth year. (BoR 8.3.8.1).

**Promotion to Senior Lecturer** –Lecturers who are reappointed after the fifth-year review may be considered for promotion to Senior Lecturer, to begin in their seventh year of service. The promotion b luehat gove3t7\* nf amov Tm1 0 0 1 0.00000yehd upo0(in 2(tr)5(te)-11(ri Tmn e)6(x)-)-23(y)2



professors include: excellence and effectiveness in teaching and instruction (or alternative faculty assignment) as well as noteworthy achievement either in service or in research, scholarship, professional growth, and creative production. Evidence of outstanding engagement in student success activities in any of these categories should be emphasized.

Specific standards are outlined in unit documents that might include, but are not limited to, professional-based practice. An eligible candidate must present a portfolio which includes the items outlined in section 3.2 of this document.

**Associate Professors (Non-Tenure Track)** - The areas of expertise and professional activities of associate professors should be more advanced, more clearly-defined, and more widely-recognized as their academic careers progress. Typically, as the faculty member's roles and contributions grow in significance, leadership, and initiative, the faculty member will have established a stron

- C. If applicable, the college or unit application form for tenure and promotion which has been completed by the candidate.

## **Section II: Evaluations of the Candidate by Review Committees and Administrators**

- A. Relevant sections of the unit and college or division tenure and promotion guidelines for the appropriate job action.
- B. Annual Faculty Evaluations for each year under review.
- For a dossier accompanying an application for early promotion, or tenure, or simultaneous tenure and promotion, documents for all years the candidate has been at VSU should be included.
  - For a dossier accompanying an application for promotion to full professor, documents for all years since the last job action should be included.
- C. Pre-Tenure Review Committee letter and unit head letter if applicable (for a dossier accompanying an application for tenure only).
- D. Unit Tenure and/or Promotion review letter(s) (by both the T and P Committee and head if applicable to that unit).
- E. College or division Tenure and/or Promotion review letter(s) (by both the T and P Committee and Dean or Director).

## **Section III: Teaching and Student Learning (or alternative primary faculty assignment)**

This section of the dossier contains illustrative evidence of the quality and significance of the faculty member's teaching and student learning (or alternative for those whose primary faculty assignment is not teaching), supervision and mentoring.

For faculty teaching courses for which they are the instructor of record, these materials must include the following types of evidence:

- SOI (Student Opinion of Instruction) Results. These results should include summary information regarding the numerically-scored questions for each class section the faculty member has taught, including the total number of students and the number of respondents. They should also include summary information about the contents of the student narrative comments but *not* a complete listing of all narrative comments received.
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the candidate's appointment at VSU, the list should be organized in a fashion that clearly distinguishes accomplishments prior to the candidate's appointment at VSU from those which have occurred since that time. Copies of these materials should be maintained by the Provost's Office for review by committee members.

- For applications for promotion, the list should clearly distinguish activities that occurred prior to the candidate's last job action from those which have occurred since that time.
- B. A separate chronological reference list of other scholarly or creative accomplishments, beginning with the most recent.
- For tenure applications, if the list includes accomplishments which occurred prior to the candidate's appointment at VSU, the list should be organized in a fashion that clearly



process, no additional materials can be added to the dossier except for recommendation memos and appeal letters.





**Appendix B: Timeline for VSU Tenure and Promotion Review Process**

<b>TENURE AND PROMOTION</b> Submission and Review Timeline		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Recommended Completion Date*</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend institutional training seminars about the tenure and promotion process at VSU;</li> <li>Review department, college, and institutional tenure and promotion policies and procedures</li> </ul>	Faculty Member	Prior to Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind faculty of upcoming application due date</li> </ul>	Department Head	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday in April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide application and supporting materials to department tenure and promotion advisory committee</li> </ul>	Faculty Member	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday in August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review applications for tenure and promotion; Provide report/recommendation for tenure and/or promotion to candidate and Department Head</li> </ul>	Department Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in Sept. (~3 weeks)



## TENURE AND PROMOTION



clearly- stated tenure criteria and procedures that emphasize excellence in teaching and involvement in student success activities for all teaching faculty, conform to the requirements listed below, and are approved by the USG Chief Academic Officer. The requirements listed below are the minimum standard for award of tenure, but shall be sufficiently flexible to permit an institution to make individual adjustments appropriate to its mission. While the Board of Regents has delegated authority for tenure decisions to institution presidents, if an institution is not carrying out its faculty review process in a sufficiently rigorous manner the Board of Regents may move the authority to award tenure to the Board level until institutional processes have been remediated.

### **8.3.7.2 Tenure Requirements**

Tenure resides at the institutional level. Institutional responsibility for employment of a tenured individual is to the extent of continued employment on a 100 percent workload basis for two out of every three consecutive academic terms until retirement, resignation, separation as remedial action related to post-tenure review, dismissal for cause, or release because of financial exigency or program modification as determined by the Board of Regents.



The maximum time that may be served in combination of full-time instructional appointments (instructor or professorial ranks) without the award of tenure shall be ten (10) years, but a terminal contract for the 11th year may be proffered if a recommendation for tenure is not approved by the president.

Except for the approved suspension of the probationary period due to a leave of absence, the maximum period of time that may be served at the rank of full-time instructor shall be seven (7) years.

### **8.3.7.7            Loss of Tenure or Probationary Credit Towards Tenure**

Tenure or probationary credit towards tenure is lost upon:

1.            Resignation from an institution; or
2.            Written resignation from a tenured position in order to take a non-tenured position; or,