

(This promotion and tenure policy covers faculty hired prior to 2017-2018 who did not opt in to the current promotion and tenure policy)

## 2.5 CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION, TENURE, AND APPOINTMENT

### 2.5.1 General Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

As a regional, state supported institution of higher education, the University of North Alabama pursues its mission of engaging in teaching, research, and service in order to provide educational opportunities for students, an environment for discovery and creative accomplishment, and a variety of outreach activities meeting the professional, civic, social, cultural, and economic development needs of our region in the context of a global community. Faculty members seeking promotion and/or tenure are expected to demonstrate significant contributions in support of this mission as reflected in accomplishments specific to the criteria below.

1. Effectiveness in Teaching. The individual is evaluated upon evidence such as the following: knowledge of subject matter, including current developments in the discipline; active concern for the student's academic progress; evidence of success in supporting student research and creative activity; ability to organize and effectively present and evaluate coursework, including effectiveness in oral and written communication; ability to motivate student interest and participation; ability to relate coursework to other fields with a view to broadening the student's general knowledge; evidence of conscientious preparation; and use of effective methodology and teaching techniques.
2. Effectiveness in Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activities. The University of North Alabama fulfills its mission in research (including creative accomplishments and other forms of scholarship) through recognition that active participation in one's academic discipline promotes intellectual growth and enhances and informs classroom, laboratory, clinical, and studio instruction. Scholarly inquiry and learning vary by discipline and the individual is evaluated upon evidence that one's scholarly accomplishments are valued by others in the discipline. Examples of such recognition would include publication of one's work in peer-reviewed outlets (books, monographs, journal articles) or invited contributions to scholarly works (book chapters); presentations and/or chaired sessions at professional society meetings; invited presentations at exhibits or recognition at juried shows; professional acclaim for performances or contributions to performances; honors or awards recognizing scholarly accomplishment; competitively awarded grants or contracts that support professional growth; selection as a professional referee or editor; and other generally recognized scholarly accomplishments.
3. Effectiveness in Rendering Service. The individual is evaluated upon evidence such as recognition in the professional field; consultant services of high professional quality in business, cultural, educational, governmental, and industrial endeavors; activities in

learned and professional societies; contributions to university development and growth; effective performance on committees and administrative assignments; and contributions to the improvement of student life. Evidence of service outside the university should ideally be related to the faculty member's profession or should contribute to promoting the University. Other contributions to the community are encouraged; however, such efforts should not constitute a majority of the evidence for effective service.

In addition to the three areas of general criteria, faculty members in areas with regional and specialized accreditation standards shall satisfy applicable credential and performance requirements.

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama has determined that the degree of Master in Library Science is to be considered a terminal degree for promotional and tenure purposes. The following degrees are to be considered terminal degrees for promotional, pay, and tenure purposes: MFA in Studio Art, MFA in Creative Writing, MFA in Theatre, J.D. for Business Law, and MFA in Interior Design.

### **2.5.2 Special Criteria by Ranks for Promotion, Tenure, and Appointment**

Faculty ranks of the University, including librarians, educational technologists and supervising teachers at Kilby School, are instructor, visiting (open rank) professor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Only positions at the assistant professor level or higher are considered tenure-track. All others are based on renewable appointment. Determination of rank is established at the time of initial appointment. The years of appropriate experience are calculated at the end of the academic year prior to appointment. The academic year in which a promotion portfolio is submitted will count toward appropriate cumulative experience for that rank. Compensation for visiting (open rank) professors is determined by joint agreement of the department chair, college dean, and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs based on duties, needs of the University, and available funds.

The University understands that the interests and areas of emphasis for faculty members change as their career develops. It is the responsibility of departments, in cooperation with their respective deans, to develop guidelines for faculty professional growth that (1) adequately define for each faculty member what his/her departmental expectations are for promotion, tenure, and year to year success, and (2) are implemented through guidance provided by the department chair to the faculty member during the annual evaluation and at other appropriate times. It is the responsibility of the college deans and Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs to monitor equity of expectations across the University.

The following criteria and procedures below do not apply to the Department of Military Science because of the special nature of that department. Faculty from the Department of Military Science will not serve on promotion committees.

