

McGill University School of Social Work Policy and Guidelines Relating to the Employment of Tenure Track and Tenured Academic Staff¹

Section 1. Scope

- 1.1 The guidelines herein set out the terms governing the exercise of the School's duties for tenure track and tenured staff, relating to the appointment, reappointment, tenure and promotion, replacing the Guidelines approved by Dean Christopher P. Manfredi of the Faculty of Arts on May 15, 2007.
- 1.2 The functions covered in these guidelines are those which are assigned to Departmental Committees in the [*University's Regulations Relating to the Employment of Tenure Track and Tenured Academic Staff*](#)², henceforth referred to as 'the Regulations'.

Section 2. The Staff Selection, Promotion and Tenure Committee (SSPTC)

- 2.1 The role of the Staff Selection, Promotion and Tenure Committee (henceforth referred to as 'the Committee') is to review and make recommendations on the appointment, re-appointment, tenure and promotion of staff within the School of Social Work. It is expected to conduct this role in consultation with academic and non-academic staff, and where appropriate with students.

Membership

- 2.2 Membership of the Committee must be consistent with the terms set out in Sec 6.20 (for appointment), Sec 7.20 (for tenure) and Sec 8.9 (for promotion to professor) of the Regulations.
- 2.3 When reviewing applications for tenure or promotion, the Committee is composed of the Chair and at least four other full-time academic staff with tenure, who have expressed a willingness to serve and who have been in the School for at least one full academic year (September to August). Two alternate committee members shall also be chosen from amongst the full-time tenured academic staff, wherever possible.

¹ Initially approved by the School of Social Work Faculty Meeting on May 13, 2015; submitted to the Dean of Arts for approval on June 12, 2015; returned to SSW by the Dean on Jul 28, 2015 to elaborate criteria for promotion to Professor (Section 5). Revised March 2020, pending approval by the School of Social Work faculty and the Dean of Arts.

²

https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/employment_of_tenure_track_and_tenured_academic_staff_regs_relating_to.pdf

- 2.4 When making appointments or reappointments, the composition of the Committee may be expanded to represent other ranked academic staff, students, and community agencies, as determined by the Chair. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, or his/her delegate, will serve as a member of the Committee when it is conducting appointments.
- 2.5 Members of the Committee must attend all meetings of the Committee in order to exercise voting rights in appointment and tenure decisions. In the event that a member of the Committee is absent from a meeting at which tenure is considered, that member shall not participate in further consideration of that candidate's case for tenure.
- 2.6 In the event that a member of the Committee is unable to consider the case of a candidate, or is disqualified for cause, an alternate member shall be appointed to the Committee, but only in cases where there has been no meeting at which consideration of the merit of the candidate's case for tenure has taken place.

Chair

- 2.7 The Committee is chaired by the Director of the School.
- 2.8 Where the Committee is exercising its role in tenure or promotion, and the Director of the School is not tenured, or is unable to chair the Committee or is disqualified for cause or conflict of interest, the Chair shall be chosen from amongst the tenured faculty of the School (excluding the Dean, associate deans, vice-principals, associate vice-principals, the Provost, the Deputy Provost and associate provosts) by an established documented collegial process approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

Deliberations

- 2.9 It is the duty of the members of the Committee to treat its deliberations and decision-making in confidence.
- 2.10 Members of the Committee are expected to carefully consider the material submitted by the candidates such as Curriculum Vitae, references, publications, and teaching evaluations as well as other pertinent documentation. It is the responsibility of the Committee to review all the evidence necessary to ensure a full and fair evaluation.
- 2.11 It is the responsibility of the candidate to prepare a dossier, as appropriate for appointment, reappointment, tenure or promotion, which demonstrates the 3 areas which serve as the basis for assessment, as specified in the Regulations (and in the case of an appointment, elaborated in the advertisement), namely (i) teaching (graduate and undergraduate courses and supervision of students), (ii) research and other scholarly and professional activities, and (iii) other contributions to the University and scholarly communities.

- 2.12 The candidate is encouraged to submit material which s/he considers relevant. Except for student's written comments from teaching evaluations, no anonymous material is considered. Candidates are discouraged from soliciting material from students or others.
- 2.13 Recommendations are made by consensus wherever possible in the time available, or failing that, by majority vote. In the event of a tie vote, the Chair casts the deciding vote.
- 2.14 The Chair reports the Committee's recommendations to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and may include a minority view.

