

GUIDELINES ON ASSEMBLING MATERIALS FOR TENURE

These guidelines summarize conventions regarding the assembling of materials for tenure, in order to provide increased clarity regarding expectations. They have been developed by the Office of the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs (DOF/VPAA) in consultation with the Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC), and are informed by the experiences of these groups regarding the most effective ways for candidates to present their cases for tenure.

The materials you present and the manner in which they are assembled convey your professional narrative to various campus constituencies at the point of tenure. These constituencies include your department(s) or program, the members of ATC, the Office of the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. While your department or program colleagues will likely be familiar with your discipline (although not always), ATC and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty include colleagues outside of your department or program, so it is important to keep all of these audiences in mind while assembling your materials.

Evaluation for tenure is based on teaching effectiveness, professional accomplishment (scholarship and/or creative work), and service. Please consult the Faculty Handbook (FHB) for elaboration on criteria for tenure for each of these categories.

Assembling Materials to Demonstrate Teaching Effectiveness

As described in the FHB, evaluation of teaching effectiveness at Skidmore takes into account the following features of successful teaching: motivation and mentoring, expertise, course design and delivery, and fostering student learning.

Please include the following evidence of teaching effectiveness.

- **Teaching/pedagogical statement:** A summary teaching statement that discusses your overall pedagogical approach, reflects on your evolution as a teacher and provides the bases for changes in your pedagogy. The purpose of this statement is to give us insight into your growth and evolution as an instructor. We encourage you to reflect on the ways that you have constructed an inclusive learning environment to facilitate the growth and learning of our students. This may include the ways that you built the syllabus, structured your course sessions, constructed assignments, and/or assessed student learning and growth. We also encourage you to reflect on the strengths and challenges in your courses, changes that you have made, and the degree to which those changes produced the results you hoped for. It is helpful to share the ways that you have contributed your own unique perspective to the departmental and all-college offerings. There is no required length, but in most cases, statements of about 3-5 pages typically provide the clarity and brevity of an effective teaching statement.
- **Summary table:** A table that presents a listing of courses by semester in which they were taught; enrollment and course caps in those courses (for example, 23/29); the three summary numbers from student ratings that address the course overall (item 2.1), instructor effectiveness overall (item 4.1) and learning overall (item 5.1); and any course releases.

- **Presentation of information on specific courses:** For each course, college-wide student ratings and departmental feedback forms in chronological order starting from the earliest course iteration; syllabus for the course (if the syllabus has changed considerably over iterations, you may want to include previous syllabus iterations, or a statement as to how and why the course has evolved and only include the most recent syllabus); other evidence which may include selected assignments, exams, examples of student work, outlines of innovative class presentations, or other relevant evidence. Presenting evidence of teaching effectiveness grouped by courses helps to give readers a sense of how specific courses evolve over time, and allows you to present other evidence (student work, assignments, etc.) in a manner that best complements the totality of student evaluations for that specific course.

For candidates who were tenured at a previous institution and come up for tenure earlier than the fall of their fourth year on the tenure-track at Skidmore, inclusion of evidence from your previous institution(s) regarding teaching effectiveness is needed to demonstrate the quality of your teaching performance over time with the understanding that there will be an emphasis on the quality of teaching that was accomplished at Skidmore. It is helpful to include a brief narrative that explains how to read outside evaluations either as part of or as separate from your pedagogical statement. In these cases, it may be useful to have an external reviewer from the candidate's previous institution who can provide information about regarding their teaching and service before coming to Skidmore.

Assembling Materials to Demonstrate Scholarship and Professional Accomplishment

Skidmore expects its faculty to cultivate, over the course of their careers, the scholarly or artistic maturity sufficient to define problems and issues in their areas of expertise, which they then engage in their work. Scholarship invites the critical scrutiny of peers. Similarly, recitals, performance, and exhibitions provide faculty in the performing and visual arts the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity and are equivalent to scholarly publications and research in other disciplines. Scholarly achievement includes but is not limited to peer-reviewed books, monographs, and articles; exhibitions; peer-reviewed, external research grant proposals; conference presentations and invited lectures; and unpublished manuscripts, drafts, and works in progress.

