



UNIVERSITY  
OF WYOMING

Office of  
Academic Affairs

**Office of Academic Affairs**

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**To: Academic Deans and Associate Deans, Directors, and Department Heads**  
**From: Tami Benham Deal, Senior Vice Provost**  
**Date: August 16, 2021**  
**Subject: Reappointment, Tenure, Fixed Term and Promotion Procedures**  
**Copies: University Tenure and Promotion Committee, Provost and Executive Vice President Kevin Carman, President Ed Seidel, General Counsel Tara Evans, Faculty Senate Chair Adrienne Freng**

This memo lists key dates, procedures, guidelines for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed-term decisions for faculty and academic professionals. Please read the document carefully – some items have been modified for the upcoming academic year. I have highlighted some important changes for the upcoming year below.

The decisions at issue are the most important that the university makes, and your role is pivotal. In accordance with university regulations, candidates for reappointment, fixed-term, tenure, and promotion are evaluated on the academic functions they are expected to perform. The needs, directions, and priorities of the University will also be considered in reappointment, fixed-term, and tenure cases.

COVID-19 Pandemic: Last year we noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had the potential for disrupting faculty in reaching their pre-pandemic teaching, research/scholarship/creative activity, outreach/service, and extension goals. While we remain committed to recognizing and rewarding high standards of excellence in each of these areas of the University's mission, we must acknowledge that this ongoing pandemic may have significant impact on faculty productivity. In spring 2020, we provided guidelines for addressing impacts of the pandemic on faculty career progress. You can find these guidelines on the [AA-COVID Response website](#).

Department/College Expectations: Departmental and college expectations for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed term should be consistent with duties and workload distributions outlined in candidates' job descriptions. Performance evaluations will appropriately recognize the proportion of time and effort allocated and expected for the particular functions by the candidates at each rank. If job descriptions are adjusted temporarily due to the pandemic (per the 9-21-20 Statement on Career Progress), unit expectations should include a temporary statement about COVID-related accommodations.

Budget Reductions and University Restructure: In addition to the pandemic, this year some faculty are experiencing additional stress and uncertainty related to the pending budget reduction and university restructuring plan and wonder how these actions will impact their positions and careers.

First, please reassure your faculty that the restructuring plan will not impact the reappointment, tenure, promotion, and fixed-term-rolling contract review process this year. Even if a program is impacted by the final plan, the faculty member will receive tenure, promotion, or fixed-term-rolling contract if recommended and approved by the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees. For more information, see the [SAPP](#) on Academic Programs Discontinued per UW Regulation 2-13: Academic Program Appointments and Teach Out Plans.

Second, as the leader of your unit it is imperative that you emphasize the importance of reappointment, tenure, fixed-term, and promotion reviews being grounded in the academic merit of the case. Candidates should not be held to a different standard because they are in a unit that may be impacted by the budget reduction and/or university restructuring plan, nor should their participation in the UW 2-13 review process have a negative impact the outcome of their reappointment, tenure, fixed-term, and/or promotion review.

WyoFolio: All reappointment, tenure, fixed-term, and promotion reviews will be completed using the WyoFolio online platform. You can access it from the WyoWeb by clicking on the link to WyoFolio.

For assistance with WyoFolio: Aneesa McDonald is available to provide training and assist staff in each college and college-like unit to learn (or review) how to use the system. Questions from department faculty, staff, and department heads should be directed to the College WyoFolio Administrator. (Check with your Dean's office to identify who to contact.) If the College WyoFolio Administrators are unsure of the answer, they can reach out to Aneesa.

Please remind your faculty that WyoVita is the university's official source of information about faculty professional activity (i.e., teaching, scholarship/creative activity, service/outreach, and extension). Information from WyoVita will be used to create the CV that is required review packet. (The only exception to the ability to use a non-WyoVita generated CV for external reviewers.) Therefore, information in WyoVita should be current.

Note: You can find a number of resources on the [AA-Faculty Review website](#), including instructional guides for administrators, the candidate, review committees and external reviewers. Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with these resources.

A Final Word About Promotions: As the leader of your unit, it is your responsibility to work with and counsel a candidate who would like to be considered for promotion. This is especially important in cases involving promotions that are not tied to a specific timeline (e.g., promotion to full professor). Before it was revised and streamlined, UW Regulation 2-7 included the following language. This language is now included in the temporary SAPP on RTP procedures, (see the [AA-Faculty Review website](#) – "Procedures for 2021-22 Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review").

