

STANDING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES  
RETENTION, PROMOTION, AND TENURE  
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

## GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

In its determination to excel in the selection and development of faculty to facilitate its mission, the Department of Technical Communication has established the following guidelines and standards for use in evaluating faculty for reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

These guidelines are in accordance with and subordinate to those issued by the Board of Regents, the university, and the College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences (CLASS).

Tenure and/or promotion are not guaranteed by the Department of Technical Communication as a function of university employment or years of professional experience. The awarding of tenure announces a special relationship between the university and the faculty member. As an extension of annual review and merit evaluation of faculty, the department's decision regarding tenure and/or promotion is viewed as a process that engenders academic freedom and professional stability for experienced faculty members. Moreover, through the application of these guidelines and standards, the department seeks faculty excellence. Therefore, the Department of Technical Communication evaluates the quality of teaching, the quality and quantity of research and publication, and an appropriate level of service pertaining to rank in the granting of promotion and/or tenure to faculty members. These guidelines and standards are designed, therefore, to function as expectations for persons seeking tenure and/or promotion within the department.

## PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

During September of a faculty member's first year, the department chair is responsible for seeing that the faculty member is directed to documents that are pertinent to the tenure and promotion process. These documents include:

- CLASS Guidelines for Documentation of Reappointment, Promotion and/or Tenure Cases
- CLASS Guidelines for Hiring, Evaluating, and Promotion Lecturers
- Department Personnel Actions Committee (PAC) Evaluation Guidelines
- Department of Technical Communication Charter

The candidate for promotion and/or tenure is responsible for submitting documentation in accordance with deadlines set by the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (RPTC) in anticipation of the annual CLASS calendar.

The RPTC will review the dossier of the candidate for promotion and/or tenure in accordance with the schedule established in the annual CLASS calendar. The Committee's written recommendation to the department chair will be signed by all members of the committee.

Upon reviewing the dossier of the candidate for tenure and/or promotion and the RPTC's recommendation, the department chair will make an independent recommendation to the dean of the CLASS. Both the RPTC's recommendation and the department chair's recommendation will be forwarded to the dean in accordance with the schedule established in the annual CLASS calendar.

In its deliberations and recommendations regarding promotion and/or tenure, the RPTC will conform as closely as possible to these general guidelines.

## CONSIDERATION FOR TENURE/PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Consideration for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and a decision regarding tenure, except in unusual cases, will be made concurrently. Therefore, the criteria for promotion regarding teaching, research/scholarship, service, and membership in the community of scholars are the same as those for tenure decisions, and standards for documentation and evidence to support promotion are the same as those to support tenure.

### Research, Publications, and Professional Activity

As a part of its mission, the Department of Technical Communication supports research that advances knowledge, bolsters classroom instruction, and promotes the application of knowledge for the benefit of the professional, scientific, and technical communication community, including, but not limited to, the academy, students, and practitioners. Consequently, faculty members in the department should engage actively in a program of research and publication. The department recognizes that to be recommended for tenure, and to reflect continuing growth, a faculty member must be engaged in a significant program of research and publication of sufficient quality and quantity to ensure that the faculty member is committed to the scholarly development of the discipline. In order to successfully attain the rank of Associate Professor, Assistant Professors must demonstrate the ability to publish a major body of research.

To be promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure, faculty members must meet criteria within one of two options:

1. Publish a minimum of six scholarly articles, five of which appear in a first-tier journal. Journal quality tiers are defined in a separate section of this document (p. 7).
2. Publish a scholarly book with a press that includes a rigorous peer review process, including review of the manuscript as well as the proposal, and also publish at least three peer-reviewed articles in first-tier journals.

To demonstrate independence as a researcher, at least three articles (or a book) must be sole authored. To advance the discipline of professional and technical communication and enhance the research reputation of the department, credit for one, sole-authored article in a first-tier journal is granted for at least \$100,000 of external funding acquired as Principal or Co-Principal Investigator.

Additional types of publication, including

- Peer reviewed book chapters

- Peer reviewed chapters or articles in scholarly conference proceedings
- Invited chapters in books and
- Invited chapters or articles in scholarly conference proceedings.

will be considered part of the candidate's overall record but will not apply toward the article count stipulated in either of the two options above. Strong emphasis is placed on blind-reviewed submission and subsequent publication in scholarly journals. The bulk of the candidate's scholarship must be completed while affiliated with the Department of Technical Communication at UNT.

**Additional Activity.** The candidate is encouraged to seek internal and external funding in support of his or her research and to list all grant applications, whether successful or not, in annual evaluation dossiers and the CV submitted for promotion and tenure.

Additional scholarly tasks, such as presenting at peer-reviewed conferences and peer-reviewing manuscripts under editorial review create a more comprehensive profile, but scholarly energies should focus on publication according to the above criteria. In general, candidates should avoid time-consuming projects such as book- or journal-editing and conference-organizing that would divert focus from research and publication.

