

# **Guidelines for Faculty Tenure and Promotion**

**Division of City and Regional Planning**

**School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy  
College of Arts and Sciences  
The University of Memphis**

GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY TENURE AND PROMOTION  
DIVISION OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS  
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## **I. Introduction**

The purpose of the guidelines presented here is to establish procedures and criteria for evaluating faculty who request tenure and/or promotion within the Division of City and Regional Planning (hereafter referred to as the Division). The guidelines are based on the mission of the Division and reflect minimum standards of performance necessary for tenure and/or promotion. The guidelines are tailored to the specific demands of professional education in City and Regional Planning and are based on the policy framework established by the University and the Board of Regents. All candidates for tenure and/or promotion must meet Division, School, College, and University eligibility criteria in effect at the time of the application.

**Division Mission.** The primary mission of the Division of City and Regional Planning is professional education. The Master of City and Regional Planning degree is the central focus of the education program.

The Master's degree program is designed to prepare students for professional planning practice involving policy research that is carried out in the political arena of cities, regions, states and nations. The professional planner transmits advice to decision-makers in a variety of problem solving and policy-making contexts; and the planner should effectively promote the public interest while working within a context of interacting social, political, economic and physical environments.

Professional education requires a strong core curriculum heavily influenced by research and service to the community. The core curriculum should contain a balance between planning theory, derived from disciplinary research, and practical application of knowledge, gained from policy research. This balance is achieved from the faculty's research and service activities through the Regional Economic Development Center.

**Tenure-Track Appointments.** Tenure-track faculty members will be appointed at the assistant professor level or above. Full-time faculty members receive one-year, renewable contracts during the probationary period. The Division Director will recommend regular renewal of these contracts unless performance in teaching, research, or service is unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching is indicated by a combination of such things as persistent, unexcused absenteeism, very low student evaluations of teaching performance, and frequent student complaints. Unsatisfactory scholarship is demonstrated by failure to carry out activities that are likely to result in products that can be evaluated by peers. Unsatisfactory service is demonstrated by failure to carry out professional responsibilities, which have been assigned in writing by the Director or other legitimate university authority (Dean, Provost or President). Procedures related to non-renewal of contracts will be consistent with the policies and procedures described in the faculty handbook.

The Division Director will solicit a tenured faculty member to serve as a faculty mentor for tenure-track assistant professors. With the mutual agreement of the assistant professor and the

faculty member, the mentor will regularly meet with the tenure-track assistant professor to advise him/her about tenure and promotion criteria and procedures.

As faculty members begin year six of a probationary period, they must make application for tenure and promotion to associate professor if they have not already attained that rank. Exceptions to the minimum probationary period are discussed in the faculty handbook. Faculty members who have not been promoted to associate professor and approved for tenure will not have their contracts renewed at the end of the probationary period. However, they will be rehired for the following year on a one-year, nonrenewable contract.

## **II. Faculty Reviews and Evaluations**

**Annual Faculty Evaluation.** The Division Director evaluates all faculty members annually and the results are used for decisions relating to tenure and promotion. Copies of the annual reviews will be included in the tenure/promotion dossier. The review should assess the faculty member's accomplishments during the prior calendar year and establish a plan of activities for the forthcoming year, or longer if appropriate. The review will consider performance in all areas, teaching, advising/mentoring, scholarship/creative activities, support, outreach, and service reported in the Faculty Evaluation and Planning document. Correction of any weaknesses cited in an annual review will be documented in the faculty member's personnel file.

The review process begins with the submission of an updated curriculum vita, using the University's format requirements. Faculty members will append supportive documentation as well as a thoughtful summary that documents both their accomplishments and forthcoming plans. The performance summary should include an explanation of how these activities support the Division, School and University missions. Faculty members may formally respond to any aspect of the evaluation by commenting on their Evaluation and Planning form before submission to the School Head. The Division Director will provide explicit feedback to each tenure-track faculty member regarding progress toward tenure and promotion. This will include comments on teaching, research, and service. The Director's signature on the planning report indicates approval of the faculty member's plan.

