



Tenure, Promotion, & Retention

Guidelines for Preparing the Faculty Portfolio

**2026-2027
Timeline Update**

**Academic Affairs
Approved April 11, 2013**

Table of Contents

1. Introduction and Scope of Portfolio.....	3
2. Tenure and Promotion Flowchart.....	4
3. Promotion, Tenure, and Retention: Action Steps and Timelines.....	4
4. Preparing Your Portfolio.....	5
5. Organizing Your Faculty Portfolio.....	5
a. Section 1: Introduction.....	6
b. Section 2: General Information.....	7
c. Section 3: Department Chair Evaluations.....	7
d. Section 4: Teaching.....	8
e. Section 5: Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities.....	9
f. Section 6: Service, Outreach, Professional Activities.....	9
6. Appendix A: Faculty Portfolio Content Checklist.....	11
7. Appendix B: Tenure and/or Promotion Eligibility Checklist.....	14
8. Appendix C: Instructions to Deans & Department Chairs.....	15
9. Appendix D: Timeline for 2026-2027 Tenure & Promotion.....	16
10. Appendix E: Tenure and/or Promotion Recommendation Form.....	19

Introduction

The 2012-2013 University Personnel Committee on Tenure and Promotion was charged by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to recommend a set of guidelines for preparing the faculty portfolio. These guidelines serve as a framework for documenting teaching, research, and professional service as a member of the Tennessee State University faculty. The process of Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) is subject to the Tennessee Board of Regents policies 5:02:02:20, 5:02:03:60 and Tennessee State University, respectively. Documentation of work as a faculty member is to be presented in a portfolio format for review by department chairs, departmental committees, college/school committees, deans and the University Personnel Committee on Tenure and Promotion. The organization of the portfolio is consistent for faculty across all academic units, whether faculty members are applying for tenure, promotion, or both during the academic year(s) in which they are eligible for consideration.

Since that time, the University has transitioned from paper-based portfolios to digital tenure portfolios. This change allows more timely completion, review, and processing of applications. While the format has changed, the focus on documentation remains constant.

