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University Tenure and Promotion Committee Practices, Expectations, and Procedures

I. Introduction

Tenure and Promotion are important steps in a professor's professional career. Policy IV.04, the [Promotion of Faculty](#) policy, generally describes the promotion process and the minimum criteria to be considered for promotion. Policy IV.05, the [Continuation of Appointments \(Tenure\)](#) policy, generally describes the tenure process and the minimum criteria to be considered for tenure. The President has assigned the implementation and interpretation of Policies IV.04 and IV.05 to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services. This document is meant to explain the promotion and tenure procedures and criteria in greater detail, for the benefit of both the University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee (UFTPC) and the University faculty community as a whole.

Each faculty member will be provided with a copy of this document at the new faculty orientation, and it will also be issued again to each applicant for promotion and/or tenure. Each year, during the period between the announcements of the most recent promotions and/or tenure and the time for submission of new applications for promotion and/or tenure, the Provost will coordinate a voluntary meeting with members of the UFTPC for all interested faculty in which the promotion and/or tenure process will be discussed.

II. Promotion and/or Tenure Eligibility

Applicants for promotion must meet the criteria listed in the [Promotion of Faculty](#) policy in order to be considered for promotion.



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Applicants for tenure must meet the criteria listed in the [Continuation of Appointments \(Tenure\)](#) policy in order to be considered for tenure.

III. University Faculty Tenure and Promotions Committee (UFTPC) Responsibilities

Orientation

The Provost will convene and charge the Committee with its duties based on dates listed in the *Timeline for Promotion and/or Tenure Process* listed below, absent unusual circumstances. During this meeting, the Provost will: (i) discuss the role of faculty committee members, (ii) describe the promotion and/or tenure process to the Committee, (iii) stress the objectivity of the promotion and/or tenure process, and (iv) stress the confidentiality of the promotion and/or tenure process.

In addition, the Provost will inform each member of their duty to educate the members from other colleges about the details of portfolios outside the other members' area of expertise, based only on information provided in the applicant's portfolio. The Provost will ask that each College Dean (or his/her designee) address the Committee in an effort to educate the members from other Colleges about the details and particularities of typical portfolios from their Colleges, including description of elements present in a portfolio worthy of promotion and/or tenure. Athens State University has a small faculty community. As such, faculty members often know one another on a personal basis, developing long relationships with one another. It is critical, however, that the Committee evaluate each applicant for promotion and/or tenure on an objective basis, without advantage or disadvantage given such personal knowledge. Evaluations will be based only on what is presented in the portfolio.

Impartiality and Confidentiality

Likewise, it is important that the Committee's discussions about the merits of each applicant remain confidential to protect the integrity of the promotion and/or tenure process. While the promotion and/or tenure process should be transparent, members of the committee will not discuss the details of anything said during executive sessions of the Committee or regarding



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individual portfolios. Doing so is considered unethical, unprofessional and compromises the integrity of the Committee's work. Service on the committee indicates a pledge to conduct an impartial, confidential and non-biased review of the applicant's submissions. Failure to honor this pledge will result in the immediate removal from the committee and a five-year suspension from serving on the committee. The Provost, in consultation with the appropriate Dean, will remove the committee member and appoint a replacement. Although unsuccessful applicants will need feedback concerning how they might improve their portfolio, such feedback will be provided by the College Dean and Provost at a later time.

IV. Mid-Tenure Review Procedures

1. **By the end of September, the College Dean shall conduct an election within the respective Colleges to select three faculty members to serve on a College mid-tenure Review Committee.** If there are eligible librarian applicants, the Library Director shall conduct an election within the Library to select a librarian to serve on the mid-tenure review committee. The librarian must hold a rank equal to or higher than the library applicant(s). The elected library representative will only participate in the review of librarian applicants through the approved tenure process. Each member must be tenured in order to serve on the Committee.
2. **By the end of January the applicant shall prepare and make available a folder of evidence** which must include the following.
 - a. A current *curriculum vitae*.
 - b. Copies of the annual evaluations.
 - c. Two letters of support from Athens State University colleagues.
3. **By the end of February the Department Chair (or Library Director, in the case of library applicant(s))** will evaluate the applicant's progress toward tenure, taking into consideration evidence of teaching, scholarship, and professional service as stated in the Athens State University promotion policy. The Department Chair or Library Director, as applicable, will conclude one of the following options and produce a written summary of the findings.



