



Learning with Purpose

PROVOST'S GUIDELINES FOR THE PROMOTION PROCESS TEACHING AND CLINICAL FACULTY For Applicants, Committees, Chairs, and Deans 2025-2026

The Provost's guidelines provide recommendations to the candidate developing a portfolio for promotion on ways to present their accomplishments effectively and concisely. They were developed to promote consistency in the organization of the candidate's materials, to provide the candidate with an understanding of what reviewers look for, and to provide clarity to readers at various levels of review.

The guidelines in no way supersede, replace the language of the MSP contract, or reflect a comprehensive statement of MSP contract principles. The faculty candidate, members of personnel committees, and chairs are expected to review the relevant sections of the MSP contract.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY

Important note: The candidate is advised to talk with their chair and dean, and to consult the MSP contract, before deciding when to seek promotion.

For candidates seeking promotion:

- from assistant teaching professor to associate teaching professor
- from associate teaching professor to full teaching professor
- from assistant clinical professor to associate clinical professor
- from associate clinical professor to full clinical professor

Faculty may be promoted after completing six (6) years of full-time service at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Accordingly, faculty may submit their materials for consideration for promotion to associate teaching or clinical professor as early as the September of their sixth academic year, or any year thereafter. Faculty at the rank of associate teaching or clinical professor may submit their materials for consideration for promotion to full teaching or clinical professor as soon as the September of their sixth year from the prior promotion, or any year thereafter.

Non-tenure track faculty members can continue to serve without promotion indefinitely.

Candidates who apply, but who are not recommended for promotion, may reapply in September of the third year after the initial application. There are no limits on the number of times that a candidate can be considered.

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

Eligible candidates are advised to begin their preparation by reviewing Articles II and VIII of the MSP contract, which outline the promotion procedure, and to make themselves familiar with the promotion calendar and the relevant deadlines that are part of the process.

Article II of the MSP contract provides guidance for the candidate and reviewers on the requirements for promotion:

The criteria for promotion in [...] non-tenure track positions are excellence in teaching and excellence in service.

Candidates document their achievement of these criteria in their promotion portfolio.

PROCESS FOR LETTERS OF ASSESSMENT FROM CLINICAL SITES (Clinical faculty only)

The MSP Contract specifies that, along with other evidence in support of excellence in teaching, Clinical Faculty are “expected to provide letters of assessment sought by department chairs from supervisors at clinical sites.” The following is meant to provide a basic framework for the process of procuring those letters and presenting them in the portfolio.

Clinical Assessment Letter Process Timeline

The MSP contract does not provide process deadlines; the timeline below is suggested.

Spring 2025	Clinical faculty candidate provides Chair with names and contact information for potential letters of assessment from clinical sites.
By end of May 2025	Chair solicits (via email) letters of assessment from clinical sites on behalf of Clinical Faculty and informs candidate how many letters have been solicited on their behalf. (See template, Appendix 8.)
Summer 2025	Chairs may forward letters to Clinical Faculty as they arrive.
8/15/2025	Requested deadline for clinical assessors to provide letters.
9/15/25 5:00 p.m. Eastern	Deadline for candidates to upload all promotion materials to the P&T SharePoint; Clinical Faculty include all received letters from clinical sites in the supplemental materials file.

Guidelines for the Clinical Assessment Letters

- Department chairs, in consultation with their dean, should set a range for the number of letters to be solicited for clinical candidates. This number may vary widely between departments or programs within departments, but should be consistent, to the extent possible, for candidates across the program/department. This number should be shared with the candidate.
- If the chair writes to a potential assessor who declines to write, the chair should notify the candidate, and decide with the Dean if it is desirable to seek a replacement letter.
- The contract does not indicate that these letters will be held confidential. Chairs should explicitly mention this policy to potential assessors.
- The letters should take into account, as possible, the relevant period of assessment; either from appointment as Assistant Clinical Professor to Associate Clinical Professor, or from appointment as Associate Clinical Professor to Clinical Professor.
- Clinical letters should not be sought from assessors with a vested interest in the outcome of the decision.
- The candidate should not request clinical assessment letters directly, nor raise the topic of the clinical evaluation with a potential or confirmed assessor prior to the submission of the promotion materials.
- The candidate should present all clinical assessment letters solicited and received by the chair in their portfolio; no letters received should be dismissed, edited, excluded or discarded.
- Candidates may provide a COVID impact statement to their chair to be forwarded to the assessor as soon as they have agreed to provide a letter (optional, see details page 6).

