

**Handbook  
on Tenure and Promotion  
for  
Library Services Faculty**

**Prepared by  
Office of the Provost  
Delta State University**

## Introduction

The award of promotion and/or tenure is an important milestone in the professional life of a faculty member. It gives affirmation to the accomplishments of the faculty member as well as financial remuneration (in the case of promotion). It is a setback to the faculty member and to the institution when the process produces a negative result.

This handbook is designed to provide advice to faculty on how to submit a successful portfolio in support of the application for tenure and possibly, simultaneous promotion. The intent is to give as much direction as possible to faculty regarding all steps in the process.

This handbook is maintained and updated by the Office of Academic Affairs. Faculty are encouraged to ask questions and/or seek clarity as needed.

## Eligibility and Timeline

With respect to tenure, there are two types of faculty at DSU – tenure-track and non tenure-track. Typically, the designation is made at the time of hire. Normally, faculty are appointed to the tenure-track at the time of their initial appointment in the university. Tenure-track appointments may be at the level of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. It is incumbent on every faculty member seeking tenure or with tenure seeking promotion to the next higher rank to demonstrate a sustained high level of successful activity in professional competency, scholarship, and service commensurate with the increased level of rank.

The termination of tenure-track faculty members, prior to the award of tenure, must occur in accordance with the notification guidelines outlined in the university tenure and promotion policies. In the last year of the tenure period, tenure-track faculty must be reviewed for tenure. Their termination prior to the completion of the tenure-track must occur in accordance with the notification guidelines outlined in the university tenure and promotion policies. In the last year of the tenure period, tenure-track faculty must be reviewed for tenure. A negative decision results in a terminal contract for the following year. Following the award of tenure, faculty members are designated as tenured and provided continuing employment. They can only be terminated for reasons as outlined in Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) policies 403.0104 TENURED FACULTY DISMISSAL or as a result of post-tenure review. Those policies can be accessed on the IHL website ([www.ihl.state.ms.us](http://www.ihl.state.ms.us)). A checklist of all dates associated with the tenure/promotion process is attached as Appendix A.

## Documentation

There are two key documents that are used by the faculty member to support a request for tenure and/or promotion – a portfolio and curriculum vita. To ensure that these two documents are current and comprehensive, it is crucial that they be maintained and updated on a regular basis. Throughout employment, all faculty members shall maintain a current CV; faculty are encouraged to maintain on file efforts and/or accomplishments that can be included in the portfolio. To assist faculty in being successful with the portfolio, the university requires biennial portfolio reviews that require feedback from the departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee

and the dean. Faculty should adapt their efforts in accordance with the recommendations provided in the reviews. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the faculty to demonstrate that he/she has met or exceeded the criteria for promotion and tenure.

### Organization of the Portfolio

A portfolio submitted for promotion and/or tenure is reviewed by numerous colleagues. It is advantageous to the candidate that it be organized in such a manner that accomplishments are presented in a clear and organized fashion.

All new faculty as of August 2018 are required to submit an e-portfolio for their 2 year, 4 year, and Tenure or Promotion applicants. Remaining faculty are encouraged to begin using an e-portfolio at their earliest convenience for pre-tenure reviews, and Promotion or Tenure applications. All faculty are required to submit an e-portfolio for their 2 year, 4 year, or Tenure or Promotion applications beginning Fall 2020.

Microsoft OneNote is the program of choice for e-portfolios. All faculty have access to this program. The Ford Center for Teaching and Learning will provide training for faculty to develop their portfolio and a template is provided that faculty must use to organize their materials.

#### Portfolio content

1. The title page, providing information such as the following:

Portfolio for Jane Smith Assistant Professor of Library Services

Promotion from  
Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and Tenure  
or  
Associate Professor to Professor  
or submitted for  
Two-year/Four-year Pre-tenure  
review 2018 – 2019

2. Letter of candidacy notification to Library Services committee chair (promotion) and letter of eligibility notification from Dean of Library Services (tenure).
3. Letters of recommendation from Library Services committee and the dean inserted in the document holder in the notebook.
4. A letter from the candidate addressed to the tenure and promotion committee. The purpose of the initial part of the letter is to give the evaluators a sense of the cumulative experience of the candidate that contributes to the faculty's expertise. The letter is to address each of the following:
  - a. A statement of the requested personnel action

