

**University of Louisiana at Monroe**  
**Department of Communication**  
**Promotion and Tenure Guidelines**  
**College of Arts and Sciences**

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**Introduction**

This document frames the Department of Communication's policy on tenure and promotion and perspective on teaching, professional growth, and service; the three critical areas that influence promotion and tenure recommendations. The promotion and tenure policies of the Department of Communication have been formulated in conformity with the minimum and general requirements set forth by the Board of Supervisors of the University of the Louisiana System (ULS) and University, College, and Departmental policies at ULM. The process of granting tenure and promotion is an essential mechanism for ensuring quality and allocating rewards in the university. It is intended to be both rigorous and fair.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide guidance to tenure-track assistant professors in achieving tenure, and to tenured assistant professors and associate professors wanting to be promoted. Specifically, this document offers tenured and non-tenured faculty specific guidelines for achieving tenure and promotion and for maintaining employment in the Department of Communication at the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

All faculty members in the Department of Communication are expected (1) to be professionally competent, current in their areas of teaching, and excellent classroom instructors; (2) in the case of tenured and tenure-track faculty, to have an ongoing program of scholarly and/or creative activities, as detailed in these Department Guidelines; and (3) in the case of tenured and tenure-track faculty, to perform assigned Department, College, and University service responsibilities, and to contribute to public service activities where appropriate all of which are in compliance with Department, College, and University policies. These performance indicators will be considered by the appropriate peer review committee and by the Department Head in making promotion and tenure recommendations to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The faculty member's responsibility is to build a record of teaching, academic achievement and service that will enable his or her performance to be evaluated effectively through the lens of the following guidelines. The Department of Communication holds a unique perspective on each of the three components critical in evaluating a faculty member for tenure and promotion.

## **A Perspective on Teaching, Professional Growth, and Service**

The Department of Communication believes that teaching and professional growth are interrelated. Professional growth is evidenced by traditional scholarly research within a discipline and by the exploration of issues relating to pedagogy. These academic enterprises may take the form of scholarly publications, participation in professional organizations, public performances, and other creative accomplishments. We believe, therefore, that success in professional development can be achieved in many ways and that no one approach or technique is inherently superior to another. A good teacher is always updating her/his knowledge through an ongoing program of research while the effective scholar seeks to apply research findings in the development of curriculum and lecture material.

The Department of Communication also believes that service can complement a faculty member's research and teaching. Service allows a scholar to share his or her expertise and professionalism with others within and outside the academic arena. Appointed or volunteered services are highly valued activities in conjunction with one's teaching and professional development. Service often ensures a program remains active, for without someone to take an officer's position a professional organization may suffer. Service often demonstrates and enhances a faculty member's leadership opportunities and qualities. Therefore, the Department of Communication believes faculty members should engage in service activities.

This perspective influences the type of evidence the Department of Communication seeks in determining promotion and tenure of faculty. Criteria for determining whether a faculty member has achieved this perspective on teaching, professional development, and service, are listed clearly and subsequently.

### **Promotion and Tenure Defined**

#### **Tenure**

Tenure constitutes more than recognition of past teaching and scholarly performance. Tenure is a sign of mutual commitment among the faculty member, the Department, and the University. Tenure of a faculty member normally requires six years of instructional experience in residence. In these six years there should be documentation of consistent teaching, research, and service effectiveness with indications of excellence in teaching. Research documentation must include material from the categories supplied below. There must be evidence in the record to project continued effectiveness of contribution in each of the three major areas of evaluation: teaching, professional development, and service.

#### **Promotion**

Promotion refers to the various ranks of professional achievement, such as assistant professor to associate professor, and associate to professor. Rank is awarded based a

rigorous review of the candidate's dossier in the three major areas of evaluation, years of service at a specific rank and expectations outlined below. Promotion often follows the same six year span as for an assistant professor seeking tenure. Associate professors with tenure may seek promotion to the rank of professor after having been employed as an associate professor for five years or longer. Early promotion is rarely, if ever granted.

Promotion and tenure are usually considered in concert.

