

Tenure Dossier Workshop

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Agenda for Today

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- Introductions
- Overview of the tenure process (necessary steps) and relevant clauses in the Collective Agreement
- How to prepare your dossier
- Discussion and questions

Relevant articles in the CA

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- Article 18: Tenure for Faculty Members
- Article 14.01: General Criteria for Dossiers
- Article 16: Duties and Responsibilities of Faculty Members
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Service



What you want to achieve

- A dossier that is easy to read and makes clear and concise points
- A dossier that highlights your best performance and also explains difficulties and how you overcame them
- That makes a compelling case for tenure – make it easy to say yes
- That shows growth and development
- That demonstrates promise and competence: what you have already done and what you will do in the future
- That creates a holistic and cohesive picture of who you are as an academic and leaves a strong impression
- A DOSSIER IS NOT A DOCUMENT DUMP – show how your work made a difference to your students, your academic peers, the University

General approach

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- Gather all your dossier items together and review them carefully
- Come up with one sentence that describes your work and use it as the template to organize your dossier
- Keep in mind that “promise and competence” are the criteria for tenure (Article 18.02a)
- Identify your most significant achievements for each section of the dossier
- Understand what your Department/Faculty considers important for tenure
- Review the annual Career Development memos from your Chair (Article 14.13)
- Read your 36 month contract renewal letter from the FPTC (Article 14.01)



General approach (2)

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- Identify a supportive colleague who is willing to review your dossier and provide advice
- Do not leave your preparation to the last minute!
- Give yourself time to “sleep on it”



Structure of the dossier

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- Cover Page: Each section of the dossier should have one
- Personal Statement: Each section of your dossier should include a maximum 1-2 page statement
 - Opening paragraph highlighting key accomplishments and summarizing contents
 - Brief discussion of each dossier area based on what is important to the unit with references to advice you were given
 - Paragraph that outlines your vision for the future: where you want to go and what contributions you hope to make
 - A closing paragraph that ties it all together and shows you have attained “competence and promise”
 - Make sure each section is well-defined: use bolding, italics when appropriate and make it easy to read



The Teaching Dossier

- Should reflect the overall performance and competence of the member.
- This includes: curriculum development, new course development, use of relevant pedagogy, and where appropriate, use of experiential learning.
- Includes graduate supervision – level, number of students, in-progress and graduated
- While teaching philosophy is important, you need to focus on the OUTCOMES of that philosophy - how do you implement it, and what are the results?
- If you were given guidance on improving your teaching, or recognized for excellent teaching, include it here.
- What would you like to teach in the future (do you want to teach new courses; redesign existing ones)

Teaching Dossier (2) – teaching evaluations

- Your cohort will have limited numbers of these, as many classes were taught virtually from 2020-2022.
- How do we deal with the teaching evaluations you have?
- First: focus on the elements you do best. Calculate your averages on those questions and highlight them.
- I would avoid omnibus questions (unless they are very good and then you might as well include them)
- Based on latest research, these types of questions are subject to bias for both racialized and women faculty members
- You do not have to be a star – average teaching evaluations are acceptable – it's the overall dossier that counts and you can show room to grow here

Some examples

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- The course outline/syllabus is clear and complete (e.g., learning objectives, course topics, evaluation method).
- The methods used for evaluating student work are fair and appropriate.
- The Instructor covers the scheduled material and/or activities within the allotted time.
- The instructor is well prepared for classes.
- The instructor demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the subject matter.
- The instructor clearly explains the course concepts.
- The instructor provides useful feedback on assigned work
- The instructor uses instructional methods (lecture, case-based, media, etc.) that are effective.
- The instructor is accessible to students (office hours, after class, voice/e-mail).



Other teaching elements

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- Attendance at CTL seminars (pandemic Zoom seminars; other teaching seminars or conferences) – don't just list them, talk about what you learned and how you implemented your learnings
- Teaching grants from CTL (or other organizations) that you received or any grants you applied for
- During pandemic, how did you transition your courses - discuss your “best practices” (include screen shots of Moodle pages, special material you developed, etc.
- Unsolicited testimonial emails or letters from students

The Research Dossier

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- This section of the dossier is less specific
- Relies on “judgement of faculty member’s disciplinary peers
- Craft this section to showcase the key contributions to your field
- Showcase your competence and promise based on the requirements in your Department/Faculty
- If you were provided guidance from the Chair, DPC, FPTC, this is where you highlight it
- NOTE: If your research was delayed due to the pandemic, this should be documented here (it is likely this is already a part of a previous performance evaluation).



