

T&P FAQ's

(Updated 18 August 15)

1) *What are we looking for when evaluating a portfolio for tenure?*

Answer: In various parts of Section 3 of the KSU Faculty Handbook, it is stated that: *“Academic tenure is an employment status at the University that assures a tenured faculty member of continuous appointment from contract year to contract year, except under conditions of dismissal for cause or financial exigencies. The awarding of tenure is a highly important decision through which the University incurs a major commitment to the individual faculty member well into the future. Years of service or successful annual reviews alone are not sufficient to qualify for tenure. It should only be granted to those faculty members whose achievements demonstrate the quality and significance expected of their current rank and who demonstrate potential for long-term effectiveness at the University. All tenure-track faculty are expected to produce scholarship in at least one performance area. This scholarship must be consistent with departmental, college, and university guidelines, and it must clearly document quality and significance to review parties beyond the department. Only under exceptional circumstances will a candidate be recommended for tenure without at least one form of scholarship as articulated in approved tenure and promotion guidelines. In awarding tenure, the University recognizes the long-range value of the faculty member to the institution and ensures them the academic freedom that is essential to an atmosphere conducive to the proper operation of the University.*

The review for tenure involves a retrospective analysis of how well the individual has met the needs and expectations of the University during the probationary period. Perhaps the greatest value of that retrospective analysis is in how well it informs the judgment of colleagues about the individual's prospects for future contributions and achievements as a KSU faculty colleague. The fundamental issue underlying the tenure decision is whether, in the judgment of teaching and administrative faculty colleagues, the faculty member will continue to meet institutional needs and expectations in the future. Based on BoR policy (8.3.7.3), tenure requires the earned doctorate or its equivalent in training, ability, and/or experience. Neither the possession of the doctorate nor longevity of service is a guarantee of tenure.

In all cases evaluation of faculty performance will be based on evidence of the quality and significance (see Section 3.4) of the individual faculty member's scholarly accomplishments in his or her respective areas of emphasis. Reviewers' deliberations shall be based on whether or not the candidate has met the standards for tenure and/or promotion in the department guidelines, in light of the evidence presented in the candidate's portfolio as well as the reviewers' first-hand personal observations of the candidate.”

This evaluation is done in the context of KSU being a “Comprehensive University” which is defined by the BoR as follows:

Institutions classified as comprehensive universities offer a number of undergraduate and master’s-level programs with some doctoral programs. Typically, associate-level degrees are not offered at comprehensive universities. Graduate programs at comprehensive universities are characterized as master’s-dominant. While teaching is a core focus at all USG institutions, the emphasis on basic and applied research is heavier at comprehensive universities than state universities or state colleges, but not emphasized as heavily as research universities. It is expected that institutions within this sector will be committed to being world-class academic institutions. (BoR Policy Manual, Section 2.10)

2) What are we looking for when evaluating a portfolio for promotion?

Answer: In various parts of Section 3 of the KSU Faculty Handbook, it is stated that: “*The professorial ranks are typically linked to the different stages of career development and accomplishment for University faculty. Faculty members at the different stages of an academic career tend to have different levels of experience, expertise, accomplishment, effectiveness, and productivity. They also tend to have different opportunities for contribution, leadership, and mentorship. Consequently, KSU’s general expectations for faculty performance and for promotion in rank differ from one experience level and rank to the next in keeping with the typical patterns of career development for University faculty.*

Experience is correlated with professorial rank, but years of service or successful annual reviews alone are not sufficient to qualify for a promotion in rank. When a faculty member’s experience, accomplishments, and career development evolve to the point where expectations applicable to the beginning level of the next highest rank are being met, the faculty member can make a strong case for promotion. A decision of promotion will result from a thorough review of a faculty member’s accomplishments and contributions to the University by KSU teaching and administrative faculty colleagues. This review is accomplished in consideration of one’s situational context and in relation to one’s stage of academic career development.

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3) *Can a candidate up for PTR (Post-Tenure Review) serve on a departmental T&P (Tenure & Promotion) committee?*

Answer: Yes, according to the KSU Faculty Handbook (section 3.7B), *“A candidate under review for Post-Tenure Review can serve on the department T&P committee, since the candidate’s portfolio starts at the college level.”*

4) *For jointly-appointed faculty, whose T&P guidelines should be included in their portfolio, their home department’s or the sharing department’s?*

Answer: Both (unless stated otherwise in the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)). You should refer to the Joint-Appointment MOU to determine which one takes precedence.

5) *If a T&P committee or department chair notices that a signature page, cover page or Department T&P guidelines is/are missing, can they insert it into the portfolio?*

Answer: The KSU Faculty Handbook (section 3.7) *“If in the course of its consideration of the portfolio, the review committee discovers what it deems to be an inadvertent omission of a required document, the committee will ask the supervisor or designee provide the missing item(s).”*

If the committee deems this an "inadvertent omission", then the Department Chair can submit the form to you for inclusion into the portfolio. The candidate needs to be informed of this addition.

6) For T&P, the committee should consider the faculty member's cumulative accomplishments, not just those achieved while at KSU. Would this also be true for third-year review though to a lesser extent since a new faculty member may be a newly minted PhD and not have much experience elsewhere.

