PROMOTION AND TENURE DOCUMENT

Adopted April 14, 2020

PREAMBLE

Inasmuch as this document portrays a key operating policy of George Mason University's School of Business, it reflects the missions of both the University and the School. Moreover, it is consistent with the established procedures of the University (GMU Faculty Handbook) and the School (School of Business By-Laws). The overarching structures and processes for faculty promotion and tenure consideration are determined for the School by the University, so the purpose of this document is to explicate—to the extent that is possible, a priori—what a person must accomplish to qualify for "election without term" (the Commonwealth of Virginia's designation for academic tenure) and/or advancement to higher professorial rank. It is understood that neither tenure nor promotion inheres as an entitlement. Rather, it is earned through an appropriate record of accomplishments as delineated in this document and by personifying the ethos of the School of Business faculty. The University confers them on deserving faculty only when institutional capacity and resources warrant.

This document sets out the processes and criteria by which candidates for tenure and/or promotion in the School of Business are considered and evaluated. These processes occur within the School of Business but, unless a candidate voluntarily halts the proceedings, the ultimate decision regarding promotion or tenure is not reached until the central university administration, including the Board of Visitors, acts on the recommendations submitted. The responsibility for the timeliness and contents of dossiers is each candidate's—tardy, incomplete or incorrect information is not the burden of any other person, committee or evaluative agency. Candidates are entitled to know the contents of their applications and it is their responsibility to audit them if there is any question about those contents. They also have a concomitant right to privacy--to expect that their files will be perused by no one other than those with a need to know, that these people will handle the materials in a secure fashion.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCEDURE

Application for promotion and/or tenure follows a schedule promulgated each academic year by the Office of the Provost, and it begins with the individual candidate. If an application is not self-nominated, it must have the concurrence of the candidate, who is responsible for completing the application dossier on a timely basis, except for external letters of reference, the responsibility for which is shared with the School of Business Dean. The application proceeds through two levels of faculty review within the School, after which it is reviewed by the School of Business Dean. All three reviews, accompanied by their respective recommendations, are then forwarded to the Provost for evaluation and recommendation, and then to the President, who forwards their recommendation to the Board of Visitors. Because election without term (tenure) or promotion to the rank of Associate Professor or Professor can be conferred only by the Board, the successful candidate is notified in writing by the Board of Visitors. The candidate also is informed of the recommendation made at each stage in his/her evaluation procedure and may halt subsequent evaluations by withdrawing the application after any stage in the procedure. In such cases, that focal recommendation and all previous ones remain part of the candidate's permanent file, but they may not be used to prejudice any future applications for promotion and/or tenure s/he might initiate. Candidates not recommended for tenure during or prior to their sixth year of probationary appointment may appeal their case as described in the GMU Faculty Handbook.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

School of Business candidates for promotion and/or tenure are evaluated according to the missions of the School of Business and the University. As specified by the University Faculty Handbook, successful candidates are expected to have achieved high competence in teaching, research, and service, while demonstrating genuine excellence in either teaching or research. The evaluation process depends heavily on peer review and heavy emphasis is placed on the candidate's overall accomplishments as teachers and scholars. Candidates' adherence to norms of professional ethics and good citizenship is also given significant weight in evaluations.

The gravity of the decisions recommending tenure or a higher professorial rank is substantial. "Full" professors typically have more experience and accomplishments than associate professors, but no one is granted tenure if there is any doubt of his/her long-term value to the School and the University. Candidates promoted to the rank of Professor in the School of Business evince accomplishments not unlike those of full professors at comparable business schools. A similar correspondence applies for successful Associate Professor candidates. While identification of a set of "comparable" schools is imprecise, the reality is that schools do not operate in isolation and evaluators are urged to consider a judicious set of comparable schools in making this comparison that reflects the SBUS's current status and aspirations. Although each School of Business promotion and/or tenure decision is unique, these peer evaluations remain anchored implicitly in the equivalent assessments made at other schools of business comparable to GMU's. Importantly, evaluation is not formulaic and is not performed with a checklist mindset. The details of criteria and process that follow incorporate by reference the School of Business Teaching Evaluation Criteria document adopted by faculty. The most recent version of this document is available in the School's document library, and is subject to periodic revisions as the school's needs and objectives evolve.