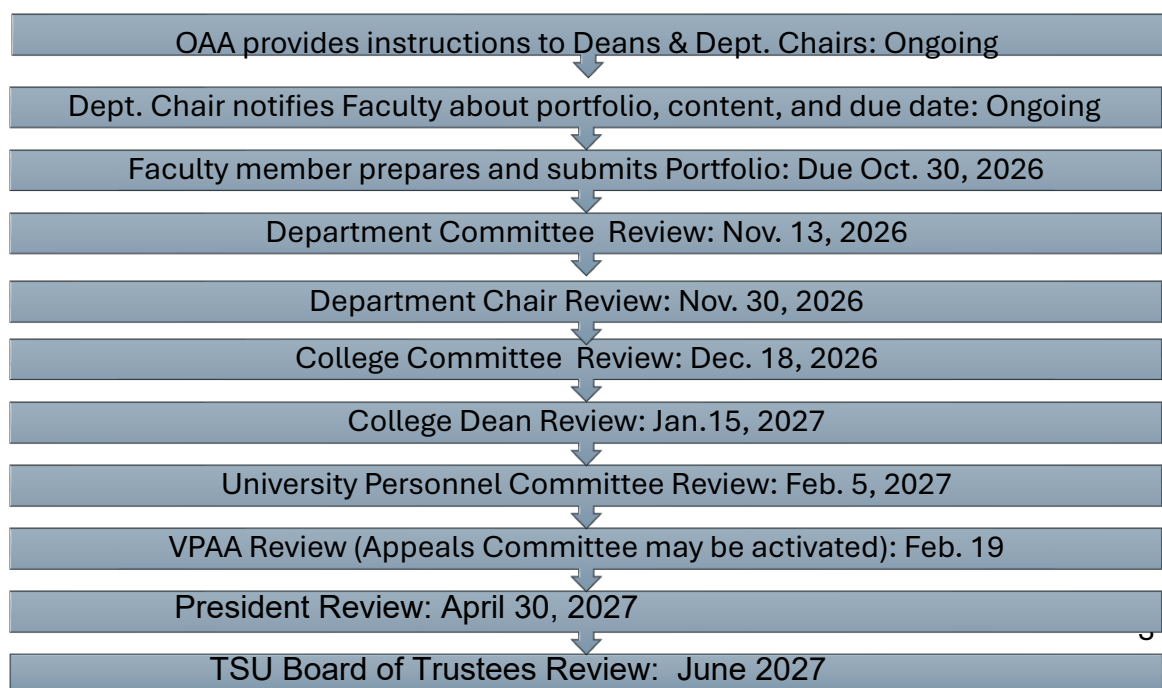
Scope of Portfolio

The Faculty Portfolio should provide an overview of significant accomplishments in three major areas: Teaching Activities; Research/Scholarly/Creative Activities; and Service/Outreach/ and Professional Activities. Narratives supporting each area should be written using reverse chronology, that is, list most recent achievements and/or activities first. Your narrative can include bullet points but should primarily be in sentence/paragraph form and be no longer than two (2) pages.

If you are seeking tenure, include information from your years at Tennessee State University from the date of hire. If you have been awarded years of prior credit toward tenure, include information for only the time spent at Tennessee State University.

If you are seeking promotion to Assistant Professor or Associate Professor, include information from your activities in your three areas since your last promotion at Tennessee State University or your initial appointment at Tennessee State University. If you are seeking promotion to Professor, include information from your activities in the three areas since your last promotion.

Tenure and Promotion Flowchart



Promotion, Tenure, and Retention: Action Steps and Timelines

- a. Academic Affairs Instructions to Deans and Department Chairs: Sept. 6, 2026
- b. Departmental Action--Department Chair Notification of Faculty Member about ePortfolio, Content, and Due Dates: Sept. 30, 2026
- c. Department and College Tenure and Promotion Committees formed: Oct. 2, 2026
- d. Faculty Member Preparation and Submission of ePortfolio: Oct. 30, 2026
- e. Department Tenure and Promotion Committee access to ePortfolios: Nov. 1, 2026
- f. Department Tenure and Promotion Committee complete review of ePortfolios: Nov. 13, 2026
- g. Department Chair complete review of ePortfolios: Nov. 30, 2026
- h. College Tenure and Promotion Committee access to ePortfolios: Dec. 1, 2026
- i. College Tenure and Promotion Committee complete review: Dec. 18, 2026.
- j. College Deans complete review: Jan. 15, 2027.
- k. University Faculty Personnel Committee access to ePortfolios: Jan. 15, 2026. Submit candidate reviews by February 5, 2027.
- l. Vice President for Academic Affairs Review: Feb. 19, 2027. Inform candidates in writing of VPAA recommendation by March 5, 2027.
- m. Appeals Committee (if applicable): March 26, 2027. Review of Appeals by April 16, 2027.
- n. President's Review: April 23, 2027. Forward recommendations regarding tenure and promotion to TSU Board of Trustees, April 30, 2027. President all applicants of recommendations made to BOT, May 3, 2027.
- o. TSU Board of Trustees Receives President's Recommendations: April 30, 2027. By the end of July 2027, BOT will inform all faculty of their status regarding tenure and promotion.

Preparing Your Portfolio

- a. All faculty seeking retention, tenure, or promotion must complete and submit a Faculty ePortfolio.
- b. Faculty preparing portfolios should attend one of the scheduled faculty development workshops on promotion, tenure, and retention. September 24th and October 1st.
- c. New faculty members to the University are strongly encouraged to attend one of the scheduled faculty development workshops on promotion, tenure, and retention.
- d. Faculty who choose to apply for tenure and/or promotion should notify the department chair/program director of their intent in the semester prior to the one in which they will apply.
- e. Faculty members should consult closely with their department chair/program director as well as with experienced senior members of the department for guidance in preparing an accurate, well organized, and up-to-date portfolio.

Organizing Your Portfolio

The Faculty ePortfolio is divided into six sections as follows:

- (1) Cover Information
- (2) General Information
- (3) Department Chair Evaluations

(4) Teaching

(5) Research/Scholarship/Creative Activities; and

(6) Service/Outreach/Professional Activities

It is imperative that applicants follow the following sections verbatim!

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

a. Tenure and/or Promotion Recommendation Form. The Form and its instructions can be found in Appendix E

b. Cover Page

This will include:

- Name
- Academic Year
- Terminal Degree (last) & Institution
- College (Academic Unit)
- Department

c. Table of Contents

d. Statement of intent/cover letter and other items

- Example of text for statement of intent for promotion:

“Please consider this portfolio in support of my application for promotion to Associate Professor at Tennessee State University.”

