

# **Principles and Essential Features of Standards Documents**

Senate Committee on Promotion, Tenure and Faculty Standards

October 2007

## **Preamble**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to departments, Faculties, Schools and Divisions in finalizing their respective standards documents. The members of the Senate Committee on Promotion, Tenure and Faculty Standards (PTFSC) have unanimously agreed to the principles outlined below.

These principles and essential features of departmental standards documents are to address the issue of appraisal, defined as a process that provides an evaluation of a faculty member's overall performance, and allowing informed decisions to be made for promotion and tenure purposes.

Achieving tenure and promotion through the ranks is based on incremental and accumulative growth of a faculty member in his/her teaching or professional role, and in service. To merit tenure or promotion, faculty members must be prepared to have their performance assessed against increasing expectations for effectiveness in teaching, recognized research, scholarly and creative work, and contributions to service within the university community as well as to the profession (locally, nationally and internationally).

Departmental standards for promotion and tenure should encourage faculty members to create a Promotion and Tenure Portfolio that describes the candidate's activities, achievements, and future plans in the categories of teaching, research, scholarship, creative or professional work, and service. This Portfolio should provide evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, of the candidate's performance.

Divisions with non-teaching faculty members should define professional practice in the context of their particular vocation or profession. Similarly, teaching faculty in the School of Trades and Technology should define the standards for professional skills performance in the context of their respective trades.

## **Principles**

The PTFSC recognizes that the quantitative standards for tenure and promotion, e.g., the number of publications required, vary from discipline to discipline and are different in our Faculties, Schools and Divisions. Therefore, the PTFSC strongly encourages departments to formulate standards using quantitative or qualitative methods depending on the nature of the department or discipline. Rather than merely emphasizing minimum quantitative requirements in the areas of teaching, research, scholarly or creative work, professional work and service, qualitative language should also be used where appropriate. For example, the significance of research, scholarly, creative or professional

work should determine whether a candidate merits tenure or promotion, not simply a particular number of publications, creative performances or professional contributions. While quantity and frequency of research or creative output is important, emphasis also needs to be placed on the quality and significance of one's work. The PTFSC expects that departmental standards indicate that the research, scholarly, creative or professional work of an Associate Professor must be recognized and assessed at a national level, and that of a Full Professor at an international level. Similarly, the teaching performance and professional contributions of Senior Lecturers have to be recognized and assessed at the national level, and that of a Principal Lecturer at an international level. Finally, tenure and promotion of non-teaching faculty members such as Coordinators, Counsellors, Librarians and Instructional Designers also have to be based on increasing recognition of the member's professional work at a local, national and ultimately international level.

### *Teaching*

Achieving tenure or promotion depends on documented evidence with respect to effective teaching. For example, the presentation of a teaching portfolio as described in the Collective Agreement should form part of the Tenure and Promotion Portfolio. Teaching effectiveness is an expression of competence in teaching and requires at the most basic level that faculty members keep current in their respective disciplines and thus contribute to the transfer of knowledge and skills reflecting the latest developments in their area of expertise. For the purpose of promotion, particular emphasis should be placed on faculty members' documented contributions to teaching innovation and on their demonstrated ability to assist students in reaching their educational goals. Student success should be recognized provided that a faculty member presents documented evidence of such success, e.g., demonstrating that the faculty member has a history of mentoring students with outcomes related to that mentoring. The supervision of undergraduate and graduate students can also be an important component of teaching duties for both bipartite and tripartite faculty and, if applicable, should be fully recognized for tenure and promotion consideration. For tripartite faculty for whom student supervision is linked to their research obligations, the effectiveness of their supervision of student research projects should be assessed both in terms of their role as sole supervisor or head of a supervisory team, and in terms of TRU's institutional goal of integrating teaching with research. For bipartite faculty who may participate in a supervisory team headed by a tripartite faculty member, the effectiveness of their supervisory duties should be assessed in terms of their ability to transfer knowledge and assist students in reaching their goals. Serving as an external examiner or co-supervisor of graduate students at other universities should also be recognized for the purpose of tenure and promotion. The PTFSC acknowledges that effective teaching is connected to faculty members' research, scholarly and creative work, professional work and service.

