

# **Advice for Building a Personnel File for Tenure and Promotion**

From the Campus Faculty Personnel Committee

LIU Post

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to provide some definitions and possible sources of evidence for candidates to keep in mind as they prepare their application materials for tenure and promotion.

It should be noted that, from the time of appointment at LIU Post, candidates should maintain awareness of Department Personnel Guidelines and the make appropriate responses to feedback from department and Dean during the annual reappointment process. Dealing with issues in person as they arise may be more effective than waiting for Department Personnel Committee, Chair, and Dean letters to be placed in the personnel file. Such departmental feedback should provide faculty with developmental guidance as they work toward promotion and tenure. Additionally, it is recommended that faculty attend the yearly meetings co-led by the Campus Faculty Personnel Committee and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

## **Part I Definitions and Possible Evidence**

While there may be variations among departments, the following points apply to applications for tenure or promotion and to reappointments more generally:

Candidates will be assessed in the three areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Sections below describe how each area is defined and indicate the types of evidence the CFPC believes make the strongest case for personnel action.

### Teaching

Teaching refers to all instruction and advising activities that affect or support the academic progress of students. These activities include classroom, laboratory, studio, field, and clinical teaching and evaluation; the supervision of research, writing, independent study, theses, and performance; individual and group advising and mentoring; preparation of courses; development of curricular and instructional materials; instructional innovations; and application of educational technologies.

#### Possible Forms of Evidence:

Student evaluations of teaching (University of Washington forms) must be considered. In keeping with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, no anonymous information can be placed in faculty personnel files. Therefore, these evaluations are not physically included in personnel files. Each department has the option of describing in its personnel guidelines how these student evaluations will be used and weighted.

Faculty peer evaluations provide useful measures of the manner in which a professor's

teaching is received and perceived by students and faculty peers. It may be helpful for those who provide the peer evaluations to review the Best Practices document, which is available through the Academic Affairs portion of the LIU website:

<http://liu.edu/Academic-Affairs.coaspx>

Teaching effectiveness in the creative arts is also evident in student activities that extend beyond the classroom and include, but are not limited to, the following: gallery exhibitions, performance showcases, national and regional festivals, master classes, performing tours, and grants or fellowships to participate in artist residencies.

Innovations in pedagogy; development of courses, curricula, and textbooks; and examples of student work may comprise evidence of teaching effectiveness.

Involvement in student research (independent study, honors theses, mentoring of student creative competitions and presentations) may comprise evidence of teaching effectiveness. But testimonials from selected students or friends should not be, by themselves, expected to carry much weight in the Committee's deliberations, and the procedure for obtaining testimonials should be clearly described.

The ARPT (Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure) form requests syllabuses from the previous two years. These must be placed in the personnel file. Since syllabuses submitted to the Dean each semester for instructional and accreditation purposes are not routinely placed in personnel files, candidates for personnel action will not have all their syllabuses in the file and may wish to include additional representative and innovative syllabuses.

### Scholarship

Scholarship is as varied as the disciplines. Across disciplines, the highest indication of scholarship is the ability to make original contributions in one's field of knowledge using methodology that is consistent with the best practices of that field. It may include, but is not limited to: (a) research contributing to a body of knowledge; (b) works describing the development or implementation of new technologies, materials, or methods; (c) integration of knowledge that leads to new interpretations or applications; or (d) creative expression or interpretation in the arts. Creative expression includes, but is not limited to choreography and dance performance, creative writing, direction and design of plays, gallery and site-specific exhibitions of visual art, commissions for public artwork, digital design for print and web, digital game design, direction of film and video, and musical composition and performance. Materials in languages other than English should be accompanied by a brief summary or description in English when submitted to the file.

### Possible Forms of Evidence:

Publications appearing in relevant peer-reviewed journals are primary evidence of traditional scholarship. For this type of evidence, information concerning the journal, including how submissions are reviewed, is a consideration.

Books published by appropriate publishing companies. For this type of evidence, information concerning the publishing company, including the review process for the work, may be helpful.

While the publication of textbooks is primarily evidence of teaching, in some cases textbooks may illustrate scholarship. To do so, a textbook must usually offer original insights and perspectives in the field or be cited by scholars and researchers.

