

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES
Tenure & Promotion Application F.A.Q. [rev. 7-15-19]

GENERAL

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

A: Start with the first two links at the University of Maine System (UMS) page on tenure and promotion at <http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/tenure-and-promotion/> and also visit the UMaine page, <http://umaine.edu/hr/employees/faculty-specific-resources/>. Also be sure to review your departmental promotion and tenure guidelines at <https://umaine.edu/provost/departmental-evaluation-criteria/>, or your individual MOU if applicable. *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: It depends. Tenure-track faculty members must go up for promotion and tenure on a set schedule, so they do not need to inform anyone unless they intend to use previously awarded prior credit or take advantage of a “stop the clock” agreement. The Dean’s Office should be notified before the end of the spring semester if a faculty member intends to use prior credit to apply the following fall. Associate professors seeking promotion to professor must 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.

Q: What is the timeline for P&T?

A: For tenure, the application is due early 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. There is no specified timeline for promotion to full professor. See the Sample Promotion and Tenure Timetable at <http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/tenure-and-promotion/>. *Note:* Solicitation of external letters should begin in May or June. See **CLAS Guidelines for External Review Letters** on the CLAS website for details.

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

A: Yes. On the UMS page listed above, there is a link to a Word document that provides the required template for your tenure or promotion application. For instructions on preparing your document, refer to the “Tenure Application Process” document on the same UMS page.

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. For full professor applications, include all work since your promotion to associate professor. Your CV will incorporate earlier work—but remember that the CV is an appendix included for on-campus review only. The application must tell your story on its own, without the help of the appendix.

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 conferences papers given, grant activity, and substantive service. Often, an application becomes overly long when candidates include irrelevant information, such as copies of individual student evaluations, multiple iterations of syllabi for one course, or lengthy narratives for teaching, research, and service. 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.

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 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: No. The Dean’s Office staff will confirm only that the application includes all major required components. It is your responsibility to ensure that the application is properly formatted, complete, and free of errors and inconsistencies.

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 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 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: Yes. The following packet of materials must be submitted by your chair, on paper, single-sided, to the Dean's Office, by the date the chair's letter is due:

- Completed application form with departmental signatures (including standard table for student teaching evaluation scores – see CLAS website)
- CV
- Signed letters on letterhead from external reviewers (with cover sheets), peer committee, and chair. Printed PDFs with digital signatures are fine.
- Signed T&P checklist (see CLAS website)
- Nothing else in paper. Please. No binders, no printed teaching evaluations, no paper syllabi, etc.

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.

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

A: For tenure cases, five years. For promotion to full, all evaluations since promotion to associate.

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

A: These are generated by the Office of Institutional Research. CLAS will provide 6 years of averages. Candidates who need more than 6 years should contact OIR.

Q: Whom should I ask to verify the summary of my teaching evaluations on p. 5 of the template?

A: Your department chair or equivalent.

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 table 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 your unit's criteria for T&P (or your MOU). Please see the **CLAS Guidelines for External Review Letters** on the CLAS website for details.

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

A: Electronically, in whatever way they prefer. Some are fine getting access to the relevant folders in your Google drive. Others want PDFs emailed. 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 by the department chair (or sometimes the peer committee chair). Copies will be shared with you as well. For each letter, you must include the following information on a cover sheet:

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

A: No. You may include them if you wish.

REVIEW PROCESS

Q: Who reviews my application?

A: Review begins with your peer committee (October). 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 also have a right to respond to the peer committee letter within one week of its receipt by the chair.