

UMASS LOWELL

PROMOTION & TENURE REVIEWER PREPARATION

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

BEFORE WE BEGIN

This slide deck and additional materials designed to help your committee **will be shared with you after this meeting.**

The P&T Website offers a great deal of information!

Visit www.uml.edu/pandt.

For procedural questions, contact pandt@uml.edu.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING

The granting of tenure is the single most important personnel decision made by the University. Tenure, once attained, shall confer upon the individual the right to hold their position and not to be removed there from except as provided through due process and for just cause. Barring unforeseen circumstances, tenure obligates the University to the employment of an individual for the balance of their professional life.

PROFESSIONALISM IN THE PROCESS

- Faculty who serve on review committees are obliged to fully inform themselves concerning the credentials and qualifications of candidates.
- The promotion and tenure process is a confidential personnel matter. No reviewer should discuss or disclose proceedings of committee meetings or documents associated with the process outside the appropriate convenings.

NEW/OF NOTE IN THE 2025-2026 CYCLE

NEW!

- University Rank and Tenure (URT) Committee will now have a full teaching/clinical faculty representative. This representative will vote on cases of teaching/clinical faculty only. The representative will be elected by MSP.

NEW!

- Prior to being forwarded to pandt@uml.edu by the established deadline, DPC letters must be reviewed by the Department Chair, and CPC letters must be reviewed by the Dean. In the case of a candidate who is a Department Chair, the DPC letter must be reviewed by the Dean prior to being sent.

More details on this “pre-submission check” later in this presentation!

- Optional COVID tenure delay continues for faculty hired before September, 2021.

IMPORTANT DATES

Review level	Access to file share begins	Candidate responses (to previous level) due	Committee meets	Review letters due NOTE: Chair or Dean Review to be completed prior to this date.
DPC	10/06/25	N/A	Committee determined	10/27/25
Chairs	9/16/25	11/3/25	N/A	11/10/25
CPC	11/10/25	11/19/25	Committee determined	12/01/25
Deans	12/1/25	12/8/25	N/A	1/12/26
URT	01/12/26	01/19/26	02/12/26 & 02/13/26	02/17/26

MEMBERSHIP VOTING

- Committee members can vote at rank or below.
 - Only Full Professors (both tenure or teaching/clinical track) vote on cases of faculty seeking promotion to Full Teaching or Full Clinical Professor.
- A rank-eligible teaching or clinical faculty member must be present to vote on teaching- or clinical-track candidates – this has been extended to include URT.
- One person – one vote.
 - Chairs do not serve on DPCs for matters of promotion & tenure.
 - CPC members will recuse themselves from votes for faculty members from their own department.
 - URT members will recuse themselves from votes for faculty members from their own college; the Provost convenes but does not vote at URT.

COMMITTEE PRACTICES

- CPC members will present faculty candidates from their own department in order to carry forward insights from the DPC discussion, **but will not participate in the vote.**
- Similarly, URT members will present faculty candidates from their own college **but will not participate in the vote.**
- Committee members not present for the discussion may not participate in the vote.
- Committee chairs should plan the order of review and provide a brief break between candidate ranks to allow non-eligible members to make their exit.
- Each committee should determine meeting protocols in advance—**more in a moment on meeting protocols.**

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE TEACHING/CLINICAL PROFESSOR

In considering a candidate for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor or Associate Clinical Professor, the criteria for promotion are:

- **excellence in teaching and excellence in service**

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO FULL TEACHING/CLINICAL PROFESSOR

Criteria for consideration of a candidate for promotion to Full Teaching/Clinical Professor, as differentiated from promotion to Associate Teaching/Clinical Professor:

- The criteria for promotion are **excellence in teaching and excellence in service**.
- The candidate should demonstrate growth in leadership in matters of pedagogy and in service, particularly in relation to teaching and learning.
- The candidate should have a significant record of accomplishments in instructional effectiveness, curricular innovation, student engagement, and/or institutional service and leadership.

NEW!

CRITERIA FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Consideration of a candidate for tenure shall be based on the following:

- a. Convincing evidence of **excellence in research, creative or professional activity and teaching and strength in service** such as to demonstrate the possession of qualities appropriate to a member of the faculty occupying a permanent position.
- b. Reasonable assurance of continuing development and achievement leading to further contributions to the University.

