

# Tenure & Promotion Workshop for Untenured Faculty Members

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January 2019

**DISCLAIMER:**

If there is a discrepancy between the information in this presentation and the written copy (e.g. Yellow Document and the relevant supplementary policies) held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.

# Overriding Statement

The tenure and promotion process at McMaster is governed by the “yellow document” (YD) and its associated supplementary policy statements (SPS). The yellow document provides a great deal of detail regarding the processes which govern the deliberations of various committees (e.g. at the department, Faculty and Senate levels). The yellow document is accompanied by a set of SPS’s that addresses academic assessments in further detail. These are SPS’s B1-12 in particular. This presentation attempts to provide further guidance to faculty members in preparation for the T&P process.

**\*\*It must be noted however, that the YD takes precedence over any other documents related to T&P procedures at McMaster, including this one.**

# Annual Performance Reviews

- Department Chairs must ensure they conduct annual performance reviews with all tenure-track and teaching-track faculty members to discuss their progress in teaching, research and service (Ref.: Sect. III, 37.a)
  - A written summary must be prepared and signed by both the chair and the candidate
  - Statement should identify both areas of achievement and areas of concern
    - For the latter an agreed set of actions is helpful (e.g. engagement of the MacPherson Institute where teaching is weak). A copy of this statement should be kept in the Teaching Portfolio for annual reference.
- Ensuring faculty are keeping an up-to-date Teaching Portfolio which is viewed by Department Chairs as part of their annual review.

# When is a Faculty Member Eligible for Consideration?

- **Tracking dates**
  - It is the responsibility of the Department Chair to inform faculty members well in advance when they must be or can be considered for tenure, permanence and/or promotion
  - Faculty members should be working toward preparing for tenure, permanence and/or promotion from the time they commence their appointment at McMaster.
- **Dossier preparation**
  - Ensuring candidate prepares a complete dossier according to specifications in **SPS B12**

# Timing Issues

- Timing is critical to the McMaster T&P process
- Note that all dates are zeroed on July 1 on or following the date of appointment
- Nominal timing applies to a Professor whose is a full-time appointment
  - Situation different if appointment is part-time
  - Clock can be stopped temporarily
    - E.g. illness, maternity leave, paternity leave
    - This will be documented by Dean's and Provost office
    - All letters concerned with or changes to the timing of evaluations must be signed by the President and signed back by the faculty member.

(Reference: Section II, Clause 7)

# Tenure-Track Assistant Professor

- Nominal timing applies to an Assistant Professor whose appointment is on a full-time employment basis
- Must be assessed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of an initial 3 year appointment
  - Generally considered to re-appointment for a further period.
- Tenure must be considered in the 5<sup>th</sup> year
  - The candidate may chose/agree to defer being considered for tenure in the 5<sup>th</sup> year
  - Need this in writing to the Chair of the Department and the Dean's office.
- Final review of the case for tenure must occur in the 6<sup>th</sup> year
  - If not granted, the appointment will be allowed to lapse.

# Tenure-Track Assistant Professor – cont'd

- Example
  - A person had an appointment start date of November 1, 2017
  - Tenure clock starts on July 1, 2018
    - Initial appointment runs to June 30, 2021
  - Up for reappointment in the Fall of 2020
    - If everything is on track, reappointment is for a further three years to June 30, 2024
  - Considered for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in the Fall of 2022, i.e. in their 5<sup>th</sup> year.
  - It is imperative to count academic years when calculating timing. **Please reference the Yellow Document Page 19, Section III, Clause 28**

Note: Clause 28, d (i and ii) which outlines the rules around early consideration and credit for previous years of service.

# Tenure-track: Associate Professor and Professor

- First appointment is as Associate Professor or Professor
  - must be assessed before being reappointed or granted tenure
- Associate Professor without tenure
  - tenure must be considered in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the appointment and if not granted, can be renewed but must be considered for tenure in each subsequent year.
- For those individuals who have outstanding teaching and research or both, tenure can be considered in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
- Full Professor without tenure
  - tenure must be considered in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and if not granted, must be considered in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year provided the appointment extends to that year. No one shall be considered for tenure in their first year.

**\*\*Please reference the Yellow Document, Page 20 and 21, Section III, #31 a & b.**



# Promotion to Professor

- For Promotion to Professor, a tenure-stream or tenured faculty member shall normally have spent at least 6 years in the Associate Professor rank.
- A person that falls within this category should be assessed in their 6th year
  - if they chose to wait, they should provide the Chair of the Department with written notice that they do not wish to be considered and the Chair would advise the Dean's office.
- A person in the rank of Associate Professor who demonstrates in fewer than 6 years that they deserve promotion to the rank of Professor, early promotion will be appropriate if performance in **both teaching and research** is truly exceptional.