**Mid-tenure Reviews.** The Division will conduct a major mid-term evaluation of untenured faculty in tenure-track positions. This evaluation will be held in the fall after the faculty member's third year unless the faculty member negotiates a different arrangement with the Director. An associate or full professor can request an evaluation, which should be conducted in the summer of the year he/she requests. The members of the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Director will conduct this evaluation.

The faculty member will present documentation of his/her contributions in the areas of teaching, research and service in line with Division guidelines. This documentation may include physical evidence of teaching materials, such as syllabi, student evaluations, and selected course materials; copies of publications and reviews of books and other publications for scholarship; and evidence of service and outreach. The documents can be part of an updated file. The Division Tenure and Promotion Committee will review these materials. This mid-term evaluation is designed to provide faculty members with information about the status of their progress towards tenure and promotion. The format for the review is similar to that for tenure and promotion, but external letters are not required at this juncture. The committee will provide a report to the Director, who will provide comments and then send the report to the Dean of the

College.

The University of Memphis requires that the guidelines for tenure and for promotion to associate professor be the same. Thus, assistant professors in City and Regional Planning who join the Division in tenure track positions will be considered for both tenure and promotion to associate professor at the beginning of their sixth, or earlier, year and cannot be awarded tenure without meeting the eligibility requirements for associate professor. Tenure track faculty will also have a mid-career assessment by the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee. Promotion and tenure, when granted, will normally occur at the beginning of the seventh year of appointment.

#### **IV. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion**

**Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor.** To advance to tenure and be promoted to Associate Professor, the candidate must clearly demonstrate a history of significant achievement as a professional educator and researcher, as well as a strong potential for future professional growth and development.

A candidate for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor is expected to meet the following criteria:

1. Earned Doctorate from an accredited institution in city and regional planning or related area or Master's degree in city and regional planning with 10 years of professional experience in city and regional planning.
2. Five (5) years of experience as a full-time faculty member at an accredited college or university.
3. Documented evidence of high ability in instruction, research and service (as outlined in the standards for tenure and promotion outlined below).
4. Documented evidence of high quality professional productivity and regional recognition in the academic discipline or profession.

**Criteria for Promotion to Professor.** Individuals considered for promotion from associate to full professor should clearly be leading researchers and educators whose national and international stature can serve as a standard for professional achievement. The body of the candidate's work should reflect a discernable pattern of intellectual development and growth.

A candidate for promotion to Professor is expected to meet the following criteria:

1. Earned Doctorate from an accredited institution in city and regional planning or related area or Master's degree in city and regional planning with 20 years of professional experience in city and regional planning.
2. Ten (10) years of experience as a full-time faculty member at an accredited college or university. While this minimum length of service is necessary for promotion, mere length of service does not automatically result in promotion.
3. Documented evidence of sustained excellence in instruction, research and service (as outlined

in the standards for tenure and promotion outlined below).

4. Documented evidence of high quality professional productivity and national or international recognition in the academic discipline or profession.

**Standards for Tenure and Promotion.** The Faculty member who requests tenure and/or promotion should provide evidence that he/she has adhered to the standards set out below for teaching, research and service.

**Teaching.** Both teaching and research are of paramount importance to professional education. The ability to effectively share with students the lessons gained from the candidate's research and service is the mark of a good teacher.

The candidate will be evaluated on his/her –

- command of the subject.
- ability to organize and synthesize subject matter and present subject area in a concise, clear and thoughtful manner.
- ability to provide classroom instruction; develop courses, conduct seminars; supervise studio workshops; direct individual studies; mentor students in academic products including capstones, reports, papers, and tests; and generally help students achieve their educational and career objectives.
- performance in relating effectively to students.
- professional development of the faculty member as a teacher.