- b. Information regarding current appointment, date of hire, years at DSU, years at another institution for which the candidate was given credit at the time of hire, and any other information that might be useful to readers trying to make judgments.
  - c. Other relevant experiences prior to DSU that give strength to the faculty member's candidacy. Examples might include experience in industry, K-12 schools, social services, research centers, and/or governmental agencies. The purpose of the initial part of the letter is to give the evaluators a sense of the cumulative experience of the candidate that contributes to the faculty's expertise, chronicle the accomplishments of the candidate of professional competency, scholarship, and service, in that order. The letter provides an opportunity for the faculty candidate to give context to the portfolio, with particular emphasis on outstanding accomplishments that may need illumination beyond the portfolio. Perhaps the candidate wants to make sure evaluators know he/she created or changed services offered by Library Services.
5. A current curriculum vitae (CV). Care should be taken to ensure that the CV information is current and consistent with the information provided in the introductory letter and the documentation included in the remainder of the portfolio.
  6. A copy of the annual review document including the Dean of Library Services comments and rankings for each year of employment at DSU or since the candidate's last promotion.
  7. A copy of the 2-year and 4-year pre-tenure/promotion review and the candidate's narrative detailing steps taken to address recommendations for improvement cited in the reviews.
  8. A section detailing accomplishments in professional competency, scholarship, and service (in that order).
  9. When applying for professor, include only material beyond the portfolio submitted for promotion to association professor.

### Professional Competency

DSU considers itself a teaching institution. However, most Library Services faculty do not engage in teaching semester-length formal courses. The tenure and promotion policies state:

*Thus, for Library Services faculty, professional competency is essential for tenure consideration. Effective Library Services faculty demonstrate qualities which may include, but are not limited to, the following: high academic standards, concern for learning, a thorough knowledge of the subject, excellent organizational skills, excellent communication skills, service ethic, respect for Library Services patrons, innovations in professional practice, and continuing professional development and education.*

It is incumbent on the candidate to provide evidence of performance in professional

competency that is consistent with the statement above.

In terms of portfolio organization there should be a tab labeled “professional competency.” The first entry behind that tab should be an index of the information items that are provided in support of professional competency. The documentation in support of each item should go behind the index and labeled accordingly.

There are several approaches a candidate can take. The best portfolio will encompass many, or perhaps, all of these.

The first efforts should be targeted toward any tangible evidence of professional competency. This can include things such as awards and recognition for professional excellence, citations from peers, and evaluations of professional competency.

A second dimension of professional competency effectiveness is indirect measures. These may include, but are not limited to, creative professional competency methods, faculty development, and use of technology. Each of these is discussed below:

Creative Professional Competency Methods Faculty candidates should give special attention to innovative professional practice they use that deserve the attention of evaluators. Any unique professional competency approaches that enhance library services should be referenced in the portfolio and could include: instruction in accessing information and technology, collection development, access and control of information and equipment, leadership and supervision of personnel, and preservation and conservation activities.

Faculty Development Efforts by faculty members to strengthen their professional competency should be documented in portfolios. This would include on and off campus developmental efforts. The knowledge and skills base and the professional literature supporting that base are continually changing. The extent to which faculty candidates attempt to remain current should be noted. This should include attempts to (a) remain current in professional practice, and (b) improve skills associated with professional competency excellence.

Typical examples include attendance at professional conferences and workshops – any efforts external to the campus that relate to faculty development. Also important are campus efforts such as enrolling in courses, attending lectures, and taking workshops. Portfolios should include information on how these faculty development efforts, on or off campus, contribute to professional growth.

Use of Technology. Use of technology in professional competency may be documented. This would include, but is not limited to, development of on-line resources and/or web-based instructional enhancements.

### Scholarship

The DSU tenure and promotion policies include a statement specifying scholarly activity as a faculty expectation. Faculty cannot be successful candidates for tenure and/or promotion

with an absence of scholarly activity. However, DSU is considered primarily a teaching institution. The question confronting faculty is how to balance the roles of professional practice and scholarship.

In terms of portfolio organization, faculty should provide a tab labeled “scholarship” that comes after the professional competency documentation. The initial entry page under scholarship would be a listing of all scholarly entries being submitted. There would then be subsequent tabs for each piece of scholarship. There must be supporting evidence for all scholarly entries. Typical of such evidence would be copies of papers, summaries, conference abstracts, letter of approval, and/or copies of title pages.