..... An individual may initiate candidacy for promotion with the written concurrence of the majority of a group in the academic unit composed of both tenured faculty members and those who hold the same or higher rank to which the individual is to be considered (p. 2).

This process allows you and the candidate to take the pulse of the faculty to determine level of support for promotion and increases the odds that there will be no surprises at the department level once the formal review begins.

### KEY DATES

The table below lists important dates, including both suggested target dates and hard deadlines. **The hard deadlines are in boldface font in the 'Event' column.** Colleges may set their own internal deadlines. Candidates and their unit heads are responsible for preparing clear, concise, and convincing cases. It is not too soon for department heads and candidates to begin assembling the case file for the coming year's decisions.

As many have noticed, the deadlines for first-year reappointment cases are quite early. This fact is a consequence of national guidelines established by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AAUP condones dismissal of a first-year candidate without a "grace year," provided the candidate receives notice early enough. If you wish to dismiss a first-year employee but miss this deadline, you may have to retain the employee for an extra year. Viewed in this light, the deadline is an opportunity to avoid undesirable "grace years," not simply another administrative headache.

Date	Event
Normal due date: <b>August 19, 2021</b>	<b>Colleges and college-like units shall submit names of all candidates for tenure and promotion (including promotion to Professor) to Aneesa McDonald. Deans/Directors: Please submit ASAP if you have not already done so.</b>
Summer through August	Create case(s) in WyoFolio for faculty requiring external review (work with college Dean's office to determine who will be responsible for setting up the cases)
September 1, 2021	Complete protocol for determining external reviewers**
No later than September 1, 2021 ***	Faculty and departments upload required documents for external reviewers in WyoFolio case.
No later than September 8, 2021	Solicit external letters of reference. Send notification from WyoFolio to external reviewers. Set a deadline for submission. Reviewers should be given at least 4-6 weeks to complete the review.
Throughout September, 2021	Regularly check WyoFolio for receipt of letters. There is no automated notification when letters are uploaded.
October 15, 2021 (at the latest, 4 weeks prior to scheduled department review)	Receive all letters of reference for tenure and promotions.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
November 19, 2021	Worksheets distributed for reappointment, tenure, and promotion cases
December 17, 2021	Fall semester exams end.
January 2022*	Complete all department-level deliberations for first-year reappointments.
January 18, 2022	Spring classes begin
January 24, 2022	Forward all first-year reappointment case files to college deans.
February 4, 2022	Forward all non-first year cases to the Dean's office (A&S has earlier deadlines for some of these cases.)
<b>February 7, 2022</b>	<b>Forward all first-year reappointment case files to Academic Affairs.</b>
February 18, 2022	Dean notifies Academic Affairs of cases likely to be considered by the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee. This category of cases includes those with conflicting recommendations from different levels of review, cases receiving negative recommendations from all levels of review, and early cases. Note: the Provost may refer additional cases to the University committee for review.
<b>February 25, 2022</b>	<b>All mid-probationary, tenure, fixed-term, and promotion reviews must be completed. Deans forward cases in WyoFolio to Academic Affairs.</b>
<b>By end of March</b>	<b>First year candidates will receive written confirmation from the Office of Academic Affairs.</b>
<b>April 4-6, 2022</b>	<b>University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee meets to review conflicted cases, early cases, and cases recommended by the Provost.</b>
<b>May 2022</b>	<b>Provost makes recommendations to President and Board of Trustees for tenure, 5-year fixed-term with rolling contracts, and promotion. The Board of Trustees will consider recommendations during May 11-13 Board meeting.</b>
<b>By end of May</b>	<b>Candidates for reappointment, fixed-term-rolling contract, tenure, and/or promotion will receive written confirmation from the Office of Academic Affairs.</b>

\*Academic Affairs recommends that review of first-year reappointments occur after fall semester course evaluations have been completed so that they may be included in department-level deliberations.

\*\*Colleges may require external letters for fixed-term reviews depending on college and department policy.

\*\*\* Colleges may set their own internal deadlines.

