Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion and Probation Period

Office of the Vice-President, Academic | Faculty Relations
Introduction

The appointment letter will inform the appointee of the length of time before consideration for contract renewal, tenure and promotion, or end of probation.

The Tenure and Promotion Committee will:

- Review applications by Instructors who obtain their PhD for promotion to Assistant Professor (after their appointment starts). Note: if PhD completed before start date, appointment letter revised to Assistant Professor rank.
- Review all contract renewal, tenure and promotion applications for lecture and tenure-track faculty.
- Review salary recommendations on promotion.
- Review all probationary appointments.
Establishment of Committee

• Elected annually, every April by faculty within the unit
  • Each department or equivalent approves method for electing or ratifying members

• All TPC members serve a one-year term, May 1 to April 30 of following year
Composition of Committee

• Chair
• 5 continuing faculty members (elected)
• 1 tenure-track faculty member (Associate or full Professor) from outside the unit
  • Recommended by Chair; Nominated by Dean; Ratified by Department
• May choose to also have one alternate
• Must demonstrate gender diversity
• If composition stated above not possible, Chair submits proposed committee composition to Dean, including willing faculty member(s) from other department/faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>2 (at least); no more than 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>no more than 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>1 (if there is a member at this rank in the unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Faculty</td>
<td>1 (if there is a member at this rank in the unit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Composition of Committee: Not Eligible

• Academic administrator above level of Chair
• Faculty College member
• Faculty member whose case is up for review not eligible for that particular TPC
• Member on Post Retirement appointment
• Member on leave (study, sick, parental, LTD, or other leave)
• TPC Chair eligible to consider other cases, but not take part in own
• Any member where conflict of interest or not at arm’s length
  • Any TPC member should absent themselves if reasonable apprehension of bias or conflict is brought to light by faculty member undergoing consideration (GP 37)
Composition of Committee: Chair of TPC

• In departmentalized faculty, Chair of Department or Director of School serves as the Chair of the TPC

Non-departmentalized faculty (normally appointed for 3-year term):

• Either tenured Associate Professor or tenured Professor with at least 5 years at SFU

• Nominated by another tenure-track faculty member or self-nominated
  • 5 other tenure-track faculty members in faculty must sign nomination form
  • Dean’s office conducts election or ratification vote (if one nominee); must receive majority of votes cast
Composition of Committee: Alternate Member

Member would only attend meetings in the following situations:

• A TPC member is disqualified from considering a case due to a conflict of interest or a reasonable apprehension of bias (substituting for that case only)

• A TPC member becomes seriously ill or is unable to continue serving and the work of the committee is at an early enough stage that the alternate can fully participate

• Alternate normally the “first runner-up” when election involved or if only person to express interest to serve as alternate declared elected by acclamation

• Normal rules regarding rank and gender would not apply to the alternate
Composition of Committee: Approval

• On or before April 30th, Chair of TPC will forward to Dean composition, procedure for electing, operating protocol and criteria that have been adopted

• When election not needed in the selection of a member or members of the TPC, a ratification vote will be held. Ratification requires more than 50% of the votes cast in the ratification ballot

• Dean will determine whether proposed TPC is satisfactory and consistent with Article 29, and will notify Chair to proceed, by May 15
  • Procedure if Dean has not approved, Sections 29.15/29.16
TPC Procedures

• All are voting members (no abstentions)
• Full participation essential given gravity of matters
  • To take part in vote, all members must have be present at **each/every** discussion of the case
• TPC will keep minutes (at minimum, record of date, attendance, action of the Committee)
• TPC motions should be framed in positive terms
  • In event of tie, recommendation forwarded as unfavourable to the case
• Minority recommendation should be set out in the body of the recommendation or in a separate document (if applicable)
• Under a duty to protect the confidentiality of a candidate, his/her personal information and those of the referees. Failure to do so can be grounds for discipline (I10.10)
Grant Tenure and Practitioner Faculty

• All provisions relating to the appointment, evaluation, tenure or promotion of tenured faculty with eligibility for tenure apply to the appointment, evaluation, grant-tenure or promotion of Grant Tenure Track/Grant Tenured appointments, with the necessary amendments (art. 40.3).

