



## School of The Professions: Guidelines for Renewal, Promotion, and Continuing Appointment

Please read carefully all documents governing personnel actions in the **Directory of Policy Statements** located in [section VI](#), *Personnel Policies*. The Procedures for renewal of term, continuing appointment, promotion, documentation of teaching effectiveness, and applied research and the scholarship of teaching are most pertinent. However, other DOPS guidelines under section I. *Academic Policies and Procedures* may also be helpful to faculty who are developing evidentiary documents for a dossier.

All School and departmental guidelines and suggestions for the development of a personnel dossier are made solely to assist faculty members and members of personnel committees. The official policies of the university as negotiated with the empowered representatives of the faculty supersede and frame the supplemental information provided in these guidelines.

### Faculty Promotion to Full Professor

Information on the procedure for promotion to full professor is located in the **Directory of Policy Statements** section [VI:04:03](#), *Procedure for Promotion to Full Professor*.

### Faculty Renewal and Promotion to Associate Professor

The Division of Academic Affairs and its academic departments are fully committed to helping faculty achieve ongoing success in teaching, scholarship (research/creative endeavor) and service, noting that it is expected that faculty will have a vigorous scholarly and creative life throughout their teaching career. This document serves to clarify the promotion and tenure process and assist candidates with the preparation of their documentation for renewal and promotion to associate professor.

It should be noted that decisions on continuing appointment (tenure) and promotion are separate actions at Buffalo State. Faculty seeking promotion to associate or full professor must request to be considered for promotion, and personnel committees must make a separate recommendation regarding promotion to associate professor when considering tenure decisions. Procedural guidelines about applying for promotion to full professor are provided in a separate document.

### Letters of Expectations

- A letter of expectations for each new faculty member is collaboratively designed to bring agreement and clarification among the candidate, department chairperson, department personnel committee chairperson (where applicable), and the dean. The letter of expectations is created by the department chair and/or personnel committee according to departmental procedure, in consultation with the faculty and the dean. The letter of expectation should be shared with the incoming faculty member, discussed and reviewed at each personnel action benchmark.
- The letter of expectation is both a baseline document and a dynamic agreement. At the initiation of the faculty, the letter of expectations may be modified to better describe the direction of teaching, research/creative activity and/or service endorsed by the faculty. However, when faculty are considered for personnel actions, the chair and personnel committee will use the letter of expectations given to the faculty member at the time of their entry to the University. Any changes to such expectations must be approved in writing by the candidate, department chairperson, department personnel committee (where applicable), and the dean.
- Letters of expectations vary by department and by individual faculty member but must be consistent with the policies and definitions of the School of the Professions and of SUNY Buffalo State.

## Departmental Documents

- It is recommended that every department develop a general statement of expectations (see above) for teaching, scholarship and service. This statement of departmental expectations is subject to approval by the dean. This document is to be provided to candidates and should be accessible on the department's website.
- Candidates are responsible for becoming familiar with university documents, including the Directory of Policy Statements (DOPS), the SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees, school policies and procedures, and departmental by-laws, and how they affect personnel actions.
- Department chairs are to establish the departmental calendar and charge the personnel committee to initiate the process. Departments and candidates are responsible for adhering to the academic calendar for deadlines for renewals, promotions, etc. Address any questions about the calendar directly to the dean.
- Personnel Committees are to follow the department calendar established by the department chair and the department by-laws guiding the personnel process. Personnel Committees should become familiar with documentation from previous personnel actions regarding each candidate, including committee reports and letters of expectations, and should consider them as part of a complete context for current actions being considered. Personnel Committees should work with the chair to assure that all information and procedures for the renewal and tenure process are clearly and thoroughly communicating to candidates and offer consultation to candidates in preparing materials for personnel action. They should be available to candidates to answer requests. They must follow all published guidelines for class visits connected with the evaluation of candidates.

## Dean's Role

The Dean serves as the third evaluator of the dossier. The Dean forwards his/her recommendation to the Provost and President along with the recommendations of the Personnel Committee and the Chair. The Dean must also ensure adherence to the process, raise questions when recommendations do not seem to be congruent with documentation, and offer observations as a scholarly reader of the dossier. Questions about process or calendar may be directed to the Dean's office.

## Documentation

Documentation for each evaluation leading to promotion and continuing appointment is to consist of two files: (1) File A containing the required personnel documents and (2) File B containing the supporting documentation.

## File A

Two copies of File A are to be submitted. One copy is retained in the Provost's Office and the other in the Dean's Office. File A is to contain only the items listed below. Originals are to be placed in a file folder with no dividers or cover sheets. One copy is to be organized in a three-ring binder with dividers separating the seven sections. Candidates may review a sample File A in departmental or deans' offices.

1. The **Request for Faculty Personnel Action** form (gray form). Note that consideration for promotion must be specifically requested by the candidate, and a separate recommendation for promotion is required of the personnel committee.
2. The **Candidate's Personal Statement**. For reappointments without promotion, candidates should focus on the review period and document the year(s) in which they are being reviewed (the most recent two-year term, for example). For promotions, the candidate should take a career perspective. The personal statement should be cohesive, within one document, and is typically five to ten pages. The statement may be slightly longer in cases for promotion and tenure. It is to reflect on teaching effectiveness, scholarship/creative activity and service; comment on any additional qualifications, including commitment to the Buffalo State mission, vision, and core values; and provide documentation through reference to specific evidentiary materials provided in File B. Clarity of the narrative is essential. Claims should not be made without specific evidence available in the dossier. It is recommended that the personal statement be constructed using an outline that clearly shows

how the candidate has addressed all of the pertinent categories in DOPS policy [VI:04](#) (all subsections). The candidate's self-assessment narrative should address how the candidate has fulfilled the expectations articulated in the departmental Letter of Expectations and the requirements of the university articulated in DOPS. This includes:

