

Southern Methodist University  
Algur H. Meadows School of the Arts

**FACULTY PROMOTION AND TENURE**

**Promotion and Tenure Review Process: Procedures and Documentation**  
***Revised October 2025***

Within the framework of the “***GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARD OF RANK AND TENURE***” (***SMU POLICY NUMBER: 2.11***) found [here](#), the following policies and procedures are followed in all academic units of the Meadows School of the Arts. This document summarizes only the procedural process for promotion and tenure within the Meadows School of the Arts; criteria and standards for the evaluation of faculty within each discipline are found in the guidelines of each academic unit.

## Criteria and Standards for Promotion and Tenure

Specific written criteria and standards appropriate to each discipline are established by each academic unit and approved by the Dean. These criteria and standards must adhere to both University and School policies and procedures. In any instance where the academic unit’s criteria deviate from those of the school, the guidelines of the school shall take precedence. These criteria should be consistent with the academic unit’s goals and its merit review policies.

In all the academic areas of the school, the principal factors that are considered in evaluations for promotion and for the awarding of tenure are **scholarship/creative activity** and **teaching**. Tenure cannot be granted based on promise alone. The demonstration of accomplishments in scholarship or professional/creative activities and teaching must be significant.

The standards and criteria of the individual academic units of the Meadows School will indicate the standards for scholarship or creative activity that are most valued at merit review and that are required for tenure and promotion. The criteria should reflect comparable standards of performance in the nation’s leading institutions. Individual academic unit guidelines are included as a part of all promotion and tenure dossiers.

## Summary Timeline for Promotion and Tenure Review

- **February**, Candidates in the upcoming Promotion and Tenure process consult with their Chair/Director and Associate Dean for Faculty.
- **March 2**, deadline for tenured faculty eligible for Promotion to notify their Chair/Director and the Associate Dean for Faculty if they intend to go up for promotion in the next academic year.

- **March 23**, candidate Promotion and Tenure cases are made accessible in Interfolio to candidates to provide required documents.
- **May 1**, the list of confirmed external reviewers is due to the Associate Dean for Faculty.
- **May 18**, credentials for external reviewers are due and dossier files are closed.
- **May 22**, dossiers are made available to the external reviewers via Interfolio.
- **September 2**, external reviews are due in Interfolio.
- **September 15**, the dossier files are closed.
- **October**, the academic unit's faculty committee reviews their candidate's dossier and observes their teaching
- **November 3**, the academic unit's faculty committee recommendation is sent on to the Chair/Director.
- **November 15**, complete academic unit faculty committee recommendation, and the Chair/Director's recommendation, is sent on to the Dean's office.
- **December 1-15**, the Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee meets.
- **January 12**, the Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee recommendation is sent on to the Dean.
- **February 1**, the Dean's recommendation is sent on to the Provost's office for the final decision.

## Expanded Timeline and Process for Promotion and Tenure Review

### February

Candidates for promotion and tenure and their academic Chairs/Directors meet to discuss procedural matters with the Associate Dean for Faculty and the Faculty Affairs Coordinator during the last two weeks of February of the academic year preceding the upcoming consideration. The candidate's initial contract specifies the year in which the review for promotion and tenure is scheduled to take place.

### March 1-7

Faculty members at any rank who wish to be considered for promotion must inform their Chair/Director and the Associate Dean for Faculty by the first weekday of March preceding the fall semester in which they wish to be considered for promotion.

### March 23-May 18

The candidate's case is made available in Interfolio, and they are notified of the accessibility of their dossier files to begin submitting the required documentation. ***The file will close on May 18***, and the candidate will lose access until August.

The **CHAIR/DIRECTOR** is responsible for providing the confirmed list of participants of the six External Reviewers who will provide review letters for the dossier file. The document must explain why these External Reviewers were chosen, their specific

academic specializations, and their professional and academic stature. This document should be sent to faculty affairs coordinator Brionna Clark at [brionnac@smu.edu](mailto:brionnac@smu.edu) by **May 1**. See below for more details regarding External Reviewers.