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- a. The applicant's progress toward tenure is satisfactory.
 - b. The applicant's progress toward tenure is satisfactory, but the evaluator has specific reservations and/or recommendations. The applicant will receive concrete, written suggestions for improvements necessary to ensure smooth progress toward tenure. Clear mechanisms shall be specified to assess, at least annually, the effectiveness of the applicant's response to these suggestions.
 - c. The applicant's progress toward tenure is unsatisfactory. The applicant will receive concrete, written suggestions for improvements necessary to ensure continued progress toward tenure. Clear mechanisms shall be specified to assess, at least annually, the effectiveness of the applicant's response to these suggestions.
- 4. The summary of findings produced by the Department Chair or Library Director, as applicable, will be forwarded to the College mid-tenure review committee. By the end of March, the committee will evaluate the applicant's progress using the same standards used by the Department Chair or Library Director, as applicable, listed in step 3. The mid-tenure review committee will produce a written summary of findings for each applicant. This summary of findings will be forwarded to the applicant's Department Chair.**
- 5. By the end of April the Department Chair or Library Director, as applicable, shall be responsible for communicating the combined summaries of findings, in writing, to the applicant and retaining a copy on file.**
- 6. The mid-tenure review process should fully respect academic freedom. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to alter the existing rules in other institutional documents regarding tenure. Additionally, information contained in the summary of findings of the mid-tenure review committee and/or the Department Chair or the Library Director, as applicable, should not be interpreted as a decision regarding tenure. That is, a favorable mid-tenure review is not a guarantee of a favorable tenure decision.**



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7. **If the Department Chair is the faculty member being reviewed, the College Dean shall take the place of the Department Chair in the above description in this paragraph. If the Library Director is the faculty member being reviewed, the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Services shall take the place of the Department chair in the above description in this paragraph.**

V. Timeline for Tenure and/or Promotion

The following timeline will apply to the promotion and/or tenure process, absent unusual circumstances:

1. **In April of the academic year preceding the review year, the Provost in conjunction with the College Deans or Library Director will notify eligible applicants by letter.**
2. **By the end of the spring semester in the academic year preceding the review year, the Elections Committee shall conduct an election within each College to select two faculty members and within Kares Library to select one faculty librarian to serve on a University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee (UFTPC). In addition, after this election, each College Dean shall select one faculty member from within the College to serve on the Committee.**
3. **The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services shall convene the first meeting of the University Tenure and Promotion Committee. The Committee's initial agenda shall be to elect a Chair and to review the basic policies and procedures for promotion and/or tenure.**
4. **By September 1st of the review year faculty members shall complete an application for promotion and/or tenure form and submit the application to their College Dean or Library Director.**



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5. **By September 15th the College Dean or Library Director must provide each applicant for promotion and/or tenure with current copies of any evaluations that will be used by the Committee in order to aid the applicant in the preparation of a digital portfolio.**

The UFTPC Chair must provide each applicant with current copies of any rubrics or specific methods of evaluation that will be used by the Committee to aid the applicant in the preparation of the portfolio. Any rubrics or specific methods of evaluation, or changes to rubrics or methods of evaluation used by the Committee may be reviewed by the Faculty Senate. In addition, the UFTPC Chair may distribute any digital portfolio materials or examples of previous successful candidates (with permission) who presented excellent portfolios.

