

**MTSU College of Media and Entertainment
Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure
Updated to Reflect Changes in MTSU's
Policies for Tenure and Promotion
as Approved by Board of Trustees
Effective June 26, 2020
Ratified September 10, 2021**

The following College of Media and Entertainment guidelines supplement the general University policies and procedures on promotion and tenure. In compliance with the Middle Tennessee State University Policies for Promotion (Policy 205) and Tenure (Policy 204 and 204A), it is important to note that the listed guidelines represent minimum standards set by the College.

Department policies relating to the promotion and tenure process must meet the criteria as specified herein, but may exceed and be more specific than the minimum standards required by the College and University. For purposes of promotion and tenure, two additional MTSU documents - Faculty Appointments (Policy 202) and Academic Freedom and Responsibility (Policy 201) -- may be applicable to the process. Therefore, candidates for promotion and tenure are encouraged to consult all of the above documents.

I. Promotion and Tenure Committees in the College

Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committees should be organized each spring or as soon as the Office of the Provost issues the dates for faculty review and evaluation for the upcoming academic year. Committee members must be tenured. Candidates for tenure/promotion and the Department Chair may not be members. A committee chair will be elected by committee members at the first committee meeting. Meetings to evaluate candidates for promotion and tenure should be announced as early as possible and, at the latest, 10 days prior to the meeting. The committee chair leads the deliberations of the committee and coordinates the committee's work with the departmental chair and with the candidates. The committee chair functions as a participating member of the committee and may vote on all issues facing the committee.

Absentee votes are discouraged, but are permitted by the College-level committee and at the discretion of the department/school. In instances where absentee votes are permitted, all materials and information that are part of the package submitted by the candidate and are used to assess his or her application should be made available to all members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee in written form and accessible using current University's faculty activity software, unless the Provost has approved an exception.

Given the importance of the committee's recommendations, it is imperative that all members must be present for the committee to vote on the promotion and/or tenure of candidates. A

recommendation for promotion and/or tenure can only be made with support of a majority of the promotion and tenure committee members. Proxies will be accepted. Examples: If the committee has 7 members, there must be 4 votes in favor of promotion or tenure. If the committee has 8 members or 9 members, there must be 5 votes in favor; if the committee has 10 members, there must be 6 favorable votes. In the event of a tie vote, the vote will be regarded as a no recommendation for promotion and/or tenure. In the case of multiple votes, including votes taken after consultation with departmental chairs to resolve splits, only the final vote is reported.

II. Process for Election of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee

The College Promotion and Tenure Committee (hereafter may be called the College Committee) is newly elected each spring. Committee members must be tenured. Candidates for tenure/promotion and the Department Chair may not be members. Only committee members with the rank of full professor may review and vote for candidates seeking promotion to full professor. A committee chair will be elected by committee members at the first committee meeting.

All full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members, including associate and/or assistant chairs and associate directors, may vote in the election of the College Committee; the dean, associate dean, department chairs, and school directors, however, are not eligible.

At the beginning of each spring semester, each department or school with faculty representatives, who are either rotating off or can't continue their full term of committee service, shall nominate at least two (2) eligible faculty members for election to the College Committee. More than two eligible faculty members from each department or school may be nominated, but only two may be elected from each academic unit. Members of the College Committee are elected by a vote of all full-time College faculty. Nominations may be declined by faculty members at the departmental or school level.

Each spring, the associate dean will distribute a ballot to each full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Ballots shall be written in such a way that provides anonymity for each voting faculty member.

A clearly defined voting period shall be communicated to all faculty members eligible to vote for committee members.

Immediately following the voting deadline, the associate dean and a member of the previous year's College Committee shall count the votes and report the results to the College faculty and administrators.

If there are more than two nominations from any department or school, the two nominees who receive the most votes will be elected to the College Committee. In the event of a second-place tie, a runoff election between the two second-place candidates will be held to determine the winner.

A plurality of those voting is required for election to the College Committee. Committee members may also serve on Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committees.

III. Term of Service of Elected Committee Members

Elected committee members serve three-year terms. If a committee member must be absent for a semester or longer, the committee member will be temporarily replaced by the member of their department receiving the next highest number of votes on the original ballot. If a resignation from the committee or an unexpected vacancy occurs, the committee member will be replaced by the member of their department receiving the next highest number of votes on the original ballot and serve for the remainder of the original term. If the vacancy occurs during the summer and the committee needs to meet and decide on an expedited tenure review, the dean will appoint the temporary replacement with approval of the Provost and faculty senate president.

IV. Election of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee Chair

Each spring, the dean or associate dean will call a meeting of all committee members, who will elect a chair at their first meeting.

V. Promotion and Tenure Review Process and Procedures

The department chair and the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee will forward recommendations and other materials to the dean who will then forward the materials to the College Committee. Departments must also submit the guidelines used to make their decisions. Recommendation letters from the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee must report the specific (numerical) vote.