Assessment of Teaching. Each candidate prepares a teaching portfolio whose content and structure is as specified in the Required Promotion and/or Tenure Dossier

Template provided by the Provost. Review by the candidate's colleagues of his/her teaching performance, including face to face, online or hybrid as appropriate, should be included as part of that portfolio. Effective teaching is demonstrated by the clarity, appropriateness, and efficacy of course materials, methods, and presentations, and by successful learning outcomes. Contributions to teaching include the effective delivery of existing courses, development and implementation of new courses and programs, the writing of cases and other instructional materials (particularly those using new technologies), teaching in executive education programs and in other lifelong learning activities offered by the School of Business.

Assessment of teaching is much more comprehensive than looking only, or primarily, at student evaluation of teaching scores. "High competence" in teaching implies clear, appropriate, and efficacious course materials, methods, and presentations as well as superior learning outcomes. "Genuine excellence" includes all of the criteria specified above and also requires scholarship in pedagogy and pedagogical influence beyond the School of Business. Evaluators are expected to use the Provost's recommended criteria for evaluating genuine excellence in teaching, together with the School of Business Teaching Evaluation Criteria document in doing their assessments.

<u>Assessment of Research/Scholarship</u>. Candidates prepare a research portfolio whose content and structure are as specified in the Required Promotion and/or Tenure Dossier Template provided by the Provost. Scholarly achievement is demonstrated by a portfolio of activities and output that includes, but is not limited to, publishing original research or review articles in high quality refereed journals, volumes of proceedings, or in books. While the primacy of journal publications in assessing research is widely accepted, evaluators are also expected to consider other significant aspects of a candidate's research portfolio. For instance, external funding for research is held in especially high regard, as is sole authorship of articles in quality journals and thought pieces that have achieved wide recognition in reputed scholarly and practitioner outlets. No particular methodology is accorded a priori preference. Although a journal's credentials is a significant signal of quality, evaluators are also expected to read the contents of the portfolio in coming to a final judgement on quality. When the publication portfolio consists of articles written with more than one coauthor, the relative contribution of the candidate must be documented. Letters by coauthors, noting the candidate's contribution, may be solicited as permitted by the Provost's Office guidelines for external reviewers. School of Business committees are also aided in their evaluations by expert and impartial external reviewers, who are selected for their established scholarly reputation in the profession, and who are asked to specifically assess the candidates' scholarship in terms of quality and impact.

Because University policy requires a minimum of "high competence" in research, each area of the School of Business is expected to communicate the details of this threshold, and that for "genuine excellence" in research. It is expected that the candidate will have a portfolio of scholarly work products that reflects quality, quantity and impact, or potential impact in the case of junior candidates. Moreover, a committee of the school's area chairs should seek consistency in this threshold across areas. "Genuine excellence" means that the research portfolio would be considered to be significantly above the threshold for "high competence." In particular, for promotion to Full Professor, "genuine excellence" also implies that the candidate will be seen as having provided substantive intellectual leadership in one or more domains of inquiry.

Assessment of Service. Candidates prepare a service portfolio that documents their service contributions to the area, the school, the university and the profession. Each School of Business faculty member is expected to perform institutional and professional service and the assessment of service accomplishments considers both, along with any industry-focused service that may be present in the portfolio. The mix of institutional, industry and professional service will vary, with candidates for promotion to full being expected to carry more substantial service responsibilities compared to those being considered for promotion to associate. Institutional service is important because orderly and well-functioning university life depends on faculty for governance and operational activities. School of Business faculty are expected to attend all School faculty meetings unless they are teaching, to participate as appropriate in School of Business' curricular, governance and personnel matters, and to serve effectively on committees to which they are appointed or elected. Faculty are expected to be accessible and respectful to students and colleagues. They are also expected to be members of a profession and to contribute actively to it.