Expectations for scholarship vary by discipline. For example, art, music, and theatre faculty tend to engage in activities directly related to performance-based scholarship. For Library Services, however, the description of scholarship reflected in the tenure and promotion policies is applicable (as shown below).

*Delta State University recognizes the important contributions that scholarship makes in the advancement of Library Services. Scholarly inquiry and learning in Library Services are reflected in, but not limited to, the following: dissemination of research and scholarly findings through books, journal articles, monographs, abstracts, reviews, indexes, and presentations at professional meetings, workshops, and training sessions; presentation of creative achievements through exhibitions, performances, and publications; development of new research methodologies, studies, and surveys; compilation of bibliographies, collection research guides, and pathfinders; identification and evaluation of scholarly resources that are appropriate for the educational mission; production of instructional multimedia materials; obtainment of grants and contracts which support scholarly and creative activity; achievement of honors and awards for significant scholarly and creative activity, and participation as an editor and/or referee in support of scholarly and creative publications.*

Producing knowledge and performance in professional/creative activities are essential aspects of faculty roles. While forms of scholarship vary across the University, some examples of scholarship include engagement in writing and publishing in peer reviewed venues, procurement of external funds for research and professional activities, and documented creative activities that have professional impact. Honors and awards for significant scholarly and creative activity may also be submitted to enhance your record of scholarship. In addition, you should clearly identify those scholarly or creative activities that are peer reviewed. Although the minimum acceptable threshold would be an average of one scholarly accomplishment in a state, regional, national, or international venue for each year since the initial appointment in a tenure track position or the last promotion, this minimum does not automatically indicate that the scholarship expectation has been met.

### Service

Like professional competency and scholarship, service is a required role for faculty applying for tenure and/or promotion. Library Services guidelines define service as shown below:

*Delta State recognizes the importance of service as a part of its mission. The service component is based on performance in three areas: service to the faculty member's profession, service to the University, and public service to the community which is related to the nature of the Library Services faculty member's assignment. Efforts to advance accreditation-related initiatives, such as the Quality Enhancement Plan, shall be considered as service to the University.*

In terms of portfolio organization, faculty should provide a tab labeled "service" that comes after the scholarship documentation. Depending on what is included, faculty have the discretion as to how to organize it.

Service is divided across several categories. Service to the library profession should be noted. This includes leadership and activity in professional groups that support the discipline of the faculty member. This includes activity at the local, state, regional, and/or national level.

Service to the university should also be documented. Committee leadership and memberships, participation in initiatives designed to strengthen the university, and contributions to shared governance are examples that should be included. Any work activity that contributes to the continued vitality of the university is important.

A frequent question regarding service is what can be counted in the area of community service. The tenure and promotion policies speak only to community service tied to advancement of the candidate's discipline and/or the field of education within the community or region. Candidates choose what to include, but should demonstrate a link with their faculty role.

#### Things to Avoid

The portfolio is not a scrapbook. Avoid newspaper articles and/or thank you letters from students and colleagues. The exception might be a newspaper article that is used to document success in professional competency, scholarship and/or service.

Do not overwhelm the reader with documents. Samples that are clearly marked to provide evidence of certain goals and/or accomplishments are preferable.

Do not include letters of support. As stated earlier, the letters of recommendation from the library's tenure and promotion committee and Dean of Library Services are added to the ePortfolio by the dates outlined in Appendix B.

Do not include institutional grants such as the Deans Faculty Research Award, Kent and Janice Wyatt Professional Development Award, the Dulce Fund, the Bryce Griffis Fund, or any other internal funding awards.

## Appendix A

### PRE-TENURE/PRE-PROMOTION CHECK LIST FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

- \_\_\_\_\_ OCTOBER 1 – The dean shall notify faculty in writing of their responsibility to submit a portfolio during that academic year for pre-tenure and pre- promotion review.
- \_\_\_\_\_ FEBRUARY 1 – Pre-tenure and pre-promotion candidates submit portfolio to chair of Library Services tenure/promotion committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ MARCH 15 - Pre-tenure and pre-promotion candidate’s portfolio, along with the written recommendations from the Library Services tenure and promotion committee, shall be submitted to the dean, by the chair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ APRIL 7 - Pre-tenure and pre-promotion candidate’s portfolio, along with the written recommendations from the dean and the Library Services tenure and promotion committee, shall be returned to the candidate, by the dean. Copies of all recommendations shall be filed in the dean’s office.
- \_\_\_\_\_ MAY 1 – Pre-tenure and pre-promotion candidate’s plan of action for improvement (if necessary) is on file in the dean’s office.



