Each year, the UD ADVANCE Institute and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs jointly host two panels for faculty on the promotion and tenure (P&T) process at the University of Delaware: one for assistant professors on the tenure process and one for associate professors on the promotion process to full professor. The purpose of the panels is for informal conversation about the P&T process. Understanding that every department follows different protocol, panelists are asked to speak to their own experiences. Panelists are chosen to represent a range of disciplines and committee work. The panels focus on the process for tenured/tenure-track faculty. In 2016-2018, the CT Caucus has offered separate panels for CT faculty.

Panelists have requested that we do not record the sessions. Instead, each year UD ADVANCE compiles this aggregate summary of the primary points made over the years during the panels. In this document, we first summarize key points that tend to come up every year, by topic. Points specific to a given panel are included at the end.

Preparing for P&T – Resources

- The faculty handbook and departmental P&T guidelines are the starting point for gathering information on the process.
- Look through at least two other dossiers for the same level promotion.
- Talk to others in your department who have recently gone through the process.
- Be proactive in searching for faculty in your area who have been through the process and can provide you with feedback.
- Keep in mind, feedback is only helpful if it is constructive and honest--do not be afraid to ask opinions of faculty members who are known for giving such feedback! However, carefully consider the feedback and use it as you choose.
- Make the most of peer-review opportunities, which provide a platform for seeking out areas that may need to be addressed in order to progress.
- If you feel you’d like a review in year four post-tenure, ask.
- UD has an institutional membership to the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD), which provides workshops on time management, stress management, building networks of mentors, etc. Email pdi@udel.edu to join the mailing list.
- The Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning (CTAL) is another institutional resource that can help with the development of dossier documents. Panelists discussed changing your perspective of the process being isolating to one of a community-building enterprise where your external reviewers and department are cultivating feedback around your work.

Process Mechanics

- The P&T process moved from paper binders to electronic dossiers on Sakai and now to UD Academe.
- Work at rank is considered even if at another university. Include that work in your dossier, but be sure to show that you have continued on an upward trajectory since arriving at UD.
• Keep a “shoe box” of your work, honors, feedback, etc. Keep both a virtual and physical version to store anything that comes up over the course of your time at UD that may be useful for your P&T processes (i.e. invitations to speak, a letter from someone saying thank you for being on a committee, a letter from a student, etc.). Document as much as you can -- save letters, event flyers, photocopy of the conference schedule, etc. You can also include invitations that you declined as a means of speaking to your impact and reputation. Likewise, if you submitted a grant that was not successful, keep the information. You may choose to include it in your dossier narrative to speak to your effort.

• You may add to your dossier after it has been sent to the next level (i.e. a grant, new publication), with notification sent to the committee. If you choose do to this be sure it is clear that this is material added after the previous opinions/decisions and external review letters were written.

Candidate Statement

• Make your workload completely clear in your description. Remind your chair that it also needs to be in the chair’s letter, per the Faculty Handbook.

• Make clear your contribution to a group project or what is an independent paper, a submitted paper, an accepted paper, etc. Don’t make the level of your contribution a debate. You want to keep the committees’ focus on the actual work.

• Mark sure the number of (for example) publications in your dossier agrees with the number in your CV.

• If you are a co-PI on a grant, clearly indicate how much of the grant money is yours.

• Factual and quantitative information and results are primary and must be clearly listed and identified.

• Also critical to tell your intellectual story. Narration is your best opportunity to frame the details that follow in your dossier. Narrate your candidate statement about the impact and high quality of your work.

• The format of your dossier narrative is up to you (i.e., structuring it chronologically or by research-teaching-service). Structure it in a way that best tells your story, and consider using graphics like a chart, when helpful.

• The critical component of the dossier that everyone will be looking for is impact: what has been the impact and value of your work to your department, your college, the university and the profession. Articulate the significance and innovation of the research.

• Impact is measured in different ways in each unit, so it is important to make sure you know the metrics and culture within your own department (i.e. grants, books, referred articles, etc).

• When it comes to teaching – tell how you are being effective.

• Identify your “brand” and weave it into all aspects of your dossier: who are you as a scholar? a researcher? a member of the University community?

• Make clear statements that make it easy for readers to summarize key points (“Her research is important because…” or “His teaching is innovative because…”)

• Keep your audience in mind as you prepare your dossier. The P&T committees do not know details or culture of your department or of your specialization area. Write in an inspiring and legible way to committees at every level.
• Avoid jargon; explain significance of awards, conferences, invited talks, etc. Realize, however, that committees and faculty may not read and absorb a long statement and will not “dig out” the details. Be clear and concise.
• Don’t be shy about describing your accomplishments, but avoid superlatives (“best,” “only,” etc.) unless you are sure that they apply.