### **Consideration for Promotion and Tenure**

Tenure-track assistant professors seeking tenure, and tenured assistant professors and associate professors wanting to be promoted will need to meet several requirements before being considered for promotion and tenure. A summary list of the documents needed to assess a candidate's worthiness for promotion and tenure by the Department Head, tenure and promotion committee, and the College of Arts and Sciences is listed below:

1. The possession of a terminal degree (Ph.D. or MFA).
2. Demonstration of a record of excellent teaching that can be documented by the following standards of excellence: (indicators are not listed in any particular order)
  - Positive student evaluations of teaching performance
  - Development of effective, innovative, pedagogical methods and materials
  - Positive classroom visitation evaluations by peers and/or Department Head
  - Responsible in the performance of all duties attendant upon instruction
3. Demonstration of significant professional development: scholarly and/or creative/literary activities. Traditionally, evidence of scholarship would come in the form of publications and conference papers. In such areas as Radio/Television, Performance Studies, and/or Rhetorical Studies, however, one must recognize that the research and skill that produce a video, an artistic program, and/or photography exhibit are just as eloquent as the written word. The task of the department is to assess the role that each faculty member plays in her/his areas and determine how that individual may best advance her/his knowledge for 1) personal/professional development and 2) the benefit of ULM students. With those considerations in mind, scholarly and/or creative activities shall be documented by the following standards (indicators are not listed in any particular order):
  - Acceptance for publication/broadcast of creative/scholarly work through a refereed review
  - Presentation of competitively selected materials at an appropriate conference

- Invited participation at academic symposiums or specialty conference or adjudicated forum
  - Demonstration of creative application of scholarly material
  - External funding for research
  - Publication of scholarly and/or literary books
  - Publication of a chapter(s) in scholarly and/or literary books
  - Editing books, journals, or other compilations.
4. Demonstration of a record of contribution in the area of Department, College, University and public service that shall be documented by the following standards (indicators are not listed in any particular order):
- Officer in a professional organization or commission
  - Program, division, or area chairperson of a research meeting
  - Editorship or Reviewer of scholarly submissions or publications
  - Consulting Agreements providing public or professional service with a focus in the discipline
  - Advisor to student organizations
  - Invited expert speaker to classroom within or outside the University
  - Participation on Department, College, and University task forces and committees
  - Contribution to internal and external development efforts
  - Participant in the efforts of local professional meetings and organizations
  - Significant community service that utilizes professional skills

Note: The above list is a thorough and a standard guide to follow. That is, the type of evidence the candidate needs to collect is clear. Judgment of the material listed above will be submitted to the criteria listed below, however.

### **Criteria for Promotion and Tenure**

Each candidate from the Department of Communication for promotion and/or tenure and promotion will be evaluated by the departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee in three areas: instruction, professional development/achievement, and service. The Committee consists of all tenured-faculty in the department and is chaired by a faculty member selected by the committee. The committee's evaluations are based on information derived from various sources, but primarily those based on information submitted by the candidate, the departmental committee, outside evaluators, and the department head.

### **Terms of Evaluation**

Based on the evidence submitted, the departmental committee will evaluate the candidate's instruction, professional development, and service according to the evaluative categories: *outstanding, excellent, very good, good, fair, poor*. The evaluations will take

into account expectations appropriate to the rank under consideration, the standards of the candidate's specific area of expertise, and the mission and resources of the Department of Communication.

### **Evaluation of Instruction**

The committee will be mindful that the student evaluation averages mentioned below are given as approximate, general guidelines rather than absolute numbers to follow when judging the quality of a candidate's teaching effectiveness. Appendix A summarizes the defining features of each evaluative category for instruction discussed below.

Promotion and/or Tenure to the Rank of Associate Professor: The candidate will be judged to be ***outstanding in instruction*** if the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is, on balance, exceptional. For instance, the student evaluation scores might suggest extraordinary performance in the classroom (the overall average is outstanding, high-4 out of 5 range); the course material presented might show exceptional preparation; a high degree of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; the candidate might demonstrate a very high level of involvement in mentoring students; and/or the candidate may have published a textbook or series of articles on pedagogy, or received one or more teaching awards.

