Guide to the Tenure and Promotion Process  
For Candidates

Introduction and Overview

The system of Tenure and Promotion at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) has been developed to inform, support, and enhance the professional and intellectual growth of teaching faculty at a primarily undergraduate, teaching intensive university.

The guidelines in this document are designed to familiarize tenure-track faculty applying for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, and all tenured faculty applying for promotion to Professor with the procedures and requirements of the UFV Tenure and Promotion Procedures (Procedures). (For guidelines for academic staff, faculty or administrators who supervise the tenure and promotion process at UFV, please refer to the Guide to the Tenure and Promotion Process for Division and University Review Committees and Deans.)

These guidelines should be read in close connection with: a) the UFV-UFV Faculty and Staff Association (FSA) Collective Agreement (CA) (2014-19); b) the Tenure and Promotion Procedures (Procedures); c) the Senate-approved Standards that apply to a faculty, or academic unit within a faculty; and d) the Individual Faculty Evaluation Procedures (IPEC). However, these guidelines are intended to summarize the main processes described in (a) through (d), and in the event of any inconsistency between the contents of these guidelines and the documents in (a) through (d), these latter are the authoritative sources.

The Goals of the Tenure and Promotion process at UFV

In general, the goals of the tenure and promotion system at UFV are similar to those at other universities. UFV’s system enables you, as faculty, to achieve your professional, academic, and personal goals, including, but not limited to, the building of a culture of quality and capacity, the development of positive habits, the support and ownership of individual goals and aims, and reputation and peer recognition. The system encourages career advancement by providing a transparent, fair, and formative process for growth and development that begins right at the time of your first appointment and carries on through your entire career at UFV.

From a university perspective, the system supports UFV’s mission to deliver the best undergraduate education in Canada; be responsible for the cultural, social, and economic development of the lower Fraser Valley; and be innovative and entrepreneurial in so doing. UFV’s system builds and maintains professional capacity, promotes its strategic goals, grows the professoriate, and enhances its reputation.

UFV’s system differs from other universities in that it has been developed and implemented with the clear understanding that UFV is a teaching intensive university.

Principles

The main documents that provide the framework for review, evaluation, and decision on all applications for tenure or promotion at UFV are:
a) the UFV-FSA CA and the Procedures, which govern the conditions and expectations of faculty work, and define the process and structure of rank, tenure and promotion;

b) the various Faculty and Division Standards which are approved by Senate, and define the criteria and standards of faculty work upon which the review, evaluation, and decisions on any one application for tenure or promotion at any level are made.

Throughout, the implementation and application of UFV’s system of tenure and promotion subscribes to the following principles:

- a clear, transparent, and confidential process for the review, assessment, and decisions on candidates’ applications;
- deliberations by Division Review (DRC), University Review (URC) and University Review Appeal (URAC) Committees governed by procedural fairness, and the highest standards of professionalism, discretion, and equity;
- full public knowledge of, and agreement on, the Standards of teaching, scholarship, and service set by the academic units and approved by Senate;
- assessment of candidates’ applications only on the Senate approved Standards specifically applicable to the candidate’s faculty or division (or faculties or divisions in the case of cross-disciplinary applications);
- the even application of Standards to all candidates’ applications;
- evaluation of candidates’ applications based only on information in the candidate’s Tenure and Promotion File (TPF);
- decisions based on the evidence and without favour or prejudice;
- the right of candidates to be heard and to know what is being decided and why; and
- decisions made in an efficient and timely manner.

**Appointment and the Initial Probationary Period**

The following sections apply to all new permanent full or part time teaching faculty initially appointed at UFV to a tenure-track position at the rank of Assistant Professor. (They do not apply to sessional or limited term faculty appointments, but they do apply, if with some modifications, to permanent full or part time teaching faculty who, at the date of appointment, already hold a tenure-track or ranked tenured position at another recognized university. Guidelines for applications by tenured Associate Professors for Professor are addressed separately at the end of this document.)

New tenure-track faculty initially appointed at the rank of Assistant Professor may apply for early tenure during the third year of employment, but most will do so during the fourth, and, excepting in the case of an approved request for an extension, never any later than the fifth. During this period, you and UFV are afforded multiple opportunities for mutual appraisal.

