

Helpful Hints for Tenure Dossiers (Promotion and Evaluation too!)

Lea Prevel Katsanis, Ph.D., Professor

Department of Marketing, JMSB

January, 2022

Introduction

As a two-term Chair, I reviewed many tenure dossiers, and many more as a regular faculty member and member of the DPC, FPTC and UAB. Based on this experience, I have observed a variety of ways that the organization and framing of tenure dossiers may be enhanced.

At one of our recent CUFA Council meetings, there were questions about how to present one's teaching efforts in the tenure dossier, given the fact that no teaching evaluations were being conducted (and are still not at the time this document was written).

I volunteered to provide some guidance for the "pandemic" teaching dossier, and then decided to expand the project to include the research and service areas of the dossier as well. I hope to provide some basic guidelines and ways to create a strong dossier. I will begin with general comments and then move to the specifics of each section of the dossier.

The tenure dossier is your opportunity to showcase your hard work and as well, to help your colleagues appreciate your accomplishments. It may take extra work and time to implement some of these suggestions, but I believe it will result in a stronger dossier for you. Please note that some of these ideas may be incorporated into performance evaluation and promotion dossiers as well. Good luck!

The Overview

Before you begin to write the sections of your dossier, be sure you are familiar with the elements of the Collective Agreement. I've excerpted the relevant sections for your convenience and bolded certain phrases for emphasis – this appears at the end of this document. Often, faculty members follow these guidelines as a checklist rather than looking at their work holistically and tying it together in a way that shows your unique capabilities and contributions. Consequently, the dossier often reads like a continuous stream of information rather than a highlighting and synthesis of your early stage career. To produce a quality dossier, organization and synthesis is required.

Where do I start?

1. Gather all your dossier items together and review them carefully. Some of you may think that this step is obvious. However, it is easy to overlook items to be included, particularly since the COVID pandemic – with offices moved home, online teaching, and with tenure clocks extended in some cases, updating CVs for this purpose has not necessarily been at the top of

the list. Make sure you have documented everything you have done for inclusion in the document – if you are not sure something should be included, ask your Chair.

2. *Keep in mind that “promise and competence” are the criteria for tenure (Article 18.02a).* You must show that your work represents competence (as defined by your Faculty and Department) as well as promise (where your work will take you from here). **This needs to be built into the dossier with a personal statement for each section of your dossier.** Please note that this is not required under the CA – however, I strongly recommend it for all those applying for reappointment, tenure, promotion and performance evaluation. The contents will be outlined in a separate section below.

3. *Identify your most significant achievements for each section of the dossier.* Keep in mind that dossiers tend to be large documents, and you should proactively make it easy for your colleagues to find the most important work you have accomplished. You need to lead with these in the personal statements as mentioned in #2 to show how you achieved “promise and competence”. Demonstrate your value to the Department, Faculty and University with this statement.

4. *Understand what your Department/Faculty considers important for tenure.* While the CA outlines specifics that go into the dossier, each Department/Faculty has its own criteria for what is important. Make sure you identify these and craft your personal statements to link what you have done with what your units consider necessary for the granting of tenure.

5. *Review the annual Career Development memos from your Chair (Article 14.13) performance review letters from the DPC, and 36-month contract renewal letters from the FPTC (Article 14.01).* Review these documents to determine what advice you were given about your strengths and weaknesses, and think about how you have addressed these. This information can be used to support your case for tenure.

6. *Identify a supportive colleague who is willing to review your dossier and provide advice.* It is very helpful to have a second set of eyes to read your document to provide feedback, i.e., does the document read well, is it clear to see what you have achieved, does it match with what the Department considers important?

7. *Do not leave dossier preparation to the last minute.* Give yourself time to “sleep on it”, re-read it, and have others give you constructive criticism and advice.

Structure of the Tenure Dossier

1. *Cover Page.* Each section of the dossier (teaching, research, service) should have its own cover page.

