

Department of Communication Studies

Policy on Faculty Evaluation for Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment

Version History

For each revision to the policy, assign a version number and include a brief description of the revision. Version numbers should follow semantic versioning format: Major.Minor.Path. In the row below the description, include a summary of the revisions.

1.0.0	Approved by COMM Department, Nov. 5, 2018; Vote 11-0 to approve
1.1.0	Updated and Approved by COMM Department, Nov. 29, 2021; Vote 15-0
1.2.0	Updated and Approved by COMM Department, Dec. 1, 2022; Vote 14-0
1.2.1	Proofing by cicada inscoe for document clarity
	<p>Generally, I revised the document to maximize accessibility and minimize inconsistency in formatting.¹ Further edits could be made but may change the structure of the Policy; for instance, we use an outline style that Word does not accept by default, and some levels of the outline are headings while others are full descriptions (e.g., I. A. as compared to III.A).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transferred unformatted content to new document and reformatted content based on original document• Used Header 1 and 2 Styles for first and second level categories; created Table of Contents based on Headers• Updated outline format to I.A.1.a format and updated language to reflect the change• I. General Principles: Changed links to hyperlink text• I. General Principles: Incorporated Standards section into outline format• III.A: Updated broken link (revised policy 2022). Changed link to hyperlink text.• XI: Organized list into table by month
1.3.0	Proposed Revisions by COMM Department Lecturers, per Meeting, Feb. 2, 2024
1.4.0	Updated and Approved by COMM Department, 8 March 2024; Vote 16-0
1.4.1	Revised following UPTR notes, 13 October 2025

¹ Moving forward, changes made to this document should follow current document Styles. Content copy-pasted into the document should be pasted without formatting (Ctrl+Shift+V; ⌘+Shift+V; or Right-Click → Paste Options → Keep Text Only).

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² To update the Table of Contents, Left-Click “Table of Contents,” Left-Click the : to highlight the table, and Left-Click “Update Table.” Select “Update entire table.” Left-Click “Okay.”

I. General Principles

The following document describes the general criteria and procedures related to faculty appointment, rank, and tenure in the Department of Communication Studies (COMM). The COMM policies are consistent with those of University System of Maryland (USM), Towson University (TU), and College of Fine Arts and Communication (COFAC). The procedures and expectations for review set forth in this document may be amended from time to time. The provisions of the USM policy supersede any conflicting provisions at the university, college, or department level.

- a. General information regarding University System of Maryland (USM) policy on evaluation, promotion, tenure, and permanent status may be found in the [Board of Regents —II-1.00 University System Policy on Appointment, Rank, and Tenure of Faculty.](#)
- b. Towson University policy on appointment, rank, and tenure of faculty are found in the [Appendix 3 to “02-01.00 - Towson University Policy.”](#)
- c. COFAC policy on promotion, tenure, and reappointment is found [here](#).

A. Standards

The Towson University policies on appointment, rank, and tenure and faculty workload and responsibilities provide the basis for standards and expectations common to all full or part-time tenure track faculty. The tenure and/or promotion decision is based both on the needs of the University and the competence and quality of the individual. All faculty are responsible for meeting university standards and expectations, including but not limited to those listed in this section. Meeting the general expectations specified below is essential for a faculty member's performance to be judged satisfactory in an annual review or, cumulatively, across a longer period of evaluation.

1. University standards for all University faculty include the following activities:
 - a. A faculty member shall fulfill their workload agreement in the areas of teaching/advising, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service; shall be available for consultation and advising during office hours; and shall meet all classes as scheduled.
 - b. A faculty member shall be an effective teacher both in and out of the classroom.
 - c. A faculty member shall be committed to a discipline or interdisciplinary specialty and shall be committed to continuing professional development and demonstration of scholarly growth.
 - d. A faculty member shall be committed to collegiality and academic citizenship. *Collegiality and academic citizenship* refer to the role and responsibility of faculty in shared decision making through open and fair processes devised to provide timely advice and recommendations on matters that relate to curriculum,

academic personnel, and the educational functions of the institution. The demonstration of high standards of humane, ethical, and professional behavior is fundamental to collegiality and academic citizenship. These concepts include mutual respect for similarities and differences among participants on the basis of background, expertise, opinions, and assigned responsibilities. Collegiality does not imply agreement; vibrant university communities must include the capacity for respectful disagreement among faculty members and administrators.

- e. A faculty member shall share the responsibility of university, college, and/or department governance. Faculty members must make themselves available to participate in the work of the department, of assigned committees, or of college and university processes in which faculty play an essential role.
- f. A faculty member shall participate each year in the faculty evaluation process as described in university, college, and department documents. Satisfactory participation includes the full completion of annual review forms and submission of the forms signed and accompanied by all documents required no later than the due date specified in the PTRM calendar.

2. College

- a. A faculty member is responsible for meeting the standards and expectations of the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

3. Communication Studies Department

- a. This PTR process reflects the department's commitment to supporting faculty success throughout the PTR process. Faculty are expected to exhibit fairness and collegiality during deliberations reflective of a core commitment to a process that is supportive of faculty rather than punitive. First and foremost, COMM faculty should trust that the department PTR process is created and executed in support of their career arc at all stages.
- b. A faculty member is responsible for presenting evidence of meeting the standards and expectations of the Department of Communication Studies, as outlined below.
- c. Adoption and subsequent changes to the COMM Department Reappointment, and Tenure and Three-year Review documents will be by electronic ballot of the full department faculty. Faculty on leave (sabbatical, medical leave, etc.) may submit their vote by proxy by notification to both the Reappointment Chair and Vice Chair.
- d. A 75% majority of the full department faculty must be reached for adoption and subsequent changes to department documents.