• Practitioner Faculty will be subject to performance reviews in the same manner as tenure track faculty and will be eligible for merit and progress through the ranks (art. 37.9).

• Appointment as Practitioner Faculty does not carry with it the prospect or promise of conversion to a tenure-track appointment (art. 37.10).
Joint Appointments

With any joint appointment, the faculty member will have a “primary” and a “secondary” department

• For renewal, tenure and promotion procedures, the TPC of the secondary department will provide the primary department with an assessment (and recommendation of step placement on promotion) and the primary department will consider that in making the department-level recommendation to the Dean

• If across faculties, the secondary Dean will also provide the primary Dean with an assessment

• Where administrative appointment in the same or another faculty, secondary supervisors should be asked for an assessment by the primary department
Part-time and Modified Appointments

• A part-time faculty member who holds an appointment of half-time (50%) or greater, and who is not an Instructor, a Lecturer, a Senior Lecturer, or University Lecturer will be considered for contract renewal and tenure according to the same terms as a full-time faculty member (art. 26.4)

• A Member on a modified appointment may be considered for promotion in the usual way. The same criteria will apply and will, in particular, relate to the Member's overall status and achievement in their field. However in the modification of the appointment the proportion of each year involved and the form of the reduced commitment will be taken into account in the evaluation (art. 25.16)
Referees

• At arm’s length from candidate (not recent thesis supervisor, co-author, co-research, SFU faculty member, personal friend)

• Should take into consideration academic stature and independence of each referee in weighing assessment

• Must use template letter and guidelines for external referees approved by Department and Dean

• Must receive a minimum of four referees’ reports before case can be considered (two of which appear on faculty member’s list)
  
  • For promotion to University Lecturer, require at least 4 letters of reference from internal or external referees of high academic stature

• Should not consider unsolicited letters of reference

**For Teaching Faculty, referees only required for promotion to University Lecturer

**Referees not required for Contract Renewal
Recommendations

• Consistent decisions

• Clear assessments:
  • Set out quality of performance
  • Constructive criticism of any potential areas for improvement
  • Practical guidance for future

• Minority report should be separate from body of recommendation, or in separate document
Common Problems

• Incorrectly counting or evaluating publications
• Over-emphasizing negatives in student evaluations
• Unbalanced consideration of referee letters with no explanation
• Providing a description of activity as opposed to performance assessment; insufficient details; no basis for decision; decision not tied to criteria
• No description of information or documents relied on in making recommendation
• Failing to provide suggestions for improvement
• Failing to set out minority opinion and reasons
• Providing details of actual vote, referee names or details
SFUFA’s Role

• Able to assist with strategy and providing reality checks
• Preparing submissions and responses
• Helping revise documentation and draft responses
• Accompanying members to meeting with Deans and FRCs
Key Times to Seek Advice

• As early as possible
  • Submitting documentation
  • Meeting with TPC if it has questions
  • Responding to TPC statement of case, responding to TPC recommendations
  • Preparing a submission for and/or meeting with FRC
Negative Recommendations

• Faculty Review Committee (FRC) formed to review cases where
  • Negative recommendations from TPC and Dean
  • Cases where there is disagreement between TPC and Dean recommendations
Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion

Tenure-Track Faculty
Confirmation from Faculty Relations: Starting Out the Process

• Faculty Relations provides draft lists in March with research and teaching faculty up for contract renewal, tenure and promotion for faculty feedback (addition or removal of faculty from list; early considerations, etc.)