\*\* Please reference the Yellow Document, Page 20, Section III, #33 and #34.

# Teaching-Track Appointments

- **Assistant Teaching Professors:**

“For a person whose first appointment to this University is a full-time Assistant Professor in a teaching-track position, the same general timing applies as is described for tenure-track faculty.” *Please reference page 20, Section III, clause #30 of the Yellow Document*

- \*\* Permanence must be considered in the 5<sup>th</sup> year unless the candidate agrees in writing to a one-year deferral.
- \*\* Final review of the case for permanence must occur by the sixth year. If not granted at that time, the appointment will be allowed to lapse.

# Teaching Associate Professor and Professors- Awarding of Permanence

- “A person whose first appointment to this University is as a full-time Associate Professor or Professor in a teaching-track position must be subject to an academic assessment before he or she can be re-appointed for a further period or before permanence can be granted. The timing for such assessments is the same as for tenure-track faculty”.

\*\* These appointments must be considered for tenure in the third year of the appointment and if not granted must be considered again in subsequent years.  
(Please reference page 21, Section III, Clause 32 of the Yellow Document)

**Please note:** With teaching-track positions, promotion and permanence are not linked. Promotion and permanence are not expected to occur at the same time except in very exceptional cases.

# Dossier Preparation

- Preparation of the dossier is critical to a successful T&P process
- A good dossier
  - Removes sources of ambiguity
  - Clarifies any potential conflicts of interest or other sources of conflict
  - Increases the candidates chances of success
  - The steps on how to prepare a dossier are outlined in SPS B12.

# Written Recommendation of the Department

- Faculty and Senate committees need to know the **exact decision** reached by the departmental committee
  - The **exact vote** of the department committee should be recorded (not by name but whether unanimous and if not the number for, against and abstaining)
  - Committees must avoid **conflict of interest**
    - Most committee members will have had some interaction with the candidate. However, they **should not participate in the process and should register a technical abstention** if they
      - Currently or recently shared research funds or researcher supervision with the candidate
      - Ever supervised the candidate (e.g. served on his / her supervisory committee)
      - Have had any other close personal or professional relationship with the candidate

# Written Recommendation of the Department

- Recommendation should note whether the candidate is being considered for **early or on-time** tenure or promotion
- In the case of early promotion it is important that
  - This be made clear to the external reviewers
  - The reasons for early promotion be clearly justified.
    - early promotion to full professor requires excellence in both teaching and research
- Anticipate issues that might arise.
  - Don't ignore clear weaknesses
    - address these and indicate why the committee made the decision it did
- Clarify any issues related to potential uncertainties.
  - e.g. if the candidate has collaborated extensively how to evaluate the candidate's personal contribution.
- Provide a critical evaluation of the teaching capabilities of the candidate.
  - Address all three areas of teaching – undergrad, grad and grad supervision.

# Curriculum Vitae

- Must follow guidelines in **SPS B11**
  - Chairs must vet CVs and ask for revisions if needed
  - It is the **faculty member's responsibility** to prepare and keep the curriculum vitae up to date. It is the Department Chair's responsibility, however, to ensure that the contents is accurate for cases of re-appointment, tenure, permanence and promotion.
- Encourage use of tabular format, particularly for funding, HQP training and teaching and can be very helpful in the overall assessment of the global publication record
  - Helps the committee → good for candidate

# CV – Important Elements

The CV must follow the exact format outlined in SPS B11- please reference SPS B11 for full details.

- Clarity of dates
  - degree dates – both start and finish
  - dates – start and finish – of all employment prior to joining McMaster
  - appointment date at McMaster (**exact date, not just the year**)
    - departments must check to ensure that this date is accurate agrees with your files
  - all subsequent changes of status (tenure, extension, promotion, etc.)
    - departments must check to ensure that this date is accurate agrees with your files
  - list any special circumstances (e.g. maternity or special leave) that affect the timing
- Candidate's education – list name of supervisors
- Supervision – provide a table with
  - names of all grad students, post-docs and undergrad interns
  - degree program
  - dates (start and end)
  - names of co-supervisors
  - Provide a summary (no. of students supervised in each class, whether finished or in progress)



# CV – Important Elements

- Teaching loads – provide a table for last 5 years with:
  - Course code, Course title, Year(s) taught
  - Note leaves or other forms of teaching relief
- Publication lists – provide a clear way of distinguishing the names of researchers supervised by the candidate (e.g. grad students in bold, other researchers in italics, role/contribution to publication for multi-author papers with collaborators)
- Research funding – provide a table with:
  - Grant name
  - Names of co-investigators (clearly identify PI)
  - Years
  - Funding agency
  - Annual amounts by year (in the case of a large grant identify amount coming to the candidate)

# Candidate's Statement On Research

- Now Required –SPS B12
- Research
  - Overview of major research themes, why they are important and how their work will contribute to advancing the field
  - Self assessment of the contributions to date. If there are issues, for examples in terms of research productivity (students, publications), this is the place for the candidate to address them
  - Discussion of the role of collaborators. If there has been extensive collaboration then a discussion of the role played by the candidate is helpful
  - **The candidate should provide a statement, approximately two pages long. This is the same statement that is sent to Referees.**
  - **Teaching-Stream:** A candidate's statement is required only in the case of promotion assessments. This statement would be approximately two pages long.

# Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report

- This report is prepared by the Department Chair or delegate and would include elements outlined in the following SPS's:
  - SPS B1 – Procedures for the Assessment of Teaching
  - SPS B2 – Teaching Portfolios (consists of two sections -1. Executive Summary & 2. Supporting Documentation)
- This section should contain, in tabular format, the answers to Q1, 3 and 4 for each course by the candidate in the previous 5 years. **For Q1, include the mean and the mode for the faculty member.**
- Provide a table with the **Department and Faculty averages** for undergraduate and graduate course by year – Faculty office will provide the Faculty numbers
  - According to SPS B2, student comments are not to be included in the Executive Summary or in the Departmental Evaluation Report.

# Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report

- Departments should not be basing the evaluation of teaching solely on student evaluations.
- Peer teaching evaluations should be performed periodically on all faculty until they reach the level of full professor, and even thereafter if issues arise.
  - Tenure track professors should be evaluated **annually** and given written feedback
- Tenure document should summarize the peer evaluations over the previous few years including, but not only, that conducted in the term prior to submitting the dossier
- Peer evaluation should include several elements including **in-class assessment, interview with the candidate, interviews with students** (undergrad and grad– the latter both from courses and candidate’s group)
- **All these elements should be noted in the candidates Teaching Portfolio which will be a great reference to Department Chairs at the time of tenure and promotion assessment.**

# Candidate's Response to the Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report

- This is the response submitted by the candidate for placement in the dossier after he or she has seen the Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report.

# Letters of Reference

- Credentials of each referee (**Reference: SPS B5**)
  - Provide a **list of external referees** as well as a summary (1-2 page max) of the reviewer's qualifications. **The candidate is to be given the opportunity to view the list prior to sending request for letter of references. The candidate also has the right to suggest appropriate additions to the list, within reason (Section III, 1 of SPS B5-Page 3)**
  - The candidate can indicate which papers should be sent to the referee (no limit). Chair may send additional publications but when doing so, must inform candidate (**Section IV, 1 of SPS B5-Page 3**)
- Ensure referees are not in a conflict of interest position.
  - The cover letter should ask specifically for them to contact you immediately if they have any collaboration with the candidate or where ever a supervisor.
  - If potential conflicts are revealed they need to be clarified with the reviewer and if need be the letter will not be valid. The dossier must contain three valid (i.e. conflict-free) letters.
- **All letters received must be included in the dossier.** If you have a letter from someone who has a conflict then indicate this in the departmental committee submission, stating that the letter was not used in the assessment of the candidate
- Letters to referees must clearly identify if the candidate is being put up for early promotion or tenure rather than on-time.

# Letters of Reference

## Important Note:

- All letters of reference will be regarded as confidential and will be made available only to the Department and Faculty Committees on Tenure and Promotion and to the Senate Committee on Appointments.
- In the case, where a candidate is unsuccessful at any stage in the process, unattributed copies of the original external letters of reference will be provided to the candidate by the Department Chair or the Faculty Dean's Office.

**\*\*Reference SPS B7 for full details**

# Academic Collaborators in T & P Proceedings

- A faculty member who is a significant collaborator with a candidate for appointment, tenure/permanence, promotion, or re-appointment may be perceived to be in conflict of interest.
- Whether or not an individual is a “significant” collaborator must be judged on a case by case basis.
- The Chair of the Appointment Committee should raise the issue of potential conflict of interest if one of the following is apparent:
  - (A) In an appointment process any candidate supervised in his or her graduate work by a member of the Committee or is currently working or has worked as a post-doctoral fellow with one or more members of the Committee
  - (B) A CV for any candidate shows the name(s) of one or more Committee members as co-author(s) or co-investigator(s)

In any one of these instances, the Chair will ask the Committee member(s) to outline the nature and extend of the relationship with the candidate. The Committee member(s) will absent themselves from the meeting while the Committee considers the potential conflict and votes on the issue.

For further details on how to register the vote and what documentation is required in this instance, kindly reference [SPS B4](#)