

Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
Virginia Tech Department of Music (approved October 4, 2011)

The Department of Music follows the procedures listed in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook regarding all cases of reappointment, promotion and tenure. Related documents may also be found at <http://www.provost.vt.edu> and <http://www.claahs.vt.edu>.

Criteria for Tenure and Promotion at Virginia Tech
(Selected from the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook)

Each candidate for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor is evaluated in the light of the triple mission of the university: learning, discovery, and engagement. Although not all candidates are expected to have equal levels of commitment or equal responsibilities in each of these missions, a high level of general competence is expected, in recognition of the need for flexibility in the future establishment of priorities in academic programs. Beyond that basic foundation of competence, decisions related to tenure or promotion to associate professor requires evidence of excellence in at least one area.

The award of tenure is based on the achievement of distinction in an area of learning and the prediction of eminence throughout the individual's professional career. The documentation and evaluation should recognize some significant impact of the candidate's contributions beyond the borders of the university. If the primary strength is in instruction, there should be recognition that the candidate's pedagogical contributions have influence beyond the immediate classroom; if in research, that there is significant impression on colleagues nationally; if in outreach that the influence of the contributions reaches beyond the immediate clientele.

In cases of tenure recommendation—besides evaluation of the candidate's professional abilities—consideration should be given, at all stages of evaluation and review, to future departmental program directions and concern for maintaining currency and flexibility by preserving opportunities to appoint new faculty members in the various sub-fields of the department.

Levels of expectation vary, of course, with the level of the decision. Where probationary reappointments recognize, in part, perceived potential instead of accomplishment, recommendations for tenure should suggest that the potential is being achieved and should imply few, if any, lingering doubts about the value of the candidate to the department's program for a "lifetime."

Promotion to professor, which leaves limited opportunity for further university recognition of professional development, should be reserved for those whose achievements are broad and noteworthy. Each candidate for the rank of professor must demonstrate a high level of competence in an appropriate combination of instruction, outreach, and professional activities relevant to their assignment. Because of the university's mission and commitment as a major research institution, successful candidates for the rank of professor must demonstrate excellence in research, scholarship, or creative achievement, as appropriate for the candidate's discipline and assignment. Promotion to the rank of professor is contingent upon national or international recognition as an outstanding scholar and educator.

Besides consideration of specific professional criteria, evaluation for promotion or tenure should consider the candidate's integrity, professional conduct, and ethics. To the extent that such considerations are significant factors in reaching a negative recommendation, they should be documented as part of the formal review process.

Professional Ethics

(Selected from the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook)

It is expected that all faculty will observe the policies regarding professional ethics in the Faculty Handbook, including the following as they pertain to relations with faculty and students:

As colleagues,

“We accept our obligations that derive from common membership in the faculty of Virginia Tech. We relate to colleagues and other university personnel in a responsible, professional, and civil manner, avoiding behaviors and actions that purposefully, consistently, and unnecessarily tend to disrupt, impede, harass, or abuse them in the performance of their assigned tasks and professional duties. We do not discriminate against colleagues, nor do we engage in romantic or sexual relationships with employees whom we are in a position to supervise or evaluate. We respect and defend free inquiry by all. In the exchange of criticisms and ideas, we show respect for the opinions of others, acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance, and strive to be open-minded and fair in our professional judgments. We accept our share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of Virginia Tech and take due care in the discharge of those responsibilities.”

As teachers,

“We encourage the free pursuit of learning in our students and exemplify the best scholarly and ethical standards of our disciplines. We value and promote differences among students and respect students as individuals and serve as their intellectual guides and counselors. We make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that our evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. We respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professors and students. We avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students and acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from students. We do not engage in any romantic or sexual relationships with students whom we are in a position to evaluate by virtue of our teaching, research, or administrative responsibilities.”

