

Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion
Department of City and Regional Planning
The University of Memphis

Effective Fall 2021

1. Overview

The following guidelines are designed to assist individuals, committees, and administrators involved in matters of Tenure and Promotion in the Department of City and Regional Planning (hereafter referred to as the Department).

This document supplements the University of Memphis Faculty Handbook and the College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Guidelines. The most basic and overarching rules regarding tenure and promotion are set at the University level. The University of Memphis Faculty Handbook contains detailed information about university-wide policies, procedures, requirements, and standards regarding application for tenure and promotion. **All candidates for tenure and/or promotion should first familiarize themselves with the “Tenure and Promotion” section of the most current Faculty Handbook, which can be found here:**

<https://www.memphis.edu/aa/resources/facres/facultyhandbook/index.php>

General information about tenure and promotion forms, timelines, and application instructions are provided by the Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs. Those resources are available here:

<http://www.memphis.edu/aa/resources/facres/tenurepromotion/index.php>

The College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Guidelines are available here:

https://www.memphis.edu/cas/faculty-resources/tenure_and_promotion/index.php

Departmental criteria are consistent with the policies of the University and College, but are tailored to the mission of the Department and the demands of professional education in City and Regional Planning.

The **Department’s Mission** is to educate the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conduct research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engage in community partnerships to affect local change.

The Master of City and Regional Planning (MCRP) degree is the central focus of the education program. Professional education in City and Regional Planning requires a curriculum heavily influenced by research and connection to the community. The Department places an emphasis on community engagement and reciprocal community partnerships that address planning challenges while advancing education and research. Teaching, research, service, and other professional activities that forward the mission of the Department enhance a candidate’s potential for tenure and promotion.

2. Faculty Reviews and Evaluations

Tenure-track faculty members will be appointed at the assistant professor level or above. Full-time faculty members receive one-year, renewable contracts during the probationary period. The Department Chair will recommend regular renewal of these contracts unless performance in teaching, research, or service is unsatisfactory.

Annual Faculty Evaluation

The Department Chair evaluates all faculty members annually using performance-review procedures established by the Dean and Provost. The annual evaluation assesses the faculty member's accomplishments during the prior calendar year and establish a plan of activities for the forthcoming year, or longer if appropriate. The review considers performance in the following areas: teaching, advising/mentoring, scholarship/creative activities, support, outreach, and service. (These categories are subject to change if annual evaluation procedures are altered by the Dean and/or Provost.) The Annual Faculty Evaluations are included in the tenure and promotion dossier.

Mid-tenure Reviews

The Department will conduct a major mid-term evaluation of untenured faculty in tenure-track positions. This evaluation will occur in the fall after the faculty member's third year unless the faculty member negotiates a different arrangement with the Chair. This mid-tenure review is designed to provide faculty members with information about the status of their progress towards tenure and promotion.

The format and required dossier for the mid-tenure review is similar to that for tenure and promotion, except no external letters are required. The contents of the tenure and promotion dossier are described in the current Faculty Handbook, linked above.

The Department tenure and promotion committee will review and prepare a written evaluation of the mid-tenure dossier. The committee evaluation should clearly state any perceived shortcomings and recommend corrective efforts to be made prior to the formal tenure and promotion application. The committee's mid-tenure review will be sent to the Department chair who will write a separate mid-term evaluation of the faculty member. The review will identify the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses and recommend strategies for improvement. Comments and recommendations of both the committee and the Chair will be provided to the faculty member and placed in the faculty member's file. The mid-tenure review reports are an integral part of the tenure and promotion process and are included in the dossier when the candidate applies for tenure and promotion.

3. Basic Eligibility Criteria

Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

Tenure-track faculty members must apply for tenure and promotion before beginning their 6th year of service, unless a tenure probation reduction has been granted or emergency circumstances allow a temporary stopping of the tenure clock, subject to university guidelines. Policies related to early or delayed tenure and promotion consideration are detailed in the Faculty Handbook.

The minimal requirements for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor at the University of Memphis are defined in the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 3. Faculty Personnel Policies). The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and tenure-track faculty members should familiarize themselves with these minimum requirements.