II. Committee Membership and Method of Selection

The COMM department will have two committees:

- **Reappointment Committee.**
- **Tenure, Promotion, Third year (pre-tenure) review, and Five-Year Post-Tenure review committee.** The Tenure, Promotion, Third-year pre-tenure review, and Five-Year Post-Tenure review committee *will hereafter be referred to as the Tenure committee.*

A. Reappointment Committee Structure

1. Membership of the Reappointment Committee consists of five members:
 - a. one Lecturer
 - b. one tenure-track faculty member
 - c. one tenured faculty member
 - d. one At-large member (from any rank)
 - e. COMM Department Chair who serves ex officio and does not vote. Non-voting status of the department chair will be indicated in the reappointment deliberation letters.
2. Members of the Reappointment committee are elected to three-year terms by electronic ballot of the full department faculty no later than the fourth Monday in April. Electronic ballots will not require faculty voter identification.
3. *Full department faculty* is defined as full-time Communication Studies faculty in the ranks of lecturer, pre-tenure, and tenured professors.
4. A quorum of 75% of COMM faculty members is required for election of Reappointment members.
5. All committee members are elected by a simple majority vote.
6. All members with 2 years of full-time Department service are eligible for election. Nominations are by self-nomination or peer nomination from slate of eligible faculty members prepared by the Reappointment Chair and Department Chair.
7. Membership elections should be staggered to retain half of the elected committee members each year.
8. Faculty members may not serve more than six consecutive years.
9. If an elected member's status changes (e.g., tenure-track to tenured professor), the faculty member no longer fulfills the membership requirements. A special election will be held to select a new member to complete the term.
10. Committee members on sabbatical or other leave will be replaced on a semester (or yearly) basis by a vote of the full department faculty. The faculty member resumes their service upon return from leave.
11. If there are no faculty available in a rank to fulfill a position, the position will convert to an at-large position for the remainder/entirety of the term.

12. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Reappointment committee are elected by separate electronic ballot of the full department faculty after all committee members have been elected for the upcoming year.
13. The Reappointment Chair and Vice-Chair each serve a two-year term. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by the fourth Monday in April and shall assume responsibility starting in September of that year.
14. The Reappointment Chair will have general oversight of the process of Faculty Evaluation for Reappointment. Specifically, the Reappointment Chair shall be responsible for convening, chairing, and reporting the results of all Reappointment Committee meetings; coordinating the revision of Reappointment documents and advising full-time faculty about the Reappointment processes.
15. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in the responsibilities identified above and certify all electronic ballots for the full department faculty. The Reappointment Chair and Vice-Chair are also responsible for completing all forms related to committee review and votes.

B. COMM Tenure, Promotion, Third Year Review, Five-Year Review Committee Structure.

1. Membership on the Tenure committee will comprise all tenured faculty and the COMM Department Chair who serves ex officio and does not vote. Lecturer II and Lecturer III faculty members will serve only on the Lecturer Promotion Subcommittees, as outlined below. Non-voting status of the Department Chair will be indicated in the Tenure and three-year deliberation letters.
2. Membership on the Promotion to Professor subcommittee will comprise all full Professors in the department.
3. Membership on the Lecturer II Promotion subcommittee will comprise all Lecturer II, Lecturer III, Associate, and Full Professors.
4. Membership on the Lecturer III Promotion subcommittee will comprise all Lecturer III, Associate, and Full Professors.
5. The Tenure committee will convene only when tenure, promotions to Associate, or three-year reviews are due.
6. The Professor subcommittee will convene only when promotions to full Professor are due.
7. The Lecturer II subcommittee will convene only when promotions to Lecturer II are due.
8. The Lecturer III subcommittee will convene only when promotions to Lecturer III are due.
9. Tenured and/or promoted faculty on sabbatical or other leave may serve on any of the Tenure committees or subcommittees provided they attend all deliberations and meetings and have indicated a willingness to serve.

10. The chair of the convened Tenure committee is elected by electronic ballot of the full department faculty no later than the fourth Monday in April. Electronic ballots will not require faculty voter identification.
11. *Full department faculty* is defined as full-time Communication Studies members in the rank of lecturer, tenure-track, and tenured professors.
12. A quorum of 75% of full-time faculty members is required for election of the Tenure committee chair.
13. All tenure and promotion decisions require a minimum of three voting members. If the department does not have three eligible voting faculty at the time of a tenure and/or promotion decision, the department needs to seek assistance from outside the department.
 - a. The applicant can provide the Department Chairperson with three to five suggested eligible faculty members from outside the department to be invited to join the COMM Tenure committee for the applicant's tenure and/or promotion review.
 - b. If more than one applicant exists in a single year, each applicant will be allowed to provide three to five outside eligible faculty for their tenure and/or promotion review.
 - c. The Department Chair invites outside members from the applicant's list to meet the minimum required number of three Tenure committee members for the tenure and/or promotion review.
 - d. In order that at least three (3) tenured faculty opinions be considered in promotion and tenure recommendations, in addition to the department chairperson, departments with fewer than three (3) tenured faculty members shall supplement the committee with tenured faculty members from other departments within the college or from the appropriate department if the faculty member being reviewed has a joint appointment, including a joint appointment between colleges. The additional tenured faculty members shall be selected from a list of at least three (3) faculty members recommended by the faculty member under review. The faculty member shall submit the list of recommended faculty members on or before the third Friday in June. The department chairperson and the dean will review the list from the appropriate college and make recommendations by the first Friday in September.

