

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, AND TENURE PROCEDURES

I. APT Committee Membership.

- A. **Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Committee.** The membership of the appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee is defined in the Department's Plan of Organization.
- B. **Senior APT Committee.** The membership of the Senior Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee is defined in the Department's Plan of Organization. In the event that the number of members at the rank of Professor is fewer than three, the Dean of the College of Arts & Humanities may appoint one or more eligible faculty members from related units for review and assessment purposes. A member of the Senior APT Committee will be elected Chair of the APT Committee towards the end of the spring semester. Once elected, the APT Chair will preside at all APT and Senior APT meetings and manage all APT Committee business as detailed in this policy.
- C. **Emergency APT Committee.** For non-tenured, tenure-track positions filled during the summer, the Department Chair and/or APT Chair may convene an Emergency APT Committee. All members of the APT Committee can serve as members of this committee, if available. The Department Chair and/or APT Chair will notify all APT Committee members of the convening of an Emergency Committee via email, and recommendations of an Emergency Committee of fewer than the full APT Committee will require a 2/3 affirmative vote.
- D. **Subcommittees.** For various activities of committees that cannot reasonably be performed by the full APT Committee, the APT Chair may appoint a subcommittee from among the APT Committee. Subcommittee membership must be approved by a majority of the APT Committee. In no case may a vote of a subcommittee substitute for the vote of the APT Committee. All votes of subcommittees that influence the report of the subcommittee will be reported to the full APT Committee, but no such vote will be a part of any written report. Only the vote of the full APT Committee will be the official vote on decisions of the APT Committee. All reports of subcommittees must be submitted to the parent committee and become official statements of the APT process only when adopted by the full APT Committee.
- E. **Department Chair Participation.** The Department Chair is *ex-officio* member of all APT Committees with voice but without vote.
- F. **Chair of the Advisory Subcommittee.** Each subcommittee having assessments including third-year reviews and tenure and/or promotion cases to be performed during the year will elect a chair at the subcommittee's first meeting of the academic year. The subcommittee chair's duties will include writing the recommendation on the candidate and recording the transactions at the review meeting.
- G. **Quorum.** A quorum for all meetings of the APT Committee and its subcommittees will

be a majority of the voting membership, excluding (1) those on official leave or otherwise on assignment at the University of Maryland who decline to participate in APT (and, as relevant, Senior APT) meetings, and (2) those committee members not participating in a matter because of a conflict of interest.

An individual declining will specify the dates to which the decline applies, and this information will be provided to the APT Committee Chair in writing. The individual may withdraw the decline at any time by informing the APT Committee Chair in writing.

- H. **Voting.** All votes to approve reports or to recommend personnel actions to the Department Chair must be cast in writing, as secret ballots, unless unanimous consent is given for another method of voting. Votes on matters of procedure and during editing processes may be taken by voice or by show of hands; however, any such vote will be conducted by written secret ballot if requested by any member of the APT Committee present at the meeting.
- II. **Faculty Mentor.** The APT Committee Chair, in coordination with the APT Committee and Department Chair, will provide a mentor for each assistant professor and untenured associate professor. The mentor for assistant professors and untenured associate professors is a member of the APT Committee and not the Department Chair. Upon request, the APT Committee Chair will also provide a mentor for each tenured associate professor. The mentor for tenured associate professors is a member of the Senior APT Committee. When assigning mentors, the APT Chair will solicit feedback about mentor preferences and mentor availability. Mentors should encourage, support, and assist these faculty members and be available for consultation on matters of professional development. With specific reference to teaching and advisement; research, scholarship, and creative activity; and service, mentors should advise tenure-track faculty of the prevailing standards of quality and of the most effective ways to demonstrate that they meet the standards. Mentors need to be frank and honest about the progress of the faculty member toward fulfilling the criteria for tenure and/or promotion. Comments by mentors are purely advisory to faculty members, do not represent the views of the APT Committee, and do not assure a favorable tenure and/or promotion decision.