"High competence" in service is demonstrated by a combination of quality and quantity of service accomplishments that help maintain institutional efficiency and governance, and contribute to the professional life of the academy. "Genuine excellence" is demonstrated by going above and beyond maintenance to include multiple instances of leadership in institutional and professional service activities.

PRESCRIBED PROCEDURES

Each academic year, the School of Business dean announces the schedule for promotion and/or tenure consideration, based on a calendar provided by the Office of the Provost. Faculty in their sixth year of probationary appointment at GMU, who have not previously been notified of non-reappointment by the Office of the President, are notified by the Dean to prepare their dossiers for evaluation. Other School of Business faculty, who wish to nominate themselves for tenure and/or promotion, make those intentions known to the Dean at this time. As soon as the Dean identifies all the candidates to be evaluated, s/he alerts the School of Business Committee on Promotion & Tenure, which acts as a second-level review committee for all School of Business candidates, and s/he assures that there is a first-level committee in place for each candidate. The University guidelines for soliciting external reviewers, available from the Provost's office, will be followed. The names of at least four independent external reviewers (no co-authors, or dissertation-committee members), provided by the candidate, are combined with at least six more names, provided by the candidate's first-level review committee, to form a pool of reviewers which is contacted by the Dean in a request to assess the candidate's scholarship. Each reviewer is provided the candidate's statement of research, at least three publications, and his/her curriculum vitae. The School of Business Dean's office forwards responses to these requests to the appropriate first-level review committee chair as soon as they are received from the external reviewers. A minimum of five external reviewer evaluations must be included in the candidate's dossier with a majority of these evaluations coming from individuals selected by the School.

First-Level Review Committee. The first-level committee consists of all tenured faculty in the functional area level except faculty with appointments as Deans and those who sit on the second-level committee. If fewer than three persons are eligible according to these criteria, then the Area Chair, in consultation with all other tenured faculty in the area, appoints other tenured School of Business faculty to bring the size to three members. If the assessment concerns promotion to Full Professor, then all members of the first-level committee will be Full Professors. If three Full Professors are not available at the area level, then the Area Chair, in consultation with all other tenured faculty in the area, appoints other School of Business Faculty who are Full Professors to bring the size to at least three members. In that case, a tenured faculty from the area can serve as a non-voting resource for the first-level committee. The Area Chair in consultation with other tenured faculty in the area appoints this person. The first-level review committee elects a chair from among its members to perform the review. The committee shall carefully evaluate and address potential conflicts of interest between committee members and the candidate in a manner consistent with conflict of interest guidelines in the GMU Faculty Handbook. The committee's assessment and decision shall be documented in its letter.

The first-level review committee reviews the candidate's dossier along the established dimensions of teaching/instructional development, research/scholarship and university/professional service—each domain according to whether "genuinely excellent," "highly competent," or lesser levels of performance appear to have been achieved in line with the criteria for evaluation specified in this document. The committee's evaluations of the three dimensions will be determined by three separate votes and the committee's final recommendation to support or fail to support the candidate's application will be determined by a fourth vote. A simple-majority decision rule will be used for each of the votes. All four votes will be included in the committee's report. As noted under CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION, above, considerable attention is paid to the assessments of external reviewers, the candidates' adherence to norms of professional ethics and good citizenship, and to how much his/her achievements continue to improve the academic life of School of Business and the University. This committee's letter is transmitted by the committee chair to the candidate and others, consistent with the GMU Faculty Handbook. Within seven days from the date of this letter, the candidate must elect to discontinue or continue the process and, in either case, is permitted to respond to the committee's evaluation by adding a letter to his/her dossier, that is addressed to the committee chair. Such a response does not change the committee's vote, however, and no "reply" is expected. If the candidate elects to withdraw the application at this stage it is accepted without prejudice, although all materials become part of the candidate's personnel file. The School of Business Dean is informed at this point that the first-level committee has completed its work, but s/he is not made privy to the committee's recommendation. The chair of the first-level review committee is the sole spokesperson for that committee.