Teaching effectiveness will be evidenced by the following –

- formal course/teacher evaluations by students in various classes (the University and Division require that student evaluations of teaching performance accompany the candidate's application).
- student output, such as class products, and capstone reports, that demonstrate the candidate's ability to foster student creativity and competence as a professional.
- course outlines and other materials that demonstrate a comprehensive, up-to-date treatment of the subject.
- scholarly activity or innovative professional service activities that are linked to the subject matter of instruction.

At the option of the candidate, teaching effectiveness can also be evidenced by the following -

- evaluation of the candidate by alumni (this evaluation will consist of a formal, written and confidential survey conducted by the Division Director of all alumni who have received instruction from the candidate. The survey instrument will be styled in the same manner as the SIRS instrument with questions applicable to general teaching effectiveness across the several courses taught by the candidate. Results will be shared with the T&P Committee).
- activities by the candidate to improve the academic program, which include formal proposals to restructure program requirements and to achieve recognition by the professional community.
- activities by the candidate in the area of continuing education, including short courses, workshops, symposia and professional development seminars.

**Research.** The faculty of the Division of Planning conducts research activities in the Regional Economic Development Center, which is the research/outreach arm of Planning.

1. The first is *disciplinary research* which is characterized by an aim to advance knowledge in the particular scholarly concerns of the planning profession. This research is shaped by the need to find new ways to approach problems of the city and the region and to arrive at new understandings about the human and physical dynamics of cities and regions. Disciplinary research encompasses the scholarships of inquiry, integration, teaching, and creative activity as outlined below:

Inquiry: The scholarship of inquiry involves rigorous investigation aimed at the discovery of new knowledge within city and regional planning or related area of study. Evidence of activity in this area includes scholarly publications, funded research, and presentations at professional meetings.

Integration: The scholarship of integration makes meaningful connections between previously unrelated topics, facts, or observations. Examples are cross-disciplinary and the conceptualization of an integrative framework within city and regional planning or related area of study. Evidence of activity in this area is similar to those for the scholarship of inquiry.

Teaching: The scholarship of teaching focuses on transforming and extending knowledge about pedagogy. Examples would include writing a textbook or educational article in city and regional planning or related area of education. Innovative contributions to teaching, insofar as they are published or presented in a peer-reviewed forum, would also constitute scholarship of teaching.

Creative Activity: The scholarship of creative activity focuses on transforming and extending knowledge about city and regional patterns and forms. Examples would include innovative models of urban design and organizational systems.

Evidence of disciplinary research in order of importance includes -

- peer reviewed or refereed products such as articles accepted for publication by refereed journals; research monographs; books or chapters in books published by reputable firms; papers published in conference proceedings; funded research; and models of city and regional design.

- papers and presentations accepted or invited for presentation at conferences and professional meetings; innovative course designs which are disseminated in forms other than journals, books, and technical reports; and papers published in other professional planning forums.

2. The second research stream is *policy research (scholarship of engagement)*, which is characterized by an aim to provide information and analysis immediately useful to policy-makers in dealing with development problems of urban and regional areas. This research has the same aims as disciplinary research, but is shaped by the societal perceptions of current problems as presented by competing interest groups and market demand. This stream of research is more closely linked to professional practice. Policy research encompasses the scholarship of application as outlined below:

Application: The scholarship of application adds to existing knowledge in the process of applying intellectual expertise to the solution of practical problems, and it results in a written product that is shared with other people in city and regional planning or related area of study.

The scholarship of application could include activities of the following kind, when such activities result in written products open to peer review: development of content-based seminars and workshops; the provision of technical assistance; and the evaluation of public and private sector institutions, processes, and policies.

Evidence of policy research in order of importance includes -

- peer reviewed or refereed products, such as sponsored contracts and planning reports that innovatively utilize accepted theory in problem solving.

- non-peer reviewed and non-refereed products that are widely disseminated and evaluated, such as development of content-based seminars and workshops; the provision of unfunded technical assistance; and the evaluation of public and private sector institutions, processes, and policies.

