

Orientation for Unit T&P Chairs

Dr. Scott Gwara, Dept. of English
University Tenure & Promotion Committee Chair, 2025-2026
gwaras@mailbox.sc.edu



WHAT WILL THIS PRESENTATION COVER?

- T&P Resources
- T&P Vocabulary
- Overview of T&P Process
- T&P Timeline and Key Dates
- Unit T&P Chair Responsibilities
- Logistics on Assembling and Submitting Files
- General Advice from UCTP
- Answering Your Questions



RESOURCES

Online (Provost website → Tenure and Promotion)

- T&P Clock and Calendar
- File Review Process
- Candidate File Preparation
 - UCTP Guidelines
 - Faculty Manual
- File Submission Guide
- Unit Criteria (all relevant versions)

Human resources

- Previous Unit T&P Chairs
- UCTP Members and UCTP Chair (Scott Gwara)

Office of the Provost

Office of the Provost	TENURE AND PROMOTION
About the Office	Candidate File Preparation Guide
Academic Leadership Recruitment & Review	Tenure and promotion decisions require a record of accomplishment indicative of continuing development of faculty member in research, teaching, and service, and appropriate progress toward development of a national or international reputation in a field.
News and Events	The initial file is created by the candidate using a template primary files (docx) [doc]. At each step in the review process additional documents are added and a vote summary is updated. Digital letters and signatures are acceptable, and completed files should be submitted electronically as PDF.
Our Offices	Important Resources
Our Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty Manual - final authority on procedures and guidelines for file compilation, submission, and review• UCTP Guidelines for Units: Preparing Criteria and Files [pdf] - helps tenure and/or promotion candidates and
↓ Tenure and Promotion	
Tenure Clock & Review Calendars	
➤ Candidate File Preparation	
File Review Process	
File Submission Guide	
Tenure-Progress Review	
Post Tenure Review	
Annual Review	
Unit Criteria	

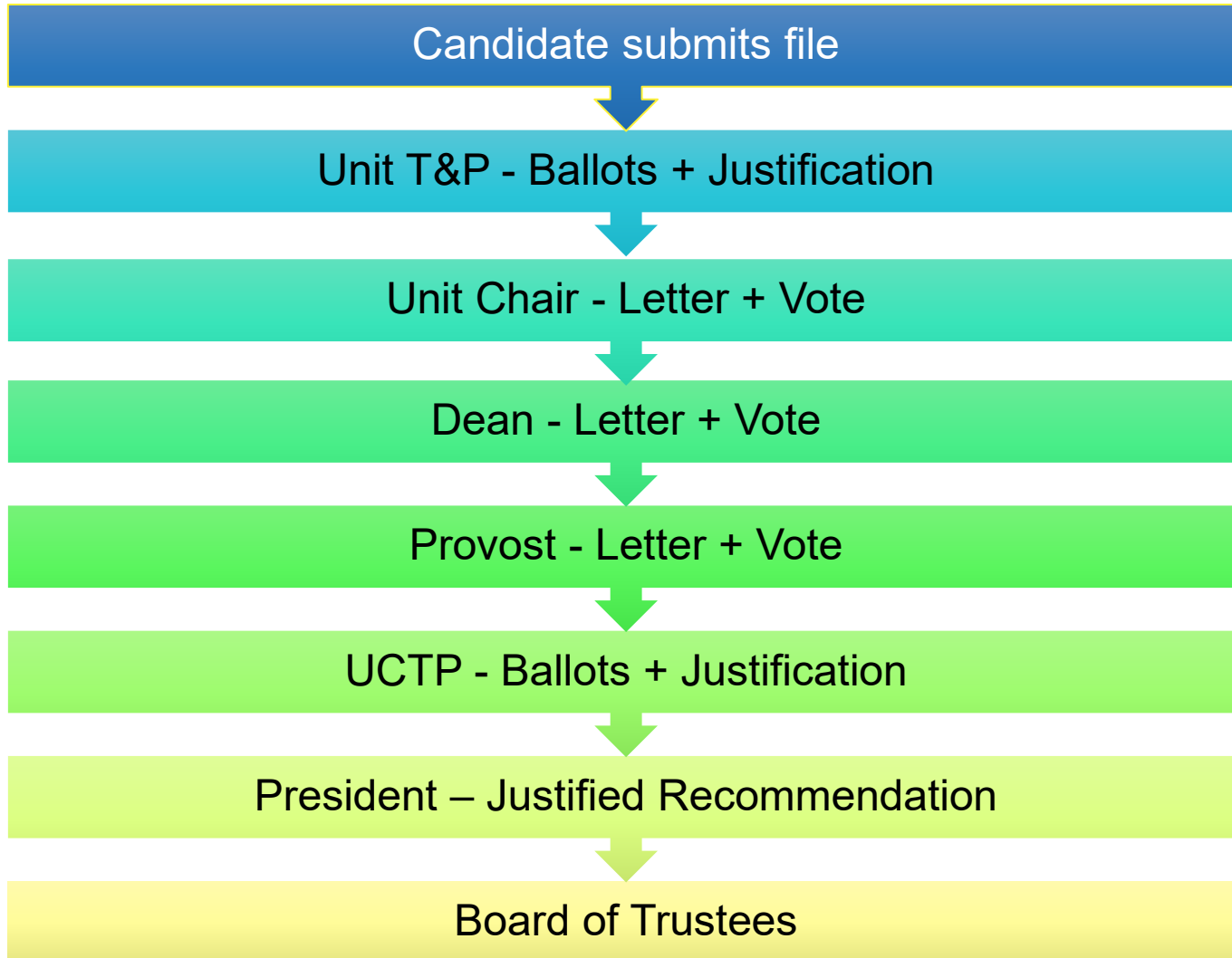


T&P VOCABULARY

term	description
T&P Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department or College/School-level committee that initially votes on your T&P file
Unit T&P Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair of the Unit T&P Committee
Unit Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit Chair \neq Unit T&P Chair. Unit Chair is usually a Department Chair.
Penultimate Year (decision date)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Last year that a tenure file can be submitted
Probationary Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Length of time allowed for a tenure-eligible faculty member to earn tenure
TCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenure Clock Extension
UCTP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University Committee on Tenure and Promotion
MOU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memorandum of Understanding

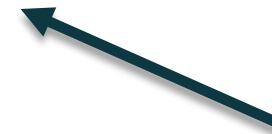


OVERVIEW OF T&P PROCESS



← work with candidate(s)

← primary responsibility



Unit Chair ≠ Unit T&P Chair
(some T&P units are at the college and school levels and may not have a Unit Chair letter)



UCTP?

Faculty Committee

Faculty Senate
(Chair – Liam Hein)

UCTP Chair
(Scott Gwara OR
Alan Waldman)

UCTP Committee
24 Professors
(15 Elected, 9 Appointed)

T&P File Review

- Reviews all tenure and promotion cases and makes recommendations to the President.
- “The committee assesses whether the candidate’s unit criteria were fairly