



Office of the Provost

Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Promotion and Tenure Evaluation Guidelines

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Office of the Provost
James Madison University

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Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication
Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
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Evaluation for promotion and tenure in Writing, Rhetoric & Technical Communication is considered in the three areas outlined in the *JMU Faculty Handbook*: Teaching, Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications, and Professional Service.

The AUH and a subcommittee of the AUPAC consisting of at least three tenured faculty members consider all applications for tenure and promotion. The AUPAC and the AUH make separate recommendations to the dean on each application for promotion and/or tenure.

Tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty are evaluated across a range of activities, contributions, and accomplishments, as outlined below. Evaluation criteria reflect the diversity of faculty interests and areas within WRTC.

When applying for tenure or promotion, faculty members should submit a dossier that makes their case based upon these guidelines, emphasizing the value of the faculty member's specific achievements and offering supporting documents in evidence of those achievements.

In addition to the dossier, the AUH and AUPAC consider "patterns of prior annual evaluations" in making promotion and tenure decisions, as prescribed by *The Faculty Handbook*. As such, WRTC uses a summative evaluation, wherein the preponderance of previous ratings from annual evaluations, along with the faculty member's promotion/tenure dossier, collectively determine the ratings for tenure and promotion. The ratings for tenure and promotion follow those articulated in the *Faculty Handbook* and are restricted to "unsatisfactory," "satisfactory," and "excellent."

Tenure-track promotion

- Tenure and Assistant to Associate Professor: five years in rank, excellent rating in teaching or scholarship and at least satisfactory in the other two
- Associate to Full Professor: five years in rank, excellent rating in teaching and one other category, and at least satisfactory in the third

A tenure-track faculty member who applies for promotion before completing five years in academic rank must present compelling evidence of accomplishment. The requirements in such cases are outlined separately.

Non-tenure-track promotion

- Lecturer to Senior Lecturer: five years in rank, excellent rating in teaching and at least satisfactory in the other two categories
- Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer: five years in rank, excellent rating in teaching and one other category, and at least satisfactory in the third

A non-tenure track faculty member who applies for promotion before completing five years in academic rank must present compelling evidence of accomplishment. The requirements

governing in such cases are outlined separately.

Because the achievement of tenure and promotion is one of the most important milestones in a faculty member's career, faculty are strongly encouraged to complete an extensive review process during the mid-point of eligibility (typically, the third year) in a tenure-track or promotion-eligible position. During this process, the faculty member submits materials demonstrating satisfactory progress toward tenure or promotion. The AUPAC and AUH evaluate the dossier and share their findings with the faculty member with the aim of advising them toward that progress.

In making their evaluation for promotion or tenure, AUPAC and AUH are not limited to those materials submitted by the candidate and may conduct a review of a candidate's departmental file.

These policies can be modified with majority vote of promotion-track faculty.

GUIDELINES: Tenure-Track Faculty

The AUPAC and AUH may exercise discretion in evaluating the quality of teaching, scholarship and publications, and service.

Teaching: Satisfactory

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence in the categories below to support a satisfactory rating in teaching:

- Teaches relevant and well-prepared material
- Receives satisfactory student evaluations*
- Works to improve teaching by attending conferences, courses, or workshops
- Responds appropriately to annual evaluations, providing evidence of change or adequately addressing disagreement
- Meets the "working conditions" outlined in the university's *Faculty Handbook*, including advising students, keeping office hours, and meeting classes as scheduled.

Teaching: Excellent

In addition to the items listed under “Satisfactory,” a faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in two or more of the categories below to support an excellent rating in teaching. Evidence, here, should demonstrate effectiveness and commitment beyond meeting course, mentoring or advising requirements:

- Receives favorable peer evaluations
- Receives generally superior student evaluations*
- Develops new courses or significantly revises existing courses
- Demonstrates an exceptional contribution to teaching through mentorship of teaching assistants, graduate assistants, and/or Writing Center tutors
- Chairs theses or practicums
- Conducts teaching-related workshops that have a significant impact on the work of other teachers
- Develops creative teaching methods, including (but not limited to) significant engagement in team or interdisciplinary teaching, or service as a guest lecturer or consultant. Other examples might include the innovative use of outside resources and instructional alternatives such as guest speakers, field trips, visiting artists and scholars
- Implements innovative technology in courses
- Demonstrates superior achievement in academic advising, directing internships, career counseling, independent studies, or mentoring students
- Enhances instructional development by securing university, state, or local grants in support of teaching
- Earns teaching awards or other recognition of excellence in teaching

***Teaching evaluations may be used in conjunction with other evidence to show satisfactory teaching or excellence in teaching, but they cannot be used as the sole measure of teaching.**

Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications: Satisfactory

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence of at least one of the following to support a satisfactory rating in scholarship:

- 1) A book published by a recognized press.
- 2) An edited volume or monograph published by a recognized press, including technical manuals. This may also include establishing, editing or maintaining a professional website recognized for significant contributions in the field.
- 3) At least three published articles, scholarly essays, or creative works in refereed or objectively evaluated journals or competitive, professional media. This includes book

chapters, refereed online venues or recognized electronic publications, and juried or refereed competitions.