- (a) **Assessment of teaching**, guided by DOPS policy [VI:04:04](#) "Guidelines for Documentation of Teaching Effectiveness" and any other published guidelines in the department or school including requirements for certification in programs
  - i. Additional measures, as appropriate, may be included, such as course and syllabus revision/updating; revision of assignments, handouts, supplementary readings, editions and translations; teaching style; new uses of technology, if any; how research influences the teaching; mentoring students; advising students; participation with the department's student groups, events and presentations; how feedback is provided outside class; availability to students through office hours 2 and out- of-class activities; other.
  - ii. Response to peer observations of teaching
  - iii. Analysis and discussion of student evaluations beyond the scores.
  - iv. How teaching is being strengthened: attention to concerns expressed in student and peer evaluations (and the resulting changes); peer conversations; participating in workshops and conferences; integration of research into teaching; plans for implementation of future innovations; other.
- (b) **Assessment of scholarship**, guided by departmental and school statements of scholarship and DOPS [VI:04:01](#) and [VI:04:05](#)
- (c) **Assessment of service**, guided by departmental and school priorities, the University mission and goals and DOPS [VI:04:01](#)
- (d) Progress on the items listed in Letter of Expectations and DOPS as appropriate.

3. Current (updated) **Curriculum Vita**.

4. The **Departmental Personnel Committee Statement**. The recommendation should document the years in which the candidate is being reviewed. This is evaluative, should be guided by DOPS and should provide a professional assessment of the candidate in teaching effectiveness, scholarship/creative activity and service. The statement should summarize and interpret peer evaluations and student evaluations, and comment directly on the candidate's statement and materials presented in the dossier. All previous personnel committee statements are to be provided in File B. If promotion to associate professor is requested, the personnel committee statement should include a separate paragraph recommending promotion guided by DOPS VI:04:01. Candidates may write a response to the personnel committee statement to be included with the documents in File A. The response will go forward with the dossier.
5. The **Department Chairperson's Recommendation**. The recommendation should document the years in which the candidate is being reviewed. This will be autonomous and separate from the Personnel Committee's recommendation. The chairperson's recommendation is evaluative, should be guided by DOPS and should provide a professional assessment of the candidate for teaching effectiveness, scholarship/creative activity and service. The chair should provide commentary on peer and student evaluations and may include pertinent information provided in the candidates' annual reports. All previous department chairpersons' recommendations are to be provided in File B. If promotion to associate professor is requested, the chair should include a separate paragraph recommending promotion guided by DOPS VI:04:01. Candidates may write a response to the chair's assessment to be included with the documents in File A. The response will go forward with the dossier.
6. The **Dean's Recommendation**. This will be autonomous and separate from the other recommendations. The dean's recommendation should consider all of the information provided by the Chair, the Personnel Committee and the candidate including the evidence presented by the candidate in his/her dossier. The Dean should view the dossier from a professional and scholarly perspective. If there is a disagreement between the recommendations of the Personnel Committee and the Chair, the Dean acts as an autonomous scholarly

reader. The Dean may choose to support or not to support the recommendations of the Chair and/or Personnel Committees. The Dean's recommendation will be made to the Provost; however, all recommendations will be sent forward to the Provost and President in File A of the dossier. All previous deans' recommendations are to be provided in File B. If promotion to associate professor is requested, the Dean will clearly address this in a separate paragraph recommending promotion. Candidates may write a response to the Dean's recommendation to be included in File A. The response will go forward with the dossier.

7. A copy of the candidate's current **Letter of Expectations**. Any previous letters of expectations are to be provided in File B.

## **File B**

File B provides supporting evidence for the candidate's personal statement in File A. The file should be clearly organized in no fewer than three general sections to display artifacts and evidence in teaching, scholarship and service. Section divisions and a Table of Contents should make it easy for reviewers to locate and consider evidentiary materials. Candidates should make every effort to contain materials in no more than three three-ring binders (File A =1; File B may be divided when necessary in B1 and B2), with supplementary materials as appropriate; however, documentation of the candidate's performance is essential, so artifacts offering support for the candidate's statement are welcome. File B is returned to the candidate after completion of the process.

The following artifacts/documents should be included in all dossiers:

- Claims of accomplishment cited in File A must be documented in File B.
- Documentation or examples of books, articles, electronic media and other scholarship and/or creative work should be included. The candidate may seek the advice of the Personnel Committee or Chair regarding the appropriate inclusion of other materials.
- Summary sheets of **all** student evaluations and **all** written student comments shall be included and clearly labeled. The faculty member should not select only favorable evaluations. Each summary sheet should be followed by the student comments, organized in chronological order with the most current first. A comprehensive summary sheet of all evaluations should be placed at the front of the evaluation section to provide an overview of the evaluations.
- Letters of support from colleagues and other agents who can attest to the quality of work claimed by the candidate are considered a form of corroborative evidence but are not sufficient to establish validity of claims. Other evidence of work is expected.
- Solicited external reviews are **optional** for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and continuing appointment unless explicitly stated in departmental policies. However, letters from external reviewers are often considered to add significant credibility to claims, particularly in scholarship, by providing non-personal testimony that offers an objective view of the candidate's stature in the profession. It is prudent for faculty who have co-authored pieces to seek a letter from the co-author attesting to the individual member's contributions to the research and/or writing of a published or presented work. Letters of testimony for service and teaching are also helpful as a form of evidence when presented along with more direct artifacts such as proceedings, minutes or materials produced. Letters should be included in File B, preferably located in proximity with the other artifacts of evidence presented for each event or product.