For candidates in the creative arts, it is helpful to provide evidence that the candidate has attained the status of emerging artist. Such documentation should show sustained creative activity of high quality as determined by experts in the field, independent peers, and reputable adjudicators or curators. Nationally and internationally recognized creative activity will be given more weight than activity at the local or regional level.

Reviews of the candidate's published materials, performances, or exhibits are another indicator of scholarly standing.

Citation of a candidate's work in the professional literature is also an indicator of scholarly standing.

Awards, prizes, grants, artist residencies, and extramural research funding from organizations using peer review committees are indexes of scholarly potential for junior colleagues, and sustained support denotes peer acceptance of the importance of the research activity for senior members of the faculty.

Invited and peer reviewed addresses and presentations given at national and international conferences reflect the applicant's scholarly productivity and ability.

Solicitation of letters from external reviewers may be authorized by the guidelines of some departments according to carefully articulated procedures.

Other miscellaneous materials may sometimes provide supplementary evidence of accomplishment, for example, discussions of a candidate's work in scholarly literature or reprints in collections.

In very special circumstances unpublished material intended of publication but not accepted may be an additional indicator of a candidate's competence and achievement when accompanied by critical assessment of its merits.

Scholarship done in collaboration should include an explanation of the candidate's contribution. It is sometimes also helpful for candidates to ask co-authors to provide descriptions of each person's participation.

Service

Faculty service is essential to the University's success in achieving its central mission, and a cumulative record in this area is an expectation for tenure and for promotion to all ranks. It covers departmental and extra-departmental service and administrative contributions, contributions to faculty governance, university and departmental accreditation, campus-level committee work, university-level service, service to the public (which draws on the candidate's professional expertise), and service to the profession. However, work done on administrative contract (rather than on faculty contract) is not a substitute for service as a faculty member. Simple notation of service activity is not so useful as an explanation of duties and service activities.

Possible Forms of Evidence:

Service on department, Campus, and University committees with inclusive dates should be accompanied by description of the work of the committee and of the candidate's contribution. The purpose of a committee should be made clear if the name or acronym is not self-explanatory.

Supporting letters from those on the committee or those affected by the committee's work may be helpful.

In the case of service to organizations within the profession, a description of the organization and evidence of its regional, national, or international stature and service to the profession may be useful alongside offices held, scholarly activities, and consultative service.

## **Part II Preparation and Submission of Application Form**

A candidate for any personnel action should note that (apart from University of Washington students evaluations) personnel recommendations can only be based on materials in the personnel file in the Dean's office. Such materials are reviewed at each level of evaluation, so nothing in the personnel file needs to be duplicated.

However, to aid in the examination of materials, candidates must also submit the current version of the ARPT (Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure) form, which can be found on the Academic Affairs section of the LIU webpage. The three statements that are part of the ARPT form should highlight significant accomplishments and cite docket numbers to help locate materials. In particular, a candidate who reapplies for tenure or promotion should emphasize evidence new since the previous consideration.

The ARPT forms that are the most helpful include well crafted versions of the three included statements: A Scholarly Research or equivalent Creative Work Narrative, a Teaching Narrative, and a Service Narrative.

The Teaching Narrative might include a description of the candidate's approach to teaching, including self-reflections on pedagogical approaches and responses to student and peer evaluations, A description of past accomplishments and goals for upcoming

years, self-evaluation of teaching in classes of different types, sizes, and levels. It may be helpful to refer to data from student observations if they have assisted the candidate in addressing pedagogical issues. For additional help in dealing with student evaluations, see:

[www.washington.edu/oea/services/course\\_eval/uw\\_seattle/adjusted\\_medians.html](http://www.washington.edu/oea/services/course_eval/uw_seattle/adjusted_medians.html)  
[www.washington.edu/oea/services/course\\_eval/cei.html](http://www.washington.edu/oea/services/course_eval/cei.html)

The Scholarly Research or Creative Work Narrative might include a description of the development and direction of the candidate's professional career; a discussion of the nature of research or creative activity and publications, performances, and exhibits; and a discussion of current work, projects, and plans for upcoming years. In this narrative, work should be discussed not merely listed, but parenthetical docket numbers may help locating materials.

The Service Narrative might include a description of the candidate's service to the department, School or College, Campus, University, and larger community or discipline. More useful than lists are explanations of qualitative contributions, especially when supported by citation of documents in the personnel file.