

**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
AND COMMUNICATION**

**CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION, RETENTION AND
TENURE**

Effective in Academic Year 2025-26

CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION AND/OR TENURE

I. The College PRT Committee

A. Mission

1. The mission of the College Promotion, Retention, and Tenure Committee (CPRTC) is to promote high standards in teaching, research and service, to encourage equivalence of promotion, retention and tenure criteria of all departments within the college and to provide flexible criteria for promotion, retention, and tenure (PRT) that will accommodate the different disciplines within our broad and encompassing college. To meet those goals, the CPRTC is responsible for reviewing, confirming, distributing and (if necessary) amending this document at the beginning of each academic year. This document will be submitted to the university PRT committee (UPRTC) each academic year for review and approval.
2. The CPRTC receives the application files of college faculty members from their department chairs, reviews them, and makes recommendations to the dean. The CPRTC also reviews the PRT criteria of all departments in the college and suggests any changes to make those departmental PRT documents clear, practical and consistent with the college's PRT criteria. Each department should formulate criteria and standards that are as clear and specific as possible to accommodate the different disciplines.

B. Membership

The CPRTC is composed of one representative from each department in the college: the chair of each departmental PRT committee (DPRTC). The CPRTC will choose its chair near the end of each spring semester for the following academic year. In keeping with the handbook, the chair of the CLAC PRT committee will represent the college on the UPRTC.

C. Process

1. PRT applications go first to the DPRTC and then to department chairs. The CPRTC receives and reviews those applications (including the written recommendations from DPRTC and department chairs), writes letters of recommendation, and forwards the files to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Communication. These reviews and recommendations will be completed according to the calendar issued each year by the University Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee (UPRTC). The dean will write recommendations for the applications and submit them to the office of the Provost/Vice-Chancellor for distribution to the UPRTC. The UPRTC will submit its recommendation to the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost. Promotion and/or tenure may be granted by the Board of Trustees following recommendation by the Chancellor and the President of the University.

2. If either the DPRTC or CPRTC, in voting on an application for promotion or tenure, is not unanimous, the letter written by that committee should explain the lack of agreement, to help those who receive their recommendation to make an informed decision.
3. If the DPRTC has ranked its recommendations for promotion in order of preference, the college and university committees should give consideration to such ranking.
4. A PRT committee member at any level (department, college, or university) will not review any faculty application for tenure or promotion or make a recommendation for tenure or promotion if the applicant has ever filed a grievance that involved the PRT committee member. Similarly, a PRT committee member at any level will not review any applications for tenure or promotion or make a recommendation for or against tenure or promotion if the committee member has ever filed a grievance against the applicant.
5. An applicant for tenure or promotion may serve on the department/unit PRTC, CPRTC and UPRTC during the academic year when their application is under review. They may not, however, take part in any deliberation, consideration, or vote on their own application, nor be present during that portion of a meeting at which their application is deliberated, considered, or voted on. In such cases, the department/unit PRTC in consultation with the department chair will assign a proxy for the applicant such that the number of voting members on the department PRT committee will remain at a minimum of five members when considering the candidate's application.
6. Committee members will recuse and absent themselves from any PRT discussion or vote concerning an application of a close family or household member.
7. In the interest of making effective decisions regarding promotion, retention, and tenure, deans and/or department chairs have the responsibility of counseling each faculty member regardless of rank at least once a year concerning the individual's teaching, work with students, research, scholarship and creative activity, and professional service.
8.
 - a. Each DPRTC will review annually the progress toward tenure of each pre-tenured faculty member in the department and will write a letter of recommendation for or against retention, to the department chair; a copy of that letter will be provided to the faculty member. The department chair will review that letter, add a written recommendation, and send them to the dean.
 - b. All third-year pre-tenured faculty members, regardless of rank, will submit documentation of their performance in teaching, scholarly and creative activities, and service using the tenure application format. Each DPRTC and department chair will make a comprehensive review of this documentation and provide appropriate written responses and guidance to the faculty member regarding his or her progress toward tenure. The documentation and the letters of the

DPRTC and department chair will be reviewed by the CPRTC, which will write a letter for the faculty member's guidance and forward the entire file to the dean.

9. When possible, each academic department will maintain a standing committee on promotion, retention and tenure. The DPRTC will be composed of a minimum of three tenured faculty members, representing all areas within the department. Neither chairs nor assistant chairs will serve on the committees. Tenured and tenure-track faculty members of the department will elect the committee with committee members serving staggered three-year terms, if possible. If the department cannot form a committee of three, the tenured and tenure-track faculty members of the department will select faculty members from other departments in the college to serve on the committee. The DPRTC will elect its own chair each academic year.

10. If a department chooses not to maintain a DPRTC by majority vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty members at its initial department meeting in the fall, it will submit the department's criteria on promotion and tenure to the CPRTC and UPRTC. That department will permit each faculty member to apply directly to the college committee for promotion and/or tenure. In addition, the college committee will make recommendations to the department chair regarding reappointment of faculty in that department. Each department that does not have a PRT committee will elect a representative to the college committee from among its tenured faculty.