Once recommendations are made, the College Committee will consult with the dean to determine if the two parties are in general agreement. Letters of recommendation of the College Committee will include a specific numerical vote, specify the performance criteria, and how the candidate has or has not met those criteria. If the recommendations of the dean and the College Committee are not in accord, they will meet in an attempt to resolve any conflict prior to submitting formal recommendations. If the differences cannot be resolved, a report submitted by the College Committee to the dean will describe the points of conflict for each candidate.

The dean will forward all material submitted by the College Committee, along with his/her own recommendation, to the provost. The dean and the College Committee will independently notify each person considered for tenure and/or promotion of their recommendations.

Each tenure-track faculty under review will be afforded the opportunity to meet with the dean and chair of the College Committee to discuss the review process and the data upon which the decision was made. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to initiate requests for meeting(s) with the dean and the chair of the College Committee.

VI. Tenure

Probationary faculty may be employed on annual tenure-track appointments for a maximum probationary period of six (6) years.

Types of evidence relevant to evaluating effectiveness and contributions in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, and service/outreach are identified in University Policy 204 Tenure, Sections X and XI.

Candidates for tenure must demonstrate excellence in two of the following areas and quality performance in the third:

- (1) Teaching
- (2) Research/scholarship and/or creative activity
- (3) Service/outreach

Candidates must identify the two areas in which they claim excellence and marshal evidence to document the claim.

Faculty hired as assistant professors must complete the terminal degree before applying for tenure. In the absence of a terminal degree, significant professional experience (as determined by the department/school) may be substituted to meet this requirement. Petitions for exceptions to promotion criteria may include consideration of the appropriateness of the degree, extraordinary qualities that the candidate may possess, and/or equivalent work experience credit. The department chair and dean are responsible for evaluating a candidate's professional experience and record of accomplishments and recommending to the provost consideration for an exception.

VII. Pre-Tenure Review Policy

The College of Media and Entertainment defers to the current MTSU's Pre-Tenure Review policy below.

MTSU Policy 204 Tenure, Section IV.C and Section V

The faculty member will receive two (2) formal reviews during the tenure review process: a pre-tenure review of progress toward tenure and a final review during the sixth (6th) year of the probationary period. The pre-tenure review will follow the process of the final tenure review through the department and college level as outlined in Sections IV and V. Tenure-track faculty entering with zero (0) or one (1) year of credit for prior service will be subject to pre-tenure review in the third (3rd) year of their probationary appointment; probationary faculty entering with two (2) or three (3) years of credit for prior service will be subject to pre-tenure review in the fourth (4th) year of their probationary appointment. Exceptions must be approved by the Provost.

The University policy establishes the general guidelines for the pre-tenure review. However, college policies and/or department policies may include more specific information on the pre-tenure review process if so desired.

VIII. Promotion

For promotion to assistant, associate, and professor, we defer to MTSU Policy 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty, except where the department or school defines more stringent criteria.

At the College level, support will be given for variance in the definition of, and in the criteria for "national recognition."

Those hired as instructor on a tenure track with a to-be-completed terminal degree are encouraged to apply for promotion to the rank of assistant professor during the promotion cycle following completion of the terminal degree.

IX. Degrees and Professional Experience

At the time of employment, an initial determination is made of the suitability of the candidate's professional experience and academic background for purposes of promotion and/or tenure. The department chair (in consultation with the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee), dean, and provost are responsible for this evaluation. Because of the diversity of backgrounds and qualifications required for faculty membership in the College, this evaluation assumes great importance, and the candidate's letter of hire should make explicit the outcome of this evaluation.

X. Scholarship

The College values both traditional research and creative activity.

A. Research

University guidelines offer explicit direction in the area of traditional research. The College adopts University policy on research specified in MTSU Policy 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty, Section VI: D. The departments within the College will set additional guidelines on research for their respective areas/sequences.

B. Creative Activity

The following guidelines offer general direction for those who will present creative activity as part of their record for promotion and/or tenure. "Creative activity" consists of the creation, production, exhibition, performance, or publication of original work. Such activity should demonstrate originality in design or execution, and reflect, comment on, or otherwise contribute to the forms and practices of any endeavor represented by the disciplines in the College of Media and Entertainment. The product of creative activity may be communicated through print media, photographs, film, video recordings, audio recordings, graphic design, digital imaging, live performances, or other technologies.

Creative Activity examples may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Published books (professional, trade, or consumer), and articles, reviews, and commentaries in professional and popular publications
- (2) Graphics, visual materials, photographs, video productions, multimedia productions, or other visually-oriented media for professional or general audiences
- (3) Audio and/or audio-related productions, sound design for theater, film, video, or other media for professional or general audiences
- (4) Performances or exhibitions of creative works before professional or general audiences
- (5) Original musical works or original arrangements of pre-existing works,

including, but not limited to, scores (traditional, electronic, or other fixed media) engineered, produced, or performed for professional or general audiences

(6) Software development, multimedia authoring, and/or unique and innovative applications thereof for professional or general audiences

(7) Public relations materials such as media kits, campaign plans, media placements, brochures, training manuals, and web pages

Creative Activity Review - Review of creative activities may be satisfied in one or more of the following ways:

(1) Acceptance for exhibition, publication, or performance in popular or professional media where submissions are judged by independent referees who are respected practitioners of the creative activity;

(2) Acceptance by an editorial staff or someone who is charged with a selective review process;

(3) Published review of performances or productions by recognized critics, scholars, or industry professionals.