Scope of Clinical Assessment Letters

Clinical assessors are asked to address, for the relevant period of assessment:

- the nature and length of the external reviewer’s past or present association to the candidate
- the significance, quality, and quantity of the candidate’s contributions to the clinical site
- the quality and effectiveness of the candidate’s instruction/practice in the clinical site
- where possible, examples of the candidate’s contributions to the clinical site
- an assessment of the candidate’s skill compared with others in the field who are at a similar stage of their career
- any relevant information about common clinical practices within the discipline or other factors that may help the university evaluate the candidate relative to disciplinary expectations
- if relevant, context about the impact of COVID on the candidate’s clinical work

Departments may edit these requested areas of evaluation to include more specific language pertaining to the nature of the faculty’s clinical work.)

THE PROMOTION PORTFOLIO

Portfolio Format

The candidate submits two PDF files: a main portfolio and a supplemental materials file. The Electronic Materials Workshop is offered each spring to provide the candidate with support for constructing their portfolio. These materials may not be edited after the submission deadline. (Candidates may submit updates as addenda; see the section on addenda and responses for acceptable items.)

Main Portfolio Content (PDF #1)

- Cover page, to include:
 - name
 - present rank
 - department and college
 - date of appointment at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and rank awarded
 - date of previous promotion (if applicable)
 - area of specialization within the discipline
- Candidate's Curriculum Vitae (CV) (MSP contract Appendix A-9, Personnel Form #6)
 - The CV is intended to provide the accomplishments of the candidate's entire career, including the specific details of accomplishments at UMass Lowell.
Accomplishments from the period under review are typically provided in bold face type. There is no page limit for the CV.
 - Candidates may adjust the CV format to reflect disciplinary conventions but should retain the order specified in Appendix A-9.
- Candidate's Narrative—recommended length, approximately 5 to 7 pages (10-12 pt. font, single spaced, standard margins)
- Instructional Activity Chart (Appendix 6)

Supplemental Materials Content (PDF #2)

Required

- All annual or periodic evaluations by the Department Personnel Committee, department chair, and dean (include formal annual evaluations and classroom observations of teaching; exclude reappointment letters)
- Student evaluations from the period under review—including scanned copies of all pages/sides of all completed evaluation forms (including numerical ratings and all written comments) NOTE: Per agreement with MSP, faculty are not required to share evaluation results from Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021; candidates may include evaluations from these semesters if they wish.
- Should any required documentation be unavailable, the supplemental materials should be prefaced with a list of any missing items and a brief explanation as to why each item has not been included.

For Clinical Track Faculty

- Letters of assessment provided by supervisors at clinical sites, provided to the candidate by the department chair

Optional

- Supplemental content that significantly advances or illustrates the case that cannot be sufficiently expressed in the CV or narrative – in consideration of the readers, the candidate should include only the most critical items, and should label them clearly
- COVID-19 personal impact statement (see details on page 6)

There is no preclusion of the candidate to include any item that they deem important. However, candidates are advised that reviewers are unlikely to put weight on ancillary material or documentation beyond what is indicated above. Accordingly, candidates are advised to focus their efforts to ensure that their narrative and CV are thorough and complete.

CANDIDATE'S NARRATIVE

The candidate's narrative should tell the story of their accomplishments in instructional effectiveness and the impact of their service. The narrative should provide the context, perspective and focus of the candidate's work, describing its place in their department and in the university, and their contributions to the mission of UMass Lowell. We recommend that an effective candidate narrative is 5 to 7 pages in length.

An effective narrative will present a concise, synthesized overview of the candidate's accomplishments and their distinctive contributions. It will offer the reader a sense of the candidate's overall career trajectory, using selective details that focus on the candidate's achievements during the relevant period under review at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

The narrative should outline the vision and philosophy that guide the candidate's efforts in teaching and service, including efforts towards continuous improvement, and address both standard areas of evaluation outlined in the MSP contract (II.A.) and should focus on the outcomes of the work in each. At both levels of promotion, accomplishments may be assessed in a variety of ways and may vary across disciplines. The narrative should enable reviewers—**including those who come from other specialties or disciplines**—to make informed judgments based on both qualitative and quantitative measures.

INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

In this section of the narrative, the candidate should articulate their teaching philosophy and contributions to the University's instructional mission in and beyond the classroom. The candidate should specify the student outcomes resulting from their instructional efforts. The candidate should present their instructional accomplishments in ways that enable colleagues from any discipline to understand the criteria that are most important for pedagogy in the specific field of study.

