

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES
Tenure & Promotion Application F.A.Q. [rev. 7-23-24]

GENERAL

Q: Where can I find information about the requirements for my application?

A: Start with the Promotion and Tenure at UMaine page on the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost's website at <https://umaine.edu/provost/promotion-and-tenure/>. The page also provides links to your departmental promotion and tenure guidelines, which you should review carefully. If you have an individual MOU, you should review that carefully as well. The University of Maine System (UMS) page on tenure and promotion is at <https://www.maine.edu/students/office-of-the-vice-chancellor-of-academic-affairs/tenure-promotion/> and provides additional information. *A meeting with your department chair very early in the process of preparing your application is strongly recommended.*

Q: Do I need to let someone know that I am going up for promotion?

A: Yes. Faculty members are to notify their department chair no later than September 15, contractually. For practical purposes, the notification should occur by late spring so as to allow chairs adequate time to solicit external letters. Solicitation of external letters should begin in May or June. See [CLAS Guidelines for External Review Letters](#) on the CLAS Faculty/Staff Resources website for details.

Q: What is the timeline for promotion and tenure?

A: The application is due early October. Ordinarily, the application for tenure is submitted in October of year 6. Exceptions include (a) earlier application using prior credit granted at time of hire, and (b) later application due to a "stop the clock" for life circumstances. Deadlines can be found on the Provost's Office website linked above and on the HR website at <https://umaine.edu/hr/promotion-tenure-timetable/>. There is no specified timeline for promotion to full professor, but applicants will need to follow the deadlines for the T&P process.

Q: Do I have to use a specific form to present my materials?

A: Yes. On the Promotion and Tenure at UMaine page listed above, there is a link to a Word document that provides the required template for your tenure or promotion application. It is important that you review and follow the instructions on preparing your document. Please familiarize yourself with the detailed directions on the CLAS Faculty Resources Page → Human Resources → "Tenure/Reappointment Application Instructions."

Q: The UMS T&P form seems fussy and awkward. Do I really have to follow it?

A: Yes.

Q: What should I do if some part of the application is irrelevant to my situation?

A: Just type "Not applicable" in the body of the section. Do not delete any headings or sections of the application.

Q: How many years of activities and accomplishments may I include?

A: In the tenure application itself, you should include only the past five years of work, unless your

probationary period has been extended (“stop the clock”). The start of year one is usually considered to be the start of your UMaine employment, unless you are using prior credit. Professional activities during your prior credit year(s), if any, should be fully represented in your application. For full professor applications, include all work since submission of your application for your most recent promotion (to associate professor and/or tenure). Your CV will incorporate earlier work, but application must tell your story on its own, without the help of the appendix, since review at the system level will not include your CV.

Q: Is there a limit on the length of my T&P form?

A: No, but longer is not better. This is a fact-based and mainly quantitative document. It should clearly show your accomplishments in terms of number of courses taught, number of students taught, success in teaching those students, number of publications, rank of publications, number of conference papers given, grant activity, and substantive service. Describe your activities and achievements concisely. Disciplinary differences prevent us from offering specific advice on length, but we strongly recommend keeping your application focused. Don’t make it hard for reviewers to figure out what you have done and how it meets the criteria by which you are being evaluated. Avoid making your T&P application an accumulation of several years’ of reappointments; write it as a succinct, coherent narrative about your accomplishments in the period under review.

Q: Hold on. Are you saying my application for promotion is just checking boxes and listing things?

A. No. There are ample opportunities to individualize your materials and tell your story, by how you organize and compose:

- Your CV
- Your concise research statement for external reviewers
- Your organization and labeling of items under T&P form headings (subheadings)
- Teaching, research, and service narratives (not too long) within the T&P form
- Your choice of extra questions from teaching evaluations
- Etc.

Q: Am I responsible for obtaining the signatures in the “Record of Actions” on p. 2 of the template?

A: No. Your peer committee chair and department chair are responsible for obtaining department signatures. The rest will be added as appropriate in the course of review.

Q: Will someone in the Dean’s Office or HR check my application for mistakes?

A: It is your responsibility to ensure that the application is properly formatted, complete, and free of errors and inconsistencies. The Dean’s Office staff will confirm only that the application includes all major required components; excludes disallowed material, such as activities prior to the period of review; and has correct pagination, headers, and footers. If you hear from someone in the Dean’s Office that a mistake in your application requires correction, you are expected to respond promptly and courteously.

Q: How exactly do I present all my materials?

A: The Dean’s Office staff will set up a Google drive folder in your name with subfolders for teaching materials, CV, the T&P application form, letters, and publications. The publications subfolder will be the same as for your reappointments, so you can just add the most recent materials instead of starting over. You will upload your materials, and your chair (or peer committee chair) will upload letters as they are received. You may create additional subfolders if desired. The key is to make sure everything is easy to find and identify.

- You, your peer committee, and your chair will have edit access until the due date for submission (early October).
- After the due date for the chair's letter to the dean, the dean and dean's advisory committee will have *read only* access.
- Your editing access will be removed after the October due date.
 - Inform your chair of late-breaking news. You cannot add to your application, but new information can be incorporated into letters.
 - Some materials (for example, a late external letter) may be added by the chair after the due date.

Q: Must I submit any materials in paper?