External Reviews
• Spend time thinking about the institutions that letter writers come from, the individuals themselves, and pick the best of both. The pedigree of the evaluator is generally not as important as their status as an expert in the field and their ability to speak to your work and your influence in the field. Reviewers provide their own CV, which should be proof of their expertise in the field.
• Explain why each person would be a good fit to evaluate your work. You can share why those that the department put forth might not be a good fit (and provide insight, i.e. historical background).
• Be intentional in getting to know external people in your field. If appropriate in your discipline, pursue invitations to give seminars at other schools. This will help build your pool of potential letter writers.
• If you are concerned that particular reviewers may provide letters that are too concise (e.g., norms for letters may be different in other countries), be sure that the reviewers receive a description of the standards for letters from your department.
• There is some debate surrounding the level of professional connection a letter writer may have with you. The faculty handbook states, “only reviewers without personal ties to the candidate should be selected.” The point is that external reviewers have to be able to provide an objective letter. Reviewers should explain in their letters their relationship to you. Also consult with department and college guidelines, which may be more specific than the faculty handbook.

Teaching
• Provide some evaluation of teaching beyond student evaluations
• Think about having senior colleagues come to your class to evaluate your teaching
• Include some supporting information from your courses: syllabi, sample exams, sample projects
• Work with CTAL to frame your pedagogy and teaching goals.
• Tell your story as a teacher. Give good examples and also an overall summary. One panelist used an evaluation of a single course, tracking documented outcomes over time.
• The most important thing you can do is show how you have developed as a teacher over time and changed course as needed. Be self reflective in your teaching statement.
Service

- When choosing service assignments, prioritize high visibility over high time commitment.
- Service needs to demonstrate that you are a good citizen. It should make you visible to others in your department/college.

**Additional tips from the Assistant to Associate Professor Panels:**

- Two- and four-year reviews need to be included in your dossier for tenure. Reference these reviews. Show that you’ve grown. Address questions that came up in the reviews and how you addressed them.
- Bear in mind that the decision to award tenure is binary. If you get tenure, don’t focus on the people who didn’t vote for you. Think about the outcome, not the individuals.
- If you find yourself in an appeals situation, the letters that are written all along the way are intended to give you feedback. Take a deep breath, read the letter from the perspective that the letters are there to say to you what is missing from the dossier or is not clear, what may need to be provided, etc. The information that you need will be in those letters. It will tell you how you need to prepare for that appeal process.

**Additional tips from Associate to Full Professor Panels:**

- Don’t treat promotion to full professor like the promotion to associate professor. It’s not a matter of proving again your worthiness. Getting promoted to full professor means you’re worthy of special recognition. You have national or international prominence. A lot of this promotion is about leadership.
- Humanities perspective: the work that gets you promoted to associate professor is solidly focused in a subfield. The work that gets you promoted to full professor should have an appeal outside of the subfield.
- Does it “count” to have a book written but not yet published and reviewed when you go up for full professor? Answer: it should, because it can take years after a book is finalized before it is reviewed. Contextualize for the committees where your book is in the publication process and the anticipated timeline (not all committee members will be familiar with book publishing).
- Having an international reputation in your field can be an important component of the promotion to full professor, but how do you build this? Starting early and building your resume with these criteria in mind is important. One panelist suggested marketing yourself at conferences by making connections (ultimately, that could lead to being invited to give seminars or colloquium talks).
- People want to see you take on a more expansive role in service while your scholarship is still progressing! They want to see an upward trajectory in good citizenship.
- Engaging in service to the profession at this level can help your promotion case as you become connected to others in your field who can write letters of support. It can also illustrate your prominence in your field. Consider organizing meetings or sessions for your disciplinary society; become a journal editor.
• Be cautious about how much time you invest in other kinds of service, particularly things you may feel passionate about but your department may see as irrelevant to your work as a scholar. On the other hand, one of the luxuries of tenure is you get to choose, to a certain extent, where you want to put your time. If you’re going to do things that will take time away from research, make sure you explain in the dossier why they were worthwhile. When thinking about service, ask yourself: Which service opportunities are the right ones for you? Think about taking on a few leadership roles instead of multiple committees. It is better to take on one highly visible service commitment than a series of low-visibility commitments.

• Have a plan. Choose service that will establish you as a leader. Don’t be reactive. Think, “By the time I go up, what do I want to be able to show?” This will help you say no to requests that don’t help you.

• Clearly articulate the impact of your work. Consider using h-factor or citation counts (if applicable) or find other ways to provide analytic data to document that your work has impact in the field and beyond. You do not need to include these factors if they are not applicable for your field, but be able to contextualize this for the committee since they will not be familiar with your field.

• Your mentorship of students is another way to speak to your impact. How have you been helping students succeed? How has your research stimulated new research from your students?