Answer: True... to a point. For T&P, accomplishments made at KSU should be given the most weight. But work done elsewhere must also be considered, especially when faculty have been granted “credit towards tenure” and/or are brought in at more senior ranks. The narratives should describe, and the committee should evaluate, the quality and significance of the contributions during the period under review in the three or four areas (Teaching, Scholarship, Service and, if appropriate, Academic Leadership). If some of those past, non-KSU accomplishments, coupled with things they've done at KSU indicate to the committee that the candidate will continue being productive into the future, then using the non-KSU accomplishments is warranted.

Ditto for a 3rd year review of “new” faculty where you might need to take into account some work they've done as grad students and/or post-docs. But you need to emphasize to the candidate that their tenure and/or promotion hinges on what they've done at KSU.

7) A faculty is going through Post -Tenure review and is also requesting a review for promotion, does the T&P Committee/Dept. Chair/Dean have to craft two separate letters or will one covering both reviews suffice?

Answer: One letter is sufficient. Just make sure that there are two, clearly defined decisions (this would be especially important if promotion is negative, it's got to be absolutely clear as to what the decision about PTR (Post-Tenure Review) is).

8) My question is about WHEN those signatures on the form are entered on the form. Which of these scenarios is correct?

As the binder is reviewed by the various individuals (dept. chair, dean, provost), those individuals put their signatures on the form as the binder travels through those levels of review over the weeks and months (i.e., similar to the cover page that has the spaces for all signatories as they review the portfolio over time and indicate their decision about the review outcome).

Or must the candidate secure original signatures from all 4 required signatories BEFORE the candidate submits the portfolio for the first level of review to begin the review process?

Answer: The correct answer is the first one: As the binder is reviewed by the various individuals (dept. chair, dean, provost), those individuals put their signatures on the form as the binder travels through those levels of review over the weeks and months.

9) *I have converted from a tenure track faculty member to a non-tenure track faculty. Why do I have to submit a third year review portfolio as a non-tenure track faculty when I submitted a third year review portfolio as a tenure track faculty?*

Answer: Per the KSU Faculty Handbook, Section 3.6, "...senior lecturers and lecturers will have an initial portfolio submission during the third year of employment in that position." The third year review is required because you are no longer serving in a tenure-track type position.

10) *Why must decision letters from committees re: tenure and/or promotion be dated and signed by the chair of the committee?*

Answer: The signature line provides the information to whom the response letter (if any) should be addressed. The date indicates the date of the decision which must be reported to the Board of Regents, and it begins the 10 day window for a response to be submitted. The date on the summary sheet should match the date on the letter to the faculty.

11) *Why must the summary sheet be marked, dated, and signed by the appropriate reviewer when letters are submitted?*

Answer: The summary provides quick summary data and confirms the decisions outlined in the decision letters. The Office of Academic Affairs confirms the information provided on the summary sheet to the decisions indicated in the decision letters. The signatures are required because the summary sheet is included in the faculty member's permanent academic personnel record.

12) *When a faculty member submits materials for required Tenure and Promotion (T&P) review late (almost 48 hours), how should committees handle/address that?*

Answer: According to the KSU Faculty Handbook, Section 3.7:

“Queries about Process and Ethical Violations

Proposed revisions to the process are directed to the chair of the Faculty T&P Process Review Committee. Committee membership consists of the chairs of College Review Committees from the previous year. Disputes about the T&P procedures, including structure and content (conflict

of interest or conflicting guidelines for example), will be directed to the chair of the process review committee for investigation and resolution. Violations of process (e.g., late letters, committees not elected according to guidelines, etc.), should be reported to the Provost/VPAA as well as to all levels of review. In these cases, the college committee should make a recommendation to the Provost/VPAA as to an appropriate course of action. Potential ethical indiscretions during the tenure and promotion process should be directed to the Provost/VPAA.”

Since your exact situation isn't specifically mentioned, here is what I suggest you do based on my interpretation of the above paragraph:

- 1) The chair of the search committee and/or department chair should inquire as to why the portfolio was submitted late, past the published deadline. (If the search chair investigates, he/she should inform the Dept. Chair of his/her action).
- 2) If it is determined that it was for some legitimate reason beyond the control of the faculty member (e.g., medical emergency), I suggest just accepting the portfolio and proceeding as normal.
- 3) If the criterion in number 2 was not met, I suggest the chair of the Dept. T&P committee inform the Dept. Chair and Dean as well as the Chair of the College Review committee. The College Review committee can meet to make a recommendation as to the appropriate course of action (i.e., recommend accepting the late portfolio or not). If you go this route, the faculty member needs to be notified that you are doing this and refer them to the above section of the KSU Faculty Handbook. IF this is the route you follow, please let the Associate Vice President for Faculty know as the College committee must be convened immediately.