- Example of text for statement of intent for tenure:

“Please consider this portfolio in support of my application for tenure at Tennessee State University.”

Section 2: General Information

a. Up-to-date Curriculum Vita (CV)

- A vita is a continuing academic record of the faculty member’s activities and accomplishments. It should include Teaching, Research, and Service

components. Your Vita should be well organized, current, accurate, and aesthetically appealing.

b. Promotion and/or Tenure Eligibility Checklist

- See Appendix B

c. Copy of original Notice of Tenure Track Appointment and Agreement of Employment

- This is your contract letter with the University and includes special conditions that govern your employment and relationship with the University.
- Interpretations of a faculty member's contract that contravenes or deviates from what is explicitly stated in the contract letter (such as years granted towards tenure, requirements for promotion, and conditions governing employment, etc.) are not permitted. For example, a departmental review committee cannot require a faculty member hired at the rank of Instructor to complete a doctoral degree or a terminal degree to attain tenure or be retained if the terms of the faculty member's contract do not specifically state that the faculty member is required to complete the aforementioned degree in order to be tenured or retained. If any questions arise regarding a faculty member's contract, all interested parties shall consult with the University Counsel for clarification and with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. While alterations of a contract are extremely rare, any proposed renegotiations of the terms of a faculty member's contract must be part of a mutual decisions between a faculty member and his/her Department and must have the expressed written approval of the President.

d. Letters of Support

- Include a minimum of two recommendations from external faculty peers.

Section 3: Department Chair Evaluations

- a. *Narrative Description*: Include a narrative description of teaching activities and student evaluation of instruction for every course taught/evaluated during the period covered. Additional evidence of teaching excellence should demonstrate the following: ability to organize and present subject matter in a logical and meaningful way; and, ability to motivate and stimulate creativity; intellectual curiosity; and interest in writing and inquiry in undergraduate and/or graduate students. Documentation of teaching might include course materials, evidence of supervision of student projects, and other forms of student mentorship.

- b. *Other Types of Evidence:* A candidate for tenure may choose to include other types of evidence that support his/her application such as additional student input; student products; teaching recognition; teaching scholarships; peer input; professional development in teaching; evidence of disciplinary or interdisciplinary program or curricular development; alumni surveys and student exit interviews; and, other evidence of teaching excellence in teaching, mentoring, or both.

Section 4: Teaching

- a. *Narrative Description:* Include a narrative description of teaching activities and student evaluations for every course evaluated during the period covered. Additional evidence of teaching quality should demonstrate the following: ability to organize and present subject matter in a logical and meaningful way; and, ability to motivate and stimulate creativity, intellectual curiosity, and interest in writing and inquiry in undergraduate and/or graduate students. Documentation of teaching might include: course materials, evidence of supervision of student projects, student mentorship, curriculum development, and demonstrated teaching improvement over time.
- b. *Other Types of Evidence:* A candidate for tenure may choose to include other types of evidence that supports his/her application such as additional student input; student products; teaching recognition; teaching scholarships; peer input; evidence of professional development in teaching; evidence of disciplinary or interdisciplinary program or curricular development; alumni surveys and student exit interviews; and, other evidence of excellence in teaching or mentoring, or both.

Section 5: Research, Scholarship, & Creative Activities

- a. *Summary Statement:* Provide a summary statement of research, scholarship, and creative activities commensurate with the requirements for the application for promotion and/or tenure. Evidence of such activities should include citations of books, journal articles, monographs, creative activities, performances, or exhibitions that have undergone appropriate peer review. Research publications in refereed journals or media of similar quality are considered reliable indicators of research/scholarly ability. Written reviews and evaluations by qualified peers, either in person or aided by other forms of reports, or both, are appropriate for performances, compositions, and other artistic creations. Books published by reputable firms and articles in refereed journals, reviewed by recognized

scholars, are more significant than those that are not subjected to such rigorous examination.

- b. Appropriate textbooks or educational articles in one's own discipline and innovative contributions to teaching, if published or presented in a peer-reviewed forum, constitute scholarship of teaching.
- c. Professional scholarly papers presented at international, national, or regional meetings may be appropriate.
- d. Research proposals and funded research projects.