#### **Minimum Qualifications by Rank**

1. Instructor/Visiting (open rank) Professor. Appointment to this rank typically requires possession of a master's or higher degree in the field of assignment. For appointments

without the master's or higher degree in the field of assignment, there must be evidence of related work experience in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes.

2. Assistant Professor. Appointment and/or promotion to this rank requires possession of a doctoral degree or a terminal degree appropriate in the field of assignment as determined by university policy. There shall also be evidence of potential for effective teaching; research, scholarship, or creative activities; and service; as well as for a successful career.
3. Associate Professor. Appointment and/or promotion to this rank requires possession of a doctoral degree or a terminal degree appropriate in the field of assignment as determined by university policy. A minimum of eight years' appropriate cumulative experience specific to the discipline is also required, at least three of which must be in rank as assistant professor. Effective for new hires beginning fall 2012, promotion to this rank requires that three of the eight years of cumulative experience shall be earned at UNA. In addition, the applicant shall have had successful experience in teaching; research, scholarship, or other creative activities; and service.
4. Professor. Appointment and/or promotion to this rank requires possession of a doctoral degree or terminal degree appropriate in the field of assignment as determined by university policy. A minimum of 12 years' appropriate cumulative experience specific to the discipline is also required, at least three of which must be in rank as associate professor. Effective for new hires beginning fall 2012, promotion to this rank requires that three of the twelve years of cumulative experience shall be earned at UNA. In addition, the applicant shall have established a sustained and consistent record of excellence in teaching; research, scholarship, or other creative activities; and service.

Exceptions: In rare and unique circumstances, a petition by the department chair (approved by a majority of the full-time tenure-track departmental faculty and the college dean) for a waiver of the aforementioned credential and experience requirements for any rank may be granted by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### **2.5.3 Procedure for Promotion**

#### **A. Faculty Members Who Are Not Department Chairs**

The promotion process will be initiated when the faculty member submits by e-mail to the department chair, dean, and the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs a notification of intent to apply by May 1. The dean will confirm, with the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, whether the candidate is eligible for promotion and notify the candidate by May 15. The candidate submits an electronic portfolio via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose by October 1.

The electronic portfolio will contain the following, be housed on the online database that UNA has established for this purpose, and be accessible only by the administration and committee members involved in the promotion review process:

1. Application for Promotion (See Appendix 2.F)
2. Current Resume or Vita
  - a. Education (Institution, major, minor, degrees awarded, and when)
  - b. College/university teaching or library experience as appropriate to field (include position and dates)
  - c. Other teaching or library experience (describe and include dates)
  - d. Other related experience (describe and include dates)
3. Supporting information for the following items\*\*
  - a. Teaching/Library Effectiveness
  - b. Scholarly or creative performance
  - c. University and community service
  - d. Any other relevant information

\*\*The candidate is provided the flexibility to use his or her own discretion as to how best to demonstrate effectiveness in the categories listed in item 3. The candidate should address the essential portfolio components via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.

4. A cover letter (optional) in which the faculty member indicates degree of merit or level of prestige or quality of work specific to his/her area, in order to demonstrate quality of scholarship for university-wide committee members who may be unfamiliar with the field, as well as indicating which of the areas in item 3 should be weighed more heavily or less heavily than others.

#### Responsibility of the Peer Promotion Committee

In the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Human Sciences, and Nursing, this committee will consist of all tenured members in a candidate's department who are not applying for promotion. The department chair will not serve on the committee; however, the department chair will convene the first meeting and supervise the election by secret ballot of a chairperson, from among the members of the committee. In Library Services and Educational Technology Services, the committee will consist of all tenured members of the candidate's area who are not applying for promotion.

The dean will then perform the functions of the department chair as outlined above. The peer promotion committee members will review the candidate's portfolio and will prepare a written evaluation of each candidate that addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for advancement in

rank. The evaluation, based on those strengths and weaknesses, will indicate the degree (exceptionally qualified, highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified), to which promotion is recommended or not recommended, be recorded on the Promotion Recommendation Form, and submitted via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose no later than November 15. This written evaluation, composed by the candidate's peer committee, should provide information directly addressing the degree of merit or level of prestige or quality of scholarly outlets cited within the candidate's portfolio. These should include, but not be limited to, the quality of academic journals in which scholarly works appear, as well as the prestige/quality of presentations/performances (musical, theatrical, other as categorically appropriate).