III. Assessments & Reviews.

- A. **Initial Appointment.** All appointments to tenure-track positions in the department must be referred to the APT Committee for approval (or to an Emergency Committee under the conditions described in Section I.C. above). All initial appointments at the rank of full professor must also receive the approval of the Senior APT Committee. The appropriate committee may request that the APT Chair supervise the collection of material required to conduct their deliberations. Other procedures for appointments are governed by existing university policy.
- B. **Annual Informal Assessments.**
1. Following appropriate consultation with the APT Committee, the Department Chair will independently provide each assistant professor and each untenured associate professor annually with an informal assessment of their progress. With specific reference to teaching and advisement; research, scholarship, and creative activity; and service, the Department Chair should advise tenure-track faculty of the prevailing standards of quality and of the most effective ways to demonstrate that they meet the standards.
 2. Informal assessments by the Department Chair are purely advisory to the faculty member and do not assure a favorable tenure and/or promotion decision. Informal assessments will be based in large part on a file constructed for purposes of the assessment by the faculty member to be assessed. The file must contain at least the following: the faculty member's *curriculum vitae*, copies of all published research, copies of course syllabi representative of the faculty member's teaching assignments in the department, and copies of all Course Experiences during the period assessed. The file may also contain additional materials that enhance the faculty member's research, teaching, and service record. It is optional, but recommended, to include a personal statement. It is also optional, but recommended, to format the *curriculum vitae* in the required UMD format (see University APT Manual and Guidelines). The *curriculum vitae* must be in the required UMD format by the formal intermediate review.

- IV. Each academic year, assistant professors and untenured associate professors must obtain a peer evaluation of teaching from a member of the APT Committee. The Department Chair, APT Chair, and faculty mentors can provide guidance on securing a peer evaluator. The peer evaluator will provide a written report of the teaching of the faculty member based in part on one or more classroom visits. These visits will be at times deemed convenient by the faculty member being assessed. The faculty member being assessed may, at their discretion, provide in advance of each classroom visit whatever material they deem useful to the reporters' ability to understand the class visited.
- V. The Department Chair will report to the APT Committee the contents of each annual informal assessment in a timely fashion. The APT Committee has the right to respond in writing to any annual informal assessment. Any such response will be submitted to the Department Chair within one week of the APT Committee's receipt of the Department Chair's report of that assessment. The faculty member being assessed will be given a copy of the annual informal assessment and will have the right to respond in writing. Any such response will be submitted to the Department Chair within two weeks of the faculty member's receipt of the assessment. Each annual informal assessment will be included in the faculty member's personnel file with any material attached as requested by the faculty member or the APT Committee. Annual assessments are separate from the tenure review process but will become a part of the information collected for the tenure review.

A. **Formal Intermediate Reviews**

- 1. **Assistant Professors.** The APT Committee will perform a formal intermediate review of the progress toward meeting the criteria for tenure and promotion in the third year of an assistant professor's appointment. The purposes of these intermediate reviews are to assess the candidate's progress toward promotion, to inform the reviewed faculty member of that assessment, to inform the faculty members more senior to that faculty member who will eventually consider them for promotion of that assessment, and to advise the candidate and Department Chair of steps that should be taken to improve prospects for promotion. These intermediate reviews will be structured exactly like reviews for tenure and/or promotion (as described in this document), with the exception that intermediate reviews will not involve external evaluations of the faculty member. The Department Chair will consider this formal intermediate review in determining contract renewal.

The faculty member being assessed will be given the Department Chair's review letter and will have the right to respond in writing. Any such response will be submitted to the Department Chair within two weeks of the faculty member's receipt of the review. Each formal intermediate review will be included in the faculty member's personnel file with any material attached as requested by the faculty member or the APT Committee. Formal intermediate reviews are separate from the tenure review process but will become a part of the information collected for the tenure review.

2. **Tenured Associate Professors and Full Professors.** Every five years tenured associate professors and full professors will undergo review as specified in the Department of Communication's Policy on Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review of Faculty.
- B. **Tenure Review.** Tenure reviews are governed by the APT documents of the System, the University, the College, and the Department.
- C. **Promotion Reviews.** Promotion reviews are governed by the APT documents of the System, the University, the College, and the Department.