Department of Music Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Processes

Timeline

Appointments are for two or three years during the probationary period, depending on previous experience and the terms under which the faculty member was initially hired. The probationary period includes a comprehensive review in the second or third year and a comprehensive review in the fourth or fifth year, culminating in the tenure and promotion review during the sixth and final year of the probationary period.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is made up of three tenured faculty members elected by the full-time faculty for staggered three-year terms, and three tenured faculty members appointed by the Department Head for staggered three-year terms. The Chair of the Personnel Committee is chosen from Personnel Committee members in their third year of service. In the event that an elected or appointed member cannot serve, a new member is elected or appointed to fill the term of the original member.

In reappointment decisions of probationary faculty the Personnel Committee is advisory to the Department Head. The committee advises and assists probationary faculty in their preparation of supporting materials for review, including a current curriculum vitae and relevant information concerning teaching effectiveness.

In tenure and promotion cases the Personnel Committee advises and assists the candidates in their dossier preparation. The committee advises and assists the Department Head in the selection of outside reviewers and other required documentation. The Personnel Committee reviews candidates for tenure and promotion and makes written recommendations to the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Personnel Committee. The recommendation letters will include the committee signatures and the division of the vote as well as a representation of any dissenting votes. In all cases the committee votes by a simple majority and votes are recorded by a secret ballot marked yes, no or abstain. A tie vote by the Personnel Committee is recorded as a negative recommendation. Letters are due in the Department Head's office two weeks prior to the college due date for tenure and promotion dossiers.

Department Head

The Department Head advises candidates for reappointment, tenure and promotion, and assists with dossier preparation. In all cases of required review the Department Head notifies the candidate and initiates the procedure with the Personnel Committee during the prior academic year. Candidates who wish to be considered for tenure or promotion only must notify the Department Head one year in advance of the requested review. All candidates for tenure and/or promotion must provide the Department Head with a curriculum vita, materials for external review (including audio and/or visual recordings, musical scores, and publications,) and a list of suggested external reviewers by the end of the academic year prior to the year of decision. The faculty member, Department Head and Personnel Committee will develop a list of external reviewers following university guidelines and external reviewers will be contacted during the academic year prior to the tenure or promotion year. All other dossier components are developed during the year of decision and are due to the Department Head by October 1 of the tenure and promotion year. Ultimately, the Department Head reviews candidates for tenure and/or promotion and forwards a written recommendation to the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Personnel Committee.

Confidentiality

All deliberations of the Personnel Committee are confidential. Written statements from the Personnel Committee, Department Head and the external reviewer letters are confidential material.

Faculty Mentors

A senior faculty member will be appointed during the first year of each pre-tenure faculty member's probationary appointment by the Department Head to serve each as a mentor. In addition, the Department Head will appoint a faculty mentor for associate professors wishing to be considered for promotion to professor. After a candidate begins preparing their dossier for the department and college personnel committees, they are also assigned a faculty member to help with dossier preparation. Usually, the assigned faculty mentor has served on the college personnel committee or has extensive experience in preparing tenure and promotion dossiers.

Peer Teaching Evaluation Process

Whenever faculty members wish to have their teaching reviewed, they should ask the Department Head to arrange to have a peer teaching evaluation conducted. All candidates for honors and teaching awards should request such reviews at regular intervals. Pre-tenure faculty must undergo a Department of Music Peer Teaching Evaluation each academic year during their probationary period.

Peer evaluation of classroom teaching is supervised by the Personnel Committee and administered under the supervision of the Department Head. An ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committee will conduct the actual process of conducting a peer evaluation of an individual faculty member. The Department Head will appoint two committee members and will designate one member as its chair. (Normally, the Department Head is not a member of an ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committee.) The faculty member being evaluated may choose a third member if they so desire. The chair of the ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committee, in consultation with the faculty member being evaluated, schedules the peer evaluations. Each member of the committee will observe at least two consecutive classes or at least two consecutive applied lessons or ensemble rehearsals.