In fields where published reviews or their equivalents are difficult to obtain, independent reviews of the individual works, projects or performances may be solicited. Such reviews are separate from the evaluation of the faculty member's research and/or creative record as a whole, which occurs as part of promotion and tenure review.

Creative Activity Responsibilities - As indicated in the University policy, documentation of creative activity represents the cornerstone of the evaluation process. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to provide detailed documentation of creative activity in materials accompanying the application for tenure or promotion, or where the creative activities are being judged as part of the annual evaluation for retention in a tenure-track position. This documentation must accompany the initial submission of materials to the department chair and departmental promotion and tenure review committee. The faculty member may also include supporting materials that would assist colleagues in assessing qualitative aspects of the work. The faculty member will receive one formal internal review (with assessment of strengths and areas to be improved) before tenure consideration. The general details related to evidence of work are outlined in the University's Policy 204 Tenure, Section VI: D.2, and Policy 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty, Section VI: D.2.

XI. Documentation

A. Teaching

In documenting teaching records for promotion and/or tenure review, candidates, and departments when appropriate, should marshal evidence in the following ways:

(1) Present an orderly summary of teaching evaluations that utilizes tables to chart responses to important questions about teaching over time in relation to departmental averages (supplied by the department/school).

(2) Present copies of class-visitation reports as prepared by the senior faculty of the department/school or other documented evidence of excellence in teaching (such as

letters from the peer committee or chair, other faculty, administrators, students, etc.).
(3) Provide additional evidence of quality teaching, including records of teaching innovations, course improvements, honors received, teaching portfolios, and participation in University, national, regional, and state symposia.

B. Service

In recording service and outreach activities, candidates may solicit letters that document substantial accomplishments, whether they are service to the University, profession, or society. University guidelines offer ample direction for documenting excellence in service.

XII. Reviewers

Departments/schools have the option to require candidates applying for promotion and/or tenure to solicit three outside evaluations of their research and/or creative record. In either case, at least one reviewer must come from an institution of higher learning. Candidates in a department/school that does not require mandatory outside reviewers have the option to request external reviews of their work. Such outside reviewers must be (1) expert in the candidate's area of specialization or in a closely related field, and/or (2) from a peer institution or higher.

For research; appropriate scholars should write the evaluations; for creative activity, appropriate professionals and/or scholars should write the evaluations. The evaluators should be chosen by the department chair / director in consultation with the candidate and with the advice of the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee. Candidates shall have the option of providing a list of 6-10 qualified outside reviewers to the department chair. In order to meet University deadlines in the decision year, the candidates should discuss evaluators with the department chair / director during the spring semester of the year prior to being reviewed. The department chair/ director, in turn, should consult with the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee to finalize the evaluators. The candidate should provide the department chair/ director with a package of materials for the evaluators by the first week of classes in the decision year. The outside evaluations should address the quality of the scholarly or creative activity as a whole, delineate the unique contribution to the field, comment on future prospects, and, if appropriate, evaluate the quality of the candidate's work in relation to those evaluated for tenure at the evaluator's institution.

XIII. Policy Amendments

It is the responsibility of each academic unit in the college to conduct periodic review of promotion and tenure policies to ensure that these are accurate and current. A signed hard copy of updated promotion and tenure documents shall be forwarded to the dean's office.

The College Committee is also responsible for keeping the College Promotion and Tenure Policy accurate and current.

Changes or updates to the College policy may be initiated by any tenured faculty and submitted for consideration to the dean's office, which will then forward to the College Committee the proposed changes for discussion. If the College Committee decides to adopt the changes/updates, the revised document shall be provided to all tenured and tenure-track faculty for review and ratification vote. The College Committee may request the dean's office for assistance with the ratification process. Once ratified, the policy and signature page, with signatures of the College Committee chair and the dean will be forwarded to the Provost and University President for signature.

**College of Media and Entertainment
Promotion and Tenure Policy
Updated: September 3, 2021
Ratified by College Faculty:
September 10, 2021**

Approved:



Chair, College Promotion and Tenure Committee

09.22.21
Date



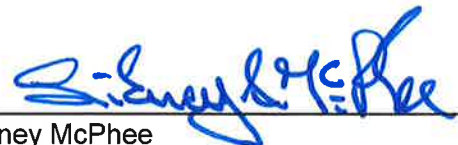
Beverly Keel
Dean, College of Media and Entertainment

9.22.21
Date



Mark Byrnes
Provost

10-1-21
Date



Sidney McPhee
President

10/13/21
Date