Excellence in instruction is central to the mission of UMass Lowell, and faculty engage in a wide array of related activities that, both directly and indirectly, create the rich educational environment we provide for our students. In accordance with the MSP contract, evaluation of faculty achievement in instructional effectiveness should consider the full breadth of their contributions.

The MSP contract (VII.B.2.c.(1)) defines instructional effectiveness as:

Including, but not limited to [...] development, improvement and demonstration of subject matter competence, continued improvement of methods and procedures of classroom presentation; active participation in departmental evaluation of course offerings and curricula for the purpose of maintaining their quality, relevance, and viability; conscientious discharging of responsibilities for student advisement throughout the academic year; and special or uniquely valuable contributions to the development or implementation or teaching of needed courses in any college or division of the University, and the like.

Reviewers will expect the narrative to address aspects of the candidate's contributions to instruction such as, but not limited to:

- ensuring student success through the continuous improvement of instruction
- pedagogic innovation (e.g., adapting a course for and being certified to teach in a TEAL classroom)
- courses developed, redeveloped, and taught; and their place in the curriculum
- currency and appropriateness of course content
- fulfillment of program, department, and Core Curriculum learning outcomes
- promoting equity in student achievement
- clarity and transparency of teaching materials, including articulating expected student outcomes
- response to instructional issues raised in teaching observations, annual/periodic reviews, or student evaluations
- use of student learning outcomes assessment to improve teaching
- role and contribution in the supervision/ mentoring of independent studies, experiential learning

- opportunities (undergraduate research, service learning, community-engaged learning, external placements, etc.), theses, dissertations
- engagement in interdisciplinary/collaborative instruction
- teaching awards and honors

The narrative may also address contributions to the university's instructional mission beyond classroom instruction, including, but not limited to:

- academic advising, including advisee load
- development of learning opportunities outside the classroom
- promoting equity in providing special opportunities and achievements for students
- curriculum development and implementation
- program-level assessment of student learning outcomes used for curricular improvement
- development of curricular materials to be shared with colleagues
- use or development of OER (Open Educational Resource) materials to reduce student costs
- seeking or providing professional development on instruction-related topics
- production of scholarship of teaching and learning (presentations, publications)
- internal or external funding for instructional activities
- partnering with campus support services to improve students' academic success
- mentoring of faculty peers with respect to teaching

Faculty seeking promotion to full teaching or clinical professor should emphasize examples of distinguishing accomplishments, such as, but not limited to:

- demonstration of pedagogical improvements sustained over time
- mentoring of junior faculty with respect to teaching
- examples of impact on the department or wider university relating to instructional methods
- leadership in curriculum development and continuous improvement

The Instructional Activity Chart

In the portfolio, the candidate provides the Instructional Activity Chart (Appendix 6) after the conclusion of the narrative. This chart documents key data items, including courses and sections taught, enrollments, student credit hours delivered, and student evaluation scores, helping readers to have an overview of the candidate's teaching. As needed, a supplemental chart may be provided to showcase a particular aspect of instructional activity that the candidate wishes to emphasize.

SERVICE

In this section of the narrative, the candidate should describe the quality and discuss the impact of their sustained and transformative service to the University, the community, and, if applicable, to the profession. The narrative should not merely list activities undertaken or committee memberships, but should provide readers with a clear picture of how the candidate shapes the campus community, participates in faculty self-governance, and enacts leadership at these various levels. The narrative should clarify the candidate's role in key service activities cited, and identify the resulting accomplishments and outcomes; leadership roles should be emphasized.

Please refer to the definitions of service outlined in the MSP contract, (VII.B.2.c.(3)) which provide a foundation for what should be included in this section. In addition to those definitions, the narrative should address the impact of their service within three categories:

Service to the University, such as, but not limited to:

- service on department, college or university-wide committees
- mentoring junior faculty, e.g., as part of U Mentor, or as part of college or departmental efforts
- fundraising or recruiting for the department or college
- service on professional boards or accreditation agencies as a representative of the University
- service on University-wide task forces

- service as an MSP officer or board member
- service as a faculty advisor to students including clubs, Living-Learning Communities, DifferenceMaker teams, etc.

The candidate should list both compensated and uncompensated service assignments, and delineate accordingly.