## PREPARING FOR REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEW

While most of us can probably think of nothing more boring than reading university regulations—and I understand that sentiment—we highly recommend all faculty and administrators read regulations and procedural documents pertaining to the reappointment, tenure, and promotion review processes prior to the review meeting. The relevant documents include:

1. UW 2-7 (Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Fixed-Term),
2. UW 2-4 (Guidelines for Establishing Academic Professionals - for those academic professionals who are still on extended term appointments),
3. Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure (SAPP) – Procedures for Implementing and Evaluating Rolling Contracts (2.7.1).
4. (Temporary SAPP) Criteria and Sources of Information for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review
5. (Temporary SAPP) Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review

These documents can be found at: [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp\\_regulations.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp_regulations.html).

It is also helpful if candidates read their external reviews prior to the department review meeting. (Note: if candidates have waived their right to see the external review letters, all identifying information should be redacted, including references to the university/institution. Please remind your faculty to **not** identify the external reviewers in their comments.

More details about external reviews can be found on the Academic Affairs website. All university regulations pertaining to academic personnel are posted on the General Counsel website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies/>.

## PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

The following suggestions may help avoid misunderstandings in the department-level discussions and voting.

**FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS.** Faculty members should read the following statement (in *italics*) **before** they meet at the department and college level to discuss reappointment, promotion, tenure, or fixed terms.

*Recommendations on matters of reappointment, promotion or tenure constitute what is arguably the most important element of faculty governance. Please approach the review and recommendation in a professional manner that safeguards the rights of the individual being reviewed and rigorously advances the academic stature of the University. The process must permit faculty and others with voting privileges to comment honestly and freely.*

*A written rationale must accompany each vote or recommendation. It is the persuasiveness of these written recommendations that counts the most, not the numerical vote tally. The lack of thoughtful, factually based rationale weakens a recommendation, whether it is for or against the candidate under review. It is also important to provide brief, factual reasons for abstentions, so that subsequent reviewers interpret them correctly. A family connection is a valid reason for an abstention. Timidity, failure to read the case, or failure to schedule adequate time to review the case files are not valid reasons for an abstention.*

*Reviewers who abstain should provide written reason (e.g. voted at another level, conflict of interest, etc.). However, reviewers who abstain may not submit evaluative comments.*

***Department staff members who collect and transcribe votes and recommendations for the candidate's case--or an appropriate faculty designee--will omit any evaluative remarks that accompany abstentions.** The Office of Academic Affairs has insisted on the removal of evaluative remarks by abstainers in past cases and will do so, if necessary, in the future.*

*Legally, recommendations and comments may not be privileged information, even if they are anonymous when collected. There have been court cases where faculty members were asked to identify their comments, and in some cases have been asked to explain them. It is awkward to explain baseless attacks, cowardly abstentions, or ill-informed support to a skeptical audience. The best way to avoid legal exposure is to perform one's responsibility, which is to make reasoned, academically based judgments based on professional expertise and facts.*

**GUIDELINES FOR MEETINGS.** Departments should adhere to the following guidelines for conducting meetings to discuss candidates' cases for reappointment, promotion, tenure, or fixed term.

***Review/Meeting Schedule:** Departments should hold at least one meeting specifically for reviewing reappointment, tenure and promotion, and fixed term decisions, with no other business on the agenda. Schedule several meetings if one is not enough. Avoid dates and times when faculty are not able to attend. Please allow ample time for full review of all candidates.*

***Complete case files should be available to voting members sufficiently in advance of the meeting(s) so that a thorough review may be done by the voting members. (All materials, including any documents or reviews pertaining to joint or SER appointments, must be included in the case files before the department review and meeting.)***

***Peer Group/Voting Protocol.*** A procedural document for conducting reappointment, tenure and promotion can be found on the Academic Affairs website ([http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp\\_reviewers.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp_reviewers.html)). Included in this document are instructions for establishing protocols for establishing peer groups. These instructions are consistent with the call from faculty senate in 2008-09, for each department to establish a standing protocol to form a peer group for the purpose of voting and making written recommendations on faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion cases. Any departments that do not currently have voting protocols in place should establish them as soon as possible and prior to reviewing any reappointment, tenure, or promotion cases. (Department faculty should discuss this well in advance of the review meeting.) All voting members of the department must be invited to participate in the department meeting described in (1) above, and must have the opportunity to review the candidate's case. **Each academic unit must have a written copy of the voting protocol on file as well as documentation indicating how the protocol was established (e.g., by faculty vote and date). Where appropriate, voting protocol involving joint appointments should be articulated in the document.**

