

# **Pre-tenure review preparation guidelines**

This document seeks to explain the nature of the pre-tenure process at Augustana and to offer suggestions that may result in more standardized presentations and more effective and transparent case preparation by candidates and Chairs.

## **An overview of the tenure process**

The tenure process is described in Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook. When the President and the Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) consider a candidate for tenure, at least four considerations are taken into account:

- The demonstrated performance of the candidate
- The current staffing and future needs of the department(s) involved
- The likelihood that the College could attract a more qualified candidate
- The financial situation of the College

It is important to be aware that, while any of these factors may have an important influence on the decision to award tenure or not, only the first factor is within the control of the candidate. Considerations such as how the financial condition of the College might affect a tenure decision are within the purview of the administration and the Board of Trustees.

## **Evaluating a candidate's performance**

In evaluating your performance, the committee typically considers the same three prevailing performance criteria.

The first of these criteria is *teaching effectiveness*, which also includes any student advising and mentoring that you have done. FWC asks for the opinions of colleagues who observe your teaching, and looks at the clarity and specificity of course and advising syllabi, and the variety and difficulty of the courses taught. Another measure is student course evaluations (Student Ratings of Instruction, SRIs; currently the IDEA form). Evidence of student learning is the most important element of a case for teaching effectiveness but is often the hardest component to assess.

The second criterion is *professional expression and development*, an umbrella term used to signify all of those activities which reveal the presence of an active, imaginative and developing intellect. Evidence of professional expression might include submission or acceptance of publications, professional presentations, public presentations of artistic creations and performances, the application for or receipt of research grants, and conference or other presentations. Evidence of professional development might include attendance at professional conferences and workshops, completion of professional certification, and continuing education in relevant areas.

The final criterion is *service to the College and to the community*. The College has always held that the responsibilities of its professionals extend beyond the limits of their classrooms and disciplinary interests, which means that FWC looks for evidence that your presence has enriched the communities in which you live and work. While off-campus community service beyond that which involves professional expertise is encouraged, it is voluntary; that is, lack of active community service (e.g., scout parent, church or municipal committee representative...) not

directly linked to your profession will not be viewed negatively by FWC or the President. However, service to the College and your profession is a central expectation for tenure-track faculty. On-campus service includes departmental and campus-wide committee work, while pertinent off-campus activities include service to professional organizations, journals or conferences, as officers, editors and reviewers, and organizers and session chairs, respectively.

## **Guidelines for the preparation of the pre-tenure case**

The remainder of this document offers a list of suggestions which will help you and your advocates generate the best possible evidence to strengthen your case-making narrative for FWC's consideration.

### **Responsibility of the candidate**

The primary responsibility for preparing an effective pre-tenure case rests with you, the candidate, not with your Department Chair. Do not presume that your successes are self-evident; this is *not* the time to be humble – you must detail your accomplishments and make a persuasive argument as to their relevance to your case. Just because you may really be good enough to be granted tenure in the future doesn't mean that FWC will come to that same conclusion, if your portfolio is not complete or convincing. You should take the initiative whenever necessary to make sure that your Chair is well informed about the progress of your career. Make sure that the Chair and all tenured department members have the opportunity to observe your work often and to gather necessary evidence as specified in the

guidelines for Chairs (e.g., surveys of current students and alumni, feedback from departmental colleagues, etc.). Remember that you are trying to become a permanent part of a team, and most of your senior team members have a say in that decision; thus, it behooves you to work with your Chair to address issues of collegiality or differences of opinion, suggestions, or criticisms that you may have received from your senior departmental colleagues. If you need advice or counsel, any of the Division Chairs or the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee would be pleased to offer assistance or guidance.

The College's eventual decision about your tenure candidacy reflects not only judgments about what you have accomplished, but also judgments about what you are likely to accomplish in the future. We must ask not only who you *are*, but also who are you going *to become*. Indeed, the greatest challenge in this entire decision-making process is trying to predict whether an individual, after several years of probationary employment, will still be vital and flexible after 10, 20, or 30 career years at the College.

In this sense, then, you are well-advised to build a case that projects the constructive role you could play as a member of your home department, your own probable growth and maturation as a teacher and advisor, an academic professional, and a contributor of service as an Augustana faculty member in the general sense. It may be useful to keep the forward-looking nature of our deliberations in mind as you decide how best to present your case. In particular, you may wish to use your opening oral presentation during the review as an opportunity to highlight these issues.