The **CANDIDATE** is responsible for preparing the following materials for the promotion/tenure file by **May 18**:

- **An up-to-date curriculum vitae** organized in sections (arranged in reverse chronological order—most recent first) on the candidate’s education, teaching experience, and related professional positions. Candidates are encouraged to create a C.V. of a more “narrative” nature that would provide more detailed explanation about the particular relevance of its contents to those outside of the discipline. Because information on the quality, national stature, and/or acceptance rates of professional venues is essential, candidates should not hesitate to provide information on the journals that contain the candidate’s publications, orchestras with which the candidate has performed, galleries in which the candidate has exhibited work, publishers of the candidate’s books or other relevant materials, theatre companies with which the candidate has worked, etc. Such contextual information is crucial in the evaluation process. Those outside the candidate’s field cannot be expected to know the relative importance or prestige of theatre companies, music publishers, communications journals, galleries, dance companies, etc.
- **A personal statement** that includes discussion of teaching and research/artistic philosophy, the relationship between scholarly or artistic work and effective teaching, research plans, and other relevant activities within the University and the profession. The statement serves as a self-evaluation and philosophical statement of the candidate’s professional activity as it relates to the academic unit, School, University, and the national and international academic community. Candidates are encouraged to work with their academic Chairs/Directors and mentors on the development of this statement.
- **Published or presented work and related supporting documents.** These materials, which will also be summarized in the tenure dossier, may include anything that the candidate deems relevant to his/her candidacy, such as copies of major publications, images, audio or video recordings, reviews, critiques, programs, etc.
- **An organized list of supporting documents that the candidate would like to be included in the dossier made available to the External Reviewers.**

**NOTE:** These “Supporting Documents” are selected only by the candidate. The candidate has the final say about what supporting documents, if any, they wish to include.

The **CANDIDATE and the CHAIR/DIRECTOR** are responsible for preparing the following materials for the promotion/tenure file by **May 18**:

- **Names and email addresses of ten current and/or former students** who can evaluate the candidate's teaching. The candidate will not solicit these students but will only submit the names to the academic Chair/Director. The Chair/Director will add his or her own list of ten and forward both lists to the Associate Dean for Faculty who will contact the students to request their feedback by email. **NOTE:** Neither this list of names nor the student letters are included in the materials made available to the External Reviewers.

The **FACULTY AFFAIRS COORDINATOR** will provide the following materials for the promotion/tenure case in Interfolio by May 18. **All** of these materials are made available to the external reviewers.:

- Promotion and Tenure Summary Sheet
- Promotion and Tenure Standards of the Academic Unit
- Appointment and reappointment (Third-Year Contract Review) letters (with salary statements deleted)
- List of candidate's courses taught, including course enrollments

## Identification and Solicitation of External Reviewers

Promotion and tenure cases are made available in Interfolio to six External Reviewers for their review. External Reviewers must be individuals of the highest credibility who have established outstanding reputations in the candidate's academic/artistic discipline and who can evaluate the candidate's work and credentials with objectivity, insight, and rigor. Ideally, they should be selected from faculty at institutions considered to be among or above [peer or aspirant universities](#). However, given the high quality of some arts or communications programs at universities outside those lists, it might be appropriate and justified to select faculty from such programs as External Reviewers.

External Reviewers are generally expected to hold appropriate tenured faculty positions. However, in the Meadows School, especially in the visual and performing arts, it is also frequently both appropriate and desirable for notable professionals in the candidate's creative field to be asked to serve as External Reviewers. Such reviewers should have a

level of awareness and understanding of the tenure and promotion process to enable them to provide significant and meaningful feedback on the candidate's record.

For candidates seeking promotion to Full Professor, External Reviewers in tenured faculty positions must hold the rank of Full Professor. For candidates under consideration for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor, External Reviewers in tenured faculty positions may hold the rank of either Associate Professor or Full Professor.

Reviewers are asked to disclose the nature of their relationship with the candidate. Reviews should not be solicited from those with close relationships to the candidate (e.g., former Ph.D. advisors, close artistic or research collaborators, longtime friends, etc.).