***Participation in Meeting by Non-Voting Members.*** Department custom may allow for participation in departmental meetings on faculty cases by department members not explicitly specified in the voting protocol. Alternatively, department heads and deans may solicit input on reappointment, tenure and promotion recommendations from non-voting academic personnel familiar with aspects of the candidate's job duties, on a case-by-case basis, as he or she deems appropriate. Departments and colleges must be judicious in meeting protocol regarding participation in discussion when a faculty member votes at a different level.

***Role of Department Head/Dean in Meeting.*** The department head may or may not be present at the department meeting, depending upon departmental customs and the wishes of the faculty. In any case, another faculty member should preside over the meeting. Since the head is responsible for making an independent recommendation, the head's role at the meeting should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification. At the college level, the chair of the college RT&P committee should preside over the meeting. Since the dean is responsible for making an independent recommendation, he or she need not be present. The dean's role at the meeting, if any, should be limited to providing procedural information and factual clarification. Similar considerations apply to deans' designees.

**1. *Role of College and University Tenure and Promotion Committee Members in the Department Review.*** Participation in department review discussions should be guided by the role faculty play on other tenure and promotion committees. For example, members of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee participate in department level review discussions because they **vote** at the department level. The custom of the university committee has been to have a member recuse themselves from discussion on a case if the candidate is from their home department. This action is consistent with the expectation that each faculty member has one vote. Departments should have protocols for participation in review discussions when faculty vote at the college level to avoid any (real or perceived) undue influence and/or appearance of voting twice.

**Meeting Attendance.** Attendance at the meeting by a voting department member is not a prerequisite for making a recommendation. For example, employees away from the university on sabbatical or professional-development leave **should vote** if otherwise eligible, unless it is highly impractical to do so. All eligible voters, however, should have an opportunity to review cases before the department meeting, even if they are unable to be present at that meeting. All case files shall be available to eligible voters via WyoFolio.

**Abstentions.** Abstentions are only occasionally appropriate. For example, faculty members must abstain in cases involving relatives, spouses, or domestic partners. (See UW Regulation 5-2.I. for a more complete list of those who must recuse themselves from decisions affecting reappointment, tenure and promotion.) In general, however, faculty members have a duty to stay informed about their colleagues' work and to cast meaningful RT&P votes. **Abstention should not be a vehicle for ducking difficult judgments or shrinking from disagreement.** This behavior effectively cedes power to administrators, who do not abstain. Also, it is inappropriate to include with an abstention any evaluative comments about a candidate's performance. Such comments shall be omitted from the case files.

#### TIMING OF REVIEW

Tenure track faculty will be reviewed at the unit, college and university levels three times: (1) 1<sup>st</sup> year review (at the end of the fall semester), (2) mid-probationary review (year 3), and (3) tenure review (generally in year 6). Annual (unit level) performance reviews will occur during the other years of the probationary period.

During the probationary period, non-tenure track faculty on fixed-term rolling contracts will be reviewed at the unit, college and university levels two times: (1) 1<sup>st</sup> year review (at end of the fall semester) and (2) 3<sup>rd</sup> year review (to determine if a rolling contract will be granted). Annual (unit level) performance reviews will occur during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Academic professionals who are in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of an extended term will be reviewed for consideration of a fixed-term rolling contract. If granted, the new fixed-term rolling contract will begin in AY 23-24/FY24, following the last year of the extended-term appointment (AY22-23/FY23).

All non-tenure track faculty being considered for promotion in rank must go through the unit, college and university level reviews.



## VOTING

***Voters for Tenure Track and Promotion Cases.*** In reappointment, tenure and promotion cases for faculty, depending on department protocol, the following department members should submit recommendations:

- All tenured faculty members.
- All non-tenured tenure-track faculty, with the candidates expressed approval.
- All other members of the department's voting protocol, with the candidates expressed approval.

The case file should include an acknowledgment from the candidate clarifying his or her wishes in the matter of voting by non-tenured faculty and other academic personnel included in the department's voting protocol. A candidate who wishes to approve voting by non-tenure track academic personnel (as defined in UW 2-1) included in the voting protocol may not at the same time exclude the non-tenured tenure-track faculty from voting on his or her case.

