

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCARBOROUGH GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING IN TENURE AND PROMOTION DECISIONS

A commitment to excellence in teaching and research is the core of our mission as a University. Effective teaching strives to provide to students not only knowledge of facts but, more importantly, the skills to analyze, to critically assess, to understand in context, to present arguments in a clear and compelling fashion, to solve problems, to generate new knowledge, and to pursue learning as a life-long endeavour.

The evaluation of teaching is relevant to decisions on tenure, promotion to Professor and promotion to Senior Lecturer. The policies¹ and guidelines² for tenure and promotions prescribe in detail the standards and procedures to be followed and the documentation to be collected. The following guidelines for the assessment of effectiveness of teaching describe how teaching effectiveness is to be evaluated at the University of Toronto Scarborough and what documentation should be collected to support that assessment.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

A faculty member demonstrates capabilities as a teacher in lectures, seminars, laboratories, and tutorials; in less formal teaching situations, including directing the research of undergraduate and graduate students and advising students; and through involvement in curriculum development.

A. Competence in Teaching

To establish competence in teaching for the purpose of achieving tenure or promotion, a faculty member must demonstrate that he or she:

1. stimulates and challenges students, and promotes their intellectual and scholarly or creative development;
2. communicates effectively;
3. develops students' mastery of a subject, including the latest developments in the subject area of instruction;
4. develops students' sense of inquiry and understanding of a subject;
5. creates opportunities that involve students in the research process;³
6. creates and maintains supervisory conditions conducive to a student's research, intellectual growth, and academic progress.⁴ In the case of graduate students, faculty in the tenure

¹ See the *Policy and Procedures on Academic Appointments*:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/phoct302003i.htm>

² See the Provostial *Academic Administrative Procedures Manual*: <http://aapm.utoronto.ca/academic-administrative-procedures-manual>

³ For teaching-stream faculty, this would normally apply to those whose teaching assignments include courses that enable such opportunities.

⁴ Ibid.

stream must ensure their practices in this regard are consistent with the School of Graduate Studies *Guidelines for Graduate Supervision*;

7. deals with students fairly and ethically, taking care to make himself or herself accessible to students for academic consultation, to inform students adequately regarding course formats, assignments, and methods of evaluation, to maintain teaching schedules in all but exceptional circumstances, to inform students adequately of any necessary cancellation and rescheduling of instructions and to comply with established procedures and deadlines for determining, reporting and reviewing the grades of his or her students;⁵
8. promotes academic integrity;
9. implements fair and transparent grading practices, with a clear connection between course learning objectives, assignments and assessments.

B. Excellence in Teaching

To meet the standard of excellence in teaching for tenure, promotion to professor, or promotion to Senior Lecturer, the candidate must demonstrate a high level of achievement in all of the criteria for competence listed above, and further demonstrate additional attributes of an excellent teacher, including:

1. superlative teaching skills, that signal a critically reflective, teaching practice;
2. regular engagement in professional development that supports teaching, keeping abreast of advances in both the subjects of instruction and pedagogy;
3. creative educational leadership in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. successful innovations in the teaching domain; for example, the creation of novel or progressive teaching processes, materials, forms of evaluation, and pedagogical changes in the discipline
 - b. significant contribution to the technological enrichment of teaching in a given area, for example, through the development of effective, new technology or the use of new media to fullest advantage
 - c. publication of textbooks or online tools and resources adapted for use by others in their courses
 - d. engagement in activities such as mentoring, and presenting seminars or workshops on pedagogical practice that have demonstrable impact on others' teaching
 - e. development of significant new courses or reform of curricula
 - f. development of effective and creative ways to promote students' involvement in the research process and to provide opportunities for them to learn, for example, through discovery-based or other appropriate methods.

As stated in Section 7 of the *Policy and Procedures Governing Promotion*⁶, excellent teaching alone "sustained over many years, could in itself justify eventual promotion to the rank of Professor". For such cases, the candidate must have consistently met the standard of excellence as set out above over a period of at least ten years.

⁵ Section 2(a) of Article 5 of the Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Toronto and the University of Toronto Faculty Association

⁶ See [Http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/promote.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/promote.htm)

ELEMENTS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

1. MATERIAL INCLUDED IN TEACHING DOSSIERS

The Teaching Dossier typically consists of a *Curriculum Vitae* (Item A), a Teaching Portfolio (Item B), Course Evaluations (Item C) and other materials gathered by the faculty member's department or academic unit (Item D).

