

TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES

Department of Sociology

University of Memphis

May 8, 2017

I. Overview

The Department of Sociology is a community of scholars and teachers which is dedicated to outstanding research, teaching, and service. Decisions about tenure and promotion are crucial to the maintenance of excellence in the department and larger university. The criteria discussed in this document supplement the University of Memphis Faculty Handbook and the College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Guidelines. All candidates for tenure and/or promotion must meet departmental, college, and university eligibility criteria in effect at the time of application. *It is faculty member's responsibility to keep current with changes in the guidelines.*

The majority of specific requirements, timetables, forms, and resources are provided by the University. Those resources are available here:

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

Additional specific requirements are found in the University of Memphis 2015 Faculty Handbook, in Chapter 4, on page 57. The current version is available here:

http://www.memphis.edu/aa/resources/facres/facultyhandbook/docs/2015_faculty_handbook.pdf

Written departmental guidelines are available on-line and on file in the departmental office and will be distributed to faculty when they join the department, when they come up for mid-tenure review, and when they apply for tenure and promotion. Guidelines will be distributed to all affected faculty members whenever they are revised. It will be the role of the Chair of the Tenure and Promotions (T & P) Committee to see to the availability of the departmental guidelines.

Candidates for tenure and promotion are evaluated on their research, teaching, and service. Although it is not possible to provide a rigid and absolute criteria for evaluation, it is important to provide faculty and others with a well-defined set of criteria and expectations which will guide departmental recommendations on tenure and promotion. The following procedures and processes are designed to ensure an impartial evaluation of candidates. Departmental Tenure and Promotion requirements are consistent with the departmental mission statement and overall objectives (see <http://cas.memphis.edu/sociology>).

In terms of **teaching**, it is expected that candidates for tenure (and promotion) demonstrate that they are “effective teachers.” An effective teacher (a) has command of the subject matter, (b) exhibits the ability to organize the subject matter and present it in logical and meaningful ways, (c) relates well to students, and (d) demonstrates enthusiasm for teaching and learning.

Effective teaching may be demonstrated through any (or all) of the following mechanisms:

1. Standard student questionnaires, such as the SETE instrument;
2. Candidate's self-evaluation;
3. Peer evaluation of classroom teaching;
4. Both solicited and unsolicited letters from students and/or colleagues that comment on teaching effectiveness;
5. Course syllabi, examinations, and assignments;
6. Development of new courses;
7. Teaching-related publications;
8. Creating relevant computer software and audio-visual material;
9. Introduction of on-line courses;
10. Collaboration with students on publications or other projects;
11. Other out of class teaching, advising, and mentoring (e.g., working with a student to arrange an internship);
12. Teaching awards and recognitions.
13. Grade distributions, plus any comments the faculty member chooses to make about the relation between the grade distribution and the nature of the course.

In terms of **research and scholarship**, it is expected that candidates for tenure (and promotion) demonstrate "productive scholarship." The most common way to show research productivity is through the publication of independent research in refereed journals that makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature. Another equally acceptable way is through the publication of original books (not edited readers). It is not expected that candidates for tenure and promotion must write books; however, if they have published a book (or have one in press), then it normally would be equivalent to several journal articles, depending on the quality of the book and prestige of the publisher.

With regard to refereed journals, some articles have more professional impact than others. Candidates should document the quality, importance, and influence of their publications to assist in the evaluation of their work.

In addition to refereed articles and original books, a number of other professional contributions may demonstrate productive scholarship. These are not in lieu of refereed publications. They include:

1. Edited books and readers;
2. Technical reports, research monographs, and refereed chapters;
3. Conference papers and proceedings;
4. Internal and external grants which facilitate research;
5. Invited guest lectures – both inside and outside the university – pertaining to the candidate's research and scholarship.
6. Engaged Scholarship which adds to existing knowledge in the process of applying intellectual expertise to collaborative problem-solving with urban, regional, state, national, and/or global communities which results in written work shared with others in the discipline or field of study. Further discussion can be found on page 62 of the 2015 Faculty Handbook.