• Verified lists come out in late March/early April, but should not hold up your processes
## Timelines for Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apply in Previous May (April for Early Tenure Consideration)</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Assistant Professor</th>
<th>Associate Professor or Professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Appointment</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Renewal</td>
<td>4 years (if PhD is completed)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure and/or Promotion</td>
<td>Tenured at start of 8th year, if successful</td>
<td>Tenured at start of 7th year, if successful</td>
<td>Tenured at start of 5th year, if successful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appointment letter specifies September 1 applicable for consideration. For appointments commencing January 1 to August 31, upcoming September will apply.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Chair to provide faculty member with written notice of scheduled contract renewal consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Faculty member to submit application for tenure and promotion along with full CV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>All material in support of all applications to be submitted by faculty member to TPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Draft assessment from TPC (2 weeks to respond)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Recommendation from TPC to Dean (2 weeks to respond)</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>Positive recommendation from Dean to VPA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Negative or split recommendation: Dean to VPA – (2 weeks to respond/appeal)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faculty Review Committee (FRC) will be formed; opportunity to meet with committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Recommendation from FRC to President (2 weeks to respond)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>President makes decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Timetables for Promotion

• **Research Faculty**
  • Early promotion submission by April 1
  • Chair provides faculty member with written notice of a scheduled tenure consideration by April 15
  • Written request to be considered, including full CV by May 1

• **Lecturer to Senior Lecturer**
  • Early promotion submission due September 15
  • Application by October 15

• **Senior Lecturer to University Lecturer**
  • Application by October 15
Schedule Modifications: Leaves

• Employees on full-time long term disability will have the schedules for contract renewal, tenure, and salary review considerations suspended until they resume full- or part-time work (art. 44.26).

• Time spent on leave of absence will not normally alter the timetable for renewal, promotion and tenure considerations nor impact salary adjustments (art. 47.3).

• Time spent on study leave will not affect the consideration of a Member for promotion or regular salary review (art 46.26).
Schedule Modifications: Early Tenure
(if accepted, follow regular process after)

May apply if:

• Associate Professor or Professor with prior experience as faculty member at another university and 1 full year experience at SFU

• Assistant Professor with at least 2 years of experience as tenure-track faculty at SFU and at least 5 years passed since obtained PhD or equivalent

• Assistant Professor with at least 3 years as full-time term faculty member, immediately prior to tenure-track appointment and 1 year in tenure-track position (both at SFU)

• Lecturer if at the time of application, they have completed at least 3 years as a continuing Lecturer at SFU and 3 years as a Lecturer (or equivalent position) at another post-secondary institution prior to the continuing appointment at SFU. Both of these appointments must be at least half time.

Years spent in a term appointment contiguous with the continuing appointment will count towards tenure and/or promotion

**Rejected requests not relevant in future consideration**
## Schedule Modifications: Early Tenure/Promotion - Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer to Senior Lecturer</th>
<th>Tenure-Track Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Must make written submission, including full CV (to Dean; copied to Chair) by <strong>September 15</strong>, outlining reasons for request</td>
<td>Member must make written submission, including full CV (to Dean; copied to Chair) by <strong>April 1</strong>, outlining reasons for request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean consults with Chair TPC; informs member and Chair, TPC of decision with reasons, in writing by <strong>October 1</strong></td>
<td>Dean consults with Chair, TPC; informs member and Chair, TPC of decision with reasons, in writing by <strong>April 15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An unsuccessful application will not be a relevant consideration in any future promotion case</td>
<td>Once approved, withdrawal from tenure consideration <strong>not</strong> permitted and case must be reviewed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schedule Modifications: Delay in Consideration

• Medical or parental leave of four months or longer
  • Notified by the VP, Academic (Faculty Relations) that member may request contract extension/delay in tenure consideration of 1 year

• Other severely disruptive personal or professional circumstances during appointment > may apply for contract extension/delay in tenure

• Long term disability > may have schedule suspended or modified by VP, Academic
Categories of Evaluation

• **Three key areas of activity** (see [Article 28](#) for Categories of Evaluation and University Requirements for Tenure and Promotion):
  • Teaching effectiveness
  • Scholarly activity
  • Service (to the University, academic discipline, or broader community)

• At a minimum, satisfactory performance must be demonstrated in teaching effectiveness and scholarly activity

• Must be evidence of meaningful service contributions
Categories of Evaluation: Teaching Effectiveness