For departments in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Human Sciences, and Nursing where two or fewer tenured faculty are eligible for the peer promotion committee, the department faculty will complete a committee of three, adding to that department's tenured faculty (not applying for promotion), other tenured faculty from the college.

#### Responsibility of the Department Chair

When a faculty member applies for promotion, it is the responsibility of the department chair (or dean) to form a peer promotion committee and to supply the names of the committee members to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs via [promotions@una.edu](mailto:promotions@una.edu) by September 1. The department chair will evaluate the portfolios of the candidates in his or her department and prepare a written evaluation of each candidate that addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for advancement in rank. The evaluation, based on those strengths and weaknesses, will indicate the degree (exceptionally qualified, highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified) to which promotion is recommended or not recommended, be recorded on the Promotion Recommendation Form, and submitted via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose no later than December 1. This written evaluation, composed by the candidate's department chair, should provide information directly addressing the degree of merit or level of prestige or quality of scholarly outlets cited within the candidate's portfolio. These should include, but not be limited to, the quality of academic journals in which scholarly works appear, as well as the prestige/quality of presentations/performances (musical, theatrical, other as categorically appropriate). The department chair will also provide written feedback to each candidate regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's portfolio when the final promotion decisions are announced in April. It will be the responsibility of the department chair to confirm the candidate meets the university's eligibility requirements (e.g., years of service) for promotion to the rank being sought.

#### Responsibility of the College Dean

It is the responsibility of the college or area dean to review and evaluate the individuals' portfolios as well as the recommendations of the peer promotion committees and department chairs. The dean will prepare a written evaluation of each candidate that

addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for advancement in rank. The evaluation, based on those strengths and weaknesses, will indicate the degree (exceptionally qualified, highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified) to which promotion is recommended or not recommended, be recorded on the Promotion Recommendation Form, and submitted via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose by February 1.

#### Responsibility of the University-Wide Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Review Committee

A university-wide portfolio review committee will serve in an advisory/supervisory capacity. This committee is to be drawn from all five faculty constituencies (four colleges and Library/Educational Technology Services faculty). The committee will have nine (9) members consisting of a minimum of one (1) member (tenured Associate and Full Professors) from each constituency plus at-large faculty to total nine. The committee will select a vice chair to serve as assistant to the chair during the first year of a two-year term and to assume the role of chair during the second year. Annually, the Faculty Senate will identify a pool of at least 15 eligible members from all tenured professors at the Associate and Full Professor ranks for recommendation to the President to serve on this committee. From this pool of candidates, the President of the University will annually, in June, select members to serve for two (2) academic years. No faculty member from a faculty constituency will be appointed for additional terms until the entire pool from that constituency has been exhausted. Only then may professors be appointed to serve another term. Exemptions from service should only be granted in extreme circumstances and then only for one (1) term. Faculty may not serve on the committee while applying for promotion.

Duties of the committee may include, but are not limited to, reviewing tenure and promotion portfolios for content; reviewing procedures/processes for adherence to stated policies with respect to tenure and promotion criteria; ensuring the missions, learning objectives, and goals of the University, various colleges, and specific departments are being met in concordance with one another with respect to tenure and promotion criteria; and concurring with, or not, the recommendations of candidates for tenure and promotion. The University-Wide Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Review Committee will focus on the portfolio (including all forms as described in section 2.5.3). Supplementary materials will be maintained on the online database that UNA has established for this purpose. The language specified in section 2.5.3 with regard to evaluation of candidates' credentials [indicating the degree (exceptionally qualified, highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified) to which promotion is recommended or not recommended] should be used at all levels and on all evaluation documents, be recorded on the Promotion Recommendation Form, and submitted via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose by March 15. All portfolios that are incomplete or not in compliance with the stated guidelines (section 2.5.3) will be considered as non-responsive and rejected. All portfolios submitted by eligible candidates, regardless of recommendation(s), will move through the entire process. The timeline for reviewing promotion materials can be found at the end of Appendix 2.E.