It is incumbent upon each candidate to demonstrate the quality and contribution of their publication outlets.

In terms of **service**, it is expected that candidates for tenure (and promotion) demonstrate “good service” within and beyond the university.

Service **within the university** may include:

1. Chairing/serving on departmental committees;
2. Holding administrative positions in the department (e.g., graduate coordinator);
3. Chairing or serving on College or University committees;
4. Holding administrative positions in the College or University (e.g., director of a program);
5. Serving as a formal mentor for a colleague;
6. Writing professional recommendation letters for students (e.g., recommendations to enter doctoral programs, etc.)

Service **beyond the university** may include:

1. Community service, if professionally-related;
2. Serving as an editor, associate editor, book review editor, editorial board member, or occasional reviewer for journals or publishing houses;
3. Serving and/or holding office in a professional association, task force, or advisory group;
4. Serving on an external review panel for another department or unit;
5. Serving as an external reviewer for candidates under consideration for tenure and/or promotion.

Candidates must demonstrate that service contributions enhance the university, community and/or discipline and demonstrate that they were acting in a professional capacity in these endeavors.

II. Annual Reviews/Evaluations

1. As mandated by University policy, the Department Chair will evaluate the performance of all faculty members each Spring. The Chair will comment on the faculty member’s progress in research, teaching, and service, particularly as it relates to requirements for tenure and promotion. The Chair will provide an overall evaluation.
2. The Chair will discuss her/his assessment with the faculty member and place the comments and recommendations in the faculty member’s file in the Chair’s office. The comments will also be forwarded to the Dean’s office.

III. Mid-Tenure Reviews

1. The University mandates mid-term evaluations of all tenure-track faculty. It is designed to provide faculty members with information about the status of their progress toward tenure and promotion. The process mirrors the full tenure process, except that external letters are not requested.
2. As in cases of tenure and promotion, the faculty member is evaluated by both the T & P Committee and the Departmental Chair. The composition of the committee, including selection of a “Candidate Representative” for the faculty member, is outlined below in Section VII.
3. The faculty member, with assistance from her/his representative, will prepare a dossier that mirrors a full tenure dossier. The faculty member will be provided with a checklist of all documentation required by the Departmental T & P Committee (also see link at the

beginning of this document). These requirements will be in line with University and College guidelines for tenure and promotion, excluding external reviews.

4. The faculty member will submit a dossier to the Departmental Chair by February 1st of her/his third year of service. The Departmental Chair and the faculty member's representative will insure that all required items have been submitted and that the dossier is complete. Once the dossier is complete, it will be forwarded to the T & P Committee for consideration.
5. The T & P Committee will convene soon after the dossier is submitted to begin evaluation of the faculty member. The Committee Chair is responsible for insuring that a careful examination of the faculty member's research, teaching, and service is undertaken by committee members. If there are multiple faculty members undergoing a mid-term evaluation, the committee may begin discussions of all faculty members at this meeting. Or they may schedule separate meetings for each faculty member.
6. The T & P Committee will meet a second time to study a written evaluation of the faculty member (that has been composed by committee members) and other supporting documentation. The committee will discuss the candidate and finalize a report that assesses the faculty member with respect to her/his progress toward tenure and promotion. The report will discuss strengths, as well as any areas of concern and what must be done to address those concerns. If there are multiple faculty members undergoing a mid-term evaluation, a separate meeting for each faculty member will be held to compose final reports.
7. Only those committee members who have attended all meetings about the faculty member and studied the dossier may vote on the final report. However, committee members who have been unable to attend all the meetings may still provide written input into the final report. And, as with tenure and promotion cases, a quorum for all T & P Committee meetings is 2/3 of all eligible voting members of the committee.
8. The Committee Chair will forward to the Departmental Chair the committee's vote and report, which will include a detailed written statement with supporting evidence on the faculty member's research, teaching, and service. A separate report will be written for each faculty member under discussion.
9. The Departmental Chair will forward the T & P Committee's report, as well as her/his own assessment and supporting statement based on an independent reading of all materials, to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
10. A copy of the Departmental Chair's report and the T & P Committee's report will be presented to the faculty member. The T & P Committee Chair and the Departmental Chair will meet with the candidate to discuss the reports.
11. The faculty member may write a brief statement in response to the discussion and reports obtained from the T & P Committee and the Departmental Chair. The faculty member may address inaccuracies and/or describe plans to address concerns in the report.