III. Policies and Procedures for Evaluation Portfolios

- A. Faculty members will be evaluated for Merit through a process separate from reappointment, third-year review, promotion, tenure, and five-year comprehensive review. For details see the [Updated Merit Policy](#).
- B. The responsibility for presenting material for the annual review, reappointment, third-year review, promotion, tenure, or five-year comprehensive reviews rests with the faculty member. Candidates are responsible for demonstrating the way their work aligns with the standards for evaluation. The department chair and committee can review only materials submitted by the candidate
- C. Guided by the department criteria, department Reappointment chair, college, and university criteria, the faculty member shall have the responsibility of making distinctions between the various categories of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service, and shall include such distinctions as they deem appropriate in their narrative statements and other documentation relevant to each evaluation portfolio section.
- D. Required materials for Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment, and Comprehensive Five-Year Review and other reviews are listed in the University ART document.
- E. Required materials for Reappointment reviews for **tenure track faculty** must include the following documents (in this order):
 1. Current curriculum vitae;
 2. Evidence of scholarly activity;
 3. Completed and signed Annual Report and Annual Workload forms;
 4. Peer and/or chairperson's evaluation(s) of teaching, signed by faculty member and evaluator;
 5. Student evaluations for courses taught;
 6. Self-evaluation of teaching effectiveness; and
 7. Evidence of service activity.
- F. Evaluation portfolio materials for **promotion to Lecturer II and Lecturer III** review of faculty must include the following documents:
 1. Completed and signed Annual Report and Annual Workload Plans.
 2. Current curriculum vitae.
 3. Syllabi of all courses taught in the evaluation period.
 4. All peer observations and student feedback completed in the review period.
 5. A reflective narrative statement in which the faculty member describes how they met teaching and advising expectations, service expectations, and research/scholarship/creative activity expectations, based on their workload agreement for the period under review.
- G. Portfolio materials for **third year review** must include the following documents:
 1. All materials listed above (section E, 1–7);

2. A summary outlining the candidate's plan for achieving tenure and their plan for teaching, service, and research/scholarship/creative activities through their tenure review period.
- H. Portfolio materials for **promotion and/or tenure** must include the following documents (in this order):
1. Section I: Curriculum Vitae and a copy of one recent peer-reviewed publication or comparable creative activity.
 2. Section II: Completed and signed Annual Reports and Annual Workload Plans, arranged from most recent to the time of last promotion or year of hire.
 3. Section III: A summary of student evaluations across the evaluation period; a narrative statement about individual teaching and advising philosophy; an interpretation of student and peer/chairperson evaluations; and peer teaching evaluations.
 4. Section IV: Supporting Statement describing correlation between expectations and accomplishments and integrating accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service.
- I. Evaluation portfolio materials for **five-year comprehensive post-tenure review** of tenured faculty must include the following documents:
1. All materials listed above in section H for the previous five (5) years;
 2. A minimum of two peer observations of teaching from the past five-year period, including one from the prior academic year.
 3. A reflective comprehensive summary written by the faculty member being evaluated, analyzing the preceding five (5) years of their work in the areas of teaching, advising, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service.
 4. A narrative outlining the candidate's plan for teaching, service, and research/scholarship/creative activities for the next five years.
- J. If the faculty member or the Reappointment Chair, Tenure Chair or COMM chairperson participating in the evaluation process wishes to add a statement to the file rebutting a committee recommendation or clarifying information or statements in the file, this information must be included in the evaluation portfolio in a special folder entitled "Information Added." All documentation used as part of the consideration process must be included in the evaluation portfolio no later than November 30.
- K. If the COMM department chairperson includes information in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio, other than their evaluation, that specific information shall immediately be made known to the faculty member undergoing evaluation and before any evaluation at the next level of review takes place. Record of the faculty member's notification shall be tracked via the Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment (PTR) Document Review Transmittal Form. Failure to notify the faculty within five (5) business days will result in the material being removed from the evaluation portfolio.

IV. Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Evaluation Procedures

- A. Committee deliberations are confidential.
- B. A quorum of 75% of voting Reappointment committee members is required for committee deliberations. A quorum of 75% of voting Tenure committee members is required for committee and subcommittee deliberations for tenure, promotion, third year review, and five-year review. In all cases, votes should take place immediately following deliberations via electronic ballot.
- C. Faculty members being evaluated shall be informed in writing of committee decisions by the fourth Friday in October. The COMM Chairperson may prepare an independent recommendation on reappointment and include it in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio. The COMM Chairperson shall prepare an independent recommendation of each faculty member considered for promotion and/or tenure and five-year review and include it in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio. The COMM Chairperson's recommendation letter will be added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio after the Reappointment Committee or Tenure Committee deliberations.
- D. Negative committee decisions shall be delivered in person by the COMM Department Chairperson or sent by certified mail to the candidate's home by the fourth Friday in October.
- E. All votes regarding tenure, promotion, reappointment, three-year review, and five-year comprehensive post-tenure reviews taken by any committee shall be by confidential, electronic ballot, signed with the Towson University ID number, and dated by the voting member, and tallied by the Reappointment chair and Co-Chair or the Tenure committee chair. The Reappointment and Tenure chairpersons shall forward a signed, dated report of the results of the vote and the committee's recommendations to the next level of review. The confidential electronic ballots shall not be included in the faculty evaluation portfolio but shall be forwarded under separate cover to the Provost, to be preserved with the tenure and promotion file until three (3) years following the faculty member's termination or resignation from the University.
- F. No committee member shall abstain from a vote for tenure or promotion unless the Provost authorizes such abstention based for good cause, including a conflict of interest.
- G. Department committees should consistently and objectively evaluate faculty members on the standards listed in the department guidelines. Department committees should review and comment on course evaluations and report on them in a representative and proportional manner. Department committees may also review and comment on grade distribution data and on any correlation between grade distribution and course evaluations.
- H. Committee letters should reference (clearly cite, explain, and apply) department standards of teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service; connect them to a faculty member's accomplishments with examples; and evaluate how the faculty member did not meet, met, or exceeded these department standards. Committee letters should

reflect the main points of discussion, including dissent. Committee letters should employ a consistent format.