VI. **Procedures for APT Committee Actions.**

- A. **Calendar.** At the start of the academic year, the APT Chair will provide annually to the faculty a timetable that will govern reappointment, promotion, and tenure reviews. If updates are made to the calendar, the APT Chair will notify faculty in a timely manner. In addition, the Department Chair will notify each non-tenured tenure track faculty member and the members of the APT Committee of the review procedure appropriate for that faculty member during that year.
- B. **Initiation of Review.** Responsibility for initiation of a tenure or promotion review will rest with the faculty member seeking tenure and/or promotion. The faculty member will indicate in writing to the Department Chair and to the APT Chair the wish to be reviewed. Responsibility for initiation of review for initial appointment or annual review of untenured faculty members will rest with the Department Chair.
- C. **Construction of the Review File.**
1. The responsibility for establishing the Personal Statement advocating the faculty member's tenure and/or promotion and the review file rests with the faculty member to be reviewed. Assistance in this task by the mentor, the Department Chair and/or any member of the APT Committee is appropriate.
 2. The review file will be constructed in compliance with the current University APT Guidelines and Manual. To document the research record, the file will contain the *curriculum vitae* in the required UMD format, a personal statement,

and copies of all the faculty member's published research. The faculty member will also select five publications to highlight as representative of their research. To document the teaching record the teaching portfolio will contain at minimum the following: course syllabi from the faculty member's recent sections, reports of peer evaluation of teaching, and Course Experiences from all undergraduate and graduate courses during the review period. See the University APT Guidelines and Manual for Teaching Portfolio guidelines.

3. When the file is complete, the faculty member being reviewed will present it to the APT Chair with an email stating that it is complete. The faculty member being reviewed may add material to the file after this time, but the addition must be accompanied by a dated letter stating the nature of the addition, the date it is forwarded for inclusion, and the reason for the addition. There is no requirement that decisions completed previous to the additional material be reconsidered by the APT Committee. Additional material may be added as a result of APT committee deliberations only with a similar dated letter of addition from the Committee to the candidate. All rights outlined under section V.A.6. of this document will be respected in this procedure.

D. **Preparation of the Summary Statement of Professional Achievements.** An Advisory Subcommittee, appointed by the APT Chair and Department Chair with APT Committee input, will prepare a concise Summary Statement of Professional Achievements, in accordance with the University APT Guidelines and Manual. The Summary Statement will place the professional achievements of the faculty member in scholarship, research, and artistic performance in the context of the broader discipline. It will place the faculty member's professional achievements in teaching and in service in the context of the responsibilities of the Department, the College, the University, the discipline, and/or the greater community. The statement will be reviewed and approved by the APT Committee for tenure and promotion cases and by the Senior APT Committee for full professor promotion cases. Tenure delay text, if applicable, will be included in the Summary Statement of Professional Achievements following the text required in the University APT Guidelines and Manual. The statement will be presented to the faculty member by the APT Committee Chair accompanied by a dated letter of notification. The faculty member under review will have two weeks to respond, as specified in the University APT Guidelines and Manual. (The Summary Statement is not required on initial appointments, except those carrying tenure).

E. **In addition to the Summary Statement of Professional Achievements, the APT Chair will provide the following documents** to the candidate at least two weeks prior to Committee deliberation, for review and certification by dated signature: 1) Reputation of Publication Outlets; 2) Unit Promotion Criteria and Agreement for Modified Criteria, if applicable; and 4) Sample email request for availability to external reviewers and sample letter sent to external evaluators (see templates in the University APT Guidelines and Manual). The Reputation of Publication Outlets document will be developed by the Advisory Subcommittee. The document will be reviewed and approved by the APT

Committee for tenure and promotion cases and by the Senior APT Committee for full professor promotion cases.