### *Research, Scholarship and Creative Work*

Research, scholarship or creative work is expected of all faculty members in tripartite appointments. As outlined above, it is important to assess faculty members' work both quantitatively and qualitatively. The most effective way to demonstrate the significance of one's work is through the process of arm's length peer review. Therefore, peer-reviewed dissemination of scholarly or creative work is an integral part of building a successful

career as a tripartite faculty member. Faculty members should also document that they have developed an ongoing plan of research, scholarship or creative work. Such a plan facilitates the incremental and accumulative growth of a faculty member with respect to his/her research, scholarly or creative work and reflects increasing performance expectations as an essential feature of the progression through the ranks.

### *Service*

Both bipartite and tripartite faculty members have to be actively engaged in collegial and professional service in order to achieve tenure and promotion. Attending departmental meetings is a service contribution expected of all faculty members as part of their basic duties and responsibilities. In itself it does not constitute sufficient service. Service for the purpose of tenure and promotion must reach beyond just attending departmental meetings and includes contributions to the internal TRU community as well as to the community and profession external to the university. For tenure and promotion, faculty members must provide evidence of service contributions. A strong service component of a Tenure and Promotion Portfolio includes an appropriate mix of contributions to the collegial self-governance of the university, discipline-related or professional contributions to regional, provincial, national and international communities and participation in provincial, national or international service groups, academic, professional and volunteer organizations.

### **Essential Features of Departmental Standards Documents**

The following key features emerged from reviewing the initial set of submissions and after discussion of these draft standards documents by the Committee at its July meeting. The points listed below reflect the thoughts expressed in departmental submissions as well as the subsequent deliberations of the PTFSC.

Departmental Standards Documents should

- 1) use Boyer's scholarship categories: Discovery (research), Integration (synthesis), Application and Engagement (practice), and Teaching (learning);
- 2) recognize the values articulated in TRU's strategic plan and acknowledge the service and professional activities that further the goals of the University and the Faculty Member's academic discipline;
- 3) express a commitment to strong performance in teaching, scholarship, creative work, professional work, and service;
- 4) assist faculty members in developing long-term career goals and objectives;
- 5) reflect national standards of their respective academic disciplines or professions in teaching, research, creative work, professional work and service;

- 6) articulate that the onus is on candidates to demonstrate that they merit tenure and/or promotion;
- 7) state that time served in a particular rank is in itself not a sufficient reason for promotion;
- 8) recognize that the demonstrable significance of a candidate's work in teaching, research, scholarship, creative or professional work, and service is an important criterion for tenure and promotion;
- 9) be transparent, consistent, achievable, and establish equally rigorous standards for bipartite and tripartite career paths;
- 10) clearly communicate to faculty members the expectations and benchmarks for tenure and promotion;
- 11) require that evidence of achievement in teaching, research, scholarly and/or creative work, professional work and service for the purpose of promotion demonstrates that the candidate has exceeded the performance level expected for the rank currently held; and
- 12) make explicit reference to Article 15.10 of the Collective Agreement (Criteria for Academic Designation, Tenure and Promotion) and to Article 15, Appendix 1, which outlines the lists of activities that "might be used to demonstrate the required level of competence in teaching."

**\*\*Please note:**

**For item 12) "Article 15.10" referenced is now Article 6.11, and "Article 15, Appendix 1" is now Article 6, Appendix I – it now outlines the list of activities that must be included and those that may be included.**

**"Senate Committee on Promotion, Tenure and Faculty Standards (PTFSC)" is now the "University Tenure and Promotion Committee (UTPC)".**

**--- update Nov 2020**