Upload the well-organized materials comprising your portfolio into your Google Drive folder and share them with your Departmental Chair, all tenured members of your department and *BOTH* [facultywelfare@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfare@augustana.edu) AND

[facultywelfarecommitteegroup@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfarecommitteegroup@augustana.edu) (one site is for archiving and the other is for distribution to committee members). You must label the shared main folder with the following information, formatted as specified: “Pre-tenure# portfolio for first name last name date” as mm.dd.yyyy (example: “Pre-tenure1 portfolio for Gustav Mauler 09.01.1860”). The # refers to either your first (1) or second (2) pre-tenure review. Files and subfolders within this main folder can be labeled and organized any way you see fit.

In addition to the electronic submission of your pre-tenure portfolio, complete and submit a hard copy of the “Checklist for Pre-Tenure & Tenure Reviews” form to the Academic Affairs Office along with seven hard copy sets of your core/primary documents (see below).

Pre-tenure reviews are generally scheduled for spring term, although in certain cases they occur in the fall. If you have a spring review, the **deadline for this official submission** is Monday of week 5 of spring term for pre-tenure2 reviews and Monday of week 8 of spring term for pre-tenure1 reviews. If you have a fall review, the deadline is Monday of week 3 of fall term. However, note that, in order to submit your departmentally vetted final version by your deadline date, you should probably begin the internal department review process by or even before the beginning of that semester. The Academic Affairs Office will schedule reviews so that they begin one week after the respective materials submission due date, and you will be informed of that date well in advance of the hearing. Reviews will occur either in-person in the Dean’s office (ideally) or on-line via a Google Meet conference call if social distancing rules require it.

## **Checklist for pre-tenure review materials**

1. Seven hard copies of your primary, core review materials packet (stapled, bound or 3-ring binder) that includes:

- Your updated curriculum vitae
- The front summary page & last comments page of each IDEA report (not entire reports)
- Your ~15-page case-making narrative on your teaching and advising, scholarship and service since you arrived at Augustana. Address prior FWC-suggested areas for improvement. Include analysis of IDEA score trends, ideally with tables and/or graphs.

2. In addition to the seven hard copies, please provide one electronic version of the same primary review materials: CV, Case-Making Narrative and IDEA Folder. See above for submission and folder name instructions.

3. One copy of supplemental materials, in well-organized and clearly labeled folders. If hard copy, then deliver to Academic Affairs Office. If electronic (preferable), please provide documents via Google drive and allow access to *BOTH* [facultywelfare@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfare@augustana.edu) AND [facultywelfarecommitteegroup@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfarecommitteegroup@augustana.edu) as well as all tenured members of your department. You must label the shared main folder with the following information, formatted as specified: “Pre-tenure# supplemental material for first name last name date”, with date as mm.dd.yyyy. The # refers to either your first (1) or second (2) pre-tenure review. Files and subfolders within this main folder can be labeled and organized any way you see fit.

4. Your Department Chair should electronically submit the Department Chair's letter of support and all annual review letters to *BOTH* [facultywelfare@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfare@augustana.edu) *AND* [facultywelfarecommittee@augustana.edu](mailto:facultywelfarecommittee@augustana.edu). You should remind them to do so in a timely manner.

## **More detailed guidelines for your portfolio**

### **Statement on Teaching & Advising, Scholarship and Service**

Your ~15-page case-making narrative on your teaching and advising, scholarship and service since you arrived at Augustana, with claims supported by evidence. Address prior FWC-suggested areas for improvement. Include analysis of IDEA score trends, ideally with tables and/or graphs. This statement, part philosophy, part introspection, part progress report, is key and constitutes the core of your portfolio. It should include thoughtful reflection of how you have addressed your successes and setbacks and how you have grown as an Augustana professor. The *Faculty Handbook* states that a candidate for tenure must demonstrate "potential and promise as an effective teacher, productive scholar and integrated and active participant in the campus and local communities," and these are the expectations that FWC uses in assessing candidates at the pre-tenure review. By the time of the tenure review, we no longer are looking for "potential and promise" and are instead looking for a record of success that we are convinced has the "potential" to continue developing.

Your statement should cover the following for each area of teaching/advising, scholarship and service:

"Teaching Responsibilities" should briefly explain your job: what courses you teach and what non-course activities you handle. It can be a paragraph or two and/or a bulleted list.

"Goals" should address what you try to achieve (as a teacher, as a professional, as a community member). You should write about your general teaching philosophy, your specific objectives, and the strategies you use to achieve your objectives, and then you should address those same considerations as they relate to your professional development and your service work in relevant sections of the report.