- F. **Preparation of External Reviews.** The faculty member under review will prepare a list of minimally six but up to eight names of widely recognized authorities in their area of research. Additional guidance on external reviewers is found in the University APT Guidelines and Manual. The faculty member may submit a list of no more than six authorities they wish to exclude from those being consulted for the review. Independent of the candidate, the APT Committee will generate a list of at least six names of widely recognized authorities in the area of research. Based on these two lists, the APT Committee will construct a list of no fewer than six external reviewers. At least three and no more than half of the names on this list will appear on the faculty member's list, and the faculty member's wishes on names not to appear on the list will be respected. The APT Chair is responsible for soliciting letters of recommendation from the selected reviewers, using the reference letter request template in the University APT Guidelines and Manual. (External review is not required on initial appointments, except those carrying tenure, nor on annual reviews.) The APT Chair will consult with the APT Committee with regard to the issues such referees should address about the candidate. The APT Chair will prepare the packet of material in consultation with the faculty member being reviewed.
- G. **Deliberations.** The deliberations of the APT Committee are confidential. Deliberations of the APT Committee will give careful attention to evaluative statements and avoid discussion of departmental political conflicts or personality traits irrelevant to the APT criteria. Evaluation of candidates may not be based on factors such as a candidate's race, sex, sexual orientation or other protected personal characteristics. Any breach of these deliberative guidelines is considered a breach of professional ethics and objections may be raised by any committee member at the decision meeting itself or in confidential consultation with the University's Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. The APT Chair has the responsibility to ensure that discussion and evaluation of candidates are fair and unbiased and to report perceptions of inappropriate discussions.
- H. **Voting.** Decisions regarding a candidate will only be made at meetings called for this purpose. At least one week's notice will be given for such meetings. After a vote regarding a candidate, another vote may be taken: (1) at the same meeting, by unanimous consent; or (2) upon request of one-third of the members of the appropriate APT Committee. The APT Chair will schedule such a meeting and notify all members of the appropriate Committee. The last vote regarding a candidate will constitute the deciding vote.
- I. **Report of the APT Committee.** The APT Committee will deliver its recommendation (including the vote tally) in writing to the Department Chair at least one week prior to the deadline for submission to the Dean and the College Committee. The report will explain the basis for the Committee's recommendation insofar as that basis has been made known in the discussions taking place among the members of the Committee. Dissenting positions may be prepared by any member of the committee and such dissents

will accompany the report through the rest of the APT process. See the University APT Guidelines and Manual for more information about optional minority reports in cases with major disagreements with the Report of the APT Committee. The Department Chair will then prepare their recommendation.

- J. **Reconciliation of Decisions by the Department Chair and APT Committee.** If the Department Chair's recommendation regarding reappointment, promotion, or tenure disagrees with the recommendation of the appropriate APT Committee, the Department Chair will then notify the APT Committee of their final recommendation.
 - K. **Report to the Candidate.** In promotion and tenure reviews, the Department Chair, after receiving the Committee's recommendation, will prepare, for the faculty member being reviewed, a letter announcing the recommendation and vote tally, and summarizing the basis for it. This letter will be reviewed and approved by the APT Committee Chair. In addition, any member of the APT Committee requesting to review this letter or the Chair's letter concerning their recommendation in the review may do so. The letter will then be presented to the faculty member being reviewed. In this summary and during this discussion, the substance of the confidential letters from any outside referees may be summarized but not attributed.
 - L. **Appeal of a Negative APT Decision.** Following a negative departmental decision, there is no right of appeal beyond that specified in University and College documents.
- VII. **Criteria for Actions.** The qualifications for appointment, tenure, and promotion are the responsibility of each member of the APT Committee. Each committee member is responsible for reaching such an evaluation within the criteria established by University, College, and Departmental APT documents. Candidates may request an agreement specifying modified criteria for tenure or promotion as specified in the University APT Manual and Guidelines. Agreement must be approved by the faculty and Chair of the first-level unit, the Dean, and the Provost.

Departmental evaluative criteria are:

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities: The Department of Communication APT Policies and Procedures specify the following criteria to be employed in evaluating research, scholarship, and creative activities, which engage questions of importance in the discipline of communication as well as interdisciplinary areas of inquiry. The Department of Communication appreciates a variety of research approaches to address the discovery, integration, transmission and/or engagement of knowledge in support of communication for the public good.