The candidate will be judged ***excellent in instruction*** if, in the categories above, the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is highly accomplished. For example, the student evaluation scores suggest highly effective performance in the classroom (the overall average is very good to excellent, mid-to high 4 out of 5 range); the course material presented might show impressive preparation; a significant degree of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; and/or the candidate might demonstrate a high level of involvement in mentoring students.

The candidate will be judged to be ***very good in instruction*** if, in the categories above, the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is highly competent. For example, the student evaluation scores suggest very effective performance in the classroom (the overall average is very good, in the low to mid-4-out of 5 range); the course material presented might show diligent preparation; a better-than-average degree of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; and/or the candidate might demonstrate an adequate level of involvement in mentoring students.

The candidate will be judged to be ***good in instruction*** if, in the categories above, the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is competent. For example, the student evaluation scores suggest effective performance in the classroom (the overall average is good to very good, in the low 4 to high-3 out of 5 range); the course material presented might show diligent preparation; a competent degree of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; and/or the candidate might demonstrate an adequate level of involvement in mentoring students.

The evaluation categories of fair and poor are reserved for candidates who fall short of meeting the standards listed above for good performance.

Promotion to the Rank of Professor: Candidates for the rank of Professor are expected to maintain and even exceed the sort of involvement and accomplishment required for an Associate Professor. The *non-bold italicized* material highlights some key expected differences that separate the candidate seeking professor status from that of someone at the rank of an associate professor.

The candidate will be judged to be ***outstanding in instruction***, if in the categories above the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is, on balance, exceptional. For instance, the student evaluation scores might suggest extraordinary performance in the classroom (the overall average is excellent, in the high—4 out of 5 range); the course material presented might show exceptional preparation and *continued refinement and improvement of course content; a greater breath and depth of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; exceptional efforts to improve the department's curriculum might be manifested; the candidate might demonstrate an especially high level of involvement in mentoring students (completion of advanced degrees, conference participation, publications, career development, etc.); the candidate might have developed innovative teaching instruments and/or methods (such as the use of new technologies or creative approaches in the classroom); and/or the candidate may have published an exceptional textbook or series of articles on pedagogy, or received one or more teaching awards.*

The candidate will be judged to be ***excellent in instruction*** if, in the categories above, the overall assessment of the committee from the evidence submitted is that the candidate's performance is *superb*. For example, the student evaluation scores suggest highly effective performance in the classroom (the overall average is very good to excellent, in the mid-to high—4 out of 5 range); the course material presented might show impressive preparation and *continuing devotion to improving and updating course content and syllabi, as well as overall curricular reform; the candidate might participate in college, university-wide, or national committees that focus on instructional improvements and issues; a great breath and depth of knowledge of the subject matter might be indicated; and/or the candidate might demonstrate a high level of involvement in mentoring students.*

The evaluation categories of fair and poor are reserved for candidates who fall short of meeting the standards listed above for good performance.

### **Evaluation of Professional Development**

Promotion to associate professor is available only to those candidates who are ***judged to be at least excellent*** in either professional development or instruction and at least very good in the other area.

Promotion to Associate Professor: A candidate for promotion to associate professor will be judged ***outstanding in professional development*** if the committee's assessment is that the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work is of rare quality and importance. There are obviously many ways for a candidate to provide justification for such a conclusion. A candidate, for example, might have published a significant number of refereed articles and/or book chapters of extraordinary quality; or a larger number of articles and/or book chapters, all of outstanding quality; or two or more books of exceptional quality; or have met any of the criteria for an evaluation of exceptional and secured extramural funding for his/her research. To qualify as outstanding, a candidate also should have been very active in other research and/or creative roles, such as intramural research or creative grant recipient, conference session organizer or participant, creative event producer, journal editor or referee, grant reviewer, or book reviewer.