**The Initial Probationary Appointment**

For the first two years of your tenure-track appointment, you will be appointed to an initial probationary position which normally includes two teaching semesters in each year, and during which the university holds the right to dismiss or lay you off for stated reason.
At the time of your appointment to the initial probationary period, your Dean or Department Head will provide you with the relevant Standards on which you will be evaluated. You will be informed that, for the purposes of tenure and promotion, your performance will be assessed using a weighting which allocates a minimum of 60% to teaching; a minimum of 20% to one of service or scholarship; and a minimum of 10% to the remaining component.

At the time of your hiring, your Dean will also consult with your Department Head on the appointment of a three-member Individual’s Probationary Evaluation Committee (IPEC) comprising two departmental members, one of whom will be the Chair, and one non-departmental member. Normally within two weeks of the first day of classes, the IPEC will meet with you to review the criteria and explain what can be expected during the initial probationary period.

While it is you, the faculty member, who declares the weightings on how you wish to be evaluated, you do not have to make this declaration at the start, or even necessarily at the end, of your initial probationary period. However, you do have to make a declaration when you apply for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and you are encouraged to consult with your Dean, Department Head, departmental colleagues or other mentors as you develop your own profile of teaching, scholarship, and service throughout the entire tenure-track process.

While the second probationary period leading up to the award of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor is continuous with, and informed by progress through, the initial probationary period, they are procedurally two distinct processes. The initial probationary period falls under the review of the Dean with input by the Department and the IPEC. The award of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor falls under the review of the DRCs and URC, with input by your Dean.

The initial probationary period is divided into two years (normally two teaching semesters in each). For complete details, please refer to the UFV Individual Faculty Evaluation Procedures, but in broad summary consists of the following:

During Year 1 of your initial probationary period, the IPEC ensures that you provide all data required for your Individual Probationary Evaluation File (IPEF) (i.e. student evaluations of all courses you teach; classroom observations by IPEC members; departmental colleague evaluations; all course syllabi, exams, and assignments; records of service and scholarship; curriculum vitae; and self-evaluation). The IPEF is maintained in the Dean’s office but available at all times to you.

Towards the end of Year 1 the IPEC reviews the data to ensure that the IPEF is complete and uses reasonable efforts to collect any information that might be missing; it is important to remember while your IPEC has a role, you bear responsibility for providing almost all of the data required for the IPEF.

In the event your IPEC advises the Dean that some of the information is missing, the Dean will determine whether this reflects a concern with your performance or extenuating circumstances beyond your immediate control.
At least two weeks prior to the end of the first year of your initial probationary period, or any other date established due to exceptional circumstances at the time of appointment, the IPEC prepares for the Dean a summary report of your teaching, scholarship, and service, based on all the data in the IPEF.

The Dean decides whether to continue the first probationary period and provides his or her decision, including reasons, to you. The decision will be to either: a) continue to Year 2; b) extend your initial probationary period to include a third year, with reasons for same; or c) to terminate your appointment.

During Year 2, the process of collecting all the required data, up to and including the completion of the IPEF and its review by the IPEC, remains the same.

At least ninety (90) days prior to the completion of your initial probationary period (normally at the end of the fourth full semester of regular teaching assignments [or equivalent]), the IPEC provides a second summary report of your teaching, scholarship, and service to the Dean, using the same criteria as in Year 1, but referring to only the data collected during Year 2.

The Dean assesses your performance, ensuring that there is clear evidence of successful teaching as outlined in the IPEF, and reflected in the scores on the Faculty Student Evaluation Questionnaires, the Probationary Faculty Classroom Evaluation Reports, the comments from the Colleague Evaluation Reports, and evidence of contributions to service and scholarship.

At least ninety (90) days prior to the completion of two years’ full time academic work (allowing for any extension at the end of Year 1 and/or extension of the initial probationary period on account of unusual hiring date), the Dean will recommend whether you should be: a) appointed to the second probationary tenure-track period, specifying any specific conditions or expectations attached; b) appointed with tenure (if eligible under CA 12.7 (a)); or c) terminated.

Second Probationary Period

In these guidelines, the second probationary period refers to the period immediately following, and continuous with, the Dean’s confirmation that you have successfully completed your initial probationary period. Unless shortened because you held tenure or rank at a previous university, or because you applied for early tenure and promotion, this period normally constitutes Years 3, 4, and 5 of the entire tenure-track process, and normally involves application for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in Year 4, with the decision on same no later than June 1 in Year 5.