A: No.

TEACHING

Q: Where can I find the template for the summary of teaching evaluations?

A: On the CLAS website, under Faculty and Staff Resources, in the Human Resources section. Please use the currently posted version of the template.

Q: How many years of teaching evaluations must I include?

A: For tenure cases, five years (plus any additional years due to a stopped clock). For promotion to full, all evaluations since the application was submitted for promotion to associate (or tenure, if more recent). The spring 2020, fall 2020, and spring 2021 semesters may be included if you wish but are not required, due to Covid provisions.

Q: Where can I find the CLAS teaching evaluation averages?

A: These are generated by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. As they are made available each semester, the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Administration adds them to a shared chairs/director supplemental materials folder in SharePoint. You can request them from your chair/director, or from the associate dean. Although you may include your individual scores for the spring 2020, fall 2020, and spring 2021 semesters, CLAS averages for those terms are not available due to Covid provisions.

Q: How should I document the success of my teaching?

A: At minimum, provide on p. 5 of the T&P application form a table in which your student teaching evaluation scores are compared with college means. *Please use the template currently available on the CLAS website.* If evaluations are uncharacteristically poor for a particular class or semester, provide an explanation.

Other evidence of your teaching performance can include peer evaluations based on classroom observation. You may include signed student comments (names redacted in the T&P application), although such comments should be kept to a minimum. Course syllabi and other course materials, such as innovative assignments, may be included.

Q: How do I include my evaluations from another institution (in cases where prior credit was awarded at time of hire)?

A: It depends, but generally faculty create a second template. The key is to make it easy to understand.

LETTERS

Q: My application isn't due until early October, but my chair is supposed to solicit external letters in early summer. Does this mean I have to have my whole promotion package ready in June?

A: Your external letter writers need not be provided with your T&P form, teaching materials, etc. Since the letter writers focus on evaluating your research (in most cases), they should have access to your CV, research/creative activity narrative, publications, and grants; and to your unit's criteria for T&P (or your MOU). Please see the **CLAS Guidelines for External Review Letters** on the CLAS Faculty/Staff Resources website for details.

Q: How do external reviewers get access to my materials?

A: Electronically, in whatever way they prefer. Some may want materials to be emailed. Others are fine getting access to materials in a Google drive. Be aware that sharing the same Google folder with multiple reviewers will disclose their identities to one another. Hence, it is recommended that the department chair provide a link to each external reviewer (rather than add them to the folder) to give them access individually without disclosing other reviewers' identities. In those rare situations when an essential item does not exist digitally, hard copy should be provided. Your chair or peer committee chair will take care of this.

Q: How are external review letters added to my application?

A: Letters will be added to the candidate's Google Drive folder by the department chair (or sometimes the peer committee chair) after the application deadline has passed and your application has been completed and uploaded. For each letter, you must include the following information on the appropriate page (Section VII) in your T&P application (prior to submission of your application, your department chair or peer committee chair can provide you with the names of evaluators who have submitted letters):

- The evaluator's name and institution.
- A statement of the evaluator's relationship with you. That relationship should not be close. Close collaborators or former advisors are not appropriate external evaluators. See the **CLAS Guidelines for External Review Letters** on the CLAS website for details.
- A very brief explanation of the evaluator's qualifications as an external reviewer.

Q: How many external review letters are needed?

A: Three letters are required, although candidates typically have 4-7 letters. It is safest to have additional names on hand. All letters move forward with the application through campus administrative review (i.e., department, dean, provost, president). The candidate will select three letters to move forward with the application to the Board of Trustees.

Q: Are internal letters of support (i.e., from UMaine or UMS colleagues) required?

A: No. The application form allows for internal letters from UMS colleagues. There is no opportunity to provide internal letters from UMaine colleagues within the application itself, although you may upload such letters in your Google folder as documentation, where appropriate.

REVIEW PROCESS

Q: Who reviews my application?

A: Review begins with your peer committee (October). The committee reviews your materials and writes a recommendation. The peer committee's recommendation is forwarded to the chair, who also reviews the application and writes a recommendation (November). The dean and provost each write a letter, in sequence (November/December and December/January), with input from an advisory committee at each level. For promotion to professor, the president's decision is final (February). For tenure, the president's recommendation is forwarded to the chancellor and then to the Board of Trustees, which makes the final decision (March).

Remember that only your application itself and the associated letters (limited to three from external evaluators) are provided for off-campus review. Your CV, which is an appendix, is not forwarded. Many of the people reading your application will be unfamiliar with your discipline. The narrative portions of your application should provide context to clarify the significance of your activities and achievements.

Q: What is the basis for evaluation of my application?

A: Applications for promotion and tenure are evaluated according to the departmental evaluation criteria (and/or MOU if applicable). Performance and accomplishments are also considered in the context of assigned duties.

Q: Will the committees and administrators reviewing my application have other information available?

A: Yes. They may review material from your personnel file, examine your publications, consult your department chair, and take other appropriate steps to ensure a full and accurate view of your accomplishments. It is a good idea to check that your personnel file is complete before you submit your application.

Q: Will I be informed of recommendations at each stage of review?

A: Yes, you will be copied on each letter. You have a right to respond to the peer committee letter within one week of its receipt by the chair, and to the provost's letter within five days of its receipt.