The candidate will be judged ***excellent in professional development*** if the committee's assessment is that the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work is highly accomplished. Such a candidate, for example, might have published refereed articles and/or distinguished book chapters; or a larger number of articles and/or chapters of excellent quality; or a book and at least articles and/or chapters, all of excellent quality. To qualify as excellent, a candidate also should have been very active in other research and/or creative roles, such as intramural research or creative grant recipient, conference session organizer or participant, creative event producer, journal editor or referee, grant reviewer, or book reviewer.

The candidate will be judged ***very good in professional development*** if the committee's assessment is that the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work is highly competent. Such a candidate, for example, might have published refereed articles and/or book chapters of very good quality; or a larger number of articles and/or chapters of very good quality; or a book and at least articles and/or chapters of extremely good quality. To qualify as very good, a candidate also should have performed several additional research roles, such as conference session organizer or participant, journal editor or referee, or book reviewer.

The candidate will be judged ***good in professional development*** if the committee's general impression is that the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work is competent. Such a candidate, for example, might have published refereed articles and/or book chapters of good quality; or a larger number of articles and/or chapters of fair quality; or one or two such publications or higher quality, or a book and one or two articles, all of fair quality. To qualify as good, a candidate also should have performed at least one or two additional research activities, such as conference session organizer or participant, journal editor or referee, or book reviewer.

The evaluation categories, fair and poor, are reserved for candidates who fall short of meeting the standards listed above for good professional development.

Promotion to Professor is available only to those candidates whose professional development is judged as excellent. The *non-bold italicized* material highlights some key

expected differences that separate the candidate seeking professor status from that of someone at the rank of an associate professor.

A candidate for promotion to professor will be judged ***outstanding in professional development*** if the committee's assessment is that the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work is of unusual quality and importance. There are many ways for a candidate's work to meet these criteria. *A candidate, for example, might have published a number of superb refereed articles and/or book chapters and a significant number of articles and/or chapters of excellent quality since the candidate's last promotion; or a book and a significant number of articles and chapters, all of excellent quality. To qualify as outstanding, a candidate also could have secured extramural funding to support his/her research and should have been highly active in additional research roles, such as intramural research grant recipient, conference session organizer or participant, journal editor or referee, grant reviewer, or book reviewer.*

The candidate will be judged ***excellent in professional development*** if the committee's assessment is that the candidate's scholarship or creative activities are highly accomplished. Such a candidate, for example, might have published *a large number* of refereed articles and/or book chapters of excellent quality; or *a larger number* of articles and chapters, all of very good quality. To qualify as excellent, a candidate also should have been very active in other research roles, such as intramural research grant recipient, conference session organizer or participant, journal editor or referee, grant reviewer, or book reviewer.

Since the lowest standard for promotion to Professor is ***excellence***, judgments of one's professional development as ***very good***, ***good*** and ***poor*** measurements would superfluous or unnecessary. However, a description of a ***very good*** or ***good*** rating appears in the standards for professional development created for associate professor.

For a candidate whose discipline is creative, published and produced creative works will be evaluated using the same ratings listed above. However, the length, complexity, dissemination, and outside peer review will also impact the ratings and ultimate decision by the promotion and tenure committee.

### **Evaluative Scenarios for Professional Development**

The Department of Communication's multi-disciplinary structure necessitates that the professional development of faculty members takes diverse forms, employ a variety of methods, and should be assessed in terms of the positive and unique contributions made to the advancement of the individual discipline and to departmental and institutional goals. Professional development, as is suggested above, may encompass basic and applied research, theoretical and empirical work, scholarship of discovery and integration, qualitative and quantitative methods, and creative endeavors. Each topic, method, approach and technique should be judged only on whether it is appropriate to the stated professional development goal and whether it produces a valuable societal or disciplinary product.



For example, a faculty member who chooses mainly to write articles for refereed journals could be seen as equally successful with another who publishes her/his work in books but whose work undergoes comparable peer review scrutiny. Candidates who pursue a mixture of publication media, e.g. articles, authored or edited books, chapters in books and/or creative activity will be evaluated on the whole body of work, just as will those who specialize in one form of scholarly or creative expression.