Faculty members should pursue a coherent and meaningful research program that results in creative activities and scholarly products of high quality and significance. Typical markers of productivity include: 1) presentation of research at refereed scholarly conferences; 2) publication of research in refereed scholarly journals and the publication of scholarly books and book chapters by refereed, academic presses; and 3) diverse forms of public engagement and creative activities irrespective of medium, as appropriate for

the faculty member's research program. This includes the faculty member's entire record of creative activities and scholarly products.

Criteria for assessing the quality, significance, and impact of research, scholarship, and creative activities include: 1) laudatory recognition, such as grants, fellowships, awards, and keynote speeches; 2) citation by other scholars; 3) quality and reputation of publication outlets in the discipline of communication, as well as in the faculty member's areas of expertise, as demonstrated by the outlet's prestige, impact, adherence to a rigorous anonymous peer review process, and relevance to the candidate's research agenda; and 4) other evidence of the quality, significance, and impact of research, scholarship, and creative activities, including that which did not undergo the standard anonymous peer review process.

Promotion to the Rank of Full Professor. In addition to the criteria mentioned above, associate professors are expected to demonstrate national and international reputation in their area of expertise, based on substantial contributions, leadership, visibility, and impact.

Teaching, Advising, and Mentoring: The Department of Communication prioritizes inclusive excellence in teaching, academic advising, and mentoring at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Teaching, advising, and mentoring activities include, but are not limited to:

1. classroom instruction,
2. course supervision
3. curricular innovation and development on- and/or off-campus,
4. creating instructional texts and other materials,
5. advising and mentoring students, and
6. educational activities performed beyond the University.

In assessing teaching, student course evaluations, peer observations, and the candidate's teaching portfolio will be considered. The Department's assessment considers that evaluations of teaching can reflect biases, especially related to gender, nationality, race, and age; likewise, some classes (e.g., large lectures, required courses) often yield comparatively lower evaluations.

The Department evaluates teaching with the following criteria: evidence of promoting an inclusive, accessible, and supportive learning environment; quality of course content with appropriate intellectual rigor; alignment of course content with course goals; appropriate assessment of student learning; and effective communication of course content, assignments, and graded work. The Department uses the following criteria to assess student advising and mentoring: appropriate quantity of students advised/mentored along with evidence of quality advising/mentoring. Appropriate quantity of students is primarily shaped by Department needs and student interest; faculty should actively engage with students including serving as their faculty contact, advisor, research project mentor, and/or committee member. Quality can be primarily demonstrated by students' conference presentations; publications in refereed journals and/or academic books; awards; and student placement in internships or jobs. Faculty can also demonstrate quality through their support for professional development.

Assistant Professors. We expect junior faculty to show emerging success in teaching as

determined by our evaluative criteria. A trend toward excellence in teaching, coupled with appropriate professional development activities—such as those offered by the Teaching and Learning Transformation Center (TLTC)—is anticipated. Active involvement in curriculum development is appreciated but not expected. Additionally, junior faculty should begin showing a track record of success in advising and/or mentoring graduate students. Undergraduate student mentoring is also valued.

Associate Professors. We expect associate professors to document success in superior teaching as determined by our evaluative criteria. Participation in appropriate professional development activities—such as those offered by the Teaching and Learning Transformation Center (TLTC)—is encouraged. Active involvement in curriculum development is appreciated. Additionally, associate professors are expected to exhibit a strong record of graduate advising and mentoring. Undergraduate student mentoring is also appreciated.

Service: The Department of Communication’s guiding principle is communication for the public good. In support of our shared mission, faculty members engage in meaningful professional service for community benefit. Faculty members are responsible for documenting the impact of their service. We use the following criteria for evaluating service:

Assistant Professors. We prioritize junior faculty engaging in meaningful service at the Department level. This service may include sitting on Department standing committees and ad-hoc committees, such as search committees. As they continue towards promotion, assistant professors should serve their specific intellectual communities through reviewing research for leading conferences, book presses, and/or refereed journals. They may also sit on select committees at the College, University, and/or disciplinary level that align with their professional expertise and goals, as well as meet campus needs. Service activity will not be expected of junior faculty to the point that it interferes with the development of their teaching and research.

