Putting Together a Successful Promotional Packet

Theodore H. Curry II
Associate Provost and Associate Vice President
Academic Human Resources
The MSU Philosophy

Promotion is a key branch point in a faculty member’s life.

The opportunity to be recognized for accomplishments through promotion to a higher academic rank is as important to non-tenure track faculty as it is for others.

Academic rank should reflect University expectations about quality of relevant accomplishments, regardless of whether or not one is in the tenure system.
Promotion of Fixed Term Faculty: Policy and Principles

• Some selected quotes
The Key:

- While the mix of duties performed by fixed term faculty may vary within and across units, academic rank at Michigan State University must be based on standards that result in a progressively stronger faculty. A fixed term faculty member's level of accomplishment, even if limited to a narrow range of duties (e.g. only teaching), should reflect the same level of accomplishment for that set of duties as is required for a tenure system faculty member being promoted to the same rank.
Materials to be included, using Form D:

1. Current curriculum vita,
2. Reflective essay about accomplishments over the reporting period (5 page maximum),
3. A representative sample of scholarly work, and
4. Evidence of excellence in performing assigned duties, e.g. significance, impact, and innovation of research/creative activities, instructional activities, and service.
Additional important points:

- Because of the diversity in assignments of fixed term faculty, unit administrators must prepare a description of the candidate's assignment, including, for example, the percentage of the appointment devoted to research/creative activities, teaching, service, etc.
- External review letters may be used, to the extent relevant, following the principles in the policy, "External Letters of Reference."
THE REVIEW PROCESS

- Department level committee makes recommendation to chair or school director
- Chair independently makes a recommendation to the dean
- The dean is advised by a college review committee
- The dean independently makes a recommendation to the provost
Rule #1

TALK TO YOUR CHAIR/DIRECTOR & MENTOR(S)
Tracking and Documenting Your Accomplishments

Adapted from a presentations by:

Ann E. Austin
Academic Advancement Network
Assistant Provost for Faculty Development—Academic Career Paths

&

Juli Wade
Academic Advancement Network
Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development
Why is documentation important?

• Helps make the case for who you are, what you have accomplished, why it is important, and your expected future trajectory

• But…
  • You can’t document what you don’t remember
  • You can’t document what you don’t have evidence to support
Documentation demonstrates who you are as a professional:

• The type of work you do
• What the synergies/connections are across the components of your work
• The impact you are making
• Your path to date
• Your trajectory as you look forward
• Your vitality and excellence in your role
What should you document?

- All aspects of your work – the components related to your assigned duties, and all of the extra responsibilities you take on. Typically, you will organize your documents around three key categories, to the extent appropriate:
  - Teaching
  - Research
  - Service and/or Outreach
- The connections across the components of your work
How to document your work?

• Establish a system for record-keeping – electronic or paper
• Be consistent, systematic, and organized
• Archive each significant event and benchmark in your professional career
• Seek and plan ways to demonstrate impact
Teaching Records to Keep

- **Formal Classes**
  - Schedule, class size, format
  - Syllabi, course material
  - Exams and grade distribution
  - Student evaluations and summary scores

- **Advising and Mentoring**
  - Formal advising load
  - Mentoring relationships
  - Students supervised in components of your work

- **Workshops, Seminars, etc.**
  - Format, materials, evaluations
Teaching Records to Keep (slide 2)

• Course and Curriculum Development
  • Development and redesign of courses
  • Teaching materials developed
  • Out-of-class experiences designed

• Professional Activities
  • Professional development opportunities
  • Instructional research and grants
Teaching Issues for Reflection

• Your philosophy and approach
• Your intended learning outcomes for students
• Your teaching methods, and rationale for them
• Approaches and innovations you have developed
• Impact on students: outcomes assessment, unsolicited comments
• How you interpret and respond to your teaching evaluations
• How your teaching has changed over time and why
Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities
Records to Keep

• **Products**
  • Books/monographs
  • Book chapters
  • Articles in refereed journals
  • Creative works, such as exhibits and performances
  • Edited works: journals, other publications
  • Presentations at scholarly/professional meetings
  • Other papers, reports, reviews

• **Funding**
  • Grant proposals: funded and non-funded
  • Grant management: budget, staff
  • Reports
Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities Records to Keep

- Involvement in the Discipline
  - Manuscript reviews, conference proposal reviews
  - Grant evaluation panels
  - Leadership activities in professional societies
- Standing in the Discipline
  - Journal rankings
  - Citation analysis
  - Reviews and published reactions
  - Awards and honors
  - Invited talks and activities
  - Unsolicited testimonials
Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities
Topics for Reflection

• Overall direction and purpose of your research
• Questions you are addressing
• Methodologies selected and benefits/limitations
• Impact: Major outcomes, why this work is important, whom it impacts
• Future plans and issues to be addressed
Service Records to Keep

• At MSU
  • Department, college, university leadership roles
  • Department, college, university committees
  • Task forces and reports

• For Professional Organizations
  • Leadership roles – elected and appointed
  • Committee memberships
  • Conferences/events planned
Service Records to Keep (slide 2)

• For the Broader Community
  • Consultation and technical assistance to organizations
  • Publications for the public and audiences outside your field
  • Interpretations of technical information for the public
  • Expert testimony
  • Development of programs in educational/cultural organizations

• Clinical Work
  • Diagnosis and treatment of clients and patients
  • Supervision of staff in clinical settings
Service and Outreach Topics for Reflection

• Overall direction and purpose of your service/outreach
• Rationale for selecting these areas of focus
• Impact—major outcomes, who is impacted, why the work is important
• Future directions
Major Components of Packet

- Reflective Essay
- Form D
- CV
- Publications, Creative Works
Reflective Essay – It Should:

- Describe how you contribute to the missions of MSU (relative to your assignment) and society more broadly; impact and broader context should be explained
- If research/creative activities is a part of your assignment, then highlight what you have done and where you are going
  - Make a cohesive trajectory clear
  - Tell a story about your vision and progress toward it
- Be a polished document that includes some specific examples
- Communicate at a level appropriate for knowledgeable people who are not in your discipline
Reflective Essay – It Should Not:

- Simply summarize what is in CV or Form D (or be a list of what you’ve accomplished)
- Use a lot of jargon
Reflective Essay – Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Why do you do what you do? And why does it matter to people other than you?
- What do you want to be known for, and why?
Reflective Essays – General Advice:

• Get information from senior colleagues and unit leaders about the culture in your department and college regarding style and content of the document.

• Review examples from successful promotion cases.
Form D – Basic Documentation

• Undergraduate and Graduate Instruction
  • List of courses taught, including number of students in them
  • Non-Credit Instruction
  • Academic Advising (UG advising by faculty only in some units)
  • Instructional Works (publications, presentations, etc. with teaching focus)
Form D – Basic Documentation (slide 2)

- Research and Creative Activities
  - List of items produced
  - Quantity of items across categories
  - Number of grants (details are listed at end of document)

- Service
  - Scholarly and professional organizations
  - University
  - Broader community
Form D – Basic Documentation (slide 3)

• Evidence of Other Scholarship
  • Impact of and attention to any work that is not specifically associated with teaching, service, research or creative activities

• Integration across Multiple Missions

• Other Awards/Evidence
Form D – Common Mistakes to Avoid

• Entering the wrong duty period on page 1
• Typos, sloppy language
• Not answering all of the questions
Questions?