To advance to tenure and be promoted to Associate Professor, candidates must clearly demonstrate a history of professional productivity and strong potential for future professional growth, leading to national recognition in the discipline of City Planning. Candidates must demonstrate good departmental citizenship through professionalism in their interaction with other faculty and students, a willingness to assist fellow faculty, and to treat all persons with courtesy, respect, and dignity. Expectations for individual faculty will vary based upon their expected annual teaching, research and service activities as stated in their faculty appointment letter and yearly assignment. Teaching, research, service, and other professional activities that forward the mission of the Department enhance a candidate's potential for tenure and promotion. Standards for evaluation of teaching, research and service are outlined below.

Promotion to Professor

Faculty members may apply for promotion to the rank of Professor any time after ten years of academic service. The minimal requirements for promotion to Professor at the University of Memphis are defined in the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 3. Faculty Personnel Policies). The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee should familiarize themselves with these minimum requirements.

To be promoted to Professor, candidates must clearly demonstrate sustained high-quality professional productivity and evidence of national recognition in the discipline of City Planning. A significantly higher level in quantity and quality of research is expected for promotion to Professor than that expected for promotion to Associate Professor. Impactful scholarly and professional activities are among the indicators of a higher quality of performance. Candidates for promotion to Professor should also distinguish themselves through a higher level of service to the University, discipline, and community.

4. Evaluation of Effective Teaching, Scholarship, and Service

The following are lists of items and standards that are used in evaluating teaching, research/scholarship, and service activities for tenure and promotion. The University of Memphis Faculty Handbook provides basic definitions of teaching, research, and service. The criteria below exhibit the department's commitment to promoting excellence in teaching, research/scholarship, and service in an effort to assess the candidate's performance in these three areas.

The evaluation should consider the ways in which the *combined* efforts of the candidate's teaching, research, service, and other professional activities have furthered the mission and values of the Department of City and Regional Planning. The evaluation should also consider the strength of the *nexus* between the candidate's teaching, research, and service outcomes. Ideally, teaching, research, and outreach are connected activities. Each candidate contributes uniquely to the mission of the department, and no individual is likely to excel in all standards.

Teaching

Teaching is an important and integral part of the academic pursuit and therefore is central to the work of a faculty member. As a significant complement to teaching, mentoring of students is also considered in the evaluations of the candidate. It is expected that the candidate will achieve and maintain an excellent level of teaching consistent with criteria as listed below. Demonstrated evidence of effective and innovative teaching is required.

Indicators of effective teaching may include but are not limited to:

- a) organization of course material and effective communication;
- b) enthusiasm for teaching and a positive attitude toward students;
- c) appropriate student learning outcomes and positive feedback from student evaluations;
- d) the use of methods designed to meet the needs of diverse learning styles.

Indicators of effective mentoring may include but are not limited to:

- a) participation in academic advising;
- b) advising on dissertations, capstones, and independent research;
- c) counseling students experiencing academic difficulties;
- d) counseling students for internship or employment opportunities.

Indicators of innovative teaching may include but are not restricted to:

- a) making multidisciplinary connections;
- b) developing a new course and addressing contemporary problems;
- c) teaching awards and recognitions
- d) integration of active research into student learning;
- e) use of emerging technology and other discipline-specific innovative methods.

Research/Scholarship

It is expected that the candidate will establish a significant and developing scholarship agenda in the area of specialization.

Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are expected to demonstrate a coherent research agenda and evidence of scholarship that will lead to national recognition in the discipline of City and Regional Planning.

Candidates for promotion to Professor are expected to demonstrate a sustained research agenda resulting in impactful scholarship and an achieved national recognition in the discipline of City and Regional Planning.

Excellence of scholarly and research productivity is most clearly evidenced by:

- a) publication of articles in refereed journals that makes a valuable contribution to the discipline and/or profession;
- b) publication of scholarly books;
- c) a track record of external funding.

Other outputs that can demonstrate research and scholarship productivity may include the following:

- a) chapters within scholarly books, or edited scholarly volumes;
- b) publication of peer reviewed articles in academic or professional conference proceedings;
- c) preparation and proposal submission or receipt of grants seeking externally funded research program from local or national sponsors and organizations;
- d) presenting accepted or invited papers at conferences and professional meetings.

Given the Department's emphasis on community engagement, Engaged Scholarship activities and outcomes can also be used to demonstrate productivity. Engaged scholarship is defined in the Faculty Handbook. Such scholarship should apply intellectual expertise to collaborative problem-solving with community partners. Examples of Engaged Scholarship outcomes include:

- a) sponsored contracts and planning reports that innovatively utilize accepted theory in problem solving;
- b) non-peer reviewed and non-refereed products that are widely disseminated and evaluated, such as development of content-based seminars and workshops as well as communication of rigorous planning scholarship via the popular press;
- c) the provision of technical assistance and/or policy analysis for local, state or national governments and agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations such as community land trusts and community development corporations;
- d) evaluation of public and private sector institutions, processes, and policies.