Votes should be recorded by faculty category; however, exceptions to this provision may be made when confidentiality of votes would be compromised.

***Voters for Fixed Term Track, Extended Term Track, Fixed Term and Promotion Cases.*** Voting members for reappointment, fixed-term, and promotion cases may vary based on position classification (e.g., Extension Educator, Lecturer, Research Scientist, Archivist, Librarian). See UW Regulations 2-1 and 2-4 for details.

***Ballots.*** Until which time voting is done in WyoFolio, departments should use the standard forms posted on the Academic Affairs website to gather votes.

([http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp\\_reviewers.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp_reviewers.html))

***Voting Timeline.*** Per the Academic Affairs procedures for reappointment, tenure and promotion document, voters should have ample time to complete and submit thoughtful recommendations. The regulation stipulates that the ballots be cast within 72 hours of the end of the meeting, excluding weekends and holidays)

***Reporting/Transcribing Results.*** When transcribing the results of departmental and committee recommendations, please ***clearly indicate which reasons are linked to affirmative recommendations, negative recommendations, and abstentions.*** Comments alone do not always make the voter's intent clear.

***Candidate Verification.*** Candidates should have the opportunity to review the votes and comments. They provide a written acknowledgement that they have read the comments prior to moving the case forward in WyoFolio.

## CASES REVIEWED BY UNIVERSITY RT&P COMMITTEE

The University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee will conduct an additional review of reappointment, tenure, fixed-term or promotion cases in which one or more of the following conditions apply.

- A disagreement on the recommendation occurs between the department faculty (or alternative peer group), department head (or direct supervisor), college committee, or dean.
- The faculty member is recommended for denial of reappointment, tenure, fixed-term or promotion.
- The Provost requests consideration of a particular case.
- The faculty member seeks an early decision for tenure, promotion, or fixed-term.

College deans are asked by the Provost to identify and recommend cases for review by the University Tenure and Promotion Committee.

## MATERIALS

Please find the following materials on the Office of Academic Affairs website. It is important to use the most current forms. Please avoid using previous forms you have saved from past reviews as some of the information has changed. [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/faculty-resources/tenure\\_promotion.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/faculty-resources/tenure_promotion.html).

1. **Tally Spread Sheets (will be sent electronically to college or unit November 19, 2021).** Each Dean's or Director's office will receive electronic tally spread sheets listing the employees who will be reviewed. Please update (if needed) and return these to Academic Affairs with all applicable case materials no later than
  - a. 5:00 p.m., February 7, 2022, for first-year cases;
  - b. 5:00 p.m., February 25, 2022, for all other cases.

For each candidate for reappointment and tenure, please indicate the review year. For example, write "2" for a candidate undergoing a second-year review. UW Regulations 2-4 and 2-7 contain more details about review schedules for probationary academic professionals and faculty.

If there are additions or corrections to the tally sheets, please contact Aneesa McDonald in Academic Affairs (6-4287 or [aneesamc@uwyo.edu](mailto:aneesamc@uwyo.edu)) as soon as possible. *Academic Affairs uses the tally sheets in preparing the recommendations to the President and the agenda for the Trustees' votes, so accuracy is essential.*

2. **Vote Tallies.** In cases involving both tenure and promotion, please record the votes for promotion and the votes for tenure separately. All votes should be accompanied by comments. In the case of votes accompanied by no comment, please write “[no comment].” Abstentions should be accompanied by brief reasons, such as “the candidate is my partner.”
  
3. **Evaluation Sheet.** Please use the percentages of effort assigned in formal job descriptions for the year under review to describe individuals’ expected time commitments. Current forms can be found on the Academic Affairs website ([http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp\\_reviewers.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp_reviewers.html)). **It is important that you use the most current forms.**
  
4. **History Sheet.** Departments should complete the history sheet. This information will enable the University Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Committee to review a faculty member’s history. Please use one sheet for each candidate load it in the internal case section of the case. There is no hard deadline for cases involving promotion to Professor, so the history sheet should not list one until the case is advanced. Current forms can be found on the Academic Affairs website: [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp\\_reviewers.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academics/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/tp_reviewers.html) **It is important that you use the most current forms.**