

Laurie K. McCauley • Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Memorandum

TO: Academic Program Group
Research Unit Directors

FROM: Laurie K. McCauley 

DATE: July 22, 2024

RE: Promotion Casebooks for Instructional Tenure Track, Research Professor Track, and
Clinical Instructional Track Faculty 2024-2025 Promotion Cycle

The attached instructions set forth the procedures and requested format for submitting promotion casebooks. **Please note that in an effort to manage the ever-growing number of promotion and tenure requests while maintaining the integrity of the process we are requesting units, when possible, to submit casebooks to our office beginning February 5, 2025. The final submission date for all casebooks will be February 12, 2025.**

Instructional Tenure Track faculty promotion recommendations will be acted upon by the Regents at their May 2025 meeting. Promotion requests for Research Professors and Clinical Instructional Track faculty will be reported at the same meeting.

Attached is a copy of the Regental Guidelines on "[Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion in the Several Faculties of the University of Michigan](#)" (Attachment A), which is particularly relevant to the preparation of promotion casebooks for Instructional Tenure Track faculty. I would remind you and ask you to remind your chairs and promotion committees that no recommendation for Instructional Tenure Track faculty promotion or tenure is final until approved by the Regents. Any announcement prior to that date is premature and is not appropriate. I would also remind you that it is the dean's/director's responsibility to contact individual faculty members regarding a negative decision for promotion at the provost's level of review.

As you conduct the promotion review process in your units, I ask that you exercise reasonable flexibility in recognizing excellence in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic challenges and impact. While the bar for quality continues to remain unchanged, expectations about quantity, time frames, and metrics should be adapted as necessary. Units have made adjustments addressing this need, including unit- or department-level impact statements for external reviewers and provision for an optional statement by the candidate for internal use. Such provisions may vary with respect to disciplinary norms and research and scholarship practices. Each school or college will need to clarify any adjustments that have been made and ensure that they are being implemented consistently.

We expect that COVID-19 extensions will continue to be available to all eligible tenure track assistant professors, specifically those faculty who were employed on the tenure track at U-M in academic year 2019-20, and that casebooks from your units will reflect your work on counseling faculty about this provision (see May 19, 2020 Susan Collins communication). For those faculty in units with longer tenure clocks, or whose circumstances bring them closer to the 10-year university clock, we expect that your offices will attend closely to the consequences of a COVID-19 extension (which does not stop a candidate's tenure clock), including the potential need for 5.09 waivers.

For faculty who have secured a one-year COVID-19 extension to their tenure clocks, this extension should not adversely affect decisions or outcomes for promotion within your units. Given pandemic-related disruptions, I also ask that you explicitly encourage faculty who participate in reviews of promotion casebooks to continue to exercise reasonable flexibility, while maintaining high quality standards for their assessments.

As a reminder, Winter 2020 course evaluations will not be considered as part of promotion and tenure decisions. As previously directed, these evaluations may be used for developmental purposes within the units but should not be reported as part of candidates' casebooks. With respect to the broader process of promotion and tenure review, please note that units should attend carefully to potential conflict of interest issues in the assignment of faculty to promotion and tenure review panels or committees and throughout the review process.

Producing casebook materials requires a substantial amount of work, and I am grateful for your careful attention to the attached instructions. I would like to emphasize that the President and I must have a consistent basis for review of recommendations from many different units and disciplines. I am, therefore, requesting that each individual casebook be accompanied by a signed cover letter from the Dean or Director. This letter should provide an accurate, thorough, and balanced summary of the casebook and the promotion review in the unit. Please highlight both the pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses, of the faculty member's record and explain the rationale for the decision to recommend promotion. In addition, I request a 2-3 sentence assessment from the Dean on what substantive impact the faculty member's research or scholarly work has had either within their own field(s) or more broadly.

For those faculty with relevant activities, I ask that you comment on their contributions to interdisciplinary teaching. I also encourage you to recognize entrepreneurial, creative, and outreach activities as outlined in the memo dated July 22, 2024. Please be attuned to the value such contributions may have in the context of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as concerns about equity and racial justice and ways to address them.

Additionally, many of our faculty engage in collaborative research, a practice strongly encouraged by the university. To acknowledge the contributions of these faculty, it is essential that the Dean's letter document in the faculty member's casebook speak to their specific expertise and contribution(s) to collaborative research that indicate research independence.

Please note that only one casebook is permitted for faculty being promoted in two or more units. In these instances, it is critical that the units coordinate their casebook preparations, which will

include a cover letter signed by all the respective dean(s)/director(s). In the event the faculty candidate is not recommended for promotion and tenure in a unit(s) in which they hold a title, the cover letter should clearly indicate the reason(s) for this decision. Additional details are given in the attached instructions.

Academic units must forward materials to the provost on each mandatory tenure review decision. Those cases being deferred for review to another year by the school or college should not be sent to our office. The materials forwarded on a negative mandatory tenure case should include the same materials that are submitted for a positive promotion and tenure case, with one exception: all negative mandatory tenure cases require an updated curriculum vitae, in addition to the original curriculum vitae. This updated CV, requested by the department, should reflect the candidate's academic productivity at the time that the casebook is submitted to the provost's office. It is essential that the cover letter presents a concise but complete and unbiased accounting of all aspects of the case and makes clear the reasons for the negative recommendation. All documents created as part of the promotion process and relied upon in reaching a negative mandatory tenure recommendation should be included in the casebook and uploaded to Dropbox.

Wise and objective decisions about appointment, promotion, and tenure are essential to the overall quality of the institution. The conferring of tenure represents long-term intellectual and financial commitments by the university. In fact, it may be the single most important responsibility that we have. I appreciate your efforts and success in attracting and retaining the very best faculty. Your attention to these guidelines will greatly assist the President and me in this critical joint decision-making process. Please forward this memorandum and the attached instructions to department chairs, program heads, or others in your unit who are directly responsible for the promotional review of Instructional Tenure Track, Research Professor Track, and Clinical Instructional Track faculty. These documents are also available on the provost's office website on the Faculty Resources page under [Promotion & Tenure](#).

Your attention to this important process is greatly appreciated.

LKM/SBB/CRF/daw

Attachments

cc: Sara Blair, Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs & Arts and Humanities
James Burkel, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs
Nancy Calvin-Naylor, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs
Christopher Friese, Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs
Arthur Lupia, Interim Vice President for Research and Innovation
Sascha Matish, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Senior Director, Academic Human Resources
Richard Holcomb, Associate Vice President for Human Resources
Santa J. Ono, President