Recommended contents for research (1)

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- Discuss the focus of your research and show how you built your work
- What was the major contribution of your research to the literature (or to your field if you are Fine Arts or other creative discipline), the broader community at large, professional community (for Engineering and JMSB).
- If relevant, show how your papers build on each other, or how your creative work has progressed if it is in stages
- If you changed research streams, discuss it here – explain why and show why your new emphasis is more productive, relevant, etc.
- If you are dealing with articles, journals, books, etc., use metrics recognized by your faculty
- Where do you want your work to go in the future and how will you get there?



Recommended contents for research (2)

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- You may utilize a table to show each refereed publication and rank by quality of journal (if relevant) or use any other ranking that is appropriate for your field
- You may have a few papers/works in top outlets, or many in good quality outlets
- In a specialty area with a few specific outlets, citation count (not usually recommended for tenure files) may be helpful if they are high
- If work is interdisciplinary, be sure to discuss its relevance to your own field
- Conference papers are usually numerous – mention the total number but focus on the most high quality ones for emphasis

Recommended contents for research (3)

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- Did any of your work receive awards, special recognition?
- Did you win any general prizes for your work?
- If you wrote a book, did it receive positive reviews?
- If you wrote a textbook, did it get high ratings on Amazon (if appropriate in your discipline)?
- If you produced an exhibition or gave a performance of your work (Fine Arts), did you receive media attention or positive reviews?
- Did you receive a patent, copyright, or produce other forms of intellectual property? If so, produce a table/chart/ or describe the contribution and its significance to your field



Recommended contents for research (4)

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- Grants:
 - Should be presented in a table or chart
 - List the granting agency/organization
 - List the amount of the grant
 - Indicate if you were the PI
 - If no grants were obtained, create a table showing the grants you applied for, the amounts, etc.



The Service Dossier – and yes, it matters!

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- It reminds your Department why you are important
- It shows your integration into the Department, Faculty and University
- It provides insights into your future contributions to the University
- It shows you are a good colleague
- It augments the rest of your dossier: “You did all that AND service too?”

The Service Dossier – internal committees

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- The criterion is “evidence of having fulfilled service”
- Many junior faculty have heavy service loads that often go unrecognized – for that reason alone – include it all!
- Don’t just list the committees: provide information on each major committee, such as DHC, Curriculum – any time intensive committee.
- What was your role? How many hours did you spend? Did you prepare a report? How many meetings were there? Was it an important committee to the Faculty/University/Department?
- Even for less important committees – list how many, how much time, and point out your willingness to serve.
- This time amounts to a lot – and you should get recognized for it!



Academic and community service

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- External service such as journal reviews, conferences, invited lectures, media appearances, and include the time, number of reviews, etc. that it took. (Platforms like Orchid keep track of the number of reviews you do for certain outlets).
- Community service – any community based paid/volunteer work, management consulting, etc. should be included here
- Are you interested in a service role in the future? What is it? How will you contribute to the life of the University?
- Demonstrate your promise and commitment (future involvement) to the University.



The cover letter

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- Write the cover letter last!
- This allows you to summarize all your best accomplishments
- Professor Ted Stathopoulos suggests you use your cover letter to provide a template for the DTC when they send the dossier to the FPTC
- It makes it easier for them, and also guarantees that the content you want will be in there!

To summarize...

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- Make your dossier cohesive – if appropriate, tie together your teaching and research (and service if applicable) and demonstrate the synergy in your work
- Make it easy for your colleagues to see the value in your dossier through organization, emphasis on key points, and keeping all text brief but complete.
- Look at your “big picture”: who are you and what you wish to become in your future career – and make sure you communicate it well through the dossier.

Questions and
comments are
welcome!

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING TODAY!