IV. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

In general, an associate professor with tenure in the Department of Sociology is expected to:

1. Have six years of professional experience as sociologist;
2. Hold a doctorate in sociology;

3. Demonstrate that he/she is an effective teacher by providing evidence as discussed earlier (section I);
4. Demonstrate scholarly productivity by providing evidence as discussed earlier (section I). The candidate has the responsibility for providing evidence of scholarly productivity (reprints of publications, copies of books, conference presentations, proceedings, etc.) for which the candidate seeks recognition. Scholarly productivity prior to employment at The University of Memphis will be viewed as indicative of scholarly potential suitable for being employed. However, major evaluative weight for recommending tenure and promotion will be placed on the fulfillment of that potential by demonstrating a consistent trajectory toward achieving a national/international scholarly reputation during the tenure and promotion probation period.
5. Have at least a regional reputation within the discipline of sociology with the clear potential of achieving a national reputation. Reputation is assessed in part through positive evaluations from external referees and in departmental evaluations of scholarly productivity.
6. Present evidence that they will continue to be productive scholars and effective teachers;
7. Demonstrate “good service” within the university and/or community as well as a commitment to the discipline.

V. Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor

Promotion from associate professor to full professor is of a different magnitude than promotion from assistant to associate professor. Promotion to full professor occurs when faculty members have achieved national or international recognition in their respective discipline. More specifically, an occupant of the rank of Professor in sociology should:

1. Have at least ten years of professional experience as a sociologist;
2. Hold a doctorate in sociology;
3. Demonstrate that he/she is an effective teacher by providing evidence as discussed earlier (section I). Moreover, he/she should make innovative and sustained contributions to teaching beyond effective classroom performance. This could take the form of having initiated new courses, advising large numbers of graduate students, publishing in the area of pedagogical development, and/or other contributions that indicate excellent teaching beyond classroom performance.
4. Demonstrate that he/she has achieved national or international prominence in the area of scholarship as evidenced by numerous high-quality, refereed publications (journal articles, book chapters, and/or books) that have made a significant contribution to the discipline. Although no attempt is made to define precisely the number of required publications, it is understood that there must be a sufficient number and quality to establish the candidate as a national or international scholar in her/his field. The most important criterion is not quantity of publications, but the reputation that has been generated through the publications. The candidate must demonstrate a quality scholarly trajectory toward a national or international reputation.
5. Demonstrate that he/she has maintained high-quality service to the department, College, and University, as well as to her/his profession. Again, some of this service should be at the national level (e.g., editorial boards of respected journals, holding office in major sociological associations, etc.).