Section 6: Service/Outreach/Professional Activities

- a. *Summary Statement*: Provide a summary statement of Service, Outreach, and Professional Activities commensurate with the requirements for the application for promotion and/or tenure. Evidence of such activities should encompass a faculty member's activities in one or more combination of three areas: outreach or public service, university service, and professional service. For initial tenure and/or promotion, include in your summary statement service activities since appointment to tenure track status at TSU. For promotion only, include activities since appointment date to current rank/last promotion to current rank at TSU.
- b. The *outreach or public service* function is the University's outreach to the community and society at large, with major emphasis on the application of knowledge to address problems facing society. Outreach primarily involves sharing professional expertise and should directly support the goals and mission of the University. As a vital component of the University's mission, public service must be performed at the same high levels of quality that characterize the teaching and research programs.
- c. *University Service* refers to work other than teaching and scholarship conducted at the Department, College, or University level. A certain amount of such service is expected of every faculty member. Indeed, universities could hardly function without conscientious faculty who perform committee work and other administrative responsibilities. University service includes, but is not limited to, serving on departmental committees and participating in College and University committees. Some faculty members might accept more extensive citizenship functions, such as leadership roles in the Faculty Senate, Graduate School

Council, working on a specially appointed task force, advising university-wide student organizations, or serving on a University, College, or Departmental search committee.

- d. *Professional Service* refers to the work done for organizations related to one's discipline or to the teaching profession, in general. Service to the profession includes association leadership, journal editorships, article and grant proposal review, guest lecturing on other campuses, and other appropriate activities. It is difficult to explain the exact nature of significant professional service, clearly more is required than organizational membership and attendance. Examples of significant service would be that done by an officer of a professional organization or the member of the editorial staff of a journal. Include a detailed list of service Honors and Recognitions.

Appendix A

Faculty Portfolio Content Checklist

Section 1: Introduction

Include the following items:

- A. Tenure and/or Promotion Recommendation Form
 - B. Cover Page to include:
 - Name
 - Academic Year
 - Last/Terminal Degree & Institution
 - College (academic unit)
 - Department
 - C. Table of Contents
 - D. Letter of Intent/Cover Letter
- Section 2: General Information** Include

the following items:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Tenure and/or Promotion Eligibility Checklist
- Copy of Original Tenure Track Appointment
- Letters of Support from External Faculty Peers (minimum 2)

Section 3: Department Chair Evaluations

Include all annual evaluations from Department Chair over time period covered.

Section 4: Teaching

Include the following items:

- Provide Narrative describing teaching activities.
 - For initial tenure and/or promotion, stress teaching activities since appointment to tenure track positions at TSU
 - For tenure track faculty seeking promotion only, stress activity since appointment date to current rank/last promotion to current rank at TSU
- All student evaluations of instruction summary sheets for each course taught during time period, by academic year.
- Additional Documentation (assessments, select syllabi, course material developed since initial appointment, etc. **Section 5:**

Research/Scholarship/Creative Include the following items:

- Research Activities—Provide a written summary of research activities during this period. Discuss research experience:
 - For initial tenure and/or promotion, stress research activities since appointment to tenure track position at TSU
 - For tenured faculty seeking promotion only, stress activities since appointment date to current rank/last promotion to current rank at TSU. ○ Provide detailed list of grants and awards during period with supporting documentation (award notice letters, emails, etc.)
 - Provide detailed list of written research/publications with the articles attached in PDF format.
 - Provide detailed list of papers presented, conference presentations, workshops developed, performances, juried presentations, etc. Provide documented evidence using PDF files for papers, conference presentations, etc.

Section 6: Service/Outreach and Professional Include

the following items:

- A. Service Activities: Provide a written summary of service activities during this period. Discuss service experience.

- For initial tenure and/or promotion, stress service activities since appointment to tenure track position at TSU. Provide documentation as evidence (letters, emails, presentations, photos, etc.)
 - For promotion only, stress activity since appointment date to current rank at TSU. Also stress service learning experiences. Provide appropriate documentation.
- B. University Service ○ Provide a detailed list of administrative activities serving the Universitywide community. Provide documentation as evidence (thank you emails, letters verifying committee service, documents created as part of service, accreditation and assessment documents, etc.
- C. Professional Service
- Provide a list of work done for organizations related to one's discipline or to the teaching profession generally. Provide documentation (emails, documents, flyers or artifacts, public notices, etc.
 - Include a detailed list of Honors and Recognitions. Provide documentation as appropriate (award image, certificate, notification of award email/letter, etc.