Please include the following evidence of scholarship and professional accomplishment:

- **Curriculum Vitae**
- **Annual Reports**
- **Research/scholarship/artistic statement:** A statement that educates readers about your professional accomplishments in the context of your discipline. Remember that many readers of your file are from outside of your discipline, and this statement is critical in helping those individuals understand disciplinary norms and how your work conforms to or might converge from those conventions. What are the broad questions your work addresses? What methods do you utilize to interrogate these questions? What are your major findings or accomplishments? How does your record demonstrate a trajectory in which your work both advances the discipline and builds upon itself in increasingly sophisticated ways? What were your particular contributions to collaborative projects? Are there any issues related to infrastructure, facilities, and/or equipment that may have affected your work? What are your specific plans for scholarly work in the future? As with your pedagogical statement, there is no required length, but statements that are too lengthy can be hard to follow and readers may lose sight of the most

important points. Strive for clarity and brevity. In most cases, statements of about 3-5 pages are most effective.

- **External letters:** Department Chairs or Program Directors of tenure candidates request letters from scholars and/or artists that can speak to the following: publishing or exhibition conventions in the discipline (e.g. co-authorship and productivity rates), the quality of the candidate's work and dissemination outlets, the position of the candidate's work in the broader disciplinary context, and the candidate's promise in making important, meaningful contributions to the discipline in the future. It is important to follow your department or program's personnel policies regarding external letters as this process may vary. We encourage departments to choose expert reviewers who have the knowledge base and vantage point to evaluate your work fairly and objectively. Please select a range of letter writers that have the expertise, stature in the field, knowledge of your research, and/or familiarity with the liberal arts setting so that the most effective letter possible can be written. Typically, files include three or four external letters, the majority of whom are not collaborators or mentors. The external letters are collected by Department Chairs and Program Directors and forwarded to the Dean of Faculty Office; candidates do not have the responsibility for including them, and do not have access to the letters unless they are not granted tenure.
- **Copies of publications/record of artistic accomplishment:** Include copies of publications or evidence of artistic accomplishment completed during the time frame under review. The College is interested in understanding the trajectory of your work and your promise for continued productivity while being specifically interested in what you have or will accomplish while being affiliated with Skidmore. Therefore, depending on the context of your candidacy (e.g. shortened tenure clock), you may wish to include work that was completed before the review period. While most work will be uploaded to the Spring site, hard copies of material are allowed when necessary.

Assembling Materials to Demonstrate Service

Service presupposes a sense of responsible citizenship, or collegiality, and is essential at our institution. The broad categories that follow encompass the range of professional activities that faculty members can undertake in order to fulfill their responsibilities in service. Faculty members are not expected to perform active service in all of these categories in any one review period or even across an entire career. In addition, for pre-tenure faculty, service is normally expected to be significantly less of a time commitment than either teaching or scholarship. However, tenure candidates are expected to demonstrate that they are effectively performing their fair share of this important faculty work. Categories of service include service to students, service to departments or academic programs, service to the College, and service to the academic profession. Service that supports the College's Strategic Plan, particularly its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, could be emphasized in this section.

Please include the following evidence of service:

- **Service statement:** A statement that briefly describes your orientation toward service, your activities and accomplishments, and your plans for serving the college in the future.
- **Internal letters:** Typically, candidates request 2-3 letters from colleagues outside the department but internal to the College to discuss service contributions to the college. These letters may address other categories as well (teaching and/or professional accomplishments)

but they do not have to include all three areas. These letters are collected by Department Chairs or Program Directors, and sent to the Office of the Dean of Faculty for inclusion in the tenure dossier.

- **External letters of service:** If you perform service to your discipline outside of the College, one of your letters related to service may be from an external colleague.
- **Other letters:** If you are on a shortened tenure clock, it can be helpful to request letters from one or two colleagues at your previous institution to discuss your service contributions and promise for continued citizenship.

PRESENTING YOUR NARRATIVE

The previous sections have described the conventions for assembling materials for tenure. You will be well served to seek additional mentoring and guidance from members of your department or program, colleagues outside of your department, and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs. As the person assembling the materials, you present your file in the way that best represents your work. If there are areas that are not as strong as others, it is in your best interest to address them and provide information about efforts for growth or circumstances that may contextualize those areas. Ultimately, it is a testament to your professional credentials in the context of your discipline, and is the best proxy for your work when it clearly illuminates your accomplishments as a teacher, scholar, and citizen at Skidmore College.

TENURE CLOCK

For candidates who are standing for tenure on a lengthened or shortened time frame, it is important that you demonstrate a trajectory of high-quality teaching, engaged and maturing scholarship, and commitment to service. It is advisable to seek guidance from the DOF/VPAA Office, the Chair of ATC, and other knowledgeable colleagues regarding the presentation of your file.