6. **Applicants will submit their digital portfolios to the UFTPC and their College Deans or Library Director by **October 1st**.** The digital portfolio shall consist of a copy of the application for promotion and/or tenure; vita; supporting documentation As listed in the Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Template ([2024 Template](#)) or ([2027 Template](#)). It is the nominee's responsibility to provide evidence of merit. Additional documentation may be retained in the applicant's office for viewing if requested or in the applicant's digital portfolio. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the Chair of the UFTPC with the digital portfolio as a single document in PDF form or other form approved by the UFTPC. No changes to the portfolio may be made by the applicant after October 1st.

7. **The University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee shall review each portfolio** (review will be based only on what is presented in the portfolio).

In addition to members meeting to discuss portfolios, each committee member will:

- Submit their evaluation document with scores and comments along with their completed scorecard, to the chair of the committee.



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- After the chair calculates the Mean, Standard Deviation, and Range for each of the categories for each applicant, members will reconvene to discuss the results and to openly address any large discrepancies.
- Members should feel free to candidly discuss portfolios, within the committee, without fear of repercussion or contention.
- Once discussions have concluded, any member may edit and adjust their evaluation document comments and scorecards as they see fit. All members will then remove their names from all documents so that the documents and comments within them are anonymous. The documents will then be combined into one document so that the candidate receives all raw feedback from the evaluation forms along with concrete, written suggestions for improvements necessary to progress toward tenure and promotion.

The Committee will provide individual College Deans and/or the Library Director, as applicable, with the compiled anonymous evaluation forms, raw feedback, and scorecards for each applicant by **November 15th**.

It should be noted that only members who are full professors or senior librarians are eligible to rate all applicants. Associate professors and associate librarians on the committee will rate the assistant professor and assistant librarian applicants' portfolios. The elected librarian must hold a rank equal to or higher than the library applicant(s). In addition to the elected librarian, the Library Director may need to appoint an additional external guest librarian to consult and/or score the librarian applicant(s) in cases of not having a higher-ranking faculty librarian applying for senior librarian.

8. **It is the responsibility of the College Deans and/or the Library Director, as applicable, to review their own College applicants' digital portfolios and the evaluations by the University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee by December 1st. A written evaluation of each applicant shall be completed by the College Dean and/or Library Director, as applicable. The portfolios, evaluations, and raw feedback shall be then sent to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.**



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9. **The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services shall review the applicant's digital portfolio** and evaluations by the College Deans and/or the Library Director and the University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee, following the guidelines of academic rank criteria. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services may consult with the College Deans and/or Library Director and/or the University Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee during this review. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services shall forward portfolios and evaluations for applicants undergoing promotion and/ or tenure review to the President and shall make a recommendation regarding promotion and/or tenure in writing to the President by the end of **December**.
10. **The President may review the digital portfolios and recommendations, and consult with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services and/or College Deans and/or Library Director, as applicable, as necessary.** Final approval of all promotions and/or tenure shall be made by the President by **February 1st**. The President shall notify each applicant of the final decision in writing. Evaluation results and raw feedback will be provided to the successful applicants by the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Services.
11. **The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services and the College Deans and the Library Director, as applicable, will solicit and participate in meetings with unsuccessful applicants concerning suggestions for how these applicants might improve their performance and portfolios for a greater chance of success in the future.** The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide the evaluation results and raw feedback to the unsuccessful applicant.

Applicants not successful in the **tenure** process shall be granted an additional academic year extension of service on a non-tenured track. The applicant may request an extension or the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services or College Dean and/or Library Director, as applicable, may request the extension prior to the completion of the faculty member's tenure-track appointment.



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VI. Portfolios

In May 2024, the Faculty Senate approved a new promotional rubric. For the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic years, faculty going up for promotion and/or tenure have the option of choosing to be evaluated based on the new 2027 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Rubric or the 2024-2026 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio rubric described below.

Starting in 2026, all faculty up for promotion will be evaluated according to the new 2027 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Rubric.

All applicants should refer to the appropriate [Reviewer Summary Evaluation](#) rubric ([2024 Rubric](#)) or the ([2027 Rubric](#)) and the Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Development Guidelines ([2024 Guidelines](#)) or [the \(2027 Guidelines\)](#) document prior to portfolio development.