APPENDIX B: TENURE AND/OR PROMOTION ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

This checklist is to be completed by the Department Chair in concert with the faculty member prior to the faculty member assembling and submitting a portfolio for tenure and/or promotion.

Name: _____ T# _____
Last First Middle

Present Rank and Date Awarded: _____

Date of Tenure-track Appointment at TSU: _____

Is this the sixth year of tenure track employment? _____ If not, explain the reason for application by exception: _____

Has appointment been continuous? Yes ☐ No ☐
(If appointment has not been continuous, attach explanation)

Has the faculty member met department criteria for promotion? _____
If not, why not? _____

Has the faculty member met College/School criteria for promotion? _____
If not, why not? _____

Check-off to determine faculty member's eligibility for academic tenure and/or promotion consideration:

TENURE

☐

Satisfies the number of years from date of tenure appointment. By the end of the current academic year, the faculty member will have completed not less than the minimum six (6) years of probationary service at TSU.

Any credit granted for previous experience must show on the initial appointment. A copy of the document should be attached.

PROMOTION

☐

Faculty member satisfies the minimum five (5) years of professional experience in current rank.

Any credit granted for previous experience must show on the initial appointment. A copy of the document should be attached.

Department Chair's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Instructions to Deans and Department Chairs

Tenure/Promotion Applications 2026-27

Tenure

Tenure-track faculty who meet TSU requirements for tenure must apply for tenure at the beginning of the academic year in which they wish to be recommended for tenure. It is the responsibility of the dean/director of each tenure-recommending unit to initiate the tenure application process through verifying that a faculty member is eligible to submit a portfolio for review.

Annually, prior to communicating to tenure applicants their eligibility to apply for tenure, the dean/director should review university and departmental/college conditions for tenure. Preferably, this is done at the close of the spring semester proceeding the fall semester in which the faculty member is to submit a portfolio for peer review.

The dean/director reviews the appointment contract, including years of service and all conditions related to tenure. Once the dean/director, in consultation with the immediate supervisor (department chair), verifies a faculty member's eligibility to apply for tenure, the faculty member should be informed, preferably in writing, that he/she may submit a portfolio for peer review.

Each year, the Office of Academic Affairs issues a calendar, which includes approximate timelines for faculty to submit portfolios and for peers to review them at multiple levels of the tenure recommendation process (2025-27 calendar/timeline attached).

Promotion

The department chair and the dean/director should review University and departmental/college conditions for eligibility for promotion. The University does not automatically promote faculty members upon completion of the required years in rank. Rather, promotion is awarded by the University through the positive action of the TSU Board of Trustees (TSUBOT) in recognition of merit, achievement, and potential. A tenured or tenure-track faculty member becomes eligible to apply for promotion when he or she meets the defined qualifications for the various faculty ranks (See faculty handbook for minimum qualifications in terms of time in rank and other criteria). Tenure and Promotion applications are normally acted on by the TSUBOT at its June meeting. Faculty members are notified in the summer after receipt of the Board's approval.

Appendix D

Timeline for 2026-2027

Tenure and Promotion

By September 30, 2026, the department chair and dean/director in each faculty unit will review the personnel files of all faculty members to determine their time and/or eligibility for promotion or tenure. Tenure-track faculty hired for the 2020-2022 academic year should be eligible. Faculty members will be informed by the department chair/director of the results of this review and questions resolved (by the faculty member, dean, director). Unresolved questions will be referred to Vice President for Academic Affairs and Human Resources for resolution **prior to the faculty member beginning the process of submitting a portfolio.**

September 24, 2026 & October 1: Workshops for faculty going up for Tenure and/or Promotion.

By October 2, 2026: College & Departmental tenure and promotion committees must be formed.

October 27, 2026, workshop for Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee and Department Chairs

By October 27, 2026, the Department Chair will:

- a) Convene the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee and explain the review process. The electronic faculty portfolios will be opened to the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee on **October 30**

By October 30, 2026, faculty should submit all tenure and promotion files in their respective electronic faculty portfolio.

By November 13, 2026, the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee will:

- a) Review application files of candidates in their Department for tenure and/or promotion.
- b) Prepare and submit in eLearn the Committee's recommendation on each candidate's application.

Review dates: October 30 (after 8 AM) – November 13

Submit date: November 13 (before 1 PM)

By November 30, 2026: Department Chairs complete their recommendations on each candidate's application.