Ideally, a faculty member should achieve an intimate relationship between *disciplinary* and *policy* research so that both professional understanding and community policies are advanced. However, because the planning program is educating students to become professional practitioners, a faculty member should always be able to profess his/her experiences in relation to planning practice. Recognition is given to the fact that no single faculty member can be expected to evidence outstanding performances in both disciplinary and policy research due to time constraints. The balance between disciplinary research and policy research is appropriately determined by the mix of faculty over time, and each faculty member must evidence an ability in and potential for both areas of research.

Evaluation of a candidate's research activities will be based upon originality, creativity, thoughtful criticism, soundness of research design and significance of findings to the profession and community. In terms of either disciplinary or policy research the scholarly activities of the faculty will be considered by the visibility and the quality of contribution toward advancement of planning knowledge or professional practice.

**Service.** Professional education requires a two-way communication between the planning program and the profession so that mutually enriching exchanges can take place. The contributions of faculty to professional and scholarly communities are evidenced by editing professional journals; reviewing manuscripts and proposals; serving on advisory committees of professional associations; serving as an officer in professional associations; organizing conferences, symposia or workshops for professionals; and generally being an active participant in the organizations of the planning profession.

Likewise, service to the community is important to the image and understanding of professional education. Service on the boards or advisory committees of citizen organizations established by local governments, neighborhood associations or community service organizations are prime examples of service to the community. Workshops and lectures given to community groups as a representative of the planning profession are equally important. Service in community leadership roles is of particular importance in city and regional planning.

Finally, service to the University advances the mission of professional education and the overall objectives of the college community. Evidence of University service is found in a faculty member's active participation on Division, School, College and University-wide committees, the

academic senate, or special ad-hoc committees established to study University needs and policies. Likewise, supervision of programs, special projects, or student groups to advance planning education on campus is of vital importance.

The evaluation of service activities will be based on the evidence of participation, leadership position, and accountability by the faculty member in completing responsibilities of service activities and improving the quality of professional and public service.

## **VI. Application Process**

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion should present materials in support of their candidacy to the Director of the Division in conformance to the calendar set each year by the Division and College. (**See Attachment A**). The candidate's materials should include the "dossier" as prescribed by the University's Faculty Handbook. The Director will submit these materials to the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee who will conduct an independent evaluation of the candidate's qualifications and prepare a written recommendation for or against tenure and/or promotion to the Director.

In conducting its evaluation, the Committee will utilize the materials submitted by the candidate and will seek comments from academic and professional peers regarding the candidate's qualifications. Four (4) outside evaluators who are planning faculty with tenure will be asked to confidentially comment on the curriculum vitae and, as appropriate, evidence of professional work of the candidate. At the option of the candidate, practicing planners with membership in AICP may serve as one of the four outside reviewers. The four evaluators will be chosen from independent lists supplied by the candidate and the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee. With concurrence of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, the Director will solicit evaluation letters from the outside evaluators and will share the results with the Committee. No more than one external reviewer may have been a major advisor or collaborator of the candidate.

The Director will conduct an independent evaluation of the candidate and prepare a written recommendation for or against tenure and/or promotion. The Director will forward his/her and the Committee's recommendations to the Head of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy for review and recommendation. If the Director is seeking tenure and/or promotion, the Tenure and Promotion Committee's recommendation will go directly to the School Head.

## **VII. Composition and Functioning of Departmental Committee**

**Committee Composition**. The Division Tenure and Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured full-time faculty within the Division except the Director. If the candidate is requesting promotion, faculty with a rank equal to or higher than that to which the candidate aspires will vote on the promotion request. A Division faculty member who is the spouse of the candidate may not vote on the application. Other Division Faculty may be consulted by the Committee. In the event that less than three faculty members within the Division meet the qualifications for voting membership, the Division Director, in consultation with the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee and the candidate, will develop a committee of no less than three voting members. Faculty from outside the Division must be:

- 1) full-time faculty with a rank equal to or higher than that to which the candidate aspires,

- 2) conduct scholarship and/or teaching in a disciplinary area similar to that of the candidate, and
- 3) be from other units best positioned to evaluate the candidate.