Obtaining external funding for one's research or creative works is a highly valued professional development activity, especially for tenured faculty. The Department of Communication recognizes the relative scarcity of external grant support in some departmental disciplines. Grant support, however, is only a means to an end and is no substitute for the products of research and creative activity.

Other scholarly activities, such as organizing sessions for professional meetings and reviewing, refereeing, and editing the work of others, also are valued and expected activities of any scholar. Although no particular type of activity is specified for promotion and tenure, successful candidates for tenure and promotion will be active in such roles.

The Department also recognizes that a loose hierarchy of scholarly journals does exist within each discipline. However, there certainly is disagreement about such rankings. Sometimes, in fact, very valuable work that offers innovative approaches, new ideas, or evidence that challenges existing knowledge may not be published in the best known journals. Quality publications will be assessed on several factors including the work's impact on the field (shown through reviews, citations, and other evidence); the prestige or standing of the journal in which the article appears or the publisher of a book or book chapter; the candidate's explanation of the importance of the work; and the committee's independent assessment of the work.

The Department of Communication also recognizes the value of both individual and cooperative scholarship and creative works. While we acknowledge the importance and occasional difficulty of determining the relative contributions of co-authors or co-creators, communication research is often a team enterprise. We strongly support interdisciplinary research which by definition results in publications with multiple authors. We cannot therefore assign higher intrinsic value to either single-author or jointly-authored works. We also know that order of authorship does not necessarily convey accurate information about one's relative contribution to the work. We will thus accord proportional credit if the candidate's contribution to a multiply-authored work is established. The quality of the work will be assessed independently.

As a result of interdisciplinary collaborations, some of a candidate's publications may appear in the scholarly outlets of other disciplines. We recognize that work in the general field of communication can and do regularly make contributions to the knowledge base of a broad range of disciplines, and we will not disadvantage such work appearing in related professional publications. Likewise, a candidate's creative collaborations with other artists outside and within the communication discipline will be given consideration.

However, the core of a candidate's work should remain within her/his communicative discipline.

Many of the most innovative projects in the field of communication combine theory and practice. The department encourages such work and recognizes there may be overlaps in the categories of scholarly works and creative projects. Those achievements which fall into the two categories will be evaluated using criteria drawn from both.

The Department of Communication appreciates the increasingly prominent role that on-line publication, multimedia work, and web-based resources play in the production and dissemination of knowledge. It also recognizes that the traditional standards of peer review are often difficult to apply to these new forms of scholarship. Therefore, candidates should make a case for the quality of the project, its distinctive contribution to disciplinary knowledge and the candidate's professional development, and provide evidence of peer review (e.g. citation of the project in other venues).

While every imaginable evaluative scenario is difficult to create, the above do offer a broad base of situations that suggest every effort will be made to judge a candidate's line of professional development fairly and objectively.

### **Evaluation of Service**

**Promotion to Associate Professor or Professor:** Candidates seeking promotion to associate professor and/or professor are expected to serve (as chair or member) on university, college, departmental committees, and serve the surrounding community. Candidates seeking promotion are expected to advise, mentor, and recruit students. They are also expected to keep office hours. Communication is a discipline that crosses many activities in the community seeking performance, technical or academic volunteers or appointments. Therefore, candidates in the Department of Communication are often called upon to serve in the community and are expected to serve the community in some capacity linked to their area of expertise. The following summary offers some additional and specific activities that would lead to a rating of *outstanding, excellent, very good, and good*. A rating of *good* is the minimum standard of evaluation for service oriented activities. That is, a candidate's service activity evidence needs to meet the standard of *good* before being considered for promotion or tenure.