**NOTE:** Candidates **should not solicit External Reviewers directly** nor engage with them about the review.

The candidate should provide the Chair/Director with the names and email addresses of six prospective External Reviewers, in ranked order, along with brief statements of their professional qualifications.

The candidate must provide this information to the Chair/Director within a timeframe that allows the Chair/Director to confirm to the Associate Dean for Faculty —no later than May 1—the participation of the six External Reviewers who will provide review letters for the file. **It is the Chair/Director’s responsibility to identify and secure the participation of the six External Reviewers who will review the scholarly, artistic and/or professional activities of the candidates.** The Chair/Director solicits review letters from three persons on the list of six submitted by the candidate, and three additional External Reviewers from a list that they generate.

**NOTE:** A total of ten to twenty potential reviewers may need to be approached in order to secure the necessary six External Reviewers. The Chair/Director’s final selection of External Reviewers is done in consultation with the Associate Dean for Faculty. The faculty affairs coordinator will process the official requests to the selected External Reviewers via Interfolio.

### July 15-September 15

The tenure case is opened to the candidate to allow submission of additional files. The file officially closes on September 15, at which point materials may only be added by contacting the faculty affairs coordinator at [brionnac@smu.edu](mailto:brionnac@smu.edu). Please find below the additional required documents for submission.

**The CANDIDATE is responsible for preparing the following materials for the promotion/tenure file by September 15:**

1. A “stand alone” **Listing of Candidate’s Publications and/or Professional/Creative Activities** separate from the candidate’s C.V.
2. A “stand alone” **Listing of Candidate’s University Service Activities** separate from the candidate’s C.V.
3. A “stand alone” **Listing of Candidate’s Professional Service Activities** separate from the candidate’s C.V.
4. A “stand alone” **Listing of Candidate’s Teaching Activities**, including supporting documentation and materials separate from the candidate’s C.V.
5. **Any ADDITIONAL “Supporting Documents”** that the candidate may wish to include.

These materials must be uploaded to the “Supplemental Materials” section in the candidate’s section of their case in Interfolio.

**The CHAIR/DIRECTOR is responsible for preparing the following materials for the promotion/tenure file by September 15:**

- 1. A detailed and comprehensive statement describing the Candidate's "Professional Venues"** prepared by the Chair/Director. In this statement, the Chair/Director describes, in compelling and definitive terms and detail, the relative stature, relevance, and importance of each of the venues in which the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work has been published, presented, and/or exhibited.
- 2. Other External/Internal Letters** that the Chair may request or receive that are submitted to provide information about the candidate's professional record. These may include, but are not limited to, faculty peer assessments of the faculty member's teaching and research/professional activities.

The Chair/Director may also solicit letters of evaluation on teaching from the tenured faculty of the academic unit (if the unit's faculty review committee does not include all tenured members of the faculty) and from tenured faculty members in related disciplines, as appropriate. Letters should be prepared only by individuals who directly review the candidate's teaching and/or teaching materials. Letters should be explicit about how the assessment was made.

**The Faculty Affairs Coordinator is responsible for preparing the following materials for the promotion/tenure file by September 15,**

- 1. Annual Evaluation Letters**
- 2. Student Evaluation of Teaching**, including:
  - Rating summary in comparison to departmental or school averages
  - A summary of the questionnaires sent to 100 students at random.
- 3. Peer Evaluations of Teaching**, including 2nd-Year and 5th-year Teaching Reviews.
- 4. Statement on the Process for Soliciting Student Letters:**  
20 current or former students, 10 chosen by the candidate and 10 chosen by the Chair/Director.
- 5. Student Letters**

September 15-November 15

**Division/Institute/Department Faculty Committees meet in September and October.** Except in cases when academic unit guidelines specify otherwise, membership consists of all tenured faculty members of the unit. In cases of promotion to the rank of Professor, the Committee consists only of faculty members who hold the rank of Professor. The Committee membership will also include a faculty member of appropriate rank from a related discipline either within Meadows or from

the University at large. The academic Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean appoints the outside member.

The first meeting of the academic unit's Faculty Committee is attended by the Associate Dean for Faculty who summarizes procedures, stressing the confidentiality of the process even after the committee's recommendation has been submitted.