- I. Tie Votes. Tie votes result in the following recommendations:
 1. Promotion and Reappointment: tie votes for Promotion or reappointment result in a recommendation for Promotion or reappointment.
 2. Tenure: A tie vote for Tenure results in a recommendation against tenure.
 3. Five-year Comprehensive Review: Tie votes for five-year comprehensive review result in a Satisfactory recommendation.
- J. There are three kinds of rebuttals/appeals in the PTR process: substantive, procedural, and appeals alleging discrimination. For a full discussion of appeals, see the University ART document.
 1. Rebuttals of substantive matters for Department decisions on Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment, and Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review should go to the COFAC Dean's office for the COFAC PTR Committee and be copied to the COMM department chair and the department's Reappointment or Tenure committee chair. Rebuttals must be in writing, clearly stating the grounds for appeal, and must be accompanied by supporting documents. Rebuttals must be delivered by certified mail or in person to the college Dean within twenty-one (21) calendar days of notification of the negative recommendation.
 2. There is no appeals process for Lecturer faculty applying for promotion to Lecturer II or Lecturer III at the department level. Lecturers applying for promotion can appeal a Dean's negative decision and the appeal is directly to the Provost. Rebuttal materials by the candidate may be added to the portfolio for the Provost's review within 10 business days of receipt of a negative recommendation from the Dean.
 3. Procedural appeals shall be made to the University PTRM committee. The appeal must be in writing, clearly stating the alleged procedural error(s). The appeal shall be accompanied by supporting documents and should be delivered by certified mail or in person to the UPTRM chair within twenty-one (21) calendar days of having been notified of the negative recommendation. Appeals of department recommendations shall be copied to the department chair, the department PTR chair, the dean, and the university PTRM committee chair.
 4. Appeals alleging unlawful discrimination in race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation and disability shall follow the specific procedures described in Towson University policy 06-01.00 "Prohibiting Discrimination on the basis of Race, Color, Religion, Age, National Origin, Sex and Disability."

V. Ratification and Amendment of COMM PTR documents

- A. Any amendment to the COMM PTR documents will be developed by the Reappointment and Tenure committees.
- B. All COMM PTR documents must be distributed to full-time faculty in the department for input at least ten (10) business days prior to the full department faculty vote on the document.
- C. Final approval of the department documents shall be by a 75% majority of the fulltime department faculty vote by electronic ballot. Faculty on leave (sabbatical, medical leave, etc.) may submit their vote by proxy by notification to both the Merit Chair and Co-Chair.
- D. Faculty voting on the document should sign the voting roster to signify participation. The Reappointment Chair and Co-Chair can signify the proxy vote of a faculty member on leave.
- E. Prior to submission to the University PTR committee, the department document, with Approval Form, shall be submitted to the college PTR committee and the Dean of the college for approval by the first Friday in December.
- F. Following approval by the college PTR committee and the dean, the department PTR document shall be delivered by the dean to the chairperson of the University PTRM committee by the second Friday in February.
- G. The department Reappointment committee shall formally respond to changes and/or recommendations resulting from the review by the University PTRM committee and submit a revised copy to the college PTR committee and the dean of the college for approval prior to the due date specified by the University PTR committee.
- H. The COMM chairperson is responsible for assuring that the approved departmental PTR documents are posted on the Towson University website.
- I. The department shall review its PTR document every three years, at a minimum, and submit evidence of such review to the dean of the College and the University PTRM committee.
- J. All policies at the department level shall remain in effect until changed according to the procedures described herein. Faculty members shall be evaluated for tenure pursuant to the departmental PTR standards and criteria in effect during the year they are first appointed to a tenure-track position. If the document is updated in their pre-tenure years, faculty can elect to notify the department and Tenure chair that they wish to adopt the revised policies.

VI. Departmental Standards and Evaluations for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion: Teaching

- A. Teaching is the central purpose of Towson University and therefore all faculty recommended for reappointment, promotion and tenure should be high quality teachers. Teaching – may take a variety of forms, including the use of new technology formats, development of new courses and programs (including those involving collaborative or interdisciplinary work and civic engagement), faculty exchanges and teaching abroad, off-site learning, supervision of undergraduate and graduate research and thesis preparation, emphasis on pedagogy, including the various learning outcomes defined in a specific curriculum, and other aspects of learning and its assessment. Evaluation of teaching may take many forms and should consider classroom performance (as well as other venues for teaching), the varied forms of investment faculty make in preparation for teaching, and the faculty role in both formal and informal advising. Teaching effectiveness can best be evaluated through multiple criteria, including but not limited to:
1. Qualitative and quantitative student evaluations;
 2. Summaries of written evaluations from student evaluation forms;
 3. Copies of signed reports from peer observations of teaching;
 4. Comments on teaching from department and chair letters evaluating the candidate;
 5. The candidate's reflective essay on their teaching (self-evaluation);
 6. Evaluation of student learning outcomes;
 7. Evidence of development of new courses, and/or new programs;
 8. Evidence of the use of appropriate technologies to improve instruction;
 9. Evidence of the use of contemporary theory and practice to improve instruction;
 10. Internal and/or professional awards for teaching excellence; and
 11. Evidence for new instructional procedures from the Annual Review form.
- B. Teaching Standards for *Reappointment for T/TT faculty*:
1. Knowledgeable of emerging needs in one's field;
 2. Refinement, updating, and improvement of courses that one teaches;
 3. Effective and successful participation in course and program development that is based on established scholarship, best practice, and/or one's sustained experience with practitioners in one's field;
 4. Carefully planned and well-organized course syllabi;
 5. Availability to students; and
 6. Strong evidence of potential for meeting the standards for tenure at the time of the tenure decision.
- C. Teaching Standards for Tenure and *Promotion to Associate Professor*:
1. Standards 1–6 listed under reappointment for TT/T faculty
 2. Effective teaching, as evidenced by:

