



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto
Governing Council

Provostial Guidelines for Developing Written Assessments of Effectiveness of Teaching in Promotion and Tenure Decisions

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Provostial Guidelines for Developing Written Assessments of Effectiveness of Teaching in Promotion and Tenure Decisions

A commitment to excellence in teaching and research is the core of our mission as a University. Our mission statement affirms the University's commitment "to strive to ensure that its graduates are educated in the broadest sense of the term, with the ability to think clearly, judge objectively, and contribute constructively to society." The central place of research and scholarship - the creation of new knowledge and our commitment to bringing that knowledge and the process of discovery to bear in teaching - continues to underlie all of our activities and to drive our academic priorities. The establishment of the Office of Teaching Advancement is one example of our institutional commitment to fostering teaching development, as are the services and programs that have been established divisionally to support mentorship and promote teaching excellence.

The evaluation of teaching also constitutes a fundamental part of every professoriate-stream faculty member's career, through annual review, tenure and promotion decisions. It is therefore essential that divisions develop and communicate a clear indication of how teaching effectiveness is to be evaluated and what evidence should be collected annually to ensure the fairness and efficiency of this process. All faculty members will be expected to have at least achieved the standards for teaching competence listed in this document in order to be granted tenure and to maintain these as they progress through the ranks.

The University of Toronto is a complex institution and, consequently, the guidelines developed in each division should reflect variations in academic programming and in the means of instruction used to stimulate and challenge our students' intellectual capacity. Nevertheless, some common guidelines that express our commitment to excellence in teaching and to a rigorous evaluation of teaching effectiveness for members of the professoriate should inform the evaluation process.

1. The Teaching Portfolio

Each faculty member should maintain a Teaching Portfolio, or dossier, which should be updated annually and serve as a foundation for the documents that will be required for the three year review, tenure and promotion. It should also be used as a reference for academic administrators when evaluating faculty members for annual PTR awards. The general advice that should be given to all faculty, especially junior faculty, is to keep any document that reflects success, experimentation and innovation in teaching.

The material in the Teaching Portfolio should include, as appropriate:

1. candidate's curriculum vitae
2. a statement of teaching philosophy and plans for developing teaching skills
3. representative course outlines, bibliographies and assignments, description of internship programs, field experiences, and teaching assessment activities
4. new course proposals
5. digests of annual student evaluations and letters or testimonials from students regarding teaching performance
6. applications for instructional development grants or similar documents
7. documentation on efforts made (through both formal and informal means) to improve teaching skills or course design and a description of the outcomes
8. awards or nominations for awards for teaching excellence
9. documentation concerning innovations in teaching methods and contributions to curricular development, including activities related to the administrative, organizational, and developmental aspects of education and the use and development of technology in the teaching process

10. examples of efforts to mentor colleagues in the development of teaching skills and in the area of pedagogical design
11. evidence of professional contributions in the general area of teaching, such as presentations at pedagogical conferences or publications on teaching
12. service to professional bodies or organizations through any method that can be described as instructional
13. community outreach and service through teaching functions.

This list is not definitive and will vary by discipline and from division to division.

2. Criteria for Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness

A faculty member demonstrates capabilities as a teacher in lectures, seminars, laboratories and tutorials as well as in less formal teaching situations, including directing graduate students and counselling students. The guidelines for tenure and promotion prescribe in detail the procedures to be followed in the evaluation of teaching activities. The level of achievement deemed necessary will depend on the rank being sought. Accordingly, there will be some variation in the components and emphases of the documentation collected for each process, reflecting the different stages of an academic career.

a) Evaluation of competence in teaching requires demonstration of:

1. success in stimulating and challenging students and promoting their intellectual and scholarly development
2. strong communication skills
3. success in developing students' mastery of a subject and of the latest developments in the field
4. success in encouraging students' sense of inquiry and understanding of a subject through discovery-based learning
5. active engagement with students' learning progress and accessibility to students
6. promotion of academic integrity and adherence to grading standards of the division and, as appropriate, the ethical standards of profession
7. creation of opportunities which involve students in the research process
8. creation of supervisory conditions conducive to a student's research, intellectual growth and academic progress consistent with the School of Graduate Studies Guidelines for Graduate Supervision.

These are the minimum standards required of all faculty members and which must be demonstrated in the granting of tenure.

b) Evaluation of excellence in teaching requires, in addition to the criteria for competence, demonstration of some combination of the following:

1. superlative teaching skills
2. creative educational leadership
3. successful innovations in the teaching domain, including the creation of new and innovative teaching processes, materials and forms of evaluation
4. significant contribution to the technological enrichment of teaching in a given area, for example, through the development of effective new technology or the use of new media to fullest advantage

5. publication of innovative textbooks and/or teaching guides
6. development of significant new courses and/or reform of curricula
7. development of innovative and creative ways to promote students' involvement in the research process and provide opportunities for them to learn through discovery-based methods
8. significant contribution to pedagogical changes in a discipline.

For tenure cases that are to be based on excellence in teaching the level of involvement will go well beyond that of competence.

3. Information Required for Evaluations

The evaluation of teaching must be as thorough as possible. The sources of information for the evaluation should include:

1. faculty member's teaching portfolio
2. student evaluations, as comprehensive and objective as possible. Such information should be gathered from students who have been taught and those who have been supervised by the faculty member
3. formal peer evaluation (internal and external), including other departmental, divisional, or college assessments where cross-appointment is involved. External assessments of syllabi are also encouraged. For the purposes of tenure, it is expected that evaluation will include a classroom visit
4. data that will enable the unit to assess candidates' success in graduate supervision, including number of students being supervised; quality of theses produced; quality of supervision; number graduated and time-to-degree and information on other efforts to foster scholarly and professional advancement of graduate students
5. copies of students papers, especially those that have been published; and student theses
6. course enrolment data; including evidence of demand for elective/senior courses
7. description of innovations in teaching and contributions to curricular development, such as course development initiatives and examples of particularly effective teaching strategies.

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Appendix A

Section III: 15, iii) from the Policy and Procedures on Academic Appointments

iii) Assessments of the Candidate's Teaching Ability

Written assessments of the candidate's teaching ability shall be prepared in accordance with guidelines approved for the relevant department or division. These guidelines specify the manner in which the division will provide the committee with evidence from the individual's peers and from students and will offer the candidate the opportunity to supplement his or her files. Changes to divisional guidelines must be approved by the Vice-President and Provost and reviewed by the Academic Board.

Item 12b from the Policy and Procedures Governing Promotions

Assessment of Teaching

Written assessments of the candidate's teaching effectiveness will be prepared, in accordance with guidelines approved for the relevant department or division, and presented to the Promotions Committee. These guidelines specify the manner in which the division will provide the committee with evidence from the individual's peers and from students, and will offer the candidate the opportunity to supplement his or her file. Changes to divisional guidelines must be approved by the Vice-President and Provost and reviewed by the Academic Affairs Board.