The receipt of a major grant or a participation in national or international program of recognized, organized research may also be considered.

Note that while the annual guidelines allow faculty members to earn satisfactory ratings *without* publication in an individual academic year, a faculty member cannot earn promotion and/or tenure without this cumulative evidence of publication.

Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications: Excellent

In addition to the items listed under “Satisfactory” above, a faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in one or more of the categories to support an excellent rating in professional and scholarly achievement:

- Presentations at a refereed/juried state, regional, national, or international conference, including recognized online conferences
- Significant participation in professional conferences (state, regional, national, or international) in the faculty member’s discipline. “Participation” may come in the form of a panel discussion, focus group, or other comparable activity
- Consultations to improve the faculty member’s academic discipline
- Serving on an editorial board of a leading state, regional, national, or international academic journal or serving as editor of an online journal
- Organizing or presenting at local, regional, national, or international; workshops
- Publishing notes, reviews, or short entries in academic or professional journals, books, or reference publications
- Receiving a significant research grant or funding
- Receiving awards or other honors for scholarship
- Editing technical manuals, instructions, or websites for professionals in the faculty member’s field

Please note that letters of acceptance for recent or forthcoming work may be submitted and evaluated in the promotion or tenure application.

Professional Service: Satisfactory

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in one or more of the categories below to support a satisfactory rating in professional service:

- Participates in the regular business of WRTC, including regular attendance at scheduled WRTC faculty meetings and activities
- Serves regularly on at least two department, college, or university committees
- Service in comparable special assignments, either internally or externally, which may have been substituted for committee assignments

Professional Service: Excellent

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion or tenure should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in one or more of the categories below to support an excellent rating in professional service:

Internal Professional Service

- Directing multiple on-campus workshops
- Performing significant service on additional WRTC, college, university, or *ad hoc* committees
- Excellent performance as chair of a WRTC, college, or university committee
- Developing new on-campus programs that contribute to the enrichment of WRTC, the college, or the university
- Organizing on-campus activities that contribute significantly to the enrichment of WRTC's mission

External Professional Service

- Serving as reviewer of manuscripts/submissions for a professional meeting, a conference (local, regional, national, or international), a journal, or a book
- Serving as program organizer/chair for a professional meeting or conference
- Serving as an officer, executive, or board member of a professional association (local, regional, national, or international)

Community Service

- Participating on local, state, or national boards, commissions, or task forces
- Developing classes or workshops for groups outside the university
- Participating in service to the community

Note: The above guidelines apply to RTA faculty members at the rank of assistant or associate professor.

PROMOTION GUIDELINES: Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members

The AUPAC and AUH may exercise discretion in evaluating the quality of teaching, scholarship and publications, and service.

Non-TT faculty members must earn an excellent rating in teaching to be considered for promotion to Senior or Principal Lecturer.

Teaching: Excellent

Non-TT faculty members being evaluated for promotion should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in four or more of the categories below to support an excellent rating in teaching within the evaluation period (typically, the previous five years*). Evidence, here, should demonstrate effectiveness and commitment beyond meeting course, mentoring or advising requirements:

- Receives consistently favorable peer evaluations
- Works consistently to revise assigned courses, ensuring they are current in the discipline
- Works consistently to improve teaching through participation in conferences, courses, or workshops (faculty members will need to demonstrate that they have applied this knowledge and/or new methodologies in their courses)
- Develops creative teaching methods, including (but not limited to) significant engagement in team or interdisciplinary teaching or the innovative use of outside resources and instructional alternatives such as guest speakers, field trips, visiting artists and scholars
- Conducts teaching-related workshops that have a significant impact on the work of other teachers
- Makes significant contributions to assessment that impact teaching across the unit, college, and/or university
- Serves as a consultant or invited guest speaker on teaching
- Demonstrates significant, regular contributions to student consultation efforts (“tutoring”) through work at the Writing Center, Learning Centers, Libraries (evidence may include student testimonials, peer and/or supervisor evaluations)
- Publishes teaching-related notes, commentary, curricular materials, or article in a refereed publication (may be used to support teaching or scholarship, but not both)
- Maintains a pattern of generally superior student evaluations
- Develops new courses