- a. A reflective summary that may include (but is not limited to) levels of satisfaction with course assignments and work manageability, students' take-aways and/or gaps in understanding, grading and providing feedback, DEIJ considerations, digital accessibility, opportunities to fold in new concepts and perspectives into coursework, or other pedagogical innovations.
 - b. Creation of new courses, including those supporting the university's mission of interdisciplinary studies and Study Abroad/Study Away experiences.
- 3. Content of courses and teaching processes are supportive of department mission;
- 4. Effective instruction as measured by peer observation;
- 5. Effective instruction as measured by student evaluation;
- 6. Recognition in the department, College, University, and/or professional organizations of the quality of one's teaching.
- D. Teaching Standards for *Promotion to Professor*:
 - 1. The standards listed for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor;
 - 2. Excellence in teaching; and
 - 3. Demonstrated leadership in mentoring colleagues, particularly junior faculty, in their own teaching.
- E. Teaching Standards for *Reappointment for Lecturer faculty*:
 - 1. Knowledgeable of emerging needs in one's field;
 - 2. Refinement, updating, and improvement of individual courses that one teaches;
 - 3. Effective and successful participation in curricular/program development that is based on established scholarship, best practice, and/or one's sustained experience with practitioners in one's field;
 - 4. Carefully planned and well-organized course syllabi; and
 - 5. Availability to students
- F. Teaching Standards for *Promotion to Lecturer II*:
 - 1. Standards 1–5 listed under reappointment for lecturer faculty;
 - 2. Record of at least six years teaching full-time at an accredited university;
 - 3. Excellence in teaching as evidenced by peer evaluations, student feedback, and a reflective summary on teaching. The summary may include (but is not limited to) levels of satisfaction with course assignments and work manageability, students' take-aways and/or gaps in understanding, grading and providing feedback, DEIJ considerations, digital accessibility, opportunities to fold in new concepts and perspectives into coursework, or other pedagogical innovations.
- G. Teaching Standards for *Promotion to Lecturer III*:
 - 1. The standards listed for promotion to Lecturer II;
 - 2. Record of at least ten years teaching full-time at an accredited university.
- H. Advising is an important faculty responsibility. Standards for all full-time faculty advisors for reappointment and promotion include:
 - 1. Accessible to students for advising sessions;

2. Schedule formal advising hours each semester;
3. Be familiar with current policies and the department's website;
4. Assist students with the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their professional goals;
5. Assist students with course planning (understand curriculum, policies, and procedures; assess objectives and available choices; explore alternative courses of action).

VII. Departmental Standards and Evaluations for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities

- A. The evaluation of faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities shall be based on written evidence of the faculty member's commitment to a discipline or an interdisciplinary specialty and of continuing professional development and demonstrated scholarly growth. Research, scholarship, and creative activities may take many forms, including the research, scholarship, and creative activities of Application, Discovery, Integration, or Teaching. Regardless of type, faculty members shall be reviewed for continuing professional development and currency in their academic fields, as affirmed by its community of scholars and as demonstrated by the scholarly materials in the faculty member's evaluation portfolio.
- B. Whatever type or types of research, scholarship, and creative activities the faculty member pursues, a record of scholarly growth sufficient for the granting of tenure or promotion shall include evidence that the faculty member's completed work has met the tests of dissemination and validation, meaning that the work has been made available in a form to which an interested scholarly or public community will have ready access and that the work has been reviewed and affirmed by scholarly peers. A faculty member's portfolio sufficient for the granting of tenure or promotion should demonstrate a sustained scholarly agenda resulting in published work consistent with the standards outlined below.
- C. Scholarly papers accepted for delivery at conferences external to the University, invited scholarly talks at other institutions whether domestic or international, and similar presentations involving review or recognition by scholarly peers may all provide evidence of scholarly engagement and development. Scholarly papers may mark progress toward completed work in annual or comprehensive reviews, but they may not substitute for the pattern of published work required in evaluation for tenure or promotion.
- D. The COMM Reappointment and Tenure Committees look at peer review and dissemination as ways to validate a candidate's research, scholarship, and creative activities. In presenting scholarly/creative materials in the portfolio, the faculty member should explain the review process and dissemination plan.
- E. The COMM Department seeks a minimum of five pieces of peer-reviewed published research, scholarship, and creative activities for a positive recommendation for tenure. While five pieces of peer-reviewed scholarship are the minimum requirements, the Department of Communication Studies emphasizes a holistic approach to the tenure package. The pieces of research, scholarship, and creative activities will also be considered in conjunction with the scholarly agenda and trajectory of the candidate, and the teaching and service components. The five pieces of peer-reviewed published research, scholarship, and creative activities are the foundation of a strong tenure case, but do not guarantee a successful case.

- F. Peer-reviewed publications include but are not limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, books, chapters in books, and exhibitions/performances in COMM and related Interdisciplinary fields.
- G. Additional kinds of research, scholarship, and creative activities. The following list of research, scholarship, and creative activities represent appropriate forms of research, scholarship, and creative activities for Tenure and Promotion including but not limited to:
 - 1. Productions: Peer-reviewed performances, multi-media/digital projects.
 - 2. Successful awards of external grants and Fellowships in support of one's research and/or creative and performance activities
 - 3. Distinguished Scholarly Fellowship, Journal Editorial position, and visiting artist.
- H. Interdisciplinary work, which may also include both teaching and research, is a vital part of the activity of the modern university. The COMM Reappointment and Tenure Committees will evaluate interdisciplinary and international work as having equal weight with work done entirely within COMM.
- I. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Reappointment for TT faculty*:
 - 1. A clearly defined research, scholarship, and creative activities agenda and focus;
 - 2. Expertise in methodologies appropriate to one's research, scholarship, and creative activities agenda; and
 - 3. Currency in the knowledge base that encompasses one's field of inquiry;
 - 4. Application of that knowledge base to one's teaching, service, and other professional activities; and
 - 5. Strong evidence of potential for meeting the standards for tenure at the time of that decision.
- J. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Promotion to Assistant Professor*:
 - 1. The standards for reappointment; and
 - 2. Award of terminal degree.
- K. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor*:
 - 1. Standards 1–5 for reappointment and “standards for promotion to Assistant Professor”;
 - 2. Efforts to obtain funding to support one's research, scholarship, and creative activities or pedagogical goals;
 - 3. Evidence that one's research agenda or scholarly achievement has developed over time;
 - 4. Dissemination of one's research, scholarship, and creative activities to appropriate publics;
 - 5. Recognition by others of the quality of one's research, scholarship, and creative activities.