Prior to class or studio visits, the committee will be given access to relevant information about classes or lessons to be visited (e.g., syllabi, assignments, examinations, graded papers). The committee should take care to learn from the faculty member being evaluated as much as it can about instructional aims, methodology, and special situations. It should also be sensitive that a diversity of philosophies and pedagogical techniques are encountered in successful music courses. In so far as it can, the committee should make itself aware not only of classroom or studio activities but also of other practices (such as planning, effectiveness of student evaluation, and the instructor's availability to students outside normal class hours) that can contribute to effective courses, rehearsals, or lessons. The criteria to be used by members of the committee in preparing their conclusions about the classes they visit will focus on perceived strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement, with special attention to preparation, presentation, substance, and interaction with students. Command of subject matter and accuracy in presenting information is especially important. If committee members, the faculty member being evaluated, and students in question agree in advance, the committee may record a video of studio lessons for subsequent evaluation. Video recordings should be used only by committee members, and only for purposes of teaching evaluation. Each member of the committee will write an individual evaluation concentrating only on classes, rehearsals, or studio lessons attended. A meeting of the committee will then be held and an amalgamated report of the entire committee will be prepared. Normally, this collective report will be submitted to the Department

Head no later than two weeks after the relevant visits are concluded. The Department Head will forward a copy of the amalgamated report to the faculty member being evaluated. The faculty member being evaluated may react in writing to the report, after which the committee may modify its amalgamated report if members see fit. The final version of the report will be filed with the Department Head and the faculty member being evaluated.

Pre-tenure Faculty Comprehensive Reviews and Renewals During the Probationary Period
A two or three year comprehensive evaluation will include an evaluation by an ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committee and a review by the Personnel Committee prior to the committee submitting a recommendation to the Department Head concerning the reappointment of a probationary faculty member. The Personnel Committee will use the recommendations of the ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committees when evaluating pre-tenure track faculty members and will list in writing what factors should be identified as needing improvement. Comprehensive reviews will be conducted at two or three year intervals during the probationary period. The tenure review (normally conducted in the sixth year) will also include evaluation by an ad hoc Peer Teaching Review Committee as part of the procedure. If pre-tenure faculty members are considered for early tenure and promotion, a comprehensive review incorporating these peer teaching review procedures must be part of the review process.

The Personnel Committee acts as an advisory body to the Department Head during reappointment. During the reappointment process the Personnel Committee evaluates the Peer Teaching Reviews, Faculty Activity Reports, and curriculum vitae of the candidate. During reappointment the Department Head takes into consideration the initial terms of appointment, Peer Teaching Reviews, Faculty Activity Reports, curriculum vitae, student evaluations, and the recommendation of the Personnel Committee.

Promotion to Professor

The Department Head and Personnel Committee manage the process of promotion to professor. Departmental, college, and university guidelines are followed, including the assignment of faculty mentors, the external reviewer process, dossier preparation, and preparation of statements from the Personnel Committee and Department Head. Peer Teaching evaluations are mandatory in cases of promotion to the rank of Professor. Associate Professors are encouraged to undergo regular Peer Teaching Evaluations prior to applying for promotion to the rank of Professor.

Examples of Professional Activities Presented for Promotion or Tenure Dossiers in the Department of Music

Learning

Teaching represents a most important function of the department. It is expected that each member of the faculty will excel in teaching. Enthusiasm for teaching and the ability to stimulate students to achieve at the highest level possible are important attributes of the faculty member. Evidence to be considered in the evaluation of learning may include, but is not limited to:

- Demonstrated excellence in instruction in the classroom, studio, or rehearsal hall
- Demonstrated ability to attract talented students to the program
- Demonstrated success of former students
- Written statements by colleagues
- Unsolicited and solicited letters from former students