• The question of “When should I go up?” is much more amorphous for promotion to full professor than it is for tenure decisions. Panelists encouraged the audience to look at it as one big journey, not two separate journeys, so don’t stop in between. When you put together your dossier, you are telling a story (see above paragraphs about the intellectual story), so tie together your story from assistant professor until now: where you are now and how your research has been moving.

• You need to fight for good mentorship. For example, who tells you that you are ready to go up – your chair? Your department colleagues?

• Use your personal statement to look forward. Give the committee the sense of an ongoing life beyond the promotion decision. A panelist suggests using this template: “My whole career is dedicated to X. To date I’ve gotten to this point (describe), but there’s so much yet to do. Here’s how what I’ve done so far has primed me for the next step (future collaborations, projects, etc.).” Make the reader so interested in your statement that they want to read the rest of your dossier to learn more.

• Use your post-tenure review(s) as a way of getting real feedback on your dossier.

• Think about what types of resources you need to position yourself strongly for promotion (e.g., reduced teaching, service, etc.). Most chairs will be open to discussing a request for resources.

• If you feel you are ready to go up “early,” discuss this with others in your department and in your field. You should clearly be exceeding the standards if you want to go up early. Get mentorship and guidance from others, but ultimately you know the guidelines and are the only person who knows when you’re truly ready. If you are denied you can go up again, but beware of squandering the time of your external reviewers.
• Is there a “too late” to go up for promotion? Continued productivity does not mean that all years at rank have to be stellar, just ensure the gap can be explained. Be sure to show evidence of an upward trajectory in excellence and productivity. For example, if you took parental leave and had a slow period as a result, explain it in your dossier. It’s better for the committees to understand and recognize the circumstances instead of simply observing a slow period in your record.
• Use the appeals process to your advantage if necessary. In an appeal, you get to make your case but the other side does not.
• Reasons to go up for full professor
  o You can say no more easily to service requests and the like
  o You have more freedom
  o You can do leadership in your own direction!
  o The title makes a difference, especially regarding grants and higher administrative posts
  o Psychologically it’s done, it’s a relief

Faculty Panelists

2018
Promotion from Associate to Full Professor
  • Alice Ba, Professor, Political Science & International Relations
  • Ben Fleury-Steiner, Professor, Sociology & Criminal Justice
  • Jill Higginson, Professor, Mechanical Engineering
  • Greg Hicks, Professor and Chair, Physical Therapy
  • Chris Williams, Professor, Entomology & Wildlife Ecology

2017
Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor
  • Carlos Asarta, Associate Professor, Economics
  • Jason Hustedt, Associate Professor, Human Development & Family Studies
  • Mary Ann McLane, Professor, Medical Laboratory Sciences (University P&T Committee)
  • Mary Watson, Associate Professor, Chemistry & Biochemistry
  • Humanities representative unable to attend

Promotion from Associate to Full Professor
  • Antony Beris, Arthur B. Metzner Professor, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering (College P&T Committee)
  • Rachel Davidson, Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering
  • Jennifer Joe, Whitney Family Professor of Accounting (College P&T Committee)
  • Edward Larkin, Professor, English
  • Buz Swanik, Professor, Kinesiology & Applied Physiology

2016
Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor

- John Ernest, Professor and Chair, English
- Jennifer McConnell, Associate Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Mary Ann McLane, Professor, Medical Laboratory Sciences (University P&T Committee)
- Barret Michalec, Associate Professor, Sociology & Criminal Justice
- Yvonne Ou, Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences
- Rhonda Prisby, Associate Professor, Kinesiology & Applied Physiology

Promotion from Associate to Full Professor

- Jack Baroudi, Professor, Accounting and MIS, Interim Deputy Dean and Associate Dean for Graduate & MBA Programs, Lerner College
- Patricia DeLeon, Trustees Distinguished Professor, Biological Sciences
- Dallas Hoover, Professor, Animal & Food Sciences (former member of University P&T committee)
- J-P Laurenceau, Professor, Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Jung-Youn Lee, Professor, Plant & Soil Sciences
- Kent Messer, Unidel H. Cosgrove Chair for the Environment, Professor, Applied Economics and Statistics

2015
Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor

- Joann Browning (panel chair), Professor of Theatre and Senior Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
- David Burris, Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering
- Rebecca Davis, Associate Professor, History
- Greg Hicks, Associate Professor and Chair, Physical Therapy
- Anja Nohe, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences

Promotion from Associate to Full Professor

- Nii Attoh-Okine, Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Arwen Mohun, Professor and Chair, History
- Lori Pollock, Professor, Computer and Information Sciences
- Michael Shay, Professor, Physics & Astronomy
- Bahira Trask (panel chair), Professor and Associate Chair, Human Development & Family Studies, former member of her College P&T committee

For more information about these panels, please contact UD ADVANCE at www.udel.edu/advance or 302-831-3028.