6. Continued interaction with others internally and externally who share one's knowledge base; and
 7. Reviews of the knowledge base in one's field (via articles, conference papers, or other forums), identification of critical themes, and recommendations for extending that knowledge base.
- L. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Promotion to Professor*:
1. The above standards for tenure plus these additional standards:
 - a. A sustained record of conducting and reporting research in one's field or a sustained effort in a particular medium or style;
 - b. Demonstrated leadership in mentoring colleagues, particularly junior faculty, in the area of research, scholarship, and creative activities and/or grant writing;
 - c. Distinction in the quality of one's research, scholarship, and creative activities; and
 - d. Generation of new theories and models based on the knowledge base in one's field.
- M. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Reappointment for Lecturer Faculty*:
1. Reports on thoughtful patterns of scholarly reading, engagement and study that reflect efforts to achieve currency in the COMM discipline and related interdisciplinary fields;
 2. Participation in scholarly activities; examples include:
 - a. Conference participation, including attendance at educational workshops and workshops directed by COMM and related professional organizations;
 - b. Courses, workshops, and technical/course pedagogy workshops offered by academic and COMM and related professional organizations;
 - c. Museum-going, attendance at performances, forums, or other documented activities that demonstrate scholarly activity or professional growth
- N. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Promotion to Lecturer II*:
1. The above standards for reappointment for lecturer faculty;
 2. Record of at least six years teaching full-time at an accredited university.
 3. Sustained record of scholarship activities (examples may include, but are not limited to presenting, attending conferences and other professional development) commensurate with workload identified in Annual Plans.
 - 4.
- O. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Standards for *Promotion to Lecturer III*:
1. The above standards for promotion to lecturer II;
 2. Record of at least ten years teaching full-time at an accredited university.

VIII. Departmental Standards and Evaluations for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion: Service

- A. The evaluation of service for faculty members shall rely on evidence of service contributions consistent with the faculty member's workload agreements. Evaluation should consider the extent and quality of service, not the mere fact of membership on a committee or a position held. The faculty member should sufficiently explain the type or substance of service outside the University to allow colleagues a reasonable basis for judgment of its extent and its relation to the mission of the University. Although diverse profiles of service contributions are anticipated among candidates, it is expected that, over time, all candidates will demonstrate service in the three domains identified below: to the University, to the profession, and to the community. Outstanding contributions at one level can balance more routine service at another level. Service will be evaluated by following standards at different levels.
- B. Service to the University
 1. The service standards for *Reappointment as Lecturer or Assistant Professor*:
 - a. Involvement in the institution's faculty governance structure at program, department, college, and/or university levels; and
 - b. Contributions to the institution that are focused and draw upon one's professional expertise.
 2. The service standards for *Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor*:
 - a. Sustained participation in the institution's faculty governance structure at program, department, college, university and/or system levels;
 - b. Sustained contributions to the institution that are focused and draw upon one's professional expertise;
 - c. Advocacy in addressing institutional issues; and
 - d. Recognition by the department, college, or university of the quality and impact of one's service.
 3. The service standards for *Promotion to Professor*: The standards for tenure plus these additional standards:
 - a. Leadership in addressing institutional issues; and
 - b. Distinction in the quality of one's service to the institution at program, department, college, university, and/or system levels.
 4. The service standards for *Promotion to Lecturer II*: The standards for reappointment plus:
 - a. A sustained record of service, commensurate with workload identified in Annual Plans.
 5. The service standards for *Promotion to Lecturer III*: The standards for promotion to Lecturer II plus :

- a. A sustained record of service, commensurate with workload identified in Annual Plans
- C. Service to the profession. Professional service includes activities in professional organizations or participating in other venues external to the University (local, regional, national or global) in which one's expertise is applied, and which advance the University's mission.
 - 1. Standard for *Reappointment as Lecturer or Assistant Professor*: Involvement with practitioners and/or with professional organizations.
 - 2. Standard for *Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor*: Sustained involvement with practitioners and/or professional organizations.
 - 3. Standard for *Promotion to Professor*: Leadership in addressing issues in one's field; and Distinction in the quality of one's service or performance.
- D. Service to the community
 - 1. Standard for *Reappointment as Lecturer or Assistant Professor*: Involvement in and/or engagement of the larger community (local, regional, national, or global) outside the University in ways that may or may not be directly related to one's academic expertise, but in ways which advance the department's, college's, or university's mission.
 - 2. Standard for *Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor*: Sustained involvement in and/or engagement of the larger community in ways which advance the department's, college's, or university's mission.
 - 3. Standards for *Promotion to Professor*: Leadership in collaboratively addressing issues important to the community; and Distinction in the quality of one's service or performance.

IX. The Role of Tenured Faculty and Procedures for Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Reviews

- A. Tenured professors are a critical resource within the University community, possessing a range of skills and knowledge which can contribute significantly to the quality of the institution in a variety of ways. They are expected to provide guidance and assistance to more junior faculty in developing their capacity for teaching and research.
- B. Tenured faculty at the rank of *Professor* provide academic leadership, primarily through demonstrating and fostering excellence in research, teaching, professional activities, and policy development at a variety of levels – within the Towson COMM academic unit, the institution, and Communication Studies academic discipline.
- C. COMM Professors are expected to exhibit significant and demonstrable leadership to the department and to mentor junior faculty in a variety of ways. Professors should model collegial behavior in their role as senior faculty who must bridge the historical roots of the department with necessary visionary steps that foster a vibrant department for current and future faculty, staff, and students. Professors must also consider their special status within the university and recognize their obligation to support the professional arc of their junior colleagues while also caretaking their continued academic vibrancy.
- D. Professors should be role models in their relationships with students, faculty, and staff at all levels. They should be accessible in the department and take part in the community life of the department, college, and University. They should be leaders in the positive promotion of the COMM department and should model citizenship in the greater Towson University community.

