COE PROMOTION AND TENURE TIP SHEET
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What does it take to get promoted and tenured often depends on who is answering the question. The COE policy is attempting to bring more uniformity, consistency, and predictability to the process.

Promotion and tenure decisions should not be a surprise. It is the responsibility of the department to be direct with faculty from the beginning and put in plain written English their strengths and weakness.

Promotion and tenure is both a qualitative and quantitative decision. It is impossible to have a specific formula of how many this and that. “If it’s E=MC Squared, then you only need one publication”.

Gaining credit toward tenure is usually not a good idea. You are held to the same standard at the time of tenure and it often takes a long time to get publications in print.

All special circumstances regarding promotion and tenure need to be settled at the time of hire and put in writing on your contract. It’s often a negotiation issue and varies by employee.

Congeniality is often implied and placed under the teaching category. Faculty need to be able to work and play well with others because being a professor involves much more than just teaching your classes.

Promotion and tenure decisions are made by a jury of your peers and stand up in court unless gross negligence has occurred. Most lawsuits involve discrimination based on the protected categories since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was extended to higher education in 1972.

Tenure is generally the guarantee of employment for life and very unusual in the workplace. Tenure decisions are important because your colleagues will usually have to live with you for life and the university has to employ you for life.

Many universities are reducing the number of tenured faculty or doing away with tenure. Tenure is often seen as increasing academic freedom and rewarding people based on merit. EKU has a lecturer position which an annual contract for teaching with limited service responsibilities and no scholarship requirement. Currently the visiting professor position is up to a three year appointment.

There is no de facto tenure just because someone has been a visiting professor or lecturer for the prescribed number of years. Tenure involves specific review and specific criteria more than just time on duty.
At EKU, tenure is primarily, but not solely, based on good teaching and promotion is primarily, but not solely, based on good scholarship as well as good teaching. Tenure is mandatory on the fifth year (or 6th year effective Fall 2005) and a do or die process. Promotion is elective and a faculty member has the option of deciding when they meet the criteria.

The annual review or merit review is not the same as the tenure review. A faculty member might do well in any given year, but overall still not be on track for tenure.

Ideally promotion and tenure criteria are made available to new faculty at the time of hire. The current COE Promotion and Tenure Policy is posted on the COE website. The COE P/T Mentoring program is an attempt to provide information to all faculty.

The Board of Regents grants tenure. It can not be guaranteed by any one individual since individual faculty views may not be consistent with department, college, or university needs.

Denial of tenure is not a wrongful death issue. It’s not an overall failure issue—some can not teach, some can not do research—tenure requires faculty to spin the three balls of teaching, service, and scholarship simultaneously.

The AAUP, United Educators Insurance, and American Council on Education guidelines for tenure standards and procedures are:

a) Clarity; b) Consistency; c) Candor; d) Caring