- Teaching evaluation forms completed anonymously by students
- The extent to which students elect the faculty member's courses (with due regard for such matters as the level of difficulty of a course, its role in the curriculum, and whether or not it is required)
- Knowledge of the subject matter taught, including range, depth, and currency and use of diverse repertoire and teaching techniques when appropriate (including, for example, modern technology, improvisation, contemporary music, American music, and historically informed performance practice)
- Development of new courses, programs, teaching materials, or teaching techniques

Discovery

Creative and professional activity and research may include any of a wide variety of activities, depending upon the field of specialization and the interests of the faculty member. It is expected that each member of the faculty will pursue research or professional activities appropriate to his or her field of specialization and will achieve recognition among their peers in one or more such fields of activity. Evidence to be considered in the evaluation of discovery may include, but is not limited to:

- Publication as the author, co-author, editor, or translator of books, book chapters, articles, reviews, monographs, and non-print materials, and reviews of these publications (publications subjected to substantial peer review prior to publication shall be more highly regarded than publications not subjected to such review)
- Conducting research that contributes significantly to the state of knowledge in the faculty member's field of specialization, and publication of the results
- Commissions for musical compositions
- Publication of musical compositions or arrangements
- Obtaining funds, either internal or external, for research or development or for instructional or program improvement
- Appearances off-campus as a speaker, conductor, soloist, ensemble member, panelist, or clinician, or as a director of a workshop or institute
- Presenting papers, speaking, participating on panels, presiding at sessions, adjudicating, performing as soloist, ensemble member, or conductor, or otherwise participating in the meetings or activities of professional associations
- Appearances off-campus as recitalist, guest soloist, or conductor with academic or professional groups or in professional or academic settings including K-12 schools
- Participation in symposiums and other selective gatherings of distinguished colleagues;
- Performances by off-campus groups or individuals of compositions by the faculty member
- Performances on commercial recordings by the faculty member or performances on commercial recordings of compositions by the faculty member
- Service as a consultant to or on behalf of educational institutions, professional associations, or government agencies when it is clearly an honor to have been selected
- Service as an adjudicator in major competitions
- Winning of prizes, awards, fellowships, or other recognition

Engagement

Engagement refers to activities that utilize the professional expertise of the faculty member. Each member of the faculty is expected to render a reasonable amount of service to the department, college and university, to the profession or to professional organizations, and to the public at large. Evidence to be considered in the evaluation of engagement may include, but is not limited to:

- Effective service as an advisor to students
- Effective service as a committee chair
- Performance of other administrative duties for the Department
- Effective service on committees of the Department, College and the University and participation in meetings and other official activities of the Department
- Effective contributions to recruiting or public relations efforts on behalf of the Department, College and the University
- Service in elective or appointive leadership roles in professional associations at the national, international, regional, state, or local levels
- Appearances on campus, beyond the normal responsibilities of the faculty member, as a speaker, conductor, soloist, ensemble member, panelist, or clinician, or as a director of a workshop or institute
- Utilization of the professional abilities and expertise of the faculty member on behalf of continuing education in music or in the service of government agencies, citizens' groups, educational or religious institutions, or charitable organizations at the local, state, national, or international levels

It is not expected that a faculty member will be involved in all of the activities listed under each category (Learning, Discovery and Engagement,) nor is it expected that a faculty member will be equally active in each of the three categories. The question of what constitutes an appropriate balance of activities for a given faculty member should be discussed annually with the Department Head. The Department Head and Personnel Committee will consider each individual case on its own merits. Materials to be evaluated will include the initial terms of appointment letter, annual evaluation letters, Faculty Activity Reports, comprehensive reviews during the probationary period, and promotion and tenure materials.

All candidates for tenure and promotion should offer evidence of strong scholarly or creative activity since the date of their initial appointment. Candidates for promotion should offer evidence of strong scholarly or creative activity since the date of their last promotion at Virginia Tech.

Teaching Release

No teaching release time is offered to pre-tenure faculty members or any other non-tenure track faculty members. Tenured faculty members may apply for Research Assignment appointments according to the guidelines found in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook.