As soon as the new committee membership is determined and constituted, the chair will call a meeting for the express purpose of orienting the committee, especially incoming

new members, to the established procedures and guidelines for the committee. All members of the committee must participate in this orientation. Departmental criteria with respect to tenure and promotion criteria, unique college criteria and policies with respect to tenure and promotion criteria, and university policies with respect to tenure and promotion criteria, will be made available to each member of the committee. After orientation, the new committee will begin its work with review of promotion portfolios, followed by review of tenure portfolios. As soon as the portfolios become available on the online database that UNA has established for this purpose, the committee will begin the review process. Every member of the committee will review each portfolio submitted, regardless of recommendation and concurrence at previous stages in the process. After all members have reviewed the portfolios, the committee will meet *en masse* to discuss each portfolio. While all members of the committee will review all portfolios, in the event a consensus agreement cannot be reached by the committee, then only full professors will vote in making the final decision on a candidate for full professor. Upon reaching a decision for each portfolio, the chair will schedule a meeting of the committee with the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. After discussing the portfolios with the committee, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will forward the committee's concurrence, or lack thereof, to the President.

The committee will perform a year-end process/procedures review and prepare a report to be distributed at all levels of the process by May 15. This report should include what worked well, what did not work, and remediation recommendations.

#### Responsibility of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will review the candidate's portfolio and the recommendations from each peer promotion committee, department chair, and dean. By April 15, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will evaluate each candidate, indicating the degree (exceptionally qualified, highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified) to which promotion is recommended or not recommended.

Following the decisions made by the President as outlined below, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will inform the college or area dean of the success or failure of the candidates as soon as possible, but not later than April 22. Candidates will be notified by the deans by May 1. Promotions will become effective on the first day of the following fall semester.

#### Responsibility of the President

The President will review the individual portfolios and all recommendations. Based upon these, and in consultation with the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President will establish a tentative promotion list, which will be shared with the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the academic deans for their final input. Informed by this process, the President will make the final decision on promotion for each candidate by April 22. The President will give due consideration in these decisions

to any extraordinary circumstances, budgetary constraints, and fiduciary obligations to the University. In addition, the President shall try to ensure that the number of promotions (including department chairs) each academic college and Library Services/Educational Technology Services receives is fair and equitable.

#### B. Department Chairs Applying for Promotion

Department chairs who are applying for promotion will be evaluated using a process similar to that described for other faculty members. In the case of department chairs, however, the evaluation completed by the peer promotion committee will be sent directly to the dean of the college no later than November 15. The administrative effectiveness of the department chair will be evaluated within the category of university and community service. The college dean will evaluate the department chair's portfolio and will forward his or her evaluation and the peer promotion committee's evaluation to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs by February 1. The college dean and the peer promotion committee will provide written feedback to the department chair regarding strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio. By April 15, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will review the department chair's portfolio, recommendations from the peer committee and college dean. These recommendations will be forwarded to the President and reviewed as outlined in part A.

#### 2.5.4 Tenure

An award of tenure is not a right but a privilege which must be earned by a faculty member on the basis of his or her performance during a probationary period. The granting of tenure is never automatic. Normally, tenure is granted after a faculty member has been evaluated by the tenured faculty members in a department, the department chair, the college dean, the University-Wide Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Review Committee, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. However, the President may, after appropriate consultation, grant tenure at any time if good and sufficient reasons exist for doing so.

Policy on tenure, or continuing contract status, as adopted by the Board of Trustees of the University of North Alabama, provides that a person appointed to the faculty rank of assistant professor will serve a probationary period of five successive academic years at this University and will be granted tenure upon acceptance of an offer of appointment from the President for the sixth consecutive academic year. A person appointed to the faculty in the academic rank of associate professor will serve a probationary period of four successive academic years at this University and will be granted tenure upon acceptance of an offer of appointment from the President for the fifth consecutive academic year. A person appointed to the faculty in the academic rank of (full) professor will serve a probationary period of three successive academic years at this University and will be granted tenure upon acceptance of an offer of appointment from the President for the fourth consecutive academic year. A faculty member holding the academic rank of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor may, at the discretion of the university administration, be granted leave without breaking the successive years of employment for tenure purposes, but years of leave will not



count as years of service toward tenure unless specifically granted in writing at the time leave is granted.