- a) Department Chairs will add to the file a written report on teaching, research, and service effectiveness.

Review dates: November 13 (after 2 PM) – November 30
Submit date: November 30 (before 1 PM)

November 12, 2026, workshop for Deans and College Tenure and Promotion Committees

By December 18, 2026, the College Tenure and Promotion Committee will:

- a) Review all files and recommendations of the Departmental Committees.
- b) Prepare and submit to the Dean/Director a written recommendation on each candidate.

Review dates: December 1 (after 2 PM) – December 18
Submit date: December 18 (before 1 PM)

By January 15, 2027, the Dean will:

- a) Review all files, including recommendations of the Departmental and College Committees.
- b) Prepare and submit to the Vice President for Academic Affairs a written recommendation of each candidate.

Review dates: December 18 (after 2 PM) – January 15
Submit date: January 15 (before 1 PM)

January 14, 2027, workshop for Faculty Personnel Committee

By February 5, 2027, the University Faculty Personnel Committee will:

- a) Review all files, including reports of committees and recommendations of administrators.
- b) Forward a recommendation for each candidate to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Review dates: January 15 (after 8 AM) – February 5
Submit date: February 5 (after 8 AM)

By February 19, 2027, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will:

- a) Review all files, including reports of committees and recommendations of administrators.
- b) Forward a recommendation on each candidate to the President.

Review dates: February 5 (after 8 AM) – February 19
Submit date: February 19, 2027 (after 8AM).

By March 5, 2027, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will:

- a) Inform each candidate in writing of the Vice President's recommendation concerning his/her tenure/promotion application.

If the Provost/Vice President's recommendation is negative, the candidate may appeal. Candidates considering appealing need to email the Provost / Vice President of Academic Affairs to gain view only access to their e-portfolio. After being notified that view-only access has been granted, candidates can review previous levels of review to determine whether to appeal or accept the recommendation.

By March 26, 2027, all written appeal material must be submitted to Academic Affairs for uploading.

March 25, 2027: Workshop for the University Appeals Committee

By April 9, 2027, review of Appeals by the University Appeals Committee that will:

- a) Review all appeals files and forward recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Review dates: March 26 (after 8 AM) – April 9

Submit Date: April 9, 2027 (after 8 AM)

By April 16, 2027, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will:

- a) Review Appeals Committee recommendations and forward all Appeals Committee recommendations and his/her recommendation to the President.

By April 23, 2027, the President will:

- a) Review all files, including the findings of appeals, reports of committees, and recommendations of all administrators.

By April 30, 2027, the President will:

- a) Forward all recommendations regarding tenure and promotion to the TSU Board of Trustees. (BOT).

By May 3, 2027, the President will:

- a) Notify all applicants of recommendations forwarded to the TSU Board of Trustees.

By July 31, 2027, the Tennessee Board of Trustees will:

- a) Review recommendations of the President and will vote to award tenure and/or promotion. By the end of July 2027, the University will notify faculty of their status relating to tenure and/ or promotion (subject to change).

Important Note: The Office of Academic Affairs will schedule “training” dates for departmental, college, university, and appeals committee members in advance of their service.

Appendix E
Tenure and/or Promotion Recommendation Form
2026-2027

Instructions: Complete Section A and include in the Introduction of the Portfolio.

Section A

Name _____ T# _____

Department: _____

School/College (Academic Unit): _____

Applying for: ☐ Tenure ☐ Promotion

From (Rank): _____

Highest Degree: _____ Year Awarded: _____

(If not terminal degree, a letter of explanation must be submitted justifying tenure/promotion)

Current Academic Rank: _____ Year Awarded: _____

Date of Tenure-Track Appointment: _____

Years Awarded toward Tenure: _____ Years toward Promotion: _____

Section B

Recommendation: Write "yes", "no", or "NA" for not applicable. If a "no" recommendation is given, each committee must provide a written letter of explanation for the negative recommendation. Each administrative head, dean or department chair must provide a written statement for either recommending or not recommending tenure or promotion.

	<u>TENURE</u>	<u>RANK</u>
Department Committee Explanation:	_____	_____
Department Chair Explanation:	_____	_____
School/College Committee Explanation:	_____	_____
Academic Dean/Director Explanation:	_____	_____
Faculty Personnel Committee Explanation:	_____	_____
Faculty Appeals Committee Explanation: (If applicable)	_____	_____