11. PRT discussions, votes, and recommendations are confidential at all levels; members will not share any individual information outside the committee. Voting on applications for promotion and tenure at all levels will be by secret ballot and tallied by the committee chair. At each step in the review process for promotion or tenure (department, college, and university committees) applicants will be notified in writing by the chair of the committee about the recommendations and their rationale; the deadlines for delivery of these letters are established in the PRT calendar set by the UPRTC for the academic year. Applicants who wish to withdraw an application must do so by the close of the third business day following receipt of these notifications. A person who withdraws an application for promotion and/or tenure at any stage of the process may not resubmit an application during that review cycle and may not file a grievance on the matter. On withdrawal of an application, review of that application, at all levels, will cease.

General Guidelines

II. Terminal Degree

The earned terminal degree appropriate to the discipline and field is required for promotion and tenure in most instances. The requirement for possession of the terminal degree for tenure or promotion may be waived in the exceptional instance in which a faculty member has had employment or performance experience that constitutes a generally-accepted substitute for the terminal degree. In these rare instances the academic department must establish criteria, subject to the approval of the dean of the college and the vice chancellor/provost, for the substitution of appropriate experience. The department must also document that it is a widely-used and respected academic practice to accept the kind of substitution that is being requested.

III. Instructors

1. A person holding the rank of instructor is not eligible for the award of tenure, and the time spent as instructor will not be credited to the pre-tenure probationary period required by those ranks in which tenure may be earned.

2. An instructor hired in a tenure-track position who completes the requirements for the appropriate terminal degree may be promoted to assistant professor and granted a pre-tenure contract when:

The faculty member provides the department chair with evidence of the completion of the degree, and

The Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research receives documentation of the completion of the degree, and

The Provost/Vice Chancellor receives favorable recommendations for promotion from the department chair and dean.

In this case, it is not necessary for the candidate to apply for promotion.

IV. Time in Rank

1. Except in unusual cases, the full six-year period in a pre-tenure status is needed by the department and college to conduct an adequate review. In referring to a “year,” it is university policy that a full semester of service under a pre-tenure status contract which begins on or before the first day of the spring semester in an academic year counts as a full year.

2. Since it is unusual for a faculty member to amass a record of performance that reflects appropriate productivity in less time than the standard probationary period, accelerated tenure is rare. But any faculty member has the right to apply for tenure during any application period in which he or she can clearly demonstrate having met the performance criteria that would be expected during the mandatory review. A faculty member who fails to earn tenure in this

accelerated review cycle may apply for tenure again only after two years or in the sixth year of the pre-tenure cycle.

3. Under extenuating circumstances, a faculty member with a tenure-track appointment may apply for an extension of time in which to meet the tenure requirements. The Faculty Handbook section IV.b. should be consulted.

4. Pre-tenure faculty members will be evaluated for tenure and promotion based on the department, college, and university criteria in place during their third year of employment on a pre-tenure appointment. This will coincide with the comprehensive pre-tenure review completed during the third year of employment at Arkansas State University. Tenured faculty members applying for promotion will use the PRT criteria that have been in place for five years or less.

5. Promotion to associate professor will be awarded only after a minimum of three years as assistant professor except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the discipline.

6. Promotion to professor will be awarded only after a minimum of five years as associate professor except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the discipline.

7. A prospective faculty member may negotiate the terms of initial employment with regard to tenure status and academic rank, based on professional productivity in previous employment. These terms must be approved by the chancellor and must be based on the thorough review and positive recommendation of the DPRTC of the department in which tenure and rank will be held. Any adjustments to the standard PRT schedule will be made in consultation with the dean and written copies of the agreement will be maintained in both the dean's office and the individual's personnel file. Documentation of negotiated terms must be included with the application for tenure and/or promotion.

V. Professional Criteria

1. A candidate for promotion or tenure will be evaluated only on professional activities performed since the last promotion.

2. **Teaching:** The CPRTC recognizes the paramount importance of teaching in our profession and will assess applicants based on long-term, regular and recent evidence of effective teaching, which includes evaluations by department chairs and peers, student evaluations, and course materials. Supporting material such as new course proposals, course revisions, and other relevant materials may be considered.

3. **Research and Creative Activities:** The CPRTC recognizes the importance of scholarly and

creative activity and will assess applicants based on the long-term, regular and recent production of scholarly or creative works (such as publications, presentations, performances, and other works appropriate to the discipline and field). Specific requirements for promotion depend upon the rank being sought: the higher the rank sought, the greater the quality and quantity of the work.

4. **Service:** The CPRTC is interested in quality rather than quantity, so it will place weight on long-term, regular and recent effective participation in, peer election to, and leadership of, important service activities. These may include student advisement; active involvement in university, college and departmental committee work; professional work within the professoriate, discipline and community; and other activities that enhance the image of the department, the college and the university.

5. At any stage a PRT committee may ask an applicant to substantiate claims of productivity or service. The DPRTC and the department chair will verify all material in a faculty member's application, including consulting databases to identify predatory journals and predatory conferences, which are not acceptable forms of scholarship.

6. **Performance Standards:** In keeping with the university's threefold mission of teaching, research and service, the DPRTC and CPRTC will expect achievement in all areas in order to recommend promotion and/or tenure. PRT committees may weight the criteria for post-tenure promotion (teaching, scholarship, and service) as appropriate to the discipline and field, but no area can be weighted at zero; there must be some contribution in all three areas. While a faculty member does not need to be outstanding in all three areas, effective teaching is essential: no achievement in other areas can compensate for inadequate teaching. The CPRTC stresses high quality of research or creative activity rather than high quantity. In making decisions, PRT committees and administrators at all levels will respect the diversity of the college's disciplines.