Substantively and in terms of process and structure, it is during this period that the responsibility to review, assess, and make a determination to award tenure and promote an Assistant Professor to Associate Professor passes to the DRCs and URC constituted under the authorities of the Procedures and the applicable Standards approved by Senate.

Guidelines for Application for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

Towards the end of the first year of your second probationary period (normally the end of Year 3 of your employment), the Dean will provide you with a written formative assessment of your performance since
completion of your initial probationary period. In addition, prior to the first meeting of the DRC (normally towards the end of Year 4 of your employment), the Dean will provide you and the Chair of the DRC with a written assessment of your progress since the end of the initial probationary period. This will apply in most cases although there may be exceptions due to circumstances occasioned by the date of hiring and conclusion of the initial probationary period.

Between February 1 and February 28 of the fourth year of your tenure-track appointment (normally during the eighth full semester of teaching assignment since the date of initial appointment), the Dean will send you written notification that you are expected to apply to be reviewed for tenure and promotion in the following year and that, if application is not made, your employment will cease at the end of the fifth year. You must confirm to your Dean your intention to apply on or before March 31 following this notification.

If you are (or will be) on maternity or parental leave at the time of notification, you may defer your application for one year by providing written notice to your Dean no later than two months prior to commencement of the leave. For leaves occasioned on documented medical grounds the two months’ notice requirement may be waived. Tenure-track faculty on approved long term disability leave may defer application for two years from the date the leave is approved.

You may also apply directly to the Dean prior to March 31 of the (normally) fourth year of employment for an extension of not more than one year due to exceptional circumstances. Such extension will not be granted more than once except by express written permission of the President.

If you are eligible to apply for early tenure (i.e. eligible to apply in your third year of employment for award of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in your fourth year), you must send written notification to your Dean between March 1 and 31 (of that third year). Should you choose this option, you will not be required to demonstrate qualifications beyond those required for tenure. However, reviewers will hold such applications to the same Standards as applications on the normal timeline. UFV strongly recommends that if you are applying for early tenure, you consult often with your Dean, your colleagues, or other mentors to satisfy yourself that your application will meet the Standards, and that you provide sufficient time for the Dean to complete his or her formative assessment.

Once you have confirmed to your Dean that you will be applying for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, you must submit a formal Letter of Application to the Chair of the relevant DRC, and your tenure and promotion Dossier in PDF format must be uploaded on the appropriate secure drive in Human Resources.

If you decide to withdraw your application after you notified your Dean before March 31 that you were intending to apply, you must also send written notification to your Dean before June 10 of the year of application.

Overview of the Review Process

The processing of your application for tenure and/or promotion is a three step process beginning with review by the DRC. The Recommendation and Report of the DRC is forwarded, along with your TPF, including any additional documents added to it during the deliberations of the DRC (as described below), to the University Review Committee (URC). The URC reviews your application and its Recommendation and Report is then
forwarded, along with your TPF and any further additional documents added to it during the deliberations of
the URC (as described below), to the President for a final decision.

In the event the URC makes a negative recommendation, you are entitled to appeal that decision to the
University Review Appeals Committee (URAC). The URAC will either uphold the negative recommendation of
the URC or, if it determines that grounds for your appeal have been substantiated, recommend a mechanism
by which the error can be corrected and refer the matter back to the URC, with specific recommendations to
the URC on how to deal with it. The URC must address the URAC recommendations and then report on the
actions it took in response to the URAC. This report is then forwarded, along with the TPF, to the President for
a final decision.

The timeline for the review process, from when your TPF is first opened by the DRC to the final decision of the
President, is detailed in the Timelines in the Tenure and Promotion Process at UFV. While there is enough
flexibility in this timeline to allow for appeals to the URAC, should this be necessary, the expectation is that the
review of your application will take place in a timely manner: a) review by your DRC during the fall semester of
the review (academic) year; b) review by the URC during the early winter semester of the review year; and c)
the decision of the President on or before June 1 of the review year.