Service to the Profession, if applicable, such as, but not limited to:

- partnering with external professionals, groups, or agencies on matters related to the discipline
- moderating at conferences and professional meetings, especially as related to the scholarship of teaching and learning or student development
- service roles in professional societies
- evidence of impact on diverse communities, where applicable

Service to the Community, such as, but not limited to:

- participation on community boards, activities developed outside regular curricula engaging communities in the work of the faculty member
- serving as an expert on public panels or giving presentations to the public
- significant outreach activities performed in a professional capacity, such as outreach to K-12 students and teachers, outreach to other community groups, or public outreach
- engagement with diverse communities related to the faculty member's area of academic or professional expertise

Faculty seeking promotion to full teaching or clinical professor should emphasize examples of distinguishing accomplishments, such as, but not limited to:

- evidence of progression in the career, demonstrating growth beyond what was achieved at the previous rank
- holding leadership roles on campus, or leadership in major, university-wide initiatives
- stewardship of curricular design, improvement, and assessment
- raising the department profile, e.g., by cultivating student opportunities and success
- mentoring of junior faculty with respect to pedagogy
- forging sustained, impactful partnerships with the community

COVID IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE SUPPLEMENTAL FILE

In recognition of the many ways in which the disruption of COVID-19 has affected faculty work, the Provost invites candidates to include in their supplemental materials a one-page statement outlining any relevant impact of the pandemic and its resulting conditions on their efforts in the areas of evaluation.

A COVID-19 statement is not required, but may be included in the supplemental materials. Clinical faculty who opt to provide one may forward it to the Chair to be sent to the Clinical assessor.

Resources: Asking the Right Questions: A primer for merit, tenure and promotion evaluation committees. <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/suppl/2020/06/17/2010636117.DCSupplemental/pnas.2010636117.sapp.pdf>

For a more complete discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on faculty work, see Malisch, J.L. et al. (2020). Opinion: In the wake of COVID-19, academia needs new solutions to ensure gender equity. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Jul 2020, 117(27), 15378-15381. <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/117/27/15378.full.pdf>

UPLOAD INFORMATION FOR ALL CANDIDATES

The two PDF files described above (the main portfolio and the supplemental materials) are uploaded into a UML P&T SharePoint for secure distribution to authorized campus reviewers. Access to SharePoint for the candidate and all reviewers strictly follows the P&T calendar; late upload is not permissible.

In order to facilitate establishment of a candidate folder within the P&T SharePoint, it is recommended that the candidate sends a notice of intent to apply for promotion—via the [new web form accessible via a link on the P&T website](#)—by **July 1, 2025**.

The portfolio and supplemental materials must be uploaded electronically to the P&T SharePoint by **Monday, September 15, 2025 at 5:00 pm**. The candidate is advised to have the portfolio reviewed by mentors prior to uploading, as it may not be altered after this deadline. Candidates may remove themselves from consideration at any level by emailing pandt@uml.edu and their Department Chair.

ADDENDA & RESPONSES

After September 15, 2025, the portfolio may not be edited, but the candidate may submit addenda reflecting significant new updates. Addenda should be submitted by email to Pandt@uml.edu as a single PDF, usually comprising a very brief cover note, addressed to the next level of review, explaining what is attached, and the award or acceptance letter. Only the candidate may submit addenda. Because they are not a formal part of the portfolio, these addenda will not trigger further review by levels completed prior to submission. The P&T Team will upload addenda to the Review Letters, Responses, Addenda folder on the P&T SharePoint.

Addenda are limited to:

- funding for teaching and learning projects awarded after final submission of the candidate's portfolio
- honors or awards received after final submission of the candidate's portfolio
- candidate responses to recommendation letters by various levels of review (in accordance with the promotion and tenure calendar)
- other extraordinary examples appropriate to the candidate's discipline

CANDIDATE RESPONSE LETTERS

Candidates may provide responses to recommendation letters by various levels of review in accordance with the promotion and tenure calendar. Response letters are optional, and are used to clarify any inaccuracies or oversights in the recommendation letter. Response letters may be submitted by email to Pandt@uml.edu, and may be addressed to the reader(s) in the next level of review.

RESOURCES

Additional information can be found at www.uml.edu/Pandt, including the promotion and tenure calendar, which provides the candidate and reviewing authorities with a timetable of due dates for the given academic year, and the addenda and templates referred to in this document.

Candidate questions about portfolio content should be addressed to the department chair.

Any questions about electronic portfolio creation or SharePoint uploads may be directed to Pandt@uml.edu.

These guidelines were approved by the Provost in March 2025.