2. *Personal Statement.* **Each section of your dossier** should include a personal statement (ideally 2-3 pages maximum). This personal statement should include the following:

- a. Opening paragraph that highlights your key accomplishments for that part of the dossier and then summarizes all the elements of that section of the dossier;
- b. A brief discussion of each dossier area that is organized based on what is important to your unit, with references to advice you were given by your Chair, DPC and FPTC if relevant (i.e., if specific improvements were recommended, show that these were implemented; or if you were recommended to continue your path, show that you did);
- c. A paragraph or two that outlines your career vision for the future – where you want to go from here and what contributions you hope to make to your Department and Faculty.
- d. A closing paragraph that ties together all the above and shows you have attained “competence and promise”. Demonstrate your value to the Department, Faculty and University
- e. Divide the personal statement into well-defined sections– use bolded or italicized headings when appropriate to make the personal statement easy to read.

The Teaching Dossier

Teaching evaluations were not conducted during the pandemic, and at the time this document was prepared, are still not conducted. Therefore, it becomes important to emphasize other aspects of the teaching function to show your engagement and achievements in this area. In addition, there are now changes being made to the teaching evaluations used at Concordia, and this will also affect how this data is to be presented in the future. In general, the teaching dossier should demonstrate the overall performance and competence of the member with respect to curriculum development, introduction of new courses; use of relevant pedagogy, and implementation, if appropriate, of experiential learning, not just teaching evaluations. While your teaching philosophy is important, you should focus on the outcomes of that philosophy: how did you implement it and what were the results? If you were given guidance on how to improve your teaching, or you were recognized for teaching by your Chair, DPC or FPTC, this should be included here.

Some items to include in the teaching dossier that should be adapted **specifically** to pandemic tenure applications (and these also apply for upcoming performance evaluations and/or promotion dossiers):

- a. Attendance at CTL seminars. This may include those that were offered in May 2020 for online teaching; any other CTL courses you took to improve your teaching. Don't just list these – talk about what you learned and then how you implemented some of the advice you received in your online courses.

b. Special grants that were offered by CTL for adaptation to online teaching – if you applied for these, include them. Any other teaching grants you applied for and received should, of course, be included here.

c. How you transitioned your courses to virtual using “best practices” – this could include screen shots of your Moodle course pages; special materials you developed for virtual teaching; innovations in your course outlines and changes to your courses; or other evidence that you engaged with the process.

d. Informal polls you conducted in class – some faculty members ran their own online performance evaluations or used those by CTL and these may be included here if they were positive. I have heard of some faculty using Rate My Professor in absence of formal evaluations – but this is a judgment call and dependent on what your individual Department would consider appropriate.

e. Testimonial emails/letters from students or other evidence of high-quality teaching and student support during the pandemic.

f. Your own innovations to teaching as a result of the pandemic – how you made it easier for your students to understand and engage with the material. If you participated in any committees that developed guidelines or teaching innovations for your Department, include them.

g. For those members seeking promotion to Full Professor under Teaching: since you have a history of teaching performance, create a summary table of your teaching evaluations (choose the items you think are most relevant) and have an average for these items. Question 16 is typically the one used – however, with recent controversy in the academic literature about teaching evaluations and the biases inherent in these, you may wish to choose questions that emphasize competence (preparation of course materials, etc.) rather than “opinion” questions about what students feel they have learned or your performance in the classroom.

Article 14.01 d-f contains the list of what may be included in the teaching dossier. However, be sure not to make your dossier like a “checklist” – if you are going to include something that is important, then provide at least one or two sentences describing why it mattered – i.e., who benefited from your efforts; what contribution did it make to your Department or Faculty? Demonstrate its relevance and show how you made a difference to your students or your colleagues.

The Research Dossier

The CA is less specific about what is to be included in the Research dossier, and relies on “judgement of faculty member’s disciplinary peers”. Therefore, this section will need to be crafted in a way that showcases the key contributions to your field, as well as your competence and promise, and as mentioned earlier, what is relevant to your particular department. In

addition, if you were given guidance from your Chair, DPC, or FPTC about your research, and this was followed, you should indicate this here.

