

UAS FACULTY PROMOTION & TENURE PROCESSES

Promotion and tenure for full-time, tenure-track faculty at the University of Alaska is governed by faculty union collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). Faculty belong to one of two unions: United Academics¹ or the University of Alaska Federation of Teachers (UAFT)². The process faculty undergo leading up to consideration for promotion and tenure is different, depending upon their union affiliation. This document outlines the commonalities and differences of these processes, and is intended to help faculty understand this important framework relevant to their professional careers at UAS.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO BOTH UNIONS

Fundamentally, comprehensive faculty promotion and tenure review processes should be seen as an opportunity to affirm the work of faculty members and/or to identify areas where improvements are called for and to recommend activities that will help faculty members in the performance of their professional activities and in establishing their qualification for promotion, tenure, and sabbatical leave.

A substantial part of UAS' promotion and tenure processes are common to all faculty, despite their union affiliation. Most significantly, they share common documentary requirements and evaluation criteria.

All faculty evaluation documentary files are made up of two parts. The first is maintained by the Office of the Provost and includes the permanent records of faculty performance and evaluation history. The second part is compiled and submitted by the faculty member under review. It consists of the support materials appropriate to the action at hand (i.e., regular comprehensive review or application for promotion, tenure, and/or sabbatical leave).

The primary source document for faculty evaluations is the UAS Faculty Handbook³. Among many things, it contains the faculty evaluation performance criteria. Faculty undergoing comprehensive promotion and tenure reviews in academic year 2011-12 will be subject to the provisions in the current Faculty Handbook³. Below is a table identifying each evaluation category and performance criteria, as well as where this information can be located on the Web.

CATEGORY	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA & FACULTY HANDBOOK LOCATION
Mastery of Subject	Minimum eligibility criteria for appointment and promotion are located at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/employment/appointment/appointment-promotion.html
Teaching/ Primary Responsibility⁴	The UAS Teaching Guidelines and the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SOTL) Matrix are located at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/evaluation/evaluation-criteria/SOTLMatrix-2.pdf
University & Public Service⁴	The UAS Service Guidelines are located at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/evaluation/evaluation-criteria/ServiceMatrix.pdf
Research/ Creative Activity	The UAS Research & Creative Activity Guidelines are located at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/evaluation/researchguidelines/index.html
Overall Professional Development	A statement of professional development expectations and activity examples are outlined at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/evaluation/evaluation-criteria/criteria-performance-standards.html

These criteria and the faculty evaluation files are the sole resources upon which all faculty evaluation reviews are based. Reviewers consider the total professional qualifications and experience of a faculty member and judge the relative quality of their activities in light of their workload/primary assignment and the particular evaluation review under consideration.

An updated version of the Faculty Handbook⁵ is currently under consideration by the UAS Faculty Senate. Should the Senate adopt the revised Handbook, it will become the new standard for faculty anticipating future promotion and tenure reviews.

¹ United Academic CBA can be found at: <http://www.alaska.edu/files/labor/UNAC-CBA-2011---2013-Final.pdf>

² UAFT CBA can be found at: <http://www.alaska.edu/labor/uaft/collective-bargaining-agr-1/>

³ Faculty Handbook can be found at: <http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultyhandbook/UASFacHandbook8-6-10.pdf>

⁴ UAFT is in the process of approving UAS' SOTL and Service Guidelines. Until this takes place, UAFT faculty will be subject to the older (pre-2003) Faculty Handbook teaching and service performance criteria which can be found at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/provost/docs/faculty-evals/UAFTPre-2003Faculty_Handbook_Evaluation_Criteria.pdf

⁵ Draft revised Faculty Handbook can be found at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/facultysenate/docs/faculty_handbook_finaldraft_5_14_11.pdf

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ELEMENTS UNIQUE TO EACH UNION

The promotion and tenure review processes for United Academics and UAFT faculty differ in the frequency of comprehensive evaluations, number of steps in the process, composition of evaluation committees, assignment of committee membership, and calendar of activities.

United Academics

The United Academics collective bargaining agreement (CBA) contains considerable specificity defining the promotion and tenure process. Among other things, it specifies that non-tenured faculty will receive a comprehensive and diagnostic review during their fourth year of service for the purpose of assessing the faculty member's progress toward promotion or tenure. Tenure-track faculty must also stand for mandatory comprehensive promotion and tenure review during their seventh year of service. The United Academics collective bargaining agreement goes on to specify that non-tenured faculty undergoing review for promotion to associate professor must also be reviewed for tenure. Promotion to associate professor cannot be made without prior or simultaneous award of tenure.

Tenured United Academics faculty are reviewed through the comprehensive review process every six years and whenever they choose to stand for promotion.

The United Academics CBA structures comprehensive promotion and tenure reviews in a five-step process, proceeding in the following sequential order: 1) peer review committee, 2) dean, 3) MAU peer review committee, 4) provost, and 5) chancellor. The peer review committee is composed of at least four United Academics tenured faculty and three faculty holding full professor rank. Traditionally, the UAS United Academics faculty representative collaborates with deans and/or the provost on the determination and appointment of peer review committees. In contrast, the MAU peer review committee is composed of between three and seven tenured United Academics faculty appointed by the provost.

The calendar of comprehensive review activities is specified in the United Academics collective bargaining agreement. It defines the dates for each step in the process, including when evaluations are due and opportunities for faculty under review to submit comments about their reviews. For ease of reference, the Office of the Provost produces an annual planner depicting the major milestones in the United Academics comprehensive review process. It can be found on the Web at the following location: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/provost/docs/faculty-evals/AY11-12Promotion_Tenure_Process_UNAC_Project_Planner.pdf

UAFT

Unlike United Academics, the UAFT collective bargaining agreement does not contain specificity defining the faculty evaluations process. Instead, the university and UAFT agreed that it is desirable to have evaluation policies within each MAU. For UAS, these policies are located in the Faculty Handbook. The Handbook provides that non-tenured UAFT faculty members be evaluated through a full, comprehensive evaluation process in their third and fifth years of service, prior to tenure consideration in their seventh year. The UAS Faculty Handbook also provides that non-tenured UAFT faculty undergoing review for tenure are not required to also be reviewed for promotion.

Tenured UAFT faculty members are reviewed through the comprehensive process every five years and whenever they choose to stand for promotion.

UAFT comprehensive evaluation reviews involve a three-step process, proceeding in the following sequential order: 1) dean/director, 2) faculty evaluation committee, and 3) chancellor. The faculty evaluation committee is composed of five tenured associate or full professors, selected from the top of randomly ordered service list of qualified faculty members. Committee membership is distributed among bi-partite faculty to include at least one member from an extended campus or vocational program. Whenever possible, priority for service on the committee is given to eligible UAFT faculty.

The calendar of UAFT comprehensive review activities is specified in the Faculty Handbook. It defines the specific dates for each step in the process, including when evaluations are due and opportunities for faculty under review to submit comments about their reviews. For ease of reference, the Office of the Provost produces an annual planner depicting the major milestones in the UAFT comprehensive review process. It can be found on the Web at the following location: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/provost/docs/faculty-evals/AY11-12Promotion_Tenure_Process_UAFT_Project_Planner.pdf