Associate Professors. We prioritize associate professors engaging in meaningful service for the benefit of the Department, College, University, the discipline, and/or other communities. Associate professors’ should establish a commitment to their campus communities through leadership, such as taking on administrative positions and/or leadership roles for important committees and initiatives. Meaningful contributions may also include serving as editors or on editorial boards for leading journals and book presses, contributing to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, mentoring faculty, and/or serving on important committees on and off campus.

VIII. Rights and Responsibilities Governing the APT Process.

A. Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members wishing to be reviewed.

1. Responsibility to become familiar with, and maintain knowledge of, the rules and regulations of the University, the College, and the Department relating to the process.
2. Responsibility to indicate to the APT Chair the desire to be reviewed. During the year of mandatory tenure review, this is a responsibility to notify the Chair of a wish to waive review.

3. Responsibility, in consultation with the APT Chair and other members of the APT Committee, to prepare the Personal Statement, a Teaching Portfolio, and the initial review file in the form required by the University APT Guidelines and Manual in effect at the beginning of the academic year in which the review will occur. Right to notification of deadlines for submitting and required content in material for review.
4. Right to notification at the earliest possible time of changes in the programmatic needs of the unit or the University that might have a bearing on the faculty member's prospects for tenure.
5. Right to fair and impartial review without arbitrary or capricious decision.
6. Right to know all faculty participating in the Advisory Subcommittee.
7. Right to have access to, and attach comment or dissent to, all material contained in the review file except for those items declared confidential. Confidential material includes external reviews, evaluative reports of the Committee and the Department Chair, and any other evaluations in which confidentiality has been assured to the evaluator. In the case of confidential information, the faculty member has the right to a summary of the contents without attribution of the contents, and the right to attach comment or dissent to such summaries.
8. Right to speedy notification of actions on their application as quickly as practical after the appropriate date of release of that information to the reviewed faculty member.

B. Rights and Responsibilities of Members of the APT Committee.

1. Responsibility to become familiar with the rules and regulations of the University, the College, and the Department relating to the process.
2. Responsibility to prepare thoroughly for the deliberations of the committee and to participate fully.
3. Responsibility to receive an annual formal charge from the ARHU Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs.
4. Responsibility to impose the highest standards of quality, to ensure that all candidates receive fair and impartial treatment, and for maintaining the integrity and the confidentiality of the review and recommendation process. Right to confidentiality in deliberations and in vote on APT matters.
5. Responsibility to ensure that discussion and evaluation of candidates are fair and unbiased and to report perceptions of inappropriate discussions.
6. Responsibility to respect the confidentiality of other committee members, and all

who have been assured confidentiality when the committee requested their judgment.

7. Right of access to the entirety of review files including all confidential material forwarded to a second level of review.

C. Rights and Responsibilities of the Department Chair.

1. Responsibility to provide all new tenure track faculty with these procedures and other policies of the university named herein. This includes notifying faculty of deadlines and the material required for review.
2. Responsibility to offer and provide assistance to faculty members wishing to be reviewed in assembling review files.
3. Responsibility to work with the APT Committee and the APT Chair to assemble relevant information for the APT review.
4. Right to confidentiality of the Department Chair's report (that is, the report directed to the second level review). Responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of members of the review committee and all others to whom confidentiality has been assured.

IX. Amendment of Procedures. Changes to this document may be initiated by any member of the Department faculty through submission to the APT Chair. Changes will be referred to the APT Committee for its review. The Committee will consider the changes at a meeting held at least a week after submission of the proposed changes to the Committee, but within three months of submission of the proposed changes to the APT Chair. Upon approval by a majority of the APT Committee, changes will be forwarded to the Departmental Assembly for decision at its next meeting. Proposed changes must, however, be circulated to all members of the Departmental Assembly at least one week prior to the vote. Changes will be passed upon majority vote of the Departmental Assembly. Changes become effective for faculty members who are employed the semester following their approval, and others who agree to be evaluated by these changes.

- Adopted: February 28, 1992
- Amended: December 19, 1992; April 7, 2000; May 6, 2005; October 3, 2008; September 10, 2010; April 6, 2012; October 2, 2015; November 2, 2018; November 1, 2024; March 7, 20205; April 4, 2025.