First, briefly discuss the focus of your research and show how you have built your work in the area. **What was the major contribution of your research to date?** Discuss why your work is relevant to your field and the broader community (other researchers, professional community, the community at large). If your papers build on each other, discuss this as well. If one or two papers were particularly noteworthy, discuss this here. If you decided to change research streams, explain why you did this and why your new stream is productive. If you supervised Ph.D. students and they created work based on your research, discuss it here.

If we are dealing with journal articles, books, and other publications, it is helpful to use metrics that are recognized by your Faculty that show good to excellent quality peer-reviewed publications (in JMSB, we use the ACBD and FT 50 lists, for example).

a. This information can be presented in a table that shows each refereed publication and its rank by quality of journal. You may have many good quality publications/conference papers; or a few publications in the most prestigious outlets in your discipline. Often, these are balanced in a dossier when evaluating a tenure candidate's performance and will depend on your particular Department unit.

b. If your area is a specialty area, and has journal outlets that are highly specific to your research (and possibly not ranked in any way), then you need to point this out and talk about the overall contribution your research makes if it is not quantifiable in a way to present in a table. Although having a high citation count is usually not expected for tenure-track faculty, this might be a case where citations would show the relevance of your work (if it is highly cited by those in your field).

c. If your work is interdisciplinary and you publish in journals outside your field, be sure to discuss this with the relevant significance to your own Department/discipline and your contribution.

c. Conference papers/presentations are usually larger in quantity – you can mention the total number, but segment out the most high-quality conferences and highlight these.

d. Did any article or conference paper receive an award or other recognition?

e. If a book, did it receive positive reviews in scholarly outlets? If a textbook or other publication, did it receive high ratings on outlets such as amazon or other outlets (if this is appropriate in your discipline)?

f. Grants should also be presented in a table with the granting agency/organization and the amount of the grant indicating if you were the PI; if no grants were successfully obtained, then a table showing the grants you applied for in each academic year.

g. For those members who have patents, copyrights, performances and other forms of intellectual property, these may also be presented in a table showing the number and significance of each.

h. What do you see as the future direction of your research?

NOTE: If your research was delayed due to the pandemic, provide a status report of where it is now, when you expect to be finished, and what outlet it is targeted to with a date. This will show the “promise” of the requirement for tenure. Your work was delayed through no fault of yours – but you have continued to pursue what you can and have a plan for completion and dissemination of the research.

The Service Dossier

For tenure-track members, the criterion is “evidence of having fulfilled service”. However, many junior faculty (in particular, but not exclusively, women and BIPOC individuals) find themselves with a heavy service load that is often unrecognized, and for this reason, you should build a strong profile here for your service activities.

Don’t just list the committees you served on – provide a sentence or two about each **major** committee (such as DHC, curriculum committees, or other committees recognized as time intensive committees). What was your role? How many hours did you spend on that committee? Did you prepare a report? Was your attendance required on a regular basis? What was the output of the committee? Was the committee important to your Department/Faculty/University?

If you were asked to sit on less time intensive committees, but sat on many of them, then you should have a list showing all of these; calculate how much time it required for your work on each committee; and finally, point out your willingness to assist the Department, the Faculty and/or the University. If you have a sufficient number of limited service committees, the time commitment adds up in a significant way and should be recognized.

If you conducted external service such as reviews for journals and conferences, list these with the time it took you to complete these (some faculty review as many as 4 articles per year for a particular outlet, or more than that on an ad-hoc basis for different outlets).

If you are engaged in community service – detail this as well with the time required and the contribution you have made (with reference to output, if any).

With respect to your “promise” – are you interested in service in the future? How do you see yourself contributing to the life of the University? Do you see yourself in an administrative role, or rather, contributing in some other way? This shows your commitment to your future at the University.

Concluding Comments

I hope this document is helpful to my colleagues across the University as they prepare for reappointment, tenure, promotion or performance evaluation. While I cannot review individual dossiers, please reach out via email if I can answer a specific question for you.