• Mastery of the subject
• Generation of enthusiasm in students
• Maintenance of appropriate academic standards
• Dedicated involvement within one’s field(s)
• Openness to innovation
• Graduate supervision
• Development of academic programs
• Ability and willingness to teach a range of subject matter at various levels of instruction
Teaching Effectiveness: Assessment

• Student questionnaires
• Observations of faculty colleagues
• Teaching portfolios
• Caliber of supervised dissertations and theses
• Consideration given to service to students over and above formal teaching, particularly when service is time-consuming
Categories of Evaluation: Scholarly Activity

• Evidence of scholarship
  • Research published or otherwise subjected to appropriate peer evaluation
    • Emphasis placed on quality \textit{as well as} quantity
    • Consideration given to particular conditions of community-engaged research and knowledge-mobilization activities
  • Consideration also to recognition by national and international societies and granting agencies
    • Special recognition by such societies, agencies, or other universities should be noted
Service

• Consider contributions to all levels of the administration of the University
  • A member's contribution to the work of the Association will be deemed service

• Initiating and participating in seminars, public lectures or similar activities on campus

• Public service contributions
  • Take into consideration exceptional that service duties or expectations may be due to membership in particular group

Should be a strong focus on academic content of the contribution
Requirements for Contract Renewal

• Strong academic record and potential to grow in stature as scholar
  • Peer-review publications, grants, graduate supervision
• Clear indications individual has aptitudes of a successful teacher
  • Range of courses
  • If teaching assessed as weak from salary review, need to already be seeking help
• Willingness to play an active role in the University
  • To department, faculty, university, academic community, society – *departmental service may be most significant*

The goal is to present a positive trajectory for tenure
Requirements for Tenure and Promotion: Instructor to Assistant Professor

• Strong academic record
• Clear indications individual has aptitudes of a successful teacher
• Potential to grow in stature as scholar
• Willingness to play an active role in the University

**Can occur at any time after completion of prerequisite academic or professional training, may submit proof of completion to TPC
  • Chair informs Dean and VP, Academic (Faculty Relations) condition fulfilled and will take effect at beginning of month following submission to TPC
Requirements for Tenure and Promotion: Associate Professor

Tenure/promotion must be considered at same time

• Continued growth as established scholar
  • Development of a significant program of research and scholarship
• Sustained commitment to teaching and supervision
• Responsible and contributing member to University/academic community
Requirements for Tenure and Promotion: Professor

Total overall contributions taken into consideration (tenure/promotion may be considered at same time if came in at Professor rank/not tenured)

• For those who have excelled in teaching and research
• Evidence of national or international reputation in their area of expertise
• **If granted**, will take place September 1 and **where unsuccessful**, must wait minimum of one application cycle, unless provide notice of withdrawal
Salary Placement upon Promotion

• Should be included in the final recommendation
• This recommendation must also specify a step award for the following year.
• Member’s entire career performance reviewed and salary placement in new rank basis of that review
  • Consideration to steps awarded, but not received
  • Will include recommendation for step awards in year following promotion
In the Rare Case of Denial of Tenure

• Seek assistance from SFUFA (should already be involved)
• Generally, no appeal if all decisions negative, but has been allowed
• Appeal on grounds of procedural irregularities, personal bias, prejudice, or academic freedom
• SFUFA may provide legal assistance
• Success means tenure reconsideration and one-year contract extension
Departmental Criteria
Departmental Criteria

• For each department, school, or non-departmentalized faculty
  • Departments encouraged to develop department criteria to Assess Non-Traditional Scholarship and to Assess Fine and Performing Arts (where relevant to the disciples of a department)

• Reviewed and reaffirmed or revised no less than every three years
  • Approved by Dean; copied to VP, Academic (Faculty Relations) and SFUFA

• Must be consistent with general University requirements

• Most recent copy given to new tenure-track faculty
  • Faculty member may opt to be evaluated against department’s most recently approved criteria
  • Promotion to Professor evaluated against most recently approved criteria
Issues for Multi-disciplinary Departments

Do departmental criteria provide clear guidelines for judging colleagues from different disciplinary backgrounds?