Service

It is expected that the candidate will be active in service to the department, school, college, university, profession, and broader community. Outreach and community engagement and especially important to the Department and should also be reflected in the teaching and research efforts of faculty members.

Demonstrated evidence of service may include the following:

Department/School service

- a) serving on committees or a task force;
- b) advising student organizations and activities;
- c) holding administrative positions in the department/school;
- d) representing the department/school in on- and off-campus meetings and forums

College/University service

- a) serving on committees or a task force;

- b) serving on faculty senate or being an elected member for faculty governance;
- c) serving in a leadership role at a university research center;
- d) representing the college/university in on- and off-campus meeting and forum.

Professional Service

- a) service to professional associations or scholarly organizations;
- b) editorial and manuscript or proposal review service for academic journals, publishers or funding agencies; etc.

Outreach/Community Service

- a) service to community groups or civic organizations;
- b) service on organization boards or committees;
- c) technical assistance to community, nonprofit, or government organizations;
- d) engagement of community organizations in class projects

5. Application Process

Tenure-track faculty members must apply for tenure and promotion before beginning their 6th year of service, unless a tenure probation reduction has been granted or emergency circumstances allow a temporary stopping of the tenure clock. Policies related to early or delayed tenure and promotion consideration are detailed in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty members may apply for promotion to the rank of Professor any time after ten years of academic service.

The Dossier

Candidates must prepare a “dossier” that provides evidence of accomplishments and qualifications for tenure and/or promotion. The contents of the dossier are specified in great detail in the Faculty Handbook, along with instructions regarding the order in which materials should appear. It includes external evaluations as well as three statements prepared by the candidate that summarize accomplishments and qualifications in 1) Instruction, 2) Research/ Scholarship/ Creative Activity, and 3) Service/ Outreach/ Advising/ Mentoring/ Administration. The University of Memphis Faculty Handbook provides basic definitions of teaching, research, and service.

The dossier contains the entirety of the material that will be evaluated. Candidates are encouraged to seek advice from the Department Chair and senior colleagues in preparing the dossier.

External Peer Evaluations

The final dossier will include four external letters of reference from qualified peers who are not affiliated with the University of Memphis. The purpose of external peer reviews is solely to provide an informed, objective evaluation of the quality of the scholarship, research or creative activity of the candidate. The process and regulations for selecting peer reviewers are described in the Faculty Handbook. External reviewers will be selected from a list of names submitted by: 1) the candidate; 2) the tenured members of the department; and 3) the department Chair. Potential reviewers should have some expertise that qualifies them to consider the scholarly record of the applicant. If engaged scholarship is a significant part of the applicant record, then lists should include persons with expertise. The final selection of names will be made by the Department Chair in consultation with the Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

External reviewers will be provided with the candidate’s CV; a representative sample of the candidate’s scholarly work; the candidate’s narrative statements regarding instruction, research, and service; the department’s tenure and promotion criteria; and any other materials deemed relevant.

Stages of the Review Process

The review and evaluation of applications for tenure and promotion involves multiples stages, described below. The roles of each committee and administrator are described in detail in the Faculty Handbook in section 4.3.

1. Review by Department Tenure and Promotion Committee

The candidate’s application is first evaluated by the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee. A quorum, consisting of two-thirds of the members and no less than three members, must be present for the Committee to convene and deliberate. After discussion of each candidate, the Committee Chair will call for a secret ballot vote on whether to recommend tenure and/or promotion. The summary vote will be read to committee members who are present. To vote on tenure and promotion, a member of the Committee must have examined the candidate’s dossier and taken part in the Committee’s discussion of that candidate. When a Department faculty member serves on the College Tenure and Promotion Committee, he or she votes at the Department level. Faculty members on leave for the fall semester may participate in the voting process only if they have had the opportunity to fully evaluate the candidate’s dossier and are present for the committee meetings. Members of the

committee who are candidates for promotion will not participate in the discussions and votes on their own candidacy.

The chair of the Department Tenure and Promotion committee will write summary report expressing the committee recommendation, summarizing committee deliberations and votes, identifying committee members who voted, and identifying committee members who were absent. If the vote was not unanimous and more than one minority vote was cast, the statement will summarize discussion that could have led to the minority vote. Committee members will have an opportunity to review the summary statement and may offer suggestions for improvement, however only one statement will be submitted to the Department Chair. Committee members must maintain confidentiality.