APPENDIX

EXCERPTS OF RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE CURRENT COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT (2018-2021)

TENURE FOR FACULTY MEMBERS (Article 18)

18.02 Tenure Criteria

- a) For tenure to be granted, candidates shall have demonstrated a level and quality of **competence and promise** (*bolding mine*) in the areas of activity described in Article 16.01 a) and 16.01 b) consistent with the academic unit, Faculty and University expectations, including conditions prescribed at the time of initial appointment or in the course of a reappointment exercise conducted in accordance with Article 14.
- b) Performance during the overall period of the probationary appointment shall be taken into account in applying the above criteria; when a candidate is considered under the provisions of Article 18.06 a) i), consideration shall be given to accomplishments prior to the probationary appointment.
- c) In addition to satisfying the criteria in Article 18.02 a), **a candidate for tenure shall have given evidence of having fulfilled service, as defined in Article 16.01 c), and consistent with the academic unit, Faculty, and University expectations as described in Article 16.02.** (*bolding mine*)

REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF REGULAR MEMBER (Article 14)

14.01 GENERAL CRITERIA

- a) This article sets out general criteria for application on a University-wide basis. In addition, each Dean, after appropriate consultation, may adapt these criteria in a manner appropriate and reasonable to the particular academic area. In particular, each Dean, after consultation, shall specify whether supervision of student research is to be considered as teaching or research. In all such cases the Dean shall inform all faculty members in writing within a reasonable period of time, before such specification takes effect.
- b) The evaluation of full-time faculty shall be based upon the consideration of professional competence and potential for fulfilling academic responsibilities as defined in Article 16.
- c) The evaluation of teaching shall be done by the faculty member's colleagues on the basis of all evidence of teaching effectiveness presented by the faculty member in a teaching dossier, in accordance with Articles 14.01 d) and e). Statistical and anecdotal evidence shall be interpreted with caution.
- d) The teaching dossier shall include the following:
 - i) a list of undergraduate and graduate courses, including directed studies taught by the member and, if specified by the Dean as teaching under the provisions of Article 14.01 a), thesis and other student research supervisions undertaken by the member;
 - ii) examples of course outlines, assignments, final examinations or other materials the member deems appropriate;
 - iii) all aggregate statistical information generated from teaching evaluation questionnaires specified in Article 14.01 f) for each course taught during the period under evaluation.

e) The teaching dossier may also include, but is not restricted to, the following:

i) a statement that provides a reflective summary of teaching activities and performance as illustrated by all materials included in the teaching dossier; the member's objectives and methods of teaching; reference to institutional and academic teaching goals.

ii) a record of the member's role in curriculum innovation and instructional development such as administrative and committee service for the academic unit, Faculty, or Senate related to pedagogy, and including directing and coordinating programs, guest lectures, and other presentations;

iii) a record of the member's special contribution to teaching including teaching awards, publications and presentations, instructional development grants, participation in conferences and seminars on education/pedagogy, and other such evidence as the member deems appropriate;

iv) signed letters and testimonials from students;

f) A teaching evaluation questionnaire approved by the relevant Faculty Council shall be administered in all courses. The Provost and the President of CUFA shall agree on four questions common to all student evaluation questionnaires.

h) The evaluation of research shall depend primarily on the judgment of the faculty member's disciplinary peers, and shall be made on the basis of evidence of scholarship such as publications, presentations of papers, exhibitions, performances, patents, copyrights, external recognition, grants, contracts and other awards and, if appropriate (see Article 14.01 a)), thesis and other student research supervision undertaken by the member, as presented by the faculty member in a research dossier. In this evaluation, more weight shall be given to peer-reviewed than to non-peer-reviewed work, to the extent appropriate to the discipline.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY MEMBERS (ARTICLE 16)

16.01 The duties and responsibilities of faculty members fall into three (3) categories, regardless of where they are performed.

a) Teaching, which in general includes: the preparation, organization and presentation of course materials for credit courses and availability to students outside of class hours; curriculum development and preparation of course material for student use; the direction and evaluation of student progress in courses and practical work (including marking and timely submission of grades) and if so specified by the Dean, thesis and other student research supervision (see Article 14.01 a)).

b) Research and Scholarship, which in general includes: research, scholarly and critical or creative work within the faculty member's field; the dissemination of such work through respected publications, presentation of scholarly papers, exhibitions and performances, and other appropriate means; if so specified by the Dean (see Article 14.01 a)), the supervision of student research and theses, and the seeking of external research funding as appropriate to the discipline and the member's research profile. The primary objectives of such research shall be to increase knowledge and understanding and to further the faculty member's teaching and scholarly competence.

c) Service to the University and the Community, which in general includes:

i) participation on University-wide bodies;

ii) administrative work;

iii) committee membership at the levels of the academic unit, Faculty and University, including student advising on academic matters;

iv) the taking of an active part in scientific, cultural, educational, professional, governmental and social bodies, together with activities involving expertise or popularization which are relevant to and compatible with the professorial role;

v) service to the Association;

vi) outside professional activities.