Assistant Professors should consult regularly with the RPTC about their publication record and how appropriately it meets the tenure standards.

### Teaching

Faculty members in the Department of Technical Communication must remain current in their area(s) of expertise and demonstrate high standards of quality in instruction. Evidence of teaching excellence may include, but is not limited to, a dossier containing quantitative and qualitative student evaluations, departmental rankings, and teaching summaries prepared by the PAC and RPTC via peer review and other measures.

Additional evidence of teaching effectiveness may be demonstrated by the following:

- Development of new courses or curricula
- Significant new course preparations or redevelopment
- Work as a research adviser
- Winning of pedagogical grants

### Service

Faculty members in the Department of Technical Communication should be protected from undue service burdens while on the tenure track and should minimize the number of service assignments sought after or accepted. When asked to provide service, however, they must demonstrate a commitment to quality service to the department, the college, and the university. The department recognizes the merit of service to local, state, regional, national, and international constituencies. While some service is expected of probationary faculty, such service should not be allowed to interfere with the faculty member's duty to fulfill research and teaching obligations.

When documenting service, faculty should describe their specific responsibilities, activities, and accomplishments.

Collegiality (see page 7).

## CONSIDERATION FOR PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF PROFESSOR

CLASS normally considers promotion to full Professor after five to eight years at the Associate Professor level. The expectation of the Department of Technical Communication is that, except in unusual cases, the candidate seeking promotion should have held the rank of Associate Professor for a minimum of five years.

When considering promotion to the rank of Professor, the department places strong emphasis on research/scholarship since promotion or appointment to the rank of Associate Professor, but the entire career to date is taken into account. Associate Professors are expected to continue the quality and quantity of research/scholarship that warranted promotion to Associate Professor; promotion to professor requires that an Associate Professor exceed, in a meaningful way, these research/publication expectations. Moreover, the candidate for promotion to the rank of professor must demonstrate a highly productive program of research/publication that is recognized and respected by national and/or international authorities in the field.

The primary evidence of national reputation exists in the quality and substance of the candidate's published work. Secondary evidence of a national reputation must include at least five confidential external reviews of the candidate's work.

### Research, Publications, and Professional Activity

To be promoted to the rank of Professor, faculty members must meet criteria within one of three options, focusing primarily on the most recent five to eight years:

1. Publish a minimum of eight scholarly articles since tenure, six of which must appear in first-tier journals. Journal quality tiers are defined in a separate section of this document (p. 7).
2. Publish a scholarly book with a reputable academic press that includes peer review of the manuscript as well as the proposal and also five scholarly articles since tenure, with four in first-tier journals.

To demonstrate independence or mentorship as a researcher, at least four articles (or a book) must be sole or first authored. To advance the discipline of professional and technical communication and enhance the research reputation of the department, credit for one, first-authored article in a first-tier journal is granted for at least \$100,000 of external funding acquired as Principal or Co-Principal Investigator. (Credit for two, first-authored articles in a first-tier journal is granted for \$200,000 or more; this represents the maximum credit for funding.)

Other kinds of publication, including

- textbooks
- digital media projects

- peer reviewed book chapters
- peer reviewed chapters/articles in scholarly conference proceedings
- invited chapters in books and
- invited chapters and scholarly articles in conference proceedings.

will be considered part of the candidate's overall record but will not go toward the article count stipulated in either of the two options above (exception: textbook = one article in a second-tier journal). Strong emphasis is placed on publication through submission to blind-reviewed, scholarly journals. The bulk of the candidate's scholarship must be completed while affiliated with the Department of Technical Communication at UNT.

**Additional Activity.** The candidate is encouraged to seek internal and external funding in support of his or her research and to list all grant applications, whether successful or not, on annual evaluation dossiers and the CV submitted for promotion.

### Teaching

Although the Department of Technical Communication places strong emphasis on research/scholarship, it also expects demonstrated excellence in teaching and expanded service activities during the time-in-rank as Associate Professor. Faculty members in the Department of Technical Communication must remain current in their area(s) of expertise and demonstrate high standards of quality in instruction. Evidence of teaching excellence may include, but is not limited to, a dossier containing quantitative and qualitative student evaluations, departmental rankings, and teaching summaries prepared by the PAC and RPTC via peer review and other measures.

Additional evidence of teaching effectiveness may be demonstrated by the following:

- Development of new courses or curricula
- Significant new course preparations or redevelopment
- Work as a research adviser
- Winning of pedagogical grants

### Service

Major service activities during time-in-rank are required of those seeking promotion to full Professor; those activities must include service to the discipline or profession, as well as to the university, college, and department. Such service to the profession would include serving as officer or board member of a professional organization or editor or editorial board member of a major journal. Major service to the university would include serving on many committees, chairing university and college committees, or holding long-term major committee chair or director appointments in the department.