VI. Application Process

1. Faculty members who wish to be considered for tenure or promotion during the next academic year must inform the Departmental Chair in writing by March 31st. The Departmental Chair will then inform the Chair of the T & P Committee.
2. Candidates will be supplied with a checklist of the documentation required by the Departmental T & P Committee. These requirements will be in line with University and College guidelines.
3. Candidates must submit their dossier to the Candidate's Representative by August 15th and the Departmental Chair by August 22. The Departmental Chair and the Candidate's Representative will insure that all required items have been submitted and that the dossier is complete. Once the dossier is complete, it will be forwarded to the T & P Committee for consideration.
4. Material included in the dossier is determined by the criteria for tenure and promotion outlined in the University of Memphis Faculty Handbook, the Tenure and Promotion Guidelines of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Sociology's Tenure and Promotion Criteria.
5. By May 15th, the candidate will provide the T & P Committee with a list of 4-8 recognized scholars in the candidate's area of study who are outside the University of Memphis. Members of the T & P Committee will provide an additional list of recognized scholars in the candidate's area of study who are outside the University of Memphis. The Departmental Chair will select a minimum of four (4) names to act as external reviewers. A minimum of four letters must be received.
6. As stipulated by the College of Arts and Sciences, "Every effort should be made to minimize biases for or against the candidate when selecting qualified peers ... No more than one of the reviewers may have been a major advisor of or a collaborator with the candidates." It is the responsibility of the Departmental Chair to provide a rationale for the selection of each referee.
7. Outside letters of evaluation will be kept confidential to the maximum extent allowed by University policy, the laws of Tennessee, and the candidate's own willingness to sign a release that maintains confidentiality. The potential external referees must be informed of these procedures when their letters of evaluation are requested.
8. External reviewers will be provided with the candidate's CV, a representative sample of her/his scholarly work, a narrative statement, the department's tenure and promotion criteria, and any other materials deemed relevant. Both tenure and promotion to associate professor or professor require external peer review of a candidate's record of scholarly activity by qualified peers who are not affiliated with the University of Memphis. The purpose of external peer review is solely to provide an informed, objective evaluation of the quality of the scholarship, research, or creative activity of the candidate. Reviewers will be asked to evaluate the candidate's scholarship and to provide a robust assessment of their regional/national visibility and reputation, particularly as these factors compare to scholars in the same field and at a similar stage of career development.
9. Candidates may include other unsolicited or solicited letters in their dossier.
10. All letters and the dossier will be available to members of the T & P Committee and the Departmental Chair. It is expected that all members of the committee will study the candidates' dossier carefully prior to any committee meetings.

VII. Composition and Functioning of Departmental Committee


1. For **tenure** deliberations, the Committee consists of all tenured departmental faculty members. For **promotion** to Associate Professor, the Committee consists of all tenured associate and full professors in the department. For promotion to Full Professor, the committee membership consists of departmental faculty who are tenured Full Professors. A quorum must be present to conduct business in any T & P Committee (see below, number 10).
2. According to University policy, the T & P Committee advises the Departmental Chair on tenure and promotion cases, and the Chair then makes an independent evaluation and recommendation. Thus, the Departmental Chair does **not** vote in the T & P Committee and does not attend meetings of the T & P Committee.
3. The Departmental T & P Committee will elect a Chair before the end of the Spring semester to serve as its Chair the following academic year. The Committee will also elect a Representative to the College of Arts and Sciences T & P Committee when necessary.
4. According to College guidelines, the Departmental Representative to the College T & P Committee may vote at the departmental level but must recuse her/himself at the College level when Sociology candidates are discussed.
5. Each candidate for tenure will select a “representative” from the tenured faculty of the department. The representative will consult with and assist the candidate as the candidate prepares a tenure dossier. The representative will also work with the full T & P Committee and the candidate to insure that the T & P Committee has all the information it needs to make an informed decision. If, for instance, the T & P Committee feels the dossier is missing some information, the representative would inform the candidate and provide the candidate with an opportunity to respond. The representative is not necessarily an advocate for the candidate and it is clearly understood that *the ultimate responsibility for the dossier resides with the candidate*.
6. A candidate for full professor may also request a representative, but that is up to the candidate.
7. The T & P Committee will meet early in the fall semester to begin the evaluation of candidates. The Committee Chair is responsible for insuring that a careful examination of candidates’ research, teaching, and service is undertaken by committee members. If there are multiple candidates for tenure or promotion, the committee may begin discussions of all candidates at this initial meeting. Or they may schedule separate meetings for each candidate.
8. The T & P Committee will convene a second time to study a written evaluation of the candidate (that has been composed by committee members) and other supporting documentation. The committee will discuss the candidate and, if the committee is ready, vote on the candidate for tenure or promotion. If there are multiple candidates for tenure and promotion, a separate meeting for each candidate must be held for this second meeting. The vote will be by secret ballot.
9. Only those Committee members who have attended all meetings to review a candidate and studied the dossier and external letters are eligible to vote. Absentee votes are not permitted.
10. A quorum for all T & P Committee meetings is 2/3 of all eligible voting members of a committee (i.e., 2/3 of all tenured faculty members in the case of a mid-tenure review or a case involving promotion from assistant to associated professor, and 2/3 of all tenured full

professors in a case involving promotion from associate to full professor). If a faculty member is on any type of leave or professional development assignment, then they are not “required” to vote and therefore they are excluded from consideration in calculating the 2/3 rule.