16.02 While the pattern of duties and responsibilities indicated in Article 16.01 varies among academic units and among individuals, these constitute the principal obligations of any faculty member holding a full-time appointment. The service expectations for probationary members shall be reduced in comparison with the service expectations of tenured members in the same academic unit.

16.03 In accordance with the established procedures of the academic unit, and by mutual agreement with the faculty member, the academic unit heads and the Dean(s), academic duties may be assigned and carried out in academic units other than the member's primary unit. In the case of members holding a joint or cross appointment, or participating in an interdisciplinary teaching or research project with one (1) or more members of another academic unit, academic duties in both primary and secondary units shall be considered part of the member's duties for the purposes of all evaluations conducted under the provisions of Articles 14 and 18.

i) The evaluation of service to the University and the community, including participation in University governance and academic administration, service to the Association and the professional and academic community, shall depend primarily on the judgment of the faculty member's colleagues, and shall take into account evidence of such activities as presented by the faculty member in a service dossier.

j) The complete dossier consists of a current *curriculum vitae* and all three component parts: the teaching dossier (Article 14.01 c), d) and e) and f)), the research dossier (Article 14.01 h)), and the service dossier (Article 14.01 i)), with the proviso that ETA members shall not be required to submit a research dossier. Preparation of a digital version of the dossier is the responsibility of the Employer, unless the member chooses to prepare it in accordance with prescribed guidelines. When the Employer prepares the digital dossier, the member shall ensure that she or he is satisfied with its contents. (*bolding mine*).

REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF REGULAR MEMBER

14.01 GENERAL CRITERIA

a) This article sets out general criteria for application on a University-wide basis. In addition, each Dean, after appropriate consultation, may adapt these criteria in a manner appropriate and reasonable to the particular academic area. In particular, each Dean, after consultation, shall specify whether supervision of student research is to be considered as teaching or research. In all such cases the Dean shall inform all faculty members in writing within a reasonable period of time, before such specification takes effect.

b) The evaluation of full-time faculty shall be based upon the consideration of professional competence and potential for fulfilling academic responsibilities as defined in Article 16.

c) The evaluation of teaching shall be done by the faculty member's colleagues on the basis of all evidence of teaching effectiveness presented by the faculty member in a teaching dossier, in accordance with Articles 14.01 d) and e). Statistical and anecdotal evidence shall be interpreted with caution.

d) The teaching dossier shall include the following:

i) a list of undergraduate and graduate courses, including directed studies taught by the member and, if specified by the Dean as teaching under the provisions of Article 14.01 a), thesis and other student research supervisions undertaken by the member;

ii) examples of course outlines, assignments, final examinations or other materials the member deems appropriate;

iii) all aggregate statistical information generated from teaching evaluation questionnaires specified in Article 14.01 f) for each course taught during the period under evaluation.

e) The teaching dossier may also include, but is not restricted to, the following:

i) a statement that provides a reflective summary of teaching activities and performance as illustrated by all materials included in the teaching dossier; the member's objectives and methods of teaching; reference to institutional and academic teaching goals.

ii) a record of the member's role in curriculum innovation and instructional development such as administrative and committee service for the academic unit, Faculty, or Senate related to pedagogy, and including directing and coordinating programs, guest lectures, and other presentations;

iii) a record of the member's special contribution to teaching including teaching awards, publications and presentations, instructional development grants, participation in conferences and seminars on education/pedagogy, and other such evidence as the member deems appropriate;

iv) signed letters and testimonials from students;

f) A teaching evaluation questionnaire approved by the relevant Faculty Council shall be administered in all courses. The Provost and the President of CUFA shall agree on four questions common to all student evaluation questionnaires.