2. Review by Department Chair

The Department Chair completes a separate evaluation and prepares a written recommendation. The evaluations and recommendations of both the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Department Chair are forwarded to the College Tenure and Promotion Committee.

3. Review by College Tenure and Promotion Committee

The College Tenure and Promotion Committee evaluates the application and submits a written recommendation to the Dean.

4. Review by College Dean

The Dean evaluates the application and prepares a written recommendation.

5. Final Review by Provost

All four recommendations (Department Committee, Department Chair, College Committee, and Dean) are subsequently forwarded to the Provost for a final decision.

Schedule

The Tenure and Promotion process will follow the schedule as outlined below. The timing of steps 8 through 10 will conform to the tenure and promotion review calendar established by the Provost and Dean each year.

	Responsible Party	Action	Date
1	Candidate (for tenure and/or promotion)	Notify Dept. Chair in writing of intent to apply for promotion to professor	April 1 (of the spring prior to academic year of application)
2	Department Chair	Form Department T&P Committee	April 15
3	Candidate, Chair, and Dept. Committee	Develop list of potential external reviewers	May 1
4	Candidate	In consultation with T&P Committee, select external reviewers and solicit their agreement to review the candidate's materials	May 15
5	Dept. Chair	Submit materials for the Dept. Chair to send to external reviewers	May 30
6	Dept. Chair	Send materials to external reviewers; prepare statement of rationale for selection of external reviewers	June 1
7	Candidate	Submit complete dossier and supplementary materials to Dept. Chair	August 15
8	T&P Committee	Review dossier and supplementary materials; discuss and vote in committee meeting(s); draft committee recommendation for members' review	Date set in accordance with CAS Calendar
9	T&P Committee Chair	Finalize committee recommendation and submit it to Dept. Chair	Date set in accordance with CAS Calendar
10	Dept. Chair	Independently review candidate's dossier, external reviews, and committee recommendation; prepare recommendation.	Date set in accordance with CAS Calendar
11	Dept. Chair	Submit candidate's dossier and recommendations of T&P Committee and Dept. Chair to Dean	Date set in accordance with CAS Calendar

6. Department Committee

The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured full-time faculty within the Department except the Chair. If the candidate is requesting promotion, faculty with a rank equal to or higher than that to which the candidate aspires will vote on the promotion request. A Department faculty member who is the spouse of the candidate may not vote on the application. Other Department Faculty may be consulted by the Committee.

In the event that less than three faculty members within the Department meet the qualifications for voting membership, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and the candidate, will develop a committee of no less than three voting members. Faculty from outside the Department must be: 1) full-time faculty with a rank equal to or higher than that to which the candidate aspires, 2) conduct scholarship and/or teaching in a disciplinary area similar to that of the candidate, and 3) be from other units best positioned to evaluate the candidate. Both the candidate and Department Tenure and Promotion Committee will submit a list of potential outside members to the Department Chair. The finalized membership list will be developed by the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and Department Chair. Even when the requisite number of tenured faculty is available, the Chair, in consultation with the candidate and the tenured faculty of the Department, may appoint additional committee members to the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee. Additional members must be approved by the Dean.

The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee will select its chairperson by a secret vote of the Committee members. This chairperson will serve a term of one year. The chairperson's responsibilities will include: presiding over meetings of the Committee; tallying the secret ballots submitted by Committee members during the tenure and promotion deliberation; preparing the formal recommendation report with its rationale; and, submitting the Committee's report and candidate's materials to the Department Chair in accordance with the College calendar.

7. Modification of Department Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

These guidelines will be reviewed for potential revision on a regular basis. A mandated review will occur during any academic year that precedes the submission of a Planning Accreditation Board Self Study Report.

In the interim years these guidelines may be modified to maintain consistency with University and College tenure and promotion policies. Modification may also be considered in interim years at the request of the faculty to suit changing goals and organization in the department, college, and university.

Discussion of guidelines may include faculty who have not yet achieved tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Revisions beyond those required to maintain consistency with University and College policies will be subject to a vote of the Department's entire faculty. A two-thirds vote will be required to approve any such modifications.

The Department Chair will be responsible for writing approved modifications, circulating a draft to all tenured and tenure-track faculty, and submitting to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for approval.