Second-Level Review Committee. The second-level committee has five members, consisting of one tenured faculty member from each functional area. If the candidate is from the Foundations area, a sixth member, a tenured faculty from Foundations area, is added to the committee. If the assessment concerns promotion to Full Professor, then all members of the second-level committee will be Full Professors. If there are no Full Professors in the functional area, then a Full Professor from another area will be appointed instead. The second-level committee, in consultation with the candidate's area chair, makes this appointment. If there is no Full Professor from the candidate's area, an Associate Professor from the functional area can be consulted as needed. The second-level review committee selects a chair from among its members to perform the review. If fewer than five persons are eligible according to the criteria of the rank of the candidate, the Chair of the committee, in consultation with the Area Chairs, appoints other School of Business faculty to bring its size to five members. The committee shall carefully evaluate and address potential conflicts of interest between committee members and the candidate in a manner consistent with conflict of interest guidelines in the GMU Faculty Handbook. The committee's assessment and decision shall be documented in its letter.

The second-level review committee considers the same materials as the first-level committee and, even though it has the benefit of the latter's recommendation, it operates independently of that committee and can reach conclusions different from it. In such cases, however, substantive explanations are expected to accompany any major differences, indicating why the second-level committee finds its first-level counterpart's assessments wanting. The committee's evaluations of the three dimensions will be determined by three separate votes and the committee's final recommendation to support or fail to support the candidate's application will be determined by a fourth vote. A simple-majority decision rule will be used for each of the votes. All four votes will be included in the committee's report. The second-level committee's letter is transmitted by its chair to the candidate and others, consistent with the GMU Faculty Handbook. The candidate has seven days during which to have the process continued or halted. In either case, the candidate may enter a response to his/her evaluation by the second-level committee. Such a response does not change the committee's vote, however, and no "reply" is expected. If s/he elects to stop the process at this point, the response letter becomes part of his/her personnel file, but no prejudice attaches to the action. The chair of the second-level review committee is the sole spokesperson for that committee.

Dean's Review. The Dean reviews each application after the peer reviews have been completed. The evaluative criteria are not different at this level but, as the School's chief academic officer, the Dean may have a perspective not available to faculty. In any case, s/he makes a recommendation in each case (bringing the total at this point to three), and forwards the complete file to the Office of the Provost, so long as the candidate consents. (As at previous levels, a candidate may withdraw the application at this stage, without prejudice. S/he may also add to the file a response to the Dean's recommendation, whether withdrawing the application or having it forwarded.) This forwarding process includes notifying the candidate and such faculty as would be consistent with reporting procedures specified in the GMU Faculty Handbook.

University Review. University review will be consistent with the procedures specified in the current GMU faculty handbook.

SUMMARY

Although it is neither reasonable nor desirable to reduce promotion and tenure qualifications to formulaic representation, this document attempts to set forth a clear, public, uniform, and fair set of expectations to guide both evaluators and those whose accomplishments are to be evaluated. Candidates are evaluated as individuals and all judgments proceed only from the most deliberate consideration of all relevant information. While evaluators—especially candidates' peer reviewers—may not substitute their personal criteria in contradiction of those provided herein, they certainly have latitude within the guidelines of this document in deciding whether candidates satisfy particular promotion and tenure standards. Successful School of Business candidates reflect accomplishments equivalent to their counterparts at comparable business schools, but this does not imply that all recommended applications have identical profiles. Finally, promotion or tenure does not happen by default or as a matter of entitlement. The School of Business has a professional culture, reflected in its mission statement, that permanent faculty are expected to display.

REVISION OF THIS DOCUMENT

Future revisions of this document may be made by simple majority vote of all tenured faculty in the School of Business.