School of Communication
Tenure and Promotion Criteria

This document is in reference to the Collective Agreement between Simon Fraser University Faculty Association and Simon Fraser University dated July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019. In the case of conflict between the principles set out here and those established at higher levels (notably in the Collective Agreement), the latter take precedence.

Article 18 of the Collective Agreement outlines university-wide criteria for tenure and promotion for Research Faculty. Article 35 specifies university-wide criteria for Teaching Faculty.

Articles 28.15 and Articles 28.18-26 specify university-wide criteria for promotion and tenure of Research Faculty based on non-traditional scholarship. Non-traditional forms of scholarship relevant to the field of communication (e.g. artworks, public performances, sound recordings, film or video production, and other publications or events) may be considered for purposes of renewal, tenure, promotion or salary review based on criteria set out by articles 28.18 to 28.26 in the collective agreement. Non-traditional scholarship may be taken into account by the Tenure and Promotion Committee in the School of Communication in the areas of teaching effectiveness, scholarly activities, and contributions to the university and society for both Research and Teaching Faculty.

The following describes the minimal expectations of Tenure and Promotion for Research Faculty (to the ranks of Associate Professor or Professor), and Teaching Faculty (to the ranks of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and University Lecturer) in the School of Communication.

Research Faculty will be evaluated in three key areas of activity: Research activity and achievement; Teaching effectiveness; and Service to the School, the university and the community. Teaching Faculty will be evaluated on the basis of Educational Leadership and Innovation, Teaching effectiveness and Service to the School, the university and the community.

RESEARCH (Research Faculty)

The University expects a proven record of scholarly achievement, and continued growth for established scholars. For the School of Communication, this means that Research Faculty must have established and maintained a continuing independent research program of high quality at SFU.

A candidate in an Assistant Professor position will be granted tenure and will be considered for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. For promotion to Associate Professor when candidates must show a record of professional growth, achievement and the promise of continued contribution to the discipline in the area of research. The TPC considers both quality and quantity of research, and takes into account the assessments from external letters of reference. In general, it is expected that candidates show that they have established a solid and active research agenda, and that they have published high quality work in the discipline on a continuing basis.
The TPC’s appraisal is to be based on publication in books and scholarly journals, with reference to expert opinion and peer review.

For promotion to Full Professor the candidate is expected to have demonstrated excellence in the area of research and have a sustained and recognized record of scholarly activity and accomplishment substantially beyond that required for the rank of Associate Professor. Appointment to Full Professor requires evidence of national and international reputation as a scholar, and the achievement of a level of originality or measure of innovation, and is supported by letters from external referees of high academic stature.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION (Teaching Faculty)

Teaching Faculty members must demonstrate appropriate levels of involvement in scholarship and activities related to curriculum development, course design and other teaching and learning initiatives as specified in Articles 35.5-35.15 of the Collective Agreement.

Applicants for promotion to Lecturer must demonstrate promise of educational leadership.

Applicants for promotion to Senior Lecturer must demonstrate continuing pedagogical and professional development, as well as involvement in educational leadership, curriculum development and teaching innovation.

Applicants for promotion to University Lecturer must demonstrate distinction in the field of teaching and learning, outstanding achievement in educational leadership, as well as sustained and innovative contributions to curriculum development, course design and other initiatives that advance the University’s ability to excel in its teaching and learning mandate.

TEACHING

Teaching in the School of Communication includes both undergraduate and graduate instruction.

For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor success as a teacher is essential. A candidate should have a demonstrated record of excellence in teaching, and show growth, achievement and promise in this area. Both teaching activity and quality are assessed for teaching effectiveness. A teaching dossier must be submitted by the candidate and will provide information and documentation on the following teaching elements: teaching activity; teaching quality; curriculum/programmatic development and contributions; pedagogical research and innovation; other academic-related services to students; teaching effectiveness (evaluations).

For promotion to Full Professor the candidate must demonstrate continued success in graduate instruction and an on-going productive graduate program, including both MA and PhD students. The total overall career contributions will be considered, and success as a teacher over the candidate’s academic career is an important criterion of evaluation in the case for promotion. A teaching dossier must be submitted by the candidate in the same manner described above for
tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Particular importance will be given to the applicant’s service as senior supervisor and committee member to graduate students as well as their active engagement with training and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students as well as postdoctoral researchers.

For promotion to Lecturer, there must be demonstrated ability and commitment as an effective university teacher. Laboratory Instructors can be considered for promotion to Lecturer when a substantial portion of their permanent duties has become the full responsibility for the instruction of courses, including laboratory courses. Candidates for promotion to Lecturer must also demonstrate evidence of promise of educational leadership.

For promotion to Senior Lecturer, there must be demonstration of superior ability as a university teacher as well as examples of educational leadership, involvement in curriculum development, use of innovative pedagogy, or participation in other teaching and learning initiatives. Candidates must also demonstrate continuing pedagogical or professional development.

For promotion to University Lecturer, there must be demonstration of outstanding ability as a university teacher, including innovation that results in a positive impact on student learning. There should also be demonstrated educational leadership, or significant contributions to curriculum development, or contributions to other teaching initiatives. Candidates must demonstrate sustained and innovative contributions to curriculum development, course design, or other initiatives that advance the University’s ability to excel in its teaching and learning mandate. At least four letters of reference from internal or external referees of high academic stature must support promotion to this rank. Referees will be chosen in the same manner as those for research faculty promotions (in Articles 31.4 to 31.12).

SERVIECE

The School of Communication places high value on service to the School, the university, and the broader community. Active, collegial participation in academic administration is an essential contribution of all faculty members. It is recognized that junior faculty members should initially focus on establishing their research and teaching programs, however, it is expected that increasing service contribution will be demonstrated prior to promotion. Service is recognized as active participation in School and University governance through service on School, Faculty, or University Standing Committees, or in key School administrative appointments (Graduate Studies Committee Chair, Undergraduate Studies Committee Chair, Director, Associate Director). The School places substantial emphasis on this service criterion, and regards ongoing and active participation in governance and administration as essential to the success and progress of research and teaching in the School.

Participation in the wider academic community is also expected. Such activity may include service on editorial boards, leadership roles in academic associations, conference organizing, reviewing articles or manuscripts, serving on review panels for granting councils, presentations of papers at academic conferences or government commissions, working groups, or nongovernment agencies. As well, faculty members may provide significant service to the wider
community as public intellectuals through a range of activities and contributions, including public addresses, commentary on important public issues, media interviews, provision of expert opinion, community contributions, and the like. External referees may be asked to comment on a candidate’s record of service.

For promotion to Associate Professor, candidates should demonstrate a strong record of service to the School, the university, and/or the community in terms of the above description. A minimum performance of satisfactory is required for tenure and promotion, as well as evidence of commitment of future contributions.

For promotion to Full Professor, a candidate should demonstrate a strong and ongoing record of service, and should have excelled in a number of the elements of service described above. Candidates should have served on various committees, including in leading roles (e.g. committee Chair). Contribution to other aspects of service such as outreach initiatives or search committees is also expected.

For promotion to Lecturer applicants are expected to demonstrate evidence of promise in educational leadership and involvement in service to the academic profession (particularly in the applications in the field of communication), the university or the community.

For promotion to Senior Lecturer, a candidate should demonstrate an increasing service contribution. Demonstration of continued service to School standing committees and to other aspects of service such as outreach initiatives or search committees is also expected.

For promotion to University Lecturer continued participation in service to the School, University and broader community, and the field of communication is expected.