A. Curriculum Vitae (to be provided by the candidate)

The faculty member must provide a curriculum vitae in a standard format which, for the purposes of assessing teaching effectiveness, must include: in the case of tenure or promotion to Senior Lecturer, all courses taught; and in the case of promotion to Professor, all courses taught in the last five years. For tenure and promotion to Professor (i.e., for candidates in the tenure stream), the curriculum vitae must include a complete list of graduate students for whom the candidate has been the principal supervisor at both the masters and doctoral levels, as well as all other graduate students for whom the candidate has provided either co- or secondary supervision.

B. The Teaching Portfolio (to be provided by the candidate)

Each faculty member should maintain a Teaching Portfolio that is updated annually. The general advice that should be given to all faculty is to add to the Teaching Portfolio any document that reflects progress, success, experimentation and innovation (such as course syllabi, sample tests, and classroom activities).⁷ Faculty are also advised to solicit feedback from colleagues, the department chair, and UTSC's Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), as appropriate, on the development of their Teaching Portfolio. Support for Teaching Portfolio development is also available through the tri-campus Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI).⁸

The Teaching Portfolio should include all of the items below that are relevant to the applicant's circumstances:

1. A statement of teaching philosophy, teaching goals, and plans for ongoing development of teaching expertise;
2. Representative course outlines, bibliographies and assignments, description of internship programs, field experiences, teaching assessment activities, and evidence of student learning;
3. New course proposals;

⁷ In some cases this can include courses taught at other universities in the recent past.

⁸ Information on assembling a Teaching Portfolio can be found at

<http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/topics/documenting-teaching/teaching-dossier.htm>

4. Commentary on the official student evaluations, or other student feedback solicited by the applicant;
5. For tenure or promotion to Professor, evidence that will enable the committee to assess the candidate's success in graduate supervision, including:
 - number of students being supervised
 - quality of graduate students' research
 - quality of theses produced, where possible
 - number of students graduated
 - information on other efforts to foster scholarly, creative and professional advancement of graduate students. This could include copies of students' papers, especially those that have been published
6. Applications for instructional development grants or similar documents;
7. Documentation on efforts made (through both formal and informal means) to improve teaching skills or course design and commentary on the outcomes of these efforts;
8. Awards or nominations for awards for teaching excellence;
9. Documentation concerning innovations in teaching methods and contributions to curricular development, and the use and development of technology in the teaching process;
10. Examples of efforts to mentor colleagues in the development of teaching skills and in pedagogical design;
11. Evidence of professional contributions in the general area of teaching, such as presentations at workshops, pedagogical conferences, discipline based conferences on teaching or publications on teaching;
12. Service to professional bodies or community organizations through teaching activities at a level comparable to university instruction.

Note: This list is not intended to be exhaustive; other types of evidence of teaching skill may be required by the relevant discipline or added by the candidate.

C. Student Course Evaluations (to be collected and tabulated by the candidate's academic unit)

1. The candidate's course evaluation results.
2. A comprehensive summary of all of the candidate's course evaluations and an analysis that helps put into context the candidate's course evaluation results.
3. Where a faculty member has taught in another unit at the University of Toronto, the Chair should obtain course evaluations from that unit and include them in the candidate's

teaching dossier. Where a candidate has taught at another university within the last five years, course evaluation information from that institution should be obtained, if possible.

4. In cases of promotion to Professor, copies of teaching evaluations for at least the most recent five-year period should be provided.

D. Other Material Solicited/Provided Candidates Academic Unit

The following material must be included in the Teaching Dossier whenever possible:

1. Letters from current and former undergraduate students commenting on the candidate's success in:
 - stimulating and challenging students and promoting their intellectual and scholarly development;
 - developing students' mastery of a subject and of the latest developments in the field;
 - encouraging students' sense of inquiry and understanding of a subject through discovery-based learning or other appropriate methods;
 - creating opportunities, where appropriate, which involve students in the research process;
 - creating a lasting impact on students' appreciation of the subject or on their career path.