The Review Committees

By the time your TPF is opened by the DRC for review, normally on or about October 1 of the review year, it
has been housed on the designated and secure drive in Human Resources and securely locked for access by
only you, the members of the DRC, the members of the URC, the members of the URAC (if applicable), the
Dean (or Associate Dean if applicable) and the President. As the candidate, you can access your TPF at any time
and you can be accompanied by an FSA representative if you wish it. With the exception of required office
administrators (e.g. Deans’ Assistants), no other persons may access your TPF without your written permission.

It is your responsibility to provide the DRC with sufficient information for it to make a reasoned evaluation of
your application for tenure or promotion. In addition to the requirements of the Dossier, it is your
responsibility to ensure that prior to the first meeting of the DRC (normally on or about October 1 of the
review year) your TPF contains:

- your Letter of Application for tenure or promotion;
- your Dean’s summative report of your initial probationary period;
- your Dean’s written assessment of your progress since the end of the initial probationary period;
- your response, if any, in writing to the Dean’s assessment;
- all additional relevant documents that provide evidence of your achievements in teaching,
scholarship and scholarly activities, and service.

All DRCs are five person committees. The Chair and three other tenured faculty of the DRC, as well as an
alternate, are elected by and from members of your Division. (In the case of cross-divisional appointments, the
Chair will be the Head of your home Division, or appointed by the Dean.) The fifth member of the DRC is
appointed by the Dean from another Division. (In case of applications in Divisions that do not have enough
eligible members to serve, the Dean may combine members from other related Divisions and the Dean and
those members will agree on the selection of the Chair.)
All members of your DRC are expected to participate in all meetings, but an elected member who misses two consecutive meetings is deemed to have resigned and will be replaced by the alternate. If the non-divisional appointee misses two consecutive meetings, he or she will be replaced by the Dean. Quorum for all meetings of a DRC shall consist of the Chair and three of the four voting members. No member present at a meeting of the DRC may abstain from a vote on an application and the Chair may vote only in the case of a tie.

All DRC members are expected to have completed a joint training workshop by UFV and the UFV FSA, are bound by the strictest confidentiality, and must declare at the outset if they are in a conflict of interest with you. Similarly, you are entitled to indicate to the Chair of your DRC that you consider one of the members to be in a conflict of interest on your application, and the Chair is obligated to replace that member if he or she determines such conflict exists.

The DRC’s assessment of your application is governed by procedural fairness and the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, discretion, and equity, based entirely and only on information contained in your TPF and justified according to the criteria of the Senate-approved Standards that apply in your Division. The review is conducted in camera, but the DRC may, at any time the majority deems it necessary, ask you, the candidate, for clarification of any material in your TPF. The DRC may also ask you, the candidate, or your Dean, to appear before it to answer questions about your application. A written record of any such requests and/or questions from the DRC, and your or your Dean’s responses to them, will be placed in your TPF.

After deliberating on your application, and determining whether or not you have met the Standards, the DRC will conduct a vote on a motion that is framed in the affirmative: that you be granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. The recommendation will be determined by a majority of the ballots cast and each member of the DRC will be required to state the reasons that were persuasive in his or her vote. Any member dissenting from the majority vote will be required to state his or her reasons in writing, substantiated by reference to the Standards, and the dissent will be appended to the majority report. No names will be attached to either the majority recommendation or any dissenting votes.

You will receive a copy of the Recommendation and Report of the DRC when it is forwarded to your Dean, and forwarded, along with your TPF (including any additional documentation added as described above) to the Chair of the URC. If the DRC’s recommendation is to deny tenure or promotion, you have the right to respond in writing to the Recommendation and Report and to have this included in the submission to the URC.

The URC is an eleven member committee consisting of the Provost, three Deans appointed by the Provost, and a tenured faculty member elected by and from the membership of each of the seven UFV faculties. Each faculty also elects an alternate. A member who misses two consecutive regular meetings will be deemed to have resigned from the URC and will be replaced by the alternate. Quorum for all meetings of the URC is two thirds of the appointed and elected membership. No member present at a meeting where a vote on your application is being conducted may abstain from the vote and the Chair may vote only in the case of a tie.

The URC’s assessment of your application is governed by procedural fairness and the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, discretion and equity, and based entirely and only on information contained in your TPF, including the Recommendation and Report of the DRC. The assessment is conducted in camera, but the URC may, at any time the majority deems it necessary, ask you for clarification of any material in your TPF. The URC may also ask you or your Dean to appear before it to answer questions about your application. A written
record of both any such requests and/or questions from the URC, and your or your Dean’s responses, will be placed in your TPF.