Except as otherwise stated herein, the following process will be followed in determining whether a faculty member will be awarded tenure:

1. The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall notify a probationary faculty member by October 1 of the academic year prior to the final academic year of probationary status that failure to apply for tenure by the appropriate deadline could result in an offer of a non-renewable or “terminal” academic year contract. This notice shall be made in writing and placed in the faculty member’s campus mailbox. Failure to notify by this deadline does not automatically constitute a grant of tenure or extension of the employment contract. In such situations, appropriate adjustment of deadlines for notification and portfolio submission will be made.
2. By October 1 of the final academic year of probationary status, the faculty member will present to the department chair electronically an updated tenure review portfolio which provides evidence of accomplishments specific to the criteria as outlined in section 2.5.1.

Applicants for tenure will limit their portfolios to a maximum of 15 pages, including a current vita not to exceed five pages and supporting narrative not to exceed 10 pages. Supplemental materials may be provided but should be separate from the portfolio.

3. If a member of the teaching faculty has not presented a student evaluation composite or overview as part of teaching effectiveness, it will be the responsibility of the department chair to forward such materials to the department tenure committee and to the college dean.
4. The department chair shall convene a department tenure committee, consisting of all tenured faculty in the department and supervise the election, by secret ballot, of the chairperson from among the members of the committee. It is the responsibility of the department tenure committee to prepare a written evaluation of each candidate that addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for tenure and by majority vote to recommend for or against the granting of tenure and to submit through the department chair to the college dean all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by November 15.
5. It is likewise the responsibility of the department chair to prepare a written evaluation of each candidate that addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for tenure and to recommend for or against the granting of tenure and to forward to the college dean all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by December 1.
6. The college dean will review the materials presented by the department tenure committee and the department chair and will prepare a written evaluation on each candidate that

addresses strengths and weaknesses in relation to the university, college, and departmental criteria established for tenure and recommend for or against the granting of tenure and to forward to the Vice President for Academic Affairs all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by February 1.

7. The University-Wide Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Review Committee will review the materials presented by the department tenure committee, the department chair and college dean, and will make recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and forward all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by March 15.
8. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will review all recommendations and will make recommendations to the President by April 15.
9. The final decision for or against the granting of tenure will be made by the President by April 22, and letters will be mailed to all candidates, with copies to the respective dean and department chair, no later than May 1 of the faculty member's final academic year of the probationary period. Probationary faculty who receive non-renewal notices as a result of tenure review will be retained for one academic year of employment prior to separation from the institution.

The granting of tenure requires written notice regardless of the number of years in service. This tenure policy does not apply to non-tenure-track or adjunct faculty.

## UNA PROMOTION PROCESS

TASK	TARGET DATE*
Candidate submits by e-mail to Department Chair, Dean, and Provost/EVPAA notification of intent to apply for promotion.	May 1
Department Chair verifies, with the Office of the Provost/EVPAA, whether the candidate is eligible for promotion and notifies the candidate.	May 15
Department Chair forms Peer Promotion and/or Tenure Committee.	September 1
Candidate submits application and portfolio via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.	October 1
Peer Promotion and/or Tenure Committee reviews portfolios, completes evaluation for candidates, and submits Promotion Recommendation Form via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.	November 15
Department Chair reviews portfolio, completes evaluation for candidates, and submits Promotion Recommendation Form via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.	December 1
College Dean reviews recommendations of peer committee and department chair and portfolios, completes evaluations for candidates, and submits Promotion Recommendation Form via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.	February 1
University Tenure/Promotion Committee reviews portfolios, completes evaluation for candidates, and submits Promotion Recommendation Form via the online database that UNA has established for this purpose.	March 15
Provost/EVPAA reviews portfolios, completes evaluations for candidates, and provides evaluation to the President.	April 15
President or his/her designee makes final decision and informs Provost/EVPAA.	April 22
Provost/EVPAA informs deans of final decisions. Candidates are notified by deans.	May 1 (promotions become effective on the first day of the following fall semester)
Written feedback from department chair and/or dean is provided to candidates.	May 1

\*If target date falls on a university non-workday, the next workday applies.