The Faculty Committee elects a chair who schedules subsequent meetings, records the committee vote, and submits a summary letter (addressed to the academic unit's Chair/Director) that must be signed by all members of the Committee. Committee members, including the Committee chair, also write individual letters for the file. Committee members are expected to evaluate both teaching and research; they thus should observe at least one of the candidate's classes during the evaluation period, giving the candidate the courtesy of advance notice.

The Faculty Committee of the academic unit must determine the relative merits of accomplishments by candidates in their discipline, appropriate to the standards and criteria that have been established by their unit. The Committee's recommendation and individual letters must be submitted to the academic Chair/Director no later than **November 3**.

The complete academic unit recommendation, including the recommendation letter of the Chair/Director, along with the original file of materials, must be uploaded into Interfolio and available for the Dean's review no later than **November 17**.

It is the responsibility of the Chair/Director to make a specific recommendation to the Dean for action. The recommendation of the Chair/Director is independent and may not agree with the recommendation of the Faculty Committee.

### **November 17-on or about December 5**

The Dean will request that the Meadows School Promotion and Tenure Review Committee evaluate both the procedures and the substance of each academic unit recommendation.

The Meadows Committee is appointed by the Dean and consists of one tenured faculty member from each academic unit of the Meadows School (Advertising, Art, Art History, Corporate Communication and Public Affairs/Arts Management and Arts Entrepreneurship, Creative Computation, Dance, Film and Media Arts, Journalism, Music, and Theatre) and a faculty member from outside Meadows who holds the rank of Professor. The committee is chaired by the Associate Dean for Faculty who writes a summary letter of the Committee's proceedings addressed to the Dean.

Members of the Meadows Committee must be tenured and may be either Associate Professors or Full Professors. Committee members who are Associate Professors do not participate in the discussion or the vote for candidates being considered for promotion to Full Professor. The Committee member representing the home academic unit of the faculty candidate being discussed and voted on for consideration for promotion and tenure or for promotion participates in the discussion but not in the vote for that candidate.

### **Disputes**

In the case of negative decisions by the academic unit (Division/Institute/Department/Center), the Chair/Director meets with the candidate and gives him/her a written statement outlining the reasons for the decision.



A negative decision at the academic unit level may be appealed to the Dean within 21 days of notification of the decision. If an appeal is to be made, the faculty member may submit any rebuttal or new data appropriate to the appeal.

A negative decision by the Dean may be appealed to the Provost. If a negative decision is not appealed, the process is complete. A negative decision of the Provost may be appealed to the President. Any de novo reviews that are required because of the review process will be done at the academic unit level.

### December 8-January 9

The Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee submits a confidential letter to the Dean for each candidate, summarizing the Committee's conclusions and recommendations. The letter is written on behalf of the Committee by the Associate Dean for Faculty and signed by each member of the committee. A formal committee vote is recorded and reported, but the vote is advisory and non-binding.

Additionally, each member of the Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee submits an individual letter to the Dean for each reviewed candidate to report the member's vote/recommendation and to share the member's rationale for his/her recommendation.

The Meadows School holds firmly to the belief that the Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee's role and purpose are, first and foremost, to provide thoughtful, non-binding advice to the Dean. Additionally, it is understood that documentation of both the collective recommendation of the Committee as well as the individual recommendations of each of its members are included in each candidate's file as the file moves forward.

### January 12-February 2

The Dean considers the recommendations of the academic units' Faculty Committees, the academic units' Chairs/Directors and the report of the Meadows Promotion and Tenure Review Committee.

The faculty candidate is notified by the Dean of his/her action when (by the time) the Dean's recommendations are forwarded to the Provost, on or about February 1.

If the recommendation of the Dean is negative, the candidate may meet with the Dean in person to discuss the reasons for the decision.

### After February 1

Recommendations from the schools are considered by a faculty committee appointed by the Provost that evaluates each case and advises the Provost (See [University Policy 2.11](#)). The Provost makes recommendations to the President and ultimately to the Board of Trustees for action.