Section 3. Appointment and Reappointment of Assistant Professors

- 3.1 Appointments are made after public advertisement, and on a fair and equitable basis, with selection of the faculty most able to meet the requirements of the position. Due regard is taken of the University's [Employment Equity Policy](#).³
- 3.2 An assistant professor is initially appointed for a term of 3 years, and may be re-appointed following a successful mid-term review, provided that the appointment and reappointment does not exceed seven years in total (in line with the Regulations Sec 6.6 and 6.6.1).
- 3.3 Reappointments after a three year contract as assistant professor is made with tenure in mind. The minimum criteria established for granting tenure are specified in the Regulations (Sec 7.11.1) as "(i) superior performance in two categories of Academic Duties set out in Section 4.1; and (ii) reasonable performance in the remaining category". At the time of an Assistant Professor's 3 year review, the candidate is expected to have demonstrated reasonable potential to meet these criteria within the time remaining before mandatory tenure review.
- 3.4 The reappointment process normally begins after two years of a three year tenure-track appointment, at which point a candidate submits a reappointment dossier to include: (i) a curriculum vitae that lists achievements in the areas of teaching, research, publications and service; (ii) a teaching dossier as required by the university, (iii) copies of published and forthcoming research, and (iv) any other supporting materials.
- 3.5 Appointments and reappointments in the School are conducted with respect to Section 6 of the Regulations.

³ <https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/employment-equity-policy.pdf>

Section 4. Tenure

- 4.1 The guidelines governing the timing, criteria, the dossier, and selection of external evaluators are set out in Section 7 of the Regulations.
- 4.2 The School's written criteria are set out in this document, to be approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and provide staff members with guidance in anticipation of meeting the requirements for tenure.
- 4.3 The minimum criteria established for granting tenure are specified in the Regulations (Sec 7.11.1) as "(i) superior performance in two categories of Academic Duties set out in Section 4.1; and (ii) reasonable performance in the remaining category".
- 4.4 The School reviews Assistant Professors no later than the beginning of the 6th academic year of their holding that rank. The candidate may request to be reviewed in the third or subsequent year of a tenure track appointment. The Committee may recommend promotion or postponement of the decision until the normal time.

Criteria for Assessment

Research and Scholarly Activity

- 4.5 The candidate should be actively pursuing a clearly identified research program or programs, the eventual output of which is expected to result in publications in peer reviewed journals and scholarly books.
- 4.6 To receive a 'reasonable' rating in this category, the candidate must have at least 4 peer reviewed publications. Of these at least 2 should be first authored publications in internationally recognized peer reviewed journals. The remaining ones should be in peer reviewed journals, books or papers published in scholarly works. Other evidence including research, practice or policy reports, and presentations at scholarly conferences will also be taken into consideration.
- 4.7 A 'reasonable' rating also requires evidence of an independently recognized research agenda and record. Funding support from recognized research bodies, such as the CIHR, SSHRC, FQRSC or a major foundation, is also important in reviewing candidate's research record.
- 4.8 To receive a 'superior' rating in this category, the candidate will normally have at least 6 publications in internationally recognized peer reviewed journals, 4 of which should be first authored publications. The remaining ones should be in peer reviewed journals, books or papers published in scholarly works. Other evidence including research or policy reports and presentations at scholarly conferences will also be taken into consideration.

4.9 A 'superior' rating also requires evidence that the candidate is leading an independently recognized research agenda. Funding support as Principal Investigator from recognized research bodies, such as the CIHR, SSHRC, FQRSC or a major foundation, is also important in reviewing candidate's research record.

Teaching

4.10 In assessing effectiveness and accomplishment in teaching, the committee takes into consideration all relevant information, including course evaluations, the improvement in the evaluations over time, teaching materials (course outlines, syllabi, reading lists, assignments, examinations, etc.), development of new courses, and supervision of thesis at both masters and doctoral levels (including MSW Independent Study Projects). Given the time it takes to complete a PhD, s/he is not expected to have supervised a completed PhD.

4.11 In compiling the teaching component of his/her tenure dossier, a candidate should refer to the Teaching Portfolio Guidelines annexed at A of the Regulations.