g) The Employer shall endeavour to ensure that members' anonymity and confidentiality are maintained in the administration and use of course evaluations.

h) The evaluation of research shall depend primarily on the judgment of the faculty member's disciplinary peers, and shall be made on the basis of evidence of scholarship such as publications, presentations of papers, exhibitions, performances, patents, copyrights, external recognition, grants, contracts and other awards and, if appropriate (see Article 14.01 a)), thesis and other student research supervision undertaken by the member, as presented by the faculty member in a research dossier. In this evaluation, more weight shall be given to peer-reviewed than to non-peer-reviewed work, to the extent appropriate to the discipline.

i) The evaluation of service to the University and the community, including participation in University governance and academic administration, service to the Association and the professional and academic community, shall depend primarily on the judgment of the faculty member's colleagues, and shall take into account evidence of such activities as presented by the faculty member in a service dossier.

j) The complete dossier consists of a current *curriculum vitae* and all three component parts: the teaching dossier (Article 14.01 c), d) and e) and f)), the research dossier (Article 14.01 h)), and the service dossier (Article 14.01 i)), with the proviso that ETA members shall not be required to submit a research dossier. Preparation of a digital version of the dossier is the responsibility of the Employer, unless the member chooses to prepare it in accordance

with prescribed guidelines. When the Employer prepares the digital dossier, the member shall ensure that she or he is satisfied with its contents.

k) The academic unit head shall ensure that the dossier contains:

i) In the case of probationary members, reports produced in the course of the most recent reappointment exercise;

ii) In the case of tenured and ETA members with a five (5) year contract, reports produced in the course of the most recent performance evaluation.

iii) In the context of this clause, "reports" shall mean reasoned reports, recommendations and decisions issued by the DPC, FPTC, Dean, and Provost, as applicable.

l) The academic unit head and the Dean may supplement the dossier submitted by the candidate with relevant information at the start of the DPC stage of the proceedings. In this instance, the candidate shall be informed of the nature of this information, shall receive copies of all supplemental documentation and shall have five (5) days to provide any commentary relevant to this supplementary information. If the candidate subsequently sends additional information to the FPTC, a copy shall be sent to the DPC.

m) The evaluation of members holding a joint or cross appointment shall be conducted by the primary unit, which shall seek input from the secondary unit or units.

14.02 EVALUATION OF PROBATIONARY AND NOMINALLY TENURED FACULTY MEMBERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REAPPOINTMENT

a) Reappointments for probationary members shall be for a period of two (2) years terminating on May 31. In the case of probationary members the contract shall not extend more than one year beyond the year of mandatory tenure consideration. Candidates who are not granted tenure as a result of mandatory consideration under the provisions of Article 18 and whose contracts expire at the end of the year of mandatory tenure consideration shall be offered a one-year, non-renewable, final contract.

Reappointments for nominally tenured faculty members shall be for a period of two (2) years terminating on May 31.

b) A member who has been on a leave in accordance with Article 33 or 35 for at least six (6) consecutive months during the period being evaluated shall have the option of being considered for reappointment the following year. Should the member exercise this option, the probationary appointment shall be extended for one year.

c) A member who, at the application deadline, is on a leave in accordance with Article 33 or 35 of not less than forty-five (45) days shall have the option of being considered for reappointment the following year.

d) The evaluation shall pay particular attention to the quality of the candidate's teaching, research activities, and publications as well as potential. In addition, the candidate's participation in the life of the University and the Community as specified in 16.01 c) shall be considered.

e) A faculty member who is a candidate for evaluation for reappointment is expected to have fulfilled any special conditions in the previous contract.

f) In the case of probationary appointments specifically indicated as having been made in a new program, the continuation of the position itself may be a criterion for renewal only within five (5) years of the year in which students were first enrolled in the program. The faculty member shall be so informed prior to appointment.

g) In the case of a reappointment of a nominally tenured member, she or he is expected to address the status of his or her application for Permanent Residency only.