All applicants should remember that professionals from other disciplines review their portfolios. Therefore, it is important for applicants to take time and find artifacts that verify all aspects of the activities they are submitting (i.e. peer review status, level of organization, etc.). It is up to the applicant to provide evidence of the activity claims in their portfolio. Additionally, to help reviewers understand and evaluate certain activities, applicants should organize their information and use notes to explain the professional significance of the activities.

While librarians have full faculty status, the difference in their professional duties necessitates distinct promotion and/or tenure eligibility and criteria from that used for other faculty members. In addition to teaching effectiveness, library faculty will be evaluated based on the quality of professional effectiveness. A librarian who successfully meets the minimum requirements for promotion and/or tenure eligibility will be evaluated based on the quality of professional performance and service appropriate for each rank.



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Applicants will submit their digital portfolios electronically in order for the Committee, College Deans, Library Director, and Provost to access their portfolios. Applicants must follow all instructions of the Committee, College Dean, Library Director, or Provost in connection with the mechanics of submitting a portfolio.

It is recommended that applicants ask a mentor/colleague for assistance with creating or proofreading the portfolio once the applicant has developed it for clarity, etc. To be considered a complete representation of performance and merit for promotion and/or tenure, artifacts and information provided should begin from the date of hire through the term submitted. Applicants for full professor or senior librarian should include only artifacts and information since attaining the rank of associate professor or associate librarian at Athens State University.

Portfolio Development Guidelines

Portfolios should be well-organized and easy to review with supporting documents organized into conceptually related categories and submitted as attachments. Attachments should document major activities and accomplishments. Please limit the number of pictures, scanned articles, and other documents that are not significant in supporting performance and achievements.

[2024-2026 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Development Guidelines](#)

[2027 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Development Guidelines](#)

VII. Promotion/Tenure Criteria – Evaluation

2024-2026 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Rubric

Each committee member will use the [Suggested Format for Reviewer's Evaluation Form](#) which is based on a 100-point scale to score each applicant's contributions and achievements. Scores above 80 should reflect achievement and leadership. After each committee member has submitted his or her scores for each applicant, these scores will be averaged to determine each applicant's mean



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score. To be recommended as highly qualified for promotion and/or tenure, applicants for Associate Professor normally must earn mean scores greater than 80 and standard deviations less than 10—reflecting general agreement among committee members. To be recommended for promotion to full professor, average scores normally should be greater than 85 and standard deviations less than 10. The committee's recommendations will be submitted in their final report to the Provost and the college dean/library director for the respective applicant.

2027 Athens State Promotion/Tenure Portfolio Rubric

Each committee member will use the evaluation document and scorecard to assess the three primary areas of faculty expectations: Teaching/Professional Effectiveness, Scholarly Activities, and Service. A total score for each of the three areas is calculated based on faculty contributions and achievements. Candidates should aim for a score of 1,000 points in each category. However, scores above 900 points indicate excellence, whereas scores of 700 points or more represent meeting expectations. After committee members submit their scores, their evaluations will be averaged to determine the applicant's mean score for each of the three sections.

To be recommended as highly qualified for promotion and/or tenure, applicants must achieve the following: 1) a mean score of 900 points or more in the Teaching / Professional Effectiveness section; 2) a mean score of 900 points in either the Scholarly Activities or Service section (chosen by the applicant); and 3) a mean score of at least 700 points in the third section (chosen by the applicant).

Additionally, scores on each section must have standard deviations of less than 10 - reflecting general agreement among committee members. The committee's recommendations will be included in the final report submitted to the Provost and the respective college dean or library director.



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VIII. Appeal and Review of Tenure and/or Promotion Decision

TENURE

Applicants not successful in the tenure process have the right to proceed with the filing of a grievance as outlined in the Athens State University [Employee Grievance Procedure](#).

PROMOTION

Appeal of promotion decisions are not grievances subject to appeal and review under the Athens State University [Employee Grievance Procedure](#).