- Demonstrates an exceptional contribution to teaching through mentorship of teaching assistants, graduate assistants, and/or adjunct faculty
- Demonstrates superior achievement in academic advising, internship, career counseling, or independent studies
- Enhances instructional development by securing university, state, or local grants in support of teaching
- Earns teaching awards or other recognition of excellence in teaching
- Chairs theses or practicums

***Note: Non-tenure-track faculty members whose hiring precedes JMU's introduction of the RTA promotion path to Senior Lecturer may include evidence from the previous 10 years.**

Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications: Satisfactory

As non-TT faculty members are expected to devote the majority of their energies to teaching, there is no requirement or benchmark of peer-reviewed or otherwise objective publications to be considered for promotion. However, non-TT faculty must have earned annual ratings of satisfactory or excellent in scholarship in each of the previous five years leading to promotion.

Non-TT faculty members being evaluated for promotion must include a summary and evidence of continued scholarly and/or professional development in their application.

Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications: Excellent

Senior Lecturers who wish to apply for Principal Lecturer may provide evidence of at least one of the following to support an Excellent rating in scholarship within the evaluation period:

- A book published by a recognized press.
- An edited volume or monograph published by a recognized press, including technical manuals. This may also include establishing, editing or maintaining a professional website recognized for significant contributions in the field.
- At least three of the following in refereed or objectively evaluated forums or competitive, professional media:
 - published articles or book chapters
 - scholarly essays
 - creative works
 - funded external grants
 - award for research or scholarship

Participation in local, national or international program of recognized, organized research/intellectual work may also be considered.

Scholarly articles used to support a case in the area of teaching may not also be counted here.

Note that letters of acceptance for recent or forthcoming work may be submitted and evaluated in the promotion or tenure application.

Professional Service: Satisfactory

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in one or more of the categories below to support a satisfactory rating in professional service:

- Participates in the regular business of WRTC, including regular attendance at scheduled WRTC faculty meetings and activities
- Serves effectively on two department, college, or university committees
- Service in comparable special assignments, either internally or externally, which may have been substituted for committee assignments

Professional Service: Excellent

A faculty member being evaluated for promotion should provide evidence of as many items as appropriate in one or more of the categories below to support an excellent rating in professional service:

Internal Professional Service

- Directing multiple on-campus workshops
- Makes exceptional, regular contributions to two department, college, or university committees as assigned
- Performing significant service on additional WRTC, college, university, or *ad hoc* committees
- Excellent performance as chair of a WRTC, college, or university committee
- Developing new on-campus programs that contribute to the enrichment of WRTC, the college, or the university
- Organizing on-campus activities that contribute significantly to the enrichment of WRTC's mission
- Conducts effective peer evaluations, including class observations and consultation with part-time faculty members (faculty members should look to demonstrate that peer evaluations led to positive change or improvement)

External Professional Service

- Serving as reviewer of manuscripts/submissions for a professional meeting, a conference (local, regional, national, or international), a journal, or a book
- Serving as program organizer/chair for a professional meeting or conference

- Serving as an officer, executive, or board member of a professional association (local, regional, national, or international)

Community Service

- Participating on local, state, or national boards, commissions, or task forces
- Developing classes or workshops for groups outside the university
- Participating in service to the community

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Non-Tenure-Track Rank Descriptions:

Lecturer: Lecturers are expected to be effective teachers, participate in professional service activities, and to engage in activities that support professional/scholarly development. Lecturers may perform other tasks as required by the department including, but not limited to, student advising, revising courses and curricula, and other administrative duties. Lecturers must have earned a minimum of a master’s degree in the discipline, or related field, and have work experience and/or professional certifications that meet SACSCOC and other departmental/college accreditation requirements.

Senior Lecturer: The Senior Lecturer is expected to demonstrate a sustained record of expert teaching, and provide evidence of continued service and professional/scholarly development in their field of study. Scholarly achievement (e.g., scholarship and publication) is not a requirement, but such accomplishments may be considered as part of the evaluation for promotion. Senior Lecturers may be tasked with mentoring colleagues and undergraduate students, assisting with the development of courses or curricula, and have a sustained record of external outreach.

Principal Lecturer: The Principal Lecturer is expected to demonstrate a sustained record of exemplary teaching and also excellence in either service or professional/scholarly development in their field of study. In addition, a Principal Lecturer may be expected to have a considerable role in mentoring colleagues and graduate teaching assistants, leading course development or curricula changes, and guiding special instructional initiatives.

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