• Publications
  • What is on the “A” list?

• Authorship
  • Is single authorship privileged?
  • Is giving grad students first authorship accepted?
  • Etc.
Departmental Criteria: Assessing Non-Traditional Scholarship (see art. 28.18 to 28.22)

• Recognizing that certain faculty members or groups of faculty members may engage in non-traditional forms of scholarship

• Faculty member who expects to engage in such scholarship encouraged to consult with TPC Chair well in advance to discuss how this work might be best presented for evaluation

• Faculty member may request that one external referee have expertise consistent with the non-traditional work
  • With agreement of TPC, may be person with expertise/stature, but not academic credentials
Departmental Criteria: Scholarship in the Fine and Performing Arts
(see art 28.23 to 28.26)

• Creative work presented to the public by faculty whose scholarly work involves activity in creative areas deemed to be full equivalent of published scholarly work

• Creative area faculty member normally evaluated for will be indicated within the terms of appointment

• Consideration given to both originality and quality

• Evaluated with rigorous scrutiny in way appropriate to the nature of the art and to the subjective nature of art judgement
Promotion
Teaching Faculty
Requirements for Promotion

Laboratory Instructor to Lecturer
• May apply where substantial portion of permanent duties have become full responsibility for instruction of courses, including laboratory courses
• Demonstrate ability and commitment to teaching

Lecturer to Senior Lecturer
• 5 years as a Lecturer at SFU
• Excellence in teaching
• Examples of educational leadership
• Involvement in curriculum development and innovation and other teaching and learning initiatives
• Continuing pedagogical/professional development
• Appropriate level of involvement in service

**If unsuccessful promotion application, candidate must wait two years to reapply.**
Requirements for Promotion

Senior Lecturer to University Lecturer

• At least 5 years as Senior Lecturer at SFU
• Outstanding achievement and teaching
• Distinction in field of teaching and learning, including demonstrated innovation
• Outstanding achievement in educational leadership
• Sustained and innovative contributions to curriculum development, course design, and other initiatives
• Appropriate level of involvement in service
Probationary Period

Teaching Faculty
Probationary Period

• Initial Teaching Faculty appointments will commence with a probationary appointment of 12 months

• Teaching faculty to be provided with unit’s expected standard of performance and criteria by which performance will be measured

• TPC reviews performance of Laboratory Instructor or Lecturer at end of second semester
  • If successful, Chair, TPC makes recommendation to Dean that appointment be made continuing at end of probationary period (one step award given)
Probationary Period:
Unfavourable or Inadequate Record to Assess

If inadequate record to assess (one step award given)
  • Chair, TPC recommends to Dean probationary period be extended by 12 months

For unsatisfactory review (no step award given)
  • Chair, TPC provides in writing:
    • Unsatisfactory aspects of performance in relation to job responsibilities
    • Expected standard of performance
    • Criteria by which performance will be measured
  • May appeal negative assessment to Dean within 2 weeks of Chair, TPC’s recommendation

In both cases, supplementary review at end of fourth semester, concluded by Dean no later than the 18th month of the appointment
Currency in Discipline

• Faculty members should show how they maintain currency, list professional development activities, indicate how others draw upon their expertise

• A faculty member may want to share plans for an up-coming 1-in-9 non-teaching semester

• May want to include accomplishments that demonstrate their involvement in research and scholarship
Research and Scholarship  (No requirement for research activity)

• Significant value to activities and publications related to the scholarship of teaching and learning

• Research activity in content area can be a double-edged sword; may be seen as positive OR as taking time away from teaching
Service

• Departmental service is generally expected; if not being asked, faculty members should volunteer

• Faculty members should receive credit for service to their faculty, the university, their discipline, and relevant service to the community
Why a Teaching Dossier?

• Avoid total reliance on student evaluations
• Means of promoting one’s teaching and educating TPC members
• Means of drawing attention to growth and improvement in teaching