Both the candidate and Division Tenure and Promotion Committee will submit a list of potential outside members to the Division Director. The finalized membership list will be developed by the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee and Division Director. Additional members must be approved by the Head and Dean. The Division Director will include in his/her report to the School Head and Dean the rationale for the choice of committee members outside the division. The outside members' vita may be included for this purpose. Even when the requisite number of tenured faculty is available, the Director, in consultation with the candidate and the tenured faculty of the division, may appoint additional committee members to the division Tenure and Promotion Committee.

**Procedures.** The Division Tenure and Promotion Committee will select its chairperson by a vote of the Committee members present at its first meeting. This chairperson will serve a term of one year. The chairperson's responsibilities will include: presiding over meetings of the Committee; tallying the secret ballots submitted by Committee members during the tenure and promotion deliberation; preparing the formal recommendation report with its rationale; and, submitting the Committee's report and candidate's materials to the Division Director in accordance with the College calendar. The written report of the Committee will be drafted by the Chairperson and reviewed and approved by all committee members. Any member of the Division Tenure and Promotion Committee may submit a minority statement on any candidate. The minority report from the Division shall include sufficient information explaining the opposing vote so that reviewers at the next levels can better understand the opposing evaluations. All statements will be appended to the candidate's application and forwarded to the Division Director. The candidate may not add or delete anything from dossier after the Division's Committee votes.

A quorum, consisting of two-thirds of the members and no less than three members, must be present for the Committee to convene and deliberate. The vote is taken and counted after the deliberations of each respective candidate; the Committee Chairperson will call for the vote.

To vote on tenure and promotion, a member of the Committee must have examined the candidate's dossier and taken part in the Committee's discussion of that candidate. When a Division faculty member serves on the College Tenure and Promotion Committee, he or she votes at the Division level.

Faculty members on leave for the fall semester may participate in the voting process only if they have had the opportunity to fully evaluate the candidate's dossier and are present for the committee meetings. Members of the committee who are candidates for promotion will absent themselves from the discussions and votes on their own candidacy.

The Division Director will review the candidate's dossier and complete an independent evaluation of the candidate. The Division Director will prepare a written rationale and a recommendation for or against tenure and/or promotion, and both reports will be forwarded to the School Head and to the Dean.

### **VIII. Modification of T&P Guidelines**

The “Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion” will be reviewed annually to adjust for changes in policy of the University, College and/or School. An Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the Division Director will do a complete review of the Guidelines every five years. This review should follow the re-accreditation report of the Planning Accreditation Board. Revisions beyond University, College and School policy changes will be subjected to a vote of the Division’s entire faculty and the revision must receive a favorable vote from a 2/3 majority to become effective.

**Attachment A: Flow Chart of Division Promotion and Tenure Procedures**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1	Candidate	Notify Division Director of Intent to apply for Tenure and/or Promotion	April 1
2	Division Director	Notify faculty to form Division T&P committee and elect a chair. If insufficient size, identify additional committee members (in consultation with candidate and T&P Committee)	April
3	Candidate; Division T & P Committee	Independently develop a list of potential external reviewers	April
4	Division Director	In consultation with T&P Committee and candidate, finalize list of reviewers and solicit their agreement to review the candidate's materials	May 30
5	Candidate	Develop packet of research materials and vitae to submit to external reviewers	May 30
6	Division Director	Send letter, candidate's materials, and Division T & P Guidelines to reviewers (follow College Calendar for due date of the reviewers' recommendations)	June 5
7	Candidate	Complete Dossier (following University, College, and Division guidelines and calendar); submit to Division Director	September
8	Chair, T & P Committee	Collect all materials (Candidate's Dossier, External Review Letters and Vitae, and School Head Letter); Submit to Division T&P Committee	September
9	Chair, T & P Committee	Schedule and lead Division T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Division Director	September/ October
10	Division Director	Independently review candidate's dossier and reviews and provide recommendation; provide rationale for selection of external reviewers (and outside members of the Division's T & P Committee, if applicable); Submit to SUAPP Head and Dean's Office	October