"Achievements" should then explain how you're doing in pursuit of your specific goals and objectives. As it relates to teaching, that means how you monitor your own work (through course evaluations, classroom visits by colleagues, and so on), what you've learned through that monitoring, and what steps it has led you to take to make your teaching stronger. Such a case should include references to specific qualitative and/or quantitative evidence of student learning in your classes (see below on Supporting Materials). You could write about notable student achievements (e.g., papers accepted at honors conferences or acceptances into graduate programs) and recognition of your own work (e.g., awards, invitations to guest lecture or to teach summer institutes and workshops). Again, you should address those same considerations as they relate to your professional development and service work in relevant sections of the report.

This section will include a reflective discussion of the results of student evaluations of your teaching. Student evaluation data (both quantitative and written responses) are just one source of evidence of your teaching effectiveness, but they are important to consider. You should consider quantitative score results as a point for reflective conversation: how do you make sense of the results when read against your teaching objectives and



strategies? Where are your areas of strength? Areas of challenge? Include analysis of IDEA score trends, ideally with tables and/or graphs. Have you selected appropriate learning objectives as identified on the IDEA instrument? Do your pedagogical choices align with these objectives? More information on how to interpret and respond to IDEA evaluation results can be requested from the Institutional Research office.

*"Future Goals"*: Ideally, your discussion of achievements should not just discuss your strengths; you should frankly and concretely discuss areas of challenge or difficulty in your work. You should then briefly but concretely summarize your goals for the next two years, identifying your priorities for continuing development and improvement. If FWC has suggested areas for improvement at a prior review, then you must address those issues specifically.

The portion of your statement on scholarship should assess your work thus far in professional expression and development, and outline plans for the years ahead, ideally using the same four-point structure outlined above.

The portion of your statement on service should assess (not just state) your contributions thus far to your department, the campus and your profession (and, optionally, to the general public community), and outline plans for the years ahead, ideally using the same four-point structure outlined above.

## **Supplemental Materials**

Include an inventory of your supporting materials (i.e., a contents list); in addition, regardless of whether they are electronic or hard copies, you must tell us why you are including them – *why* are they important to your case-making narrative. The quantity of supporting materials should be great enough to give an educated outsider the ability to draw a full and accurate picture of your

career. A few exemplars are always preferred to an overabundance of repetition.

- Include a hard copy of CV and case-making narrative if submitting any hard copy supplemental materials
- Individual complete IDEA forms with student comments (the summarizing tables, graphs and analysis of these data must be part of your case-making statement), organized by course, then chronologically. Please include summary reports for all sections you have taught.
- Evidence of student learning usually comes in the form of samples of student work that illustrate learning outcomes connected to the clearly articulated objectives you set for your courses. Samples of student work should display a range of student outcomes (e.g., not just "A" work, but at a variety of grade levels). They should also illustrate growth or improvement of student performance over time in response to your critiques (e.g., multiple paper drafts; pre- and post-test results). It is helpful to include a brief cover statement on such samples, to inform the reviewers how the samples address your learning objectives and what specific qualities to look for in the samples. Evidence of student learning can also come in the form of data you collect from students based on relevant instruments (e.g., pre- and post-testing, student knowledge surveys, etc.), if feasible and desirable. Though this critical component of your overall portfolio can be exhaustive in this supplemental materials section, a succinct analysis and summary of these data should be part of your case-making narrative, as well.
- Syllabi (both for courses and for advising)
- Evidence of advising engagement and/or effectiveness

- A representative sample of your professional work. This might include books or book chapters, articles, conference presentations, reviews, or reproductions of creative work (e.g., pictures, audio and/or video formats of creations or performances). In selecting material for inclusion, remember that the background and training of the members of the committee varies widely. Include items that have been published or submitted/accepted for publication.
- Reviews of your professional work or other evidence of its quality.
- Evidence of the quality and effort of your contributions in the area of departmental, campus, professional, and/or community service, beyond a mere list of service items.
- Letters from former students who may be able to attest to your role in their personal and professional growth.
- Letters of support from colleagues on campus, including those with whom you have served on committees and those who have observed your teaching.
- Letters of support from colleagues at other institutions who may be able to attest to the role of your contribution to your discipline. In order to guarantee the greatest level of candor and credibility, you should *not* have the opportunity to read individual letters. Ask your writers to address their letters directly to the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee, and assure them that their letters are absolutely confidential and that you will not have access to them.