## Appendix B

### TENURE/PROMOTION CHECK LIST FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

- \_\_\_\_ SEPTEMBER 1 – Candidates eligible for promotion request consideration in writing to chair of Library Services Tenure/Promotion Committee.
- \_\_\_\_ SEPTEMBER 1 – Dean of Library Services verifies eligibility of candidates for tenure and promotion according to records of hire-date (from dean and/or Provost/VPAA) and any credit given toward tenure from previous work experience.
- \_\_\_\_ OCTOBER 1 – Dean of Library Services notifies eligible tenure candidates in writing.
- \_\_\_\_ NOVEMBER 1 - Dean of Library Services and representatives of Library Services tenure/promotion committee meet with tenure/promotion candidates regarding portfolio preparation and submission.
- \_\_\_\_ DECEMBER 1 - Tenure/promotion candidates submit portfolio to chair of Library Services tenure/promotion committee.
- \_\_\_\_ DECEMBER 1 – Chair of Library Services tenure/promotion committee forwards a list of tenure and promotion candidates to Dean of Library Services, university tenure and promotion committee chair, and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).
- \_\_\_\_ JANUARY 20 - Library Services tenure/promotion committee submits a written tenure/promotion recommendation for each candidate and forwards it along with the portfolio to the Dean of Library Services with a copy of the written recommendation to the candidate. For assistant professor candidates being nominated for tenure there should be a clear indication as to whether promotion is also being requested.
- \_\_\_\_ FEBRUARY 15 - Dean of Library Services prepares a written recommendation of each candidate and forwards it along with the portfolio and the recommendation of the Library Services tenure and promotion committee to the Provost/VPAA. A copy of the Dean's written recommendation is also sent to the candidate. If the Dean of Library Services' recommendation is in disagreement with the recommendation of the Library Services tenure/promotion committee, the Dean of Library Services is responsible for scheduling a meeting with the committee to provide an explanation prior to his/her submission to the Provost/VPAA.
- \_\_\_\_ FEBRUARY 15 - MARCH 1 - Following distribution of appropriate application materials to each member of the University Tenure and Promotion Committee for review, the committee meets to discuss the tenure/promotion documents for policy compliance. If necessary, the University Tenure & Promotion Committee chair meets with Dean of Library Services to seek resolution of any policy compliance issues. The University Tenure & Promotion Committee chair submits a letter to the Provost/VPAA verifying

compliance and identifying applications that the committee determines have not complied with all policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_ MARCH 15 - After receiving clearance from the University Tenure & Promotion Committee, the Provost/VPAA prepares tenure/promotion recommendations on candidates and forwards his/her tenure/promotion recommendations in writing, accompanied by the portfolio, the candidate's notification to Library Services tenure/promotion committee (promotion), the recommendations of the Library Services tenure/promotion committee (tenure) and Dean of Library Services to the President. Any unresolved policy compliance problems identified by the University Tenure & Promotion Committee are also to be cited by Provost/VPAA in writing to the President.

\_\_\_\_ APRIL 1 –Provost/VPAA notifies candidates who are not recommended for tenure/promotion by the President in writing.

\_\_\_\_ APRIL 15 - Candidates not recommended for tenure/promotion that wish to appeal must refer the case in writing to the University Tenure & Promotion Appeals Committee. The committee hears the case within fifteen days and submits a recommendation to the President who makes a final decision within seven days. Faculty candidates for tenure who wish to appeal the final decision of the President to the IHL Board of Trustees have thirty days to do so effective from the date of notification by the President.

\_\_\_\_ MAY 1 - Candidates are notified in writing by the Provost/VPAA of promotion award.

\_\_\_\_ JUNE 1 – Upon approval by IHL, candidates are notified in writing by the President of tenure award.

Appendix C

NON-RENEWAL CHECK LIST FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

\_\_\_ SEPTEMBER 1 – Tenure-track faculty with two or more years of service must be notified of non-renewal.

\_\_\_ DECEMBER 1 – Tenure-track faculty in second year of service must be notified of non-renewal.

\_\_\_ MARCH 1 – Tenure-track faculty in their first year of service must be notified of non-renewal.

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