**Demonstrated service to the department, college, and university:** Some evidence that could lead to a candidate's service oriented activities being ranked as: (1) *Outstanding* (exceeded satisfactory expectations in a prominent or unusual way): Chair college committees with two letters documenting quality of effort, or advisor to student organization, develop new curricula and/or revise curricula, create a written recruitment plan or document its effects for a given emphasis area, (2) *excellent* (substantially surpassed satisfactory expectations) if those activities include all of the following: Member of university committee, chair department committee, member of a college committee, and/or chair college committee, (3) *very good* (surpassed satisfactory expectations) if those activities include three of the following: Member of university

committee, chair department committee, member college committee, and chair university committee, (4)of *good* (satisfied minimum expectations): Member of two department committees

Demonstrated public service to community organizations will receive a rating of: (1) *Outstanding* if the activities include all of those listed below plus some distinguishing activity that brings prominence to the University, College, and especially the Department, (2) *Excellent* if the activities include some of the follow evidence: President of a professional organization with two letters documenting quality of effort, member of advisory board, assists in recruiting new students, assistant or conductor of a community event that provides for practical professional experience where Communication students are involved, leader in discipline related activities outside the Monroe/West Monroe community, unpaid consultant on an accreditation team or expert witness, public speaker, testifier on behalf of ULM or its programs and/or (faculty defined standard which exceeds satisfactory expectations in an outstanding or unusual way for this category), (3) *Very Good* if the activities include some combination of more than half of the activities listed under *Excellent* and (4) *Good* if the activities include at least half of the activities listed under *Excellent* .

### **Instructions for Department of Communication Faculty Serving on Promotion and Tenure Committees and for Candidates Seeking Promotion and Tenure**

The preceding information offers tenure-track faculty seeking tenure and promotion and tenured faculty seeking promotion some clear guidelines and expectations to consider when compiling documentation linked to their instructional, professional, and service oriented activities. The next major step for the candidate is to submit his or her dossier for evaluation. Departmental, college, and university faculty and administrators will have to decide whether the candidate's activities merit promotion and tenure. These decision-making entities are bound by University policy to follow the standardized procedures and deadlines listed in the *ULM Faculty Handbook*. Therefore, Tenure and Promotion Committees are instructed to follow the procedures for determining promotion and tenure outlined in the *ULM Faculty Handbook* (<http://www.ulm.edu/facultyhandbook/>).

A candidate seeking Promotion and Tenure in the Department of Communication is also instructed to consult the *ULM Faculty Handbook* for information concerning promotion and tenure procedures and deadlines.

Candidates are instructed to consult the *ULM Faculty Handbook* because some important facts may get left out if the promotion and tenure procedures were summarized in this document.

### **Third Year Promotion and Tenure Review**

The Department of Communication reviews all tenure-track Faculty during their third year of employment. The purpose of this review, which assesses the faculty member's effectiveness in instruction, professional development, and service, is to ensure that

junior Faculty has a candid and constructive evaluation of their accomplishments as they progress toward an eventual promotion and tenure decision.

While the faculty member under review should be familiar with the Department's promotion and tenure policies, and use these as a general guide for what to include in the dossier, it is important to remember that the spirit of the third-year review is different from that of the promotion and tenure process. While important, the third-year review is more informal: it is meant to encourage an honest assessment of, and dialogue about, the faculty member's achievements to date. If there are deficiencies in a particular area, those concerns will be acknowledged, and the Department Head and faculty member will discuss specific ways to improve over the next three year period. If the faculty member seems to be progressing toward a successful promotion and tenure decision, the Department Head will acknowledge such progress. The Department intends to nurture the faculty member so that, ideally s/he will be in the best position to succeed at the time of application for promotion and tenure.

### **Calendar for Third Year Promotion and Tenure Review**

By January 25 of the third year the Department head will ask third-year faculty in writing to prepare and submit a dossier for review by March 15. The brief dossier should include a two-page statement of goals and accomplishments in the areas of instruction, professional development, and service, including such materials as a curriculum vita, annual reports, publications/creative achievements, and evidence of teaching effectiveness.

The Department Promotion and Tenure Committee will review the submitted materials and prepare an objective summary report on the dossier and shall vote on a positive or negative recommendation. The report is due to the Department Head by April 15. Simultaneously, the Department Head will prepare her/his own independent review of the dossier.

The Department Head shall hold a conference to inform the faculty member of how well s/he is progressing toward a positive promotion and tenure decision. The DH will also give the faculty member a copy of both reports. The DH shall forward to the Dean of the College all relevant reports, and the Dean shall meet with the faculty member and the Department Head to discuss the review.