## **The role of your Department Chair**

Your Department Chair should:

- Make sure that your department's statement of expectations for teaching, scholarship, and service are current, and they should answer any questions you have about these expectations, which are available at <https://www.augustana.edu/academics/faculty-welfare/review-preparation/departments>);
- Encourage you to participate in Center for Faculty Enrichment (CFE) and FWC activities that are designed to help you learn about, adjust to and navigate the rules and norms of the lengthy review process;
- Start observing your teaching during your first year, and help you to administer the required IDEA course evaluations, beginning with your first semester and including every appropriate course taught; “helping” includes discussions about the selection of relevant choices of IDEA form essential, important and minor learning objectives;
- Also coordinate teaching observations by the tenure committee (the tenured members of the department or a separate committee in the case of departments without three tenured faculty);
- Help you interpret the results of student evaluations and encourage you to graph those results to show trends over time and across courses;
- Help you to improve your teaching in response to justifiable student critiques;
- Provide you with opportunities to participate in the life of the department and College and remind you about the importance of factors beyond classroom teaching including collegiality and work-family life balance issues;
- Provide a thorough and honest end-of-year annual review of your progress (in non-FWC-review years), including a summary letter

and conversation. This letter should be shared with the members of your tenure committee and FWC.

## **The pre-tenure review hearing**

Pre-tenure hearings last approximately one hour. The first part of each hearing consists of an optional oral presentation by the candidate. These presentations typically take fewer than five minutes; you should avoid needless repetition of information already submitted in the written materials. You may wish to:

- Provide important updates on relevant points occurring after the submission of your materials.
- Draw attention to particular strengths of your case, particularly those factors whose significance might not be immediately grasped by someone from outside of your field.
- Respond to those factors which might reflect negatively upon your case (e.g., a relatively small number of professional activities, undistinguished teaching evaluations, unresolved departmental conflicts or disputes...).
- Discuss your role in the future of your discipline, department and College.

At the conclusion of your oral presentation the six FWC faculty members and Dean will ask you questions for another 30 to 45 minutes, generally concerning your past experiences and future plans with the College, and more specifically asking for clarifications and elaborations of the details of your portfolio. At the conclusion of this discussion, you will leave the hearing. Your Department Chair will remain to discuss the merits of your case

with the Faculty Welfare Committee, and to answer any questions they may have.

## **Letter & follow-up conversation (“debrief”)**

The Faculty Welfare Committee will provide you with a letter that congratulates your successes and articulates areas of concern that should be addressed before your next review. This letter is written by your Division Chair and vetted by the rest of FWC; it becomes part of your permanent record.

A few weeks after your review, and following your receipt of this letter and consultation with your Department Chair, you will have a short (<15 min.) follow-up conversation with your Department Chair, Division Chair, Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee, and Dean. The purpose of the conversation is to allow you the opportunity to respond to the contents of the letter – to ask for clarification or for changes to be made in the wording. This meeting will also try to alert you to any obstacles or challenges which may lie ahead and to inform you of the FWC's reaction to your presentation.

In reflecting upon this meeting you should ask yourself how you will respond to the letter and in particular how you will make all of the suggested changes. Discuss the letter and the debriefing with your Department Chair again. Perhaps the Augustana Center for Faculty Enrichment can help you with teaching issues:

<https://www.augustana.edu/about-us/offices/academic-affairs/center-for-faculty-enrichment>. If your development as a scholar is a concern, speak with the Dean about the resources available to you. You must respond to the letter in subsequent reviews. We suggest that you focus on those obstacles that are within your control (e.g., ineffective teaching or advising, poor scholarship or minimal involvement in the life of the College) rather than any that

may not (e.g., a mismatch between your academic specialization and the department's or College's long-term needs, faltering student enrollments, and so on).

The pre-tenure review is an advisory process designed to help probationary (tenure-track but not yet tenured) faculty members gain some general assessment of their development relative to the parameters of the College's and department's expectations for its faculty. The FWC attempts to provide candidates for tenure helpful information regarding their tenure cases. Since at least one new member is elected each academic year to the committee, it is certain that the individuals who comprise your pre-tenure review committee will not be the same individuals who ultimately are called upon to render a tenure recommendation. Generally positive pre-tenure reviews will not necessarily result in a positive tenure recommendation, nor do generally negative reviews preclude a positive recommendation; the tone of these early formative review letters is based in part on goals, expectations and one's ability and desire to make improvements – they are written to encourage growth in all assessment areas (teaching/advising, scholarship & service). The tenure review is summative, and thus it serves a different purpose than the pre-tenure reviews.

The intent of this pre-tenure review process is to provide constructive feedback through frank, honest and transparent communication and procedures to assist the tenure-track faculty member in the years leading to the tenure review. At any point during the process, please consult with your Department Chair, Division Chair, and/or the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee for help with any questions or concerns you may have.

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