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

Criteria for consideration of a candidate for promotion to Full Professor, as differentiated from promotion to Associate:

- A continued record of accomplishments for research/scholarship,
- Long-term, successful teaching
- Most importantly, wide recognition by learned societies or professional associations for demonstrated achievement of leadership in the discipline or professional area.

Sustained levels of achievement in research and teaching, and demonstrated leadership in service.

VOTING SPECIFICATIONS

Promotion to Associate Professor with tenure and cases of tenure only:

- Separate votes for research, teaching, and service
- Requirement: excellence in research and teaching, strength in service
- Candidates must meet each of those requirements to be recommended

Promotion to Full Professor:

- Holistic vote -- recommend or do not recommend

Promotion for Teaching and Clinical faculty (either to Associate or to Full):

- Separate votes for teaching and service
- Requirement: excellence in teaching and service
- Candidates must meet each of those requirements to be recommended

SAMPLE BALLOTS FOR PROMOTION AND/OR TENURE CASES BY TYPE

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor or Associate Clinical Professor

Teaching – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Service – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Note: To provide a favorable recommendation, the criteria are Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Service.

Promotion to Full Teaching Professor or Full Clinical Professor

Teaching – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Service – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Note: To provide a favorable recommendation, the criteria are Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Service.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure or Tenure Only at the Rank of Associate or Full.*

Research, Creative, or Professional Activity– choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Teaching – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Service – choose one:

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Note: To provide a favorable recommendation, the criteria are Excellence in Research, Creative, or Professional Activity; Excellence in Teaching; and Strength in Service.

Promotion to Full Professor

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Abstain

Note: To provide a favorable recommendation, the candidate must meet the minimal criteria outlined in the contract.

* You may occasionally have a faculty member applying for tenure at the rank of Full Professor. In those cases, committees should conduct separate votes for tenure and for promotion. Committees can use the tenure ballot, voting separately on the three criteria, and also the simple “Promotion to Full Professor” ballot. Be sure the letter specifies that both votes were taken, and the vote counts on each item.





ADVANCE 

Office for Faculty Equity & Resilience

Recommended Personnel Committee Protocol*

Increasing transparency & equity in personnel decisions

* Note: These are guidelines based on best practices; they are not required.

Recognizing implicit bias

- Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- These biases are not explicitly expressed or consciously held, which makes them different from explicit biases that are consciously held and expressed.
- Implicit bias can influence our perceptions, judgments, and behaviors in subtle ways, often without us being aware of it.

Effects of implicit bias

- Implicit bias can influence various aspects of decision-making, including hiring, promotions, academic evaluations, and resource allocation.
- When unchecked, bias can lead to disparities in opportunities and outcomes for different individuals or groups and compromise meritocracy
- Implicit bias poses a challenge to efforts aimed at promoting diversity and inclusion and hinder initiatives to make meaningful and lasting change.

Establish a Protocol to Mitigate Bias

Bias proliferates when ...

- ❖ Process is ambiguous
- ❖ Appraisal is hasty rather than deliberative
- ❖ Accountability is lacking

See Heilman & Haynes, 2004 for review

Act together to promote equity

- ❖ Reduce ambiguity → discuss the evaluation criteria
- ❖ Enhance appraisal procedure → follow reflective steps
- ❖ Increase accountability → ask individuals (and require committees) to articulate reasoning

Recommended Process for Personnel Committees

- I. Before the meeting → Preparation
- II. During the meeting → Decision Making Process
- III. After the meeting → Committee Letter

I. Before the meeting→ PREPARATION

- Review all materials carefully
 - Individually review materials/dossier – taking notes as you read can be very helpful in discussions
- Form your own initial assessment
 - Determine your initial assessment (without others' influence) for each element of the vote on the relevant ballot
 - Identify the specific evidence in the portfolio that supports your assessment
- Committee chairs are urged to communicate with members prior to the meeting about the planned meeting protocol and review voting eligibility for specific candidates as needed.

II. During the meeting → DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Set the tone:

- Remind members about confidentiality
- Preview the plan for the meeting
- Guide the process: start with a new person for each round

Step 1: One-word assessment for the first criterion

- Remind the group that their initial ratings are non-binding and are not recorded.
- Each voting member shares their one-word, initial assessment about the first relevant criterion.



Why one word?

- Gauge temperature of the room
- Provide guidance on focal points and the nature of the conversation to follow
- Prevent people from *hiding in anonymity*

II. Decision-making process

Step 2: Group discussion of the first criterion

- Share evidence for initial rating
- Ask clarifying questions
- Goal is not consensus but to consider all evidence and make a judgement based on that evidence

I think the candidate's research is...