13) *We have a faculty member coming up for promotion and tenure this year. Because of years of credit given to him at the time of hire, this also happens to be his third year. What is the process for handling his tenure case and third year review? I assume that the third year review must be conducted regardless of the Promotion and Tenure (P&T) decision at the department level. But, does the faculty member need to turn in two different set of binders (one for P&T, the other for third year review)?*

Answer: The KSU Faculty Handbook states:

"A faculty member who is granted two or three years of credit toward tenure may replace the third year of review with a tenure review in the second year in the position (if taking three years of credit toward tenure) or in the third year of the position (if taking two years of credit toward tenure)."

The faculty member does not have to turn in two separate portfolios/narratives.

I'm assuming that this person is a teaching faculty, I suggest that the faculty included both the

"PORTFOLIO SUMMARY SHEET Third-Year (Pre-Promotion) Review and Sixth-Year (Post-Promotion) Review..." and the "PORTFOLIO SUMMARY SHEET Tenure/Promotion (Tenure-Track Faculty (incl. Instructors))..." The committee(s)/administrators can check the appropriate box(es) on the appropriate sheet depending upon their decision.

On the Portfolio Cover Sheet, the faculty member should check the appropriate line for the "Required Third Year Review" and the appropriate box for the "Elective Tenure" and "Elective Promotion."

Committees and Administrators need to clearly state what they are recommending in their letter and by checking the appropriate lines on the sheet(s). If they approve tenure and promotion, I think that it is clear that the person made satisfactory progress in terms of third year review. If they recommend neither tenure nor promotion, they really must be very clear about their ruling on the third year review. Ditto if it's mixed (one way for tenure and the opposite for promotion).

14) *Can anyone serve on and/or vote at more than one level of review?*

Answer: No.

15) *How do we review portfolios of candidates who were at the former SPSU where they may have had different expectations for Tenure and/or Promotion compared to their KSU colleagues?*

Answer: Given the current differences in faculty performance expectations for Tenure and/or Promotion at SPSU and KSU, and while it is expected that faculty at the "New KSU" must meet Promotion and/or Tenure guidelines that advance the mission of the New University, faculty and administrators reviewing candidates must take into account the situational context of those undergoing review. Candidates will be judged at all levels of review in light of their past working conditions and performance expectations, and in terms of the flexible "workload models" available within their department/college at the time they undergo review.

16) *How do we handle the situation where certain departments may not have had T&P guidelines in the past?*

Answer: The current department guidelines for the basis of judging all faculty within that department. However, the situational context of the faculty member must be taken into account when evaluating the portfolio.

17) *Do portfolios stop after two negative reviews?*

Answer: No. All portfolios eventually make their way to the President regardless of recommendations at any previous level of review.

18) *Do portfolios automatically go to a college committee?*

Answer: No. At the request of the candidate under review, in the event of any negative promotion recommendation(s) among required levels of review, or at the request of any of the review levels, the portfolio goes to the College Review Committee as an appeals committee for a promotion review and recommendation.

19) *Portfolios and Annual Review documents at SPSU were different than what is used at KSU. So what specifically should be include in Binder 1?*

Answer: The easiest thing is to simply have all annual reviews, reappointment letters, SPSU SIRS summary letters ("verified" with chairs signature) etc. into Binder 1. Those documents are the equivalent of KSU's ARDs (Annual Review Documents)/FPAs (Faculty Performance Agreements). The faculty must also submit CV in Binder 1. It would be a "detailed" CV as is normal for their discipline.

The Evaluation materials including "FCARs (Faculty Course Assessment Reports)" and "SIRS (Student Instructional Rating Survey)" (the actual reports, not the summary) would go into Binder 2 as documentation to which reference is (presumably) made in the narrative. Whether the yearly CVs are removed or remain would be up to the faculty (i.e., they can either take the time to remove all the original CVs or just insert the entire packet from previous years, whichever is easier). The faculty submitting the portfolio must provide the documentation necessary for the reviewers to be able to judge the quality and significance of their work including evaluation of past work and recommendations for the future.

20) *For 2015, what policies, procedures, and timelines are we following?*

Answer: All faculty are following the policies, procedures, and timelines outlined in [Section 3.7](#) of the 2015-2016 KSU Faculty Handbook and on the [Academic Affairs website](#) as well as what is in their Department and College Tenure & Promotion guidelines.

21) *Are external letters required this year?*

Answer: No, not in 2015.

22) *Where do I find information about sample narratives, coversheets content of binders etc.?*

Answer: Most of this information is on the Academic Affairs website here: <http://kennesaw.edu/facultyaffairs/resources.html>. [Section 3.7](#) of the KSU Faculty Handbook also contains needed information such as what goes in Binder 1.

23) *What is the appropriate protocol for binder check out and check on for the committee. Are binders allowed to be checked out and signed out and in? What is the best place to houses them during the review process?*

Answer: Committee members cannot "check out" the portfolio. The portfolio must remain in a secure location in the department's office while the department T&P committee members are reviewing the portfolio (or in the Dean's suite if being reviewed at the College level).

24) *Should we make a copy of all binders now?*

Answer: No copies of binders may be made. The original binders move from the Department office to the Dean's office to Academic Affairs as needed. Only Binder 1 moves to Academic Affairs except in the case of negative decisions in which case all binders are moved to Academic Affairs. If there are only positive decisions up to the Dean's level, then Binder 2 remains in the Dean's office until the review process is completed.