4.12 To receive a 'reasonable' rating in teaching, the candidate must establish competence in teaching and possess a mastery of his or her core teaching fields.

4.13 To receive a 'superior' rating in teaching, the candidate must demonstrate that s/he is an effective and accomplished teacher.

Other Contributions to the Community and University

4.14 Assessment in this category is based on the candidate's contributions to the operation of the School through program development, project work, student advising, field liaison, as well as service to the Faculty, the University and to the professional and scholarly community.

4.15 To receive a 'reasonable' rating in this category, the candidate must have consistently performed several roles and demonstrated a credible performance with positive impact in each academic year.

4.16 To receive a 'superior' in this category, the candidate must have carried out important leadership functions at the School, and/or have made substantial contributions to the University or social work community that can be demonstrated to have made a tangible impact.

Section 5. Promotion to Professor

5.1 Section 8 of the Regulations set out the timing, criteria, the dossier, the selection of external evaluators, and the process for a candidate's consideration for promotion to Professor.

5.2 A candidate's application for promotion may be initiated by either the Director of the School or by the individual member of faculty who meets the requirements set out in the Regulations. When a candidate has more than 10 years' service, s/he is entitled to ask the Principal directly to establish a Statutory Selection Committee.

Criteria for Assessment

5.3 The School is committed to transformative high quality research, teaching, and practice that uplifts society and strengthens the profession. Professors consistently conduct ethically sound and original high-quality research, are well-regarded instructors and can demonstrate significant and sustained positive service impacts. Their work purposefully transcends disciplinary boundaries by incorporating leading scholars and community members to maximize the quality and sustainability of positive change and impact. Such achievement must be demonstrated by rigorous and independent review and be recognized nationally and internationally by experts in the field and relevant communities.

5.4 As promotion to Professor signals the achievement of the highest standard of social work scholarship, education and service at McGill University, candidates for Professor must show consistent and sustained innovation and contribution since receiving tenure. Below are the criteria upon which candidates will be evaluated in each of the three realms of teaching, research and scholarly activity, and other contributions to the community and University.

Teaching

5.5 Within Teaching, candidates must demonstrate evidence of sustained high quality teaching and student mentorship since receiving tenure. Specifically, candidates should demonstrate impressive standards of:

- a) Curriculum writing and/or revision;
- b) Teaching;
- c) Graduate student supervision;
- d) Public education.

Research and Scholarly Activity

5.6 Within Research and Scholarly Activity, candidates must demonstrate a sustained program of original high-quality research, innovation that transcends disciplines since receiving tenure. Specifically, candidates should demonstrate:

- a) Consistent participation on peer-reviewed grants as both principal investigator and co-investigator as appropriate for their scholarship.
- b) Consistent lead and co-authored peer-reviewed publications and books relevant to research topics as well as in forms accessible to affected individuals/communities;

- c) Sustained multi-disciplinary approach through the creation of, or active participation in, high quality multi-disciplinary collaborations and research dissemination in multi-disciplinary fora;
- d) Sustained national and international impact through the creation of, or active participation in, high quality national and international collaborations;
- e) Dissemination of research in high quality national and international fora;
- f) Sustained attention to high ethical research standards and practices.

5.7 They may also demonstrate excellence through such example activities as dissemination of research in non-peer-reviewed works such as videos, blogs, magazine articles, books and other non-peer reviewed scholarly works that make a significant scholarly contribution and/or social work service impact as judged by relevant reviewers and communities.

Other Contributions to the Community and University

5.6 Within Other Contributions to the Community and University, candidates must demonstrate a substantial record of contributions to the University and scholarly communities. As a professional program, candidates may also, where appropriate, demonstrate a substantial record of contributions to affected communities beyond the University and scholarly communities, demonstrating a sustained, diversified and high impact program of service:

- a) That the service includes community leaders and multi-disciplinary scholars in ways that maximize service impact;
- b) Identifies the candidate's particular contribution to collective works;
- c) Demonstrates sustained and meaningful impact on the identified service need;
- d) Demonstrates a commitment to ensuring relevant research is disseminated in ways that are easily accessible and meaningful to relevant individuals/communities;
- e) Demonstrates impact at community, national and international levels.
- f) Recipient of awards and recognitions for their work.

Effective date

This revised policy will remain in effect pending review and approval by School of Social Work faculty and the Dean of Faculty of Arts.