IX. Procedures for Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review of Tenured Faculty

- A. All Tenured faculty shall be reviewed at least once every five (5) years. Comprehensive reviews are summative for a period of the preceding five (5) academic years.
- B. Evaluation portfolio materials required for the Five-Year Comprehensive Post-Tenure Review are listed in Section I, B, 3, e of the University ART policy.

X. Procedures for Third-Year Review of Untenured Faculty

- A. At the conclusion of the fall semester during a candidate's third year at Towson University, the COMM Tenure Committee shall conduct a Third-Year Review of tenure-track candidates. The intent of the evaluation is to assess progress toward tenure and to advise and mentor the faculty member. This includes aiding where issues or shortcomings in the candidate's profile are identified and encouragement where progress is deemed satisfactory or exemplary. The COMM Tenure committee evaluations of a candidate's interim progress will become part of the faculty member's file at the department level and shared with the dean; however, it will not be forwarded to either the college PTR committee or the Provost.
- B. The faculty member to be reviewed shall prepare an interim evaluation portfolio of activities for evaluation by the COMM Tenure committee as outlined in Section I.B. 3.c. of the ART policy.
- C. The COMM Tenure committee will evaluate the materials and prepare a clear, written statement of progress toward tenure addressing teaching/advising, a plan for and evidence of scholarly/creative activity, and service and other relevant criteria. This statement:
 1. Must include an indication of whether the faculty member's work to date is leading towards a positive tenure and promotion decision; and
 2. Must provide guidance for the improvement of the evaluation portfolio in the event of a satisfactory or unsatisfactory rating.
- D. The following three-level scale is to serve as a general guideline for the review:
 1. Superior progress. Requirements include excellence in teaching/advising, excellence in research, scholarship, and creative activities, and meeting department standards in service.
 2. Satisfactory progress. Requirements include progress towards excellence in teaching and scholarly productivity with satisfactory service as determined by the department. This ranking indicates that the department has determined that progress towards tenure is satisfactory, but improvements are needed.
 3. Not satisfactory progress. This evaluation requires change by the faculty across one or more dimensions. This essentially means that continuance on this performance trajectory is unlikely to result in a favorable tenure decision.
- E. All documentation is due to the COMM Department Chair by the third Friday in January.
- F. Feedback should be both in writing and in a face-to-face meeting with the COMM chair and the COMM Tenure committee chair no later than the first Friday in March. The written report will be shared with the dean.
- G. If a faculty member's mandatory tenure-review year is prior to the sixth year of continuous, full-time service, the standard Annual Review by the COMM department may be expected to serve a more extensive function and the COMM department may provide more extensive feedback to the candidate.

XI. PTRM Calendar

Towson University Annual Review, Reappointment, Third-Year Review, Merit, Promotion, Tenure and Comprehensive Review Calendar (All deadlines are final deadlines)

Month	Date and Event
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fourth Monday in April</i>: Department-wide election held to form Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment Committee.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First Friday in May</i>: Department and college Tenure and Reappointment committees are formed (elections for membership on the college committee are already completed). Tenure Committee Chair and Reappointment Committee Chair and/or Vice-Chair are elected by the full faculty. • <i>May 31</i>: All faculty submit their merit materials for the year under review to the Department Chair. The department chair submits their merit materials for the year under review to the Dean.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Third Friday in June</i>: All faculty members eligible for reappointment, tenure, promotion, or five-year review submit an electronic evaluation portfolio. All faculty members with a negative comprehensive review must have final approval by chair and dean of the written professional development plan.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The First Workday in July</i>: For faculty, the chair sends the dean, and copies the faculty member, the completed Merit Evaluation Form for Fulltime Faculty and/or Chairpersons. For chairpersons, the dean sends the Provost, and copies the chairperson, the completed Merit Evaluation Form for Fulltime Faculty and/or Chairpersons to the chairperson.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>August 1 (USM mandated)</i>: Tenure-track faculty in the third or later academic year of service must be notified in writing of non-reappointment prior to the third or subsequent academic year of service if the faculty member's appointment ends after the third or subsequent academic year. To meet this deadline, a modified schedule may be required as provided in Section III.D.4.a.
Sept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The First Tuesday in September</i>: Final date for faculty to add information to update their evaluation portfolio for work that was completed before June 1 unless the schedule for review is modified pursuant to University and COFAC guidelines. • <i>The First Friday in September</i>: Department chair approval of the list of additional faculty to be considered for inclusion in the department tenure and/or promotion committee • <i>The Second Friday in September</i>: University PTRM committee shall meet and elect a chair and notify the Senate Executive Committee's Member-at-large of the committee members and chairperson for the academic year.

	<p>Should faculty decide to appeal the chairperson's merit decision, the faculty member will provide a written rebuttal of the chairperson's decision to the departmental PTRM Committee, along with the chairperson's rationale, copying the chairperson. Chairperson may provide a written rebuttal to the dean's merit decision to the Provost, with a copy to the dean.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Third Friday in September:</i> Faculty notify department chair of intention to submit materials for promotion and/or tenure in the next academic year. College PTR Committee approval of faculty to be added to a department's PTR committee (if necessary). First year faculty members must finalize the Statement of Standards and Expectations for New Tenure-Track Faculty (SENTF) with the department chairperson. • <i>The Fourth Friday in September:</i> Department chairperson notifies department faculty, dean, and Provost of any department faculty member's intention to be reviewed for promotion and/or tenure in the next academic year. If there are merit appeals, the departmental PTRM Committee will render a written decision to the dean, copying the faculty member and the chairperson.
Oct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Second Friday in October:</i> Department Reappointment and Tenure committees report with recommendations and vote count on all faculty members are submitted to the department chairperson. College PTR documents are due to the University PTR committee if changes have been made. In the event of a negative merit decision by the departmental PTRM Committee, the dean will review the materials submitted by the PTRM Committee, the faculty member, and the chairperson. ii. The dean will notify the faculty member, the chairperson, and the PBO of their decision. • <i>The Fourth Friday in October:</i> Department chairperson's written evaluation for faculty considered for reappointment in the first through fifth years, promotion, tenure, and five-year comprehensive post-tenure review is added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio and conveyed to the faculty member. The department chairperson will place their independent evaluation into the evaluation portfolio. The department Reappointment and Tenure committees report with recommendations and vote count and the department chairperson's evaluation are distributed to the faculty member. In the event of a negative merit decision by the dean, the Provost will review the materials submitted by the dean, the departmental PTRM committee, the faculty member and chairperson.
Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Second Friday in November:</i> The faculty member's evaluation portfolio for reappointment, promotion, tenure, and five-year review, inclusive of the department review Committees' written recommendation with record of the vote count, and the written recommendation of the department chairperson,