The URC will review your TPF and the Recommendation and Report of the DRC, and after determining whether or not your application meets the Standards, all Committee members present will vote on a motion that is framed in the affirmative: that you be granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. The recommendation will be determined by a majority of the ballots cast, and each member of the URC will, after the vote has been cast, state the reasons that were persuasive in his or her vote. Any member dissenting from the majority recommendation will state his or her reasons in writing, and the Chair will ensure that the dissent is appended to the report.

If the URC makes a negative recommendation, you have the right to appeal the decision to the URAC. In such cases, you must submit a Notice of Appeal, including a statement of your case, to the URAC chair, copied to the Presidents of UFV and UFV-FSA within ten (10) business days of having received the URC recommendation.

Any such appeal must be based on one or more of: a) a material procedural irregularity or defect in the application of the Procedures; or b) an unreasonable decision on the basis of the evidence of the improper application of the Standards. Your appeal cannot be based on the contents of the Standards themselves.

The URAC must review the recommendation of the URC and will recommend to the UFV President that either: a) the URC’s negative recommendation be upheld; or b) the URC’s recommendation be reconsidered. If the URAC determines the grounds for the appeal have been substantiated, then it must recommend a mechanism by which such error can be corrected, and refer the matter back to the URC, giving specific recommendations on how to deal with the case. The URC must then report the action it took in response to the URAC and send its report along with the complete TPF to the President.

The President reviews the recommendations of the URC, or if applicable the URAC, and on or before June 1 of the review year decides that tenure be granted or that tenure be denied. The President may not capriciously overturn a recommendation of the URC and if his or her decision is to deny tenure, he or she must specify the reasons in writing. The decision of the President is final and not subject to appeal. The decision of the President may be grieved as described in Article 7 of the CA.

Guidelines for Application for Promotion to Professor

As a tenured Associate Professor, you are eligible at any time to apply promotion to Professor. In such cases it is your responsibility to notify your Dean no later than March 31 for review in the following academic year. Having notified your Dean of this intent, the steps and timelines for submission of your Dossier (or any subsequent withdrawal of your notification to apply), the opening of your TPF, and review by the DRC, URC, and if necessary the URAC, and through the decision of the President, are the same as described above for applications for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. The final decision of the President will be either that you will be promoted or that you will not be promoted. Such decision is subject to the same criteria as described in the previous paragraph.

Over and above the additional requirements for your TPF (as described in the Procedures) you also participate in the selection of two external peer reviewers. On or before June 10 of the year of your application, you must
provide the Dean with the names of two external reviewers who are recognized academics in your discipline or field and hold or have held the rank of Professor.

In exceptional circumstances, one of your recommended names can be a reviewer who is not an academic but has equivalent qualifications or expertise. In any case, you cannot recommend family members, anyone who served as your graduate or postdoctoral supervisor or has collaborated with you in a meaningful way in the five years previous to your application, or anyone who holds or has ever held an appointment at UFV.

As part of this process, your DRC must also recommend the names of two external reviewers to your Dean, no later than June 22 of the year of application. (This does mean that for all applications for promotion to Professor, the DRC will have to access your Dossier before it is officially opened for review in the review year.) The Dean then selects one name from the two names you provide and one name from the names provided by the DRC. You have the right to challenge either of the names selected by the Dean, and the Dean is obligated to consider the merit of any such challenge.

If none of the reviewers are able to provide an assessment, the Dean will ask you and the DRC to provide a supplementary list of two potential reviewers each. If you or the DRC are unable to provide supplementary names, the Dean is responsible to find two suitable external reviewers. Regardless, the names of the two external reviewers finally chosen will not be made known to you. You will receive anonymized copies of their assessments and you have the opportunity to respond in writing to them, and to include them in your TPF.

Failure by either of the two external reviewers to provide an assessment prior to consideration by the DRC will not prejudice your application in any way. In such cases, the DRC will be instructed that it can base its decision on only one external review.

In the event of an unsuccessful application for promotion to Professor you must wait two academic years before re-applying. In such cases, you must repeat the entire application process, including the submission of a new Dossier and new letters of assessments from external reviewers, as described above. You may re-apply for promotion to Professor no more than twice.