In addition, students should be asked to comment on the candidate's communication skills, active engagement with student's learning progress and accessibility to students.

Normally, a random sample of approximately 100 undergraduate students should be solicited for opinions, and responses should be sent directly to the Chair. Students may be contacted by letter or email, provided the process is random and attempts are made to contact students from all courses taught by the candidate. (The Registrar's Office provides student addresses for this purpose.)

2. For tenure and promotion to Professor, letters from former and current graduate students commenting on:
 - the opportunities created by the applicant to involve students in research;
 - whether the supervisory conditions fostered by the applicant were conducive to a student's research, intellectual growth and academic progress consistent with the School of Graduate Studies' *Guidelines for Graduate Supervision*;
 - the quality of supervision provided by the applicant.
3. Letters from Teaching Assistants commenting on the candidate's management, organization and communications skills. In soliciting these opinions, it is advisable to make clear that responses are voluntary and that they will be held in strict confidence.
4. Letters from peers who are in a position to comment on the candidate's teaching. Where cross-appointment is involved, letters from peers in other departments and divisions may be solicited. Where the candidate has participated in shared courses, letters attesting to the

teaching competence of the candidate should be obtained from colleagues who co-taught those courses.

5. Course enrolment data, including evidence of demand for elective/senior courses, attrition rates and grade distributions.
6. Where the amount of teaching the candidate has done at either the undergraduate or graduate level varies from the norms of the department, the extent of the difference and the reasons for it should be explained by the head or other suitable representative of the candidate's unit.
7. Teaching observation report(s) prepared by one or more colleagues, based on in-class visit(s). Classroom visits must be arranged with the consent of the candidate. If the candidate refuses, this should be noted in the Chair's Report. It is expected that at least one class observation be done within 12 months of the tenure or promotion meeting, and it is advisable that reports by at least two different individuals be prepared. Some units may elect to adopt guidelines encouraging additional earlier visits.
8. For candidates being considered for promotion to Professor on the basis of excellent teaching alone, the following additional material is required:
 - a. copies of teaching evaluations for the candidate's entire career at the University;
 - b. comments from a random sample of no fewer than 200 present and former students (graduate and undergraduate), distributed across the candidate's normal pattern of teaching;
 - c. letters from former students who are scholars or high-level practitioners in the field; those solicited should not be current or recent colleagues of the candidate. Individuals should be asked to comment on how the candidate's teaching influenced their careers and their intellectual, scholarly or creative development.

2. EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING DOSSIER

1. For tenure and for promotion to Professor, the evaluation of the teaching dossier must be done in accordance with procedures laid out in the relevant sections of the Academic Administrator's Procedures Manual.⁹
2. For promotion to Senior Lecturer, written evaluations of the teaching dossier from at least four qualified referees who are at arms-length from the candidate are required. None of these reviewers may be from the candidate's department; at least two of them must be academics from outside the University of Toronto and at least one must be from another department/unit at the University of Toronto. The referees should be asked to provide a critical assessment of all the Teaching Dossier material described in items A-C above, and to explicitly address whether and how the candidate meets the standard of teaching excellence laid out in these Guidelines.

⁹ See <http://aapm.utoronto.ca/academic-administrative-procedures-manual>

The Chair will ask the candidate to submit a list of several potential referees (ideally from both within and outside the University of Toronto) who are qualified to evaluate the candidate's Teaching Dossier and are at arms-length from the candidate. The referees must include at least one suggested by the candidate, and at least one not suggested by the candidate.

At the Chair's discretion, a Teaching Evaluation Committee may also be struck to assist the Promotion Committee.¹⁰ The Teaching Evaluation Committee consists of at least two faculty members who are not on the Promotion Committee, and must produce a single report commenting on the Teaching Dossier, and whether and how the candidate meets the standard of teaching excellence laid out in these Guidelines. The Teaching Evaluation Committee, if one is struck, should be provided only the Teaching Dossier, and not the referees' reports.

¹⁰ Unlike the case of tenure and promotion to full professor where the committee in charge must evaluate both teaching and research, and therefore seeks the assistance of two separate committees each providing an assessment of one of these components, for promotion to senior lecturer only teaching is assessed. Thus, it is left to the Chair's discretion to determine whether a separate teaching committee is required.