11. Participation or voting by faculty spouses or close relatives in any tenure or promotion deliberations, even if they otherwise meet all necessary criteria for doing so, is defined by Tennessee law, Tennessee Code Annotate 8-31-100 *et seq.*
12. The Committee Chair will forward to the Departmental Chair the committee’s recommendation along with a true count of the tenure and/or promotion vote. The Committee Chair will also provide the Departmental Chair with a detailed written statement supporting its recommendation. This recommendation will comment specifically on the quality of the candidate’s research, teaching, and service. In the case of multiple candidates for tenure or promotion, a separate report will be completed for each candidate.
13. All T & P Committee deliberations will remain confidential.
14. The final report on each candidate will be forwarded to the Departmental Chair in sufficient time to meet College deadlines.
15. The Departmental Chair will forward the Committee’s recommendation and report, as well as her/his own recommendation and supporting statement based on an independent reading of all materials, to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
16. The candidate may not add or delete anything from the dossier following departmental review.
17. Candidates are evaluated according to the T & P criteria in effect during the fall semester preceding the submission of their application for tenure or promotion, not at the time of their hiring.
18. If the Department Chair is being considered for tenure or promotion, the dossier shall be transmitted directly from the Departmental T & P Committee to the Dean of the College.
19. The Department Chair gives the candidate a progress report after the T & P Committee has met and voted and after the Chair has written his/her recommendation and sent it to the college.

VIII. Modification of T & P Guidelines

1. The Department of Sociology will review its T & P requirements/procedures during the spring semester. Any change in requirements/procedures can be effected through a simple majority vote of all tenured associate and full professors in the department. Untenured faculty members may participate in discussions related to modifying tenure and promotion standards, but they may not vote on such changes.

IX.  **Flowchart**-dates may be subject to modest adjustment due to variations in the College of Arts and Sciences Calendar.

Step	Responsibility	Action	Due Date
1	Candidate (for tenure and/or promotion)	Notify Dept. Chair and T&P Committee Chair in writing of intent to apply for promotion to professor	March 31

2	Candidate	Submit annotated list of 4 to 8 potential external reviewers to T&P Committee Chair	March 31
3	Candidate	Submit a packet of publications and vita for the Dept. Chair to send to external reviewers	April 15
4	Dept. Chair	In consultation with T&P Committee, select external reviewers and solicit their agreement to review the candidate's materials	April 15
5	Dept. Chair	Send cover letter, candidate's packet of materials, and department guidelines to external reviewers; prepare statement of rationale for selection of external reviewers	May 1
6	Candidate	Submit complete dossier and supplementary materials to Dept. Representative	August 15
7	Candidate	Submit complete dossier and supplementary materials to Dept. Chair	August 22
8	T&P Committee	Review dossier and supplementary materials; discuss and vote in committee meeting(s); draft committee recommendation for members' review	Date set by T&P Committee in accordance with CAS Calendar
9	T&P Committee Chair	Finalize committee recommendation and submit it to Dept. Chair	Date set by T&P Committee in accordance with CAS Calendar
10	Dept. Chair	Independently review candidate's dossier, external reviews, and committee recommendation; prepare recommendation	Date set by Chair in accordance with CAS Calendar
11	Dept. Chair	Inform candidate(s) for tenure and promotion of T&P Committee and Dept. Chair recommendations	Date set by Chair in accordance with CAS Calendar
12	Dept. Chair	Submit candidate's dossier (with selected publications as a supplement), external reviews, recommendations of T&P Committee and Dept. Chair to Dean	Date set by Chair in accordance with CAS Calendar