LSA Promotion (with tenure) Philosophy
(July 2013)

1. INTRODUCTION

On May 31, 2001, the College Executive Committee adopted a comprehensive policy on how to review candidates for tenure. Entitled “Tenure Proceedings: Principles and Best Practices,” this policy outlines procedures that aim to maintain and improve upon the rigorous standards for tenure in LSA while at the same time ensuring fairness for candidates and reasonable consistency across the College in the procedures by which we arrive at tenure decisions.

2. PRINCIPLES

1. Every person hired into a tenure track position by a department and/or program in LSA is hired with the hope that he/she will receive tenure. The College procedures for promotion and tenure are intended to ensure a fair process for all candidates. Nevertheless, tenure is an earned privilege, not a right.

2. Units in which the tenure candidate holds an appointment, the College, and the University all have an important role in tenure decisions.

3. Tenure in LSA should be granted only to candidates who have demonstrated excellence in research and teaching and, in more modest ways, excellence in service. Excellent research should have a demonstrable impact on the area of study to which it is meant to contribute and should provide evidence for a strong presumption of future distinction. Excellent teaching should be demonstrated by evidence of a strong motivation to engage students in the learning process, by the rigor and scope of the courses taught, and by student and (if available) peer evaluations of the course and instructor. The only overriding criteria for granting or not granting tenure are the quality, quantity, and impact of the candidate’s research, teaching, and service.

4. Each candidate for promotion and tenure will be reviewed by the College Executive Committee only once.

5. Those who participate in making tenure decisions bear a high level of accountability and responsibility to both the University and the candidate. At the unit level, chairs/directors (or their designates) bear primary responsibility for all procedural aspects of this decision-making and must provide the leadership necessary to produce an assessment based on a thorough, critical reading of the candidate’s work, and full and informed discussion of that work and all other aspects of the candidate’s career. It is also their responsibility to insure that an accurate and full representation of the contents of these discussions is provided to College committees.

6. Granting tenure is a decision that affects the long-term reputation and scholarship of a unit. For this reason, recommendations for or against tenure should not be the decision of only a small number of members of a unit.

7. Those who work in the disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary area(s) of the candidate, or with the same methods, are best able to judge the substantive value of the candidate’s work.

8. Candidates are entitled to a procedurally correct tenure review. A procedurally correct tenure review is one in which:

   i) The several steps in the tenure process as outlined by College and unit documents and conveyed to candidates have been followed.
ii) Unit Tenure Review Panels, decision-making bodies, and the College Divisional Evaluation Committees have given a thorough, critical reading to the candidate’s major work and have engaged seriously with it in their discussion.

iii) The full scope of interdisciplinary work (whether done inter-unit or intra-unit) has been taken into account in making a recommendation for tenure.

iv) Colleagues’ discussion of the candidate’s work has been conducted in professional terms.

v) The Tenure Review Panel is specific to each faculty member and includes at least one member broadly conversant with the candidate’s field and/or methodology.

9. Criteria for tenure must be as transparent as possible and must be made known to faculty members at the time of appointment.

i) These criteria must take account of the changing nature of scholarship, including interdisciplinary work and the possibilities of electronic publication and course development. The criteria must enunciate clearly the importance of teaching, research, and service, and must also define procedurally critical terms (e.g., “arm’s length” assessment).

ii) Units must develop written criteria that are consistent with those of the College and address disciplinary and cross-disciplinary standards.

iii) Units must publish internally a clear set of deadlines relative to tenure and a list of responsibilities on the part of the tenure candidate with regard to the tenure process.

iv) These criteria, deadlines, and a list of candidates’ responsibilities must be available in writing to all new tenure-track appointees on arrival and must be provided to all untenured faculty at several intervals during their pre-tenure years.

The procedures described below are intended to ensure that every candidate is considered thoroughly, fairly, and according to correct procedures at the College level. The College therefore requests that units follow the guidelines set forth in this document scrupulously.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Candidates are normally reviewed for promotion and tenure during their sixth year of appointment in the tenure track at Michigan. Instructorships are tenure-track positions, lectureships are not.

Recommended Timetable for a Promotion & Tenure Recommendation in the 6th Year:

- **Early February of the 5th year** – Chair/director meets with the candidate to review the entire process.
- **Early April** – The unit selects the candidate’s Tenure Review Panel (TRP) in accordance with its by-laws (either within the unit or jointly with another unit) and the candidate and unit develop a list with a minimum of 12 names of external reviewers. (See section 4 for more details.)
- **April-May** – The chair/director, in consultation with members of the TRP, select external reviewers. The chair/director begins to contact reviewers informally to determine their availability (see below for detailed instructions).
- **Early June** – The candidate provides the unit with his/her cv, teaching statement, research statement, and copies of scholarship.
• **June** – The chair/director sends the candidate’s materials to external reviewers with an early September deadline for receipt of letters.

• **Early September to early October** – The TRP reviews the case and prepares a Preliminary Report. The Preliminary Report is given to the candidate, allowing two weeks for a written response from the candidate.

• **Mid-October to early November** – The faculty voting body reviews the TRP reports and the candidate’s response and votes. The chair/director then composes the cover letter and assures proper assembly of the tenure dossier to be submitted to the College.

• **November 6, 2013** – Deadline for units to submit promotion dossiers for Associate Professor with tenure.

• **February 12, 2014** – Deadline for College promotion decisions to be submitted to the Provost.

• **May 15, 2014** – The final decision on the promotion case is made by the Regents.

**Tenure Clock:** Effective January 1, 2006, faculty with a January 1 start date began to have the tenure clock start the following September. For example, if the candidate’s initial appointment began on January 1, 2008, the tenure clock would begin on September 1, 2008 and the 2013-14 academic year will be considered his/her sixth year. Terms spent on leave do not stop the tenure clock.

**Request for Delay of Tenure:** Under certain circumstances faculty may request a delay of the tenure review as an exception to the six-year rule. Faculty who add children to their households, experience other care giving demands, or experience personal illness during the pre-tenure years may request to delay the tenure review by one year with a total delay of no more than two years.