Here is what impresses me about her recent publications...

She has a good balance between solo and collaborative work, but her specific role in the collaboration is not clear.

I have some doubts about her project two years ago.



II. Decision-making process

Step 3: Repeat steps 1 and 2 for **each remaining criterion**

Repeat the cycle of one-word appraisals and substantive discussion of evidence for all applicable criteria prior to moving to a vote.

Remember: start with someone new/change the order of input so that the same voices are not always first.

II. Decision-making process

Step 4: The confidential vote

Tip for Chairs!

Prepare & print the ballots
ahead of time to ensure:

- the conversation covers the required areas
- all votes are captured accurately.

Promotion to Associate Professor
with Tenure

RESEARCH

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

TEACHING

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

SERVICE

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Less than strong
- ☐ Abstain

Reminder:

To provide a favorable recommendation, the criteria are:

- Excellence in Research
- Excellence in Teaching
- Excellence or Strength in Service

The ballot format is specific
to the promotion type.

III. After the meeting→ COMMITTEE LETTERS

Step 5: The committee letter

Strong letters accurately reflect the committee's discussion and are complete with all required information. Ensure that your efforts to reduce bias in the review process continue into the letter writing.

Ways to ensure transparency in the letter writing process:

- Point out the key **evidence** that the committee discussed.
- Reflect **both majority and minority opinions** as required.
- Include **complete details** of all votes & **base the recommendation directly** on the votes.
- Share responsibility for taking **good notes** during the meeting to make drafting easier.
- **Include the names** of all members who were eligible to vote; note any not present.

Note: The Provost's Office will be sending you a document that outlines all the details you need.

Review the ADVANCE Best Practices to Address Bias in Personnel Decisions.

Our hope is that committee chairs and members will work together to implement measures to reduce bias!

More info can be found at
ADVANCE Office of Faculty Equity & Resilience
[Personnel Protocol](#)



ADVANCE 
Office for Faculty Equity & Resilience

COMMITTEE LETTER PRE-SUBMISSION CHECK

NEW!

NEW INFORMATION!! PLEASE REVIEW AND PLAN AHEAD!

- All committee members review the letter
- DPC letters must be **reviewed** by Department Chair
(Where a Department Chair is a candidate, DPC letters must be reviewed by Dean)
- CPC letters must be **reviewed** by Dean
- After this review, committee chairs circulate the letter for members' signature.
(DocuSign recommended; a single signature sheet with all members' signatures is acceptable)
- The committee chair sends signed letters to pandt@uml.edu for upload, with a CC to candidate
- DPC letter **deadline**: 10/27/25 - CPC letter **deadline**: 12/01/25

NOTE: THE NEW PRE-SUBMISSION REVIEW PROCESS MEANS **COMMITTEES MUST COMPLETE LETTERS PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE TO ALLOW FOR REVIEW.**

CHAIR/DEAN REVIEW OF COMMITTEE LETTERS

Chairs and Deans have been asked to confirm that each committee letter is valid on its face and aligns with the contract. Some of the details they will look for:

- descriptors “excellent” and “strong” used only in the contractual sense
- presence of substantive evidence for both majority and minority votes
- complete voting details as the promotion type requires
- names and ranks of all elected and ad hoc committee members

Chairs and Deans **should not** suggest changes in content beyond assuring that the letters meet all requirements for submission, and **should not** give feedback to the committee chair or its members about their decision. All review levels are separate and should reflect only the opinions of the committee.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

- Simplified SharePoint site has replaced the P&T File Share (VPN no longer needed)
- [DocuSign P&T PowerForm](#) is available for DPC/CPC Chairs to gather committee member signatures

UNIVERSITY RANK AND TENURE COMMITTEE

- URT will meet on Feb. 12 & 13, 2026, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Important Reminder: CPC Chairs serve on URT, so please mark your calendars!
- In any case where the URT vote is not unanimously positive, the member from the candidate's college will draft the committee recommendation, including an explanation of negative votes.
- Members review and sign all completed letters via DocuSign.
- Letters must be completed and signed by 02/17/26.

Questions and discussion

For SharePoint instructions, the P&T calendar, guidelines, and other information, please visit www.uml.edu/pandt

For additional questions, contact pandt@uml.edu