	<p>are forwarded by the department Reappointment and Tenure committee chairpersons to the dean's office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>November 30</i>: All documentation to be used as part of the consideration process must be included in the evaluation portfolio. The dean must notify the Provost in writing of reappointment/non-reappointment recommendation(s) for tenure-track faculty in their second or subsequent academic year of service. Negative recommendations shall be delivered in person by the dean or sent by certified mail to the faculty member's home.
Dec.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The First Friday in December</i>: Department PTR documents are delivered to the college PTR committee if any changes have been made. • <i>The Second Friday in December</i>: First-year tenure-track faculty submit an evaluation portfolio for the fall semester to the department chairperson. • <i>December 15 (USM mandated date)</i>: Tenure-track faculty in the second academic year of service must be notified by the President in writing of non-reappointment for the next academic year.
Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The First Friday in January</i>: The college PTR committee reports with vote counts and recommendations for faculty reviewed for tenure and/or promotion are submitted to the dean. • <i>The Third Friday in January</i>: The dean's written evaluation regarding promotion and/or tenure with recommendation is added to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio. The college PTR committee's report with vote counts and recommendations and the dean's recommendation are conveyed in writing to the faculty member. All documentation for the third-year review of tenure-track faculty is submitted by the faculty member to the department chairperson. First year Lecturers and TT faculty submit "all relevant documentation" (SENTF, CV, syllabi, student feedback, and peer observations) to the department chairperson for review.
Feb.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The First Friday in February</i>: The college dean forwards the summative portfolio inclusive of the committee's and the dean's recommendations of each faculty member with a recommendation concerning promotion and/or tenure or five-year comprehensive post-tenure review to the Provost. The dean forwards all recommendations regarding reappointment/non-reappointment to the Provost. If the dean disagrees with the department recommendation, the dean shall prepare their own recommendation and send a copy to the faculty member and add this recommendation to the summative portfolio. The Department Chair, after reviewing documentation and meeting with 1st year TT or Lecturer faculty member, makes a recommendation of reappointment or non-reappointment. If reappointment, Department Chair notifies faculty member, department PTR committee, Dean, and Provost. If non-reappointment, Department Chair notifies faculty member, Dean, and

	<p>department Reappointment committee and forwards all relevant documentation to the department Reappointment committee and to the Dean.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Second Friday in February:</i> The dean will, following their review, forward department recommendations for faculty merit to the Provost. If the dean disagrees with the department recommendation, the dean shall add their recommendation to the faculty member's evaluation portfolio and deliver the negative decision in person or by certified mail to the faculty member's home. Department documents concerning promotion, tenure/reappointment, and merit (with an approval form signed by all current faculty members) are submitted to the University PTRM committee. Negative reappointment recommendations for first-year faculty are forwarded from the Provost to the President. • <i>Third Friday in February:</i> For first year faculty, if reappointment, Department Reappointment committee notifies faculty member, Chair, Dean, and Provost. If non-reappointment, Department Reappointment committee notifies faculty member, Chair, Dean, and Provost; the Provost notifies President. The faculty member can begin to prepare their appeal to the President. • <i>Fourth Friday in February:</i> For first year faculty, Dean shares their recommendation with faculty member, Department Chair, Department Reappointment Committee, and Provost. Provost makes recommendation to President prior to March 1.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>March 1:</i> First year faculty must be notified of non-reappointment by written notification from the University President. If non-reappointment, the faculty member can present their appeal to the President. • <i>First Friday in March:</i> Faculty under third-year review must be provided with written and face-to-face feedback on their performance toward tenure. • <i>Third Friday in March:</i> Provost's letter of decision is conveyed to the faculty member, department, and college PTR committee chairpersons, department chairperson, and dean of the college.

XII. Reference Sources

Additional information concerning tenure and promotion can be found on the [Towson University website](#).

Recommended documents for faculty review:

- [Towson University Faculty Handbook](#)
- [02-01.00: Policy on Appointment, Rank, and Tenure of Faculty](#)

XIII. Appendix A: COMM Policies on Teaching Evaluations

Teaching is the central purpose of Towson University and therefore all faculty recommended for promotion, tenure, and merit should be high quality teachers. The evaluation of teaching should consider classroom performance as well as other venues for teaching, the varied forms of investment faculty make in preparation for teaching, and the faculty role in both formal and informal advising.

Student Feedback Process

Student evaluations are required for all courses taught, excluding internships and independent studies. A University-developed course evaluation instrument has been developed and is used by various academic departments, including COMM. Using the StudentVoice course evaluation tool, students complete a single course evaluation instrument online for each course in which they are enrolled. A “window” for completing the evaluation of a specific course will occur during the last two weeks of each term and session. The end dates associated with the sessions are used to determine the “window” of completion, the grade hold period, and the release date of the results.

COMM faculty members may develop additional questions to supplement the StudentVoice instrument and/or develop a secondary evaluation instrument specific to their courses according to University Assessment requirements. Student evaluations shall be conducted in such a manner to assure the confidentiality of the student.

Peer Observation Process

Peer observations are an important component of professional development and growth in teaching. To support our collective continued improvement in teaching, the department offers the following expectations for peer observations of faculty members:

Tenure-track faculty will receive two peer observations each semester until third-year review and then once each semester until application for promotion and tenure.

Tenured faculty will receive a peer observation at least once every two years.

Lecturer faculty will receive a peer observation every year.