When documenting service, faculty should describe their specific responsibilities, activities, and accomplishments.

Collegiality (see page 7).

## GUIDELINES FOR POST-TENURE REVIEW

A faculty member who receives an unsatisfactory annual review by the department Personnel Actions Committee must be placed on a professional development plan (PDP) and has up to two calendar years to achieve the outcomes identified in the PDP. (See UNT Policy 06.052 on The Review of Tenured Faculty.)

## CONSIDERATION FOR PROMOTION TO SENIOR AND PRINCIPAL LECTURER

The Department of Technical Communication encourages all Lecturers to work toward promotion by demonstrating excellence in teaching and service.

Each year during the PAC evaluation period, lecturers will submit a dossier containing teaching materials such as syllabi, handouts, graded assignments, letters from students, and other pertinent materials. Lecturers will also submit any documentation related to service work during the preceding year. The materials collected for the annual dossier should also serve as documentation for promotion when the candidate has met the criteria outlined below.

The minimum standards for promotion to Senior Lecturer include

- A record of substantial and continued effectiveness in teaching
- Three consecutive years of full-time college-level teaching experience and/or equivalent professional experience
- Evidence of professional growth as an instructor and member of the profession. This includes but is not limited to course development, mentoring other instructional faculty, advising, and maintaining currency in the area of expertise through pedagogical development, conference participation, and/or research.

The minimum standards for promotion to Principal Lecturer include

- A record of sustained excellence in teaching
- At least five consecutive years of full-time college-level teaching including at least three years at the Senior Lecturer rank, and/or the equivalent professional experience.
- Evidence of leadership within the department and as a member of the profession. This includes but is not limited to coordination of courses or curriculum areas, new course development, mentoring other instructional faculty, advising, and maintaining currency in the area of expertise through pedagogical development.

### Teaching

The RPTC will evaluate lecturers primarily with regard to teaching effectiveness. Faculty members in the Department of Technical Communication must remain current in their area(s) of expertise and demonstrate high standards of quality in instruction. Evidence of teaching excellence may include, but is not limited to, a dossier containing quantitative and qualitative student evaluations, departmental rankings, and teaching summaries prepared by the PAC and RPTC via peer review and other measures.

Additional evidence of teaching effectiveness may be demonstrated by the following:

- Development of new courses or curricula
- Significant new course preparations or redevelopment
- Winning of pedagogical grants

Optional activities, including teaching-related grant application and receipt and online/new course development related to these grants will be favorably reviewed but are not essential to promotion.

### Service

Lecturers will serve different roles according to departmental needs (e.g., Undergraduate Advisor, Director of Corporate Relations, Director of Recruitment, etc.).

When documenting service, faculty should describe their specific responsibilities, activities, and accomplishments.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Collegiality Statement

The department expects that candidates for promotion understand the nature of membership in a community of scholars and adhere to high standards of integrity and professional ethics. Candidates should also demonstrate excellence across the UNT mission.

#### Journal Quality

Quality tiers of journals devoted to professional and technical communication appear in the table.

| Journal Title  | Tier   |
|--|--------|
| <i>Business &amp; Professional Communication Quarterly</i> | First  |
| <i>IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication</i>     |        |
| <i>International Journal of Business Communication</i>     |        |
| <i>Journal of Business &amp; Technical Communication</i>   |        |
| <i>Technical Communication</i>                             |        |
| <i>Technical Communication Quarterly</i>                   | Second |
| <i>Communication Design Quarterly</i>                      |        |
| <i>Connexions</i>  |        |
| <i>Journal of Technical Writing &amp; Communication</i>    |        |
| <i>Programmatic Perspectives</i>                           |        |

Tiers of journals or proceedings not in this table will be determined by the RPTC based on evidence provided by the candidate seeking promotion. Because there is no single, meaningful impact factor comparing professional and technical communication journals, that evidence should provide data which compares the publication to those in the table on factors like the following:

- Evidence that the publication is peer reviewed
- Reputation of scholars publishing in the same journal or proceedings
- The publication's

- Google Scholar h5-index
- Circulation rate
- Impact factor
- International readership
- Acceptance rate
- Editorial board

The Department of Technical Communication recognizes that the impact of an individual article is at least as important as the impact of the journal in which the article appears. Thus, candidates for promotion are encouraged to supply information about the impact of their specific publications; this may include metrics (e.g., citation counts, download numbers, etc.) as well as awards or formal recognitions.

#### Implementation and Amendment of these Guidelines and Procedures

1. The guidelines and standards for **tenure and promotion** in this document shall apply to those faculty members who join the faculty after the ratification of this document. Additionally, a faculty member may select these guidelines and standards for tenure and promotion through written notification to the department chair prior to the RPTC's review of the candidate.
2. This document may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total number of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members in the Department of Technical Communication.

APPROVED BY THE TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK FACULTY: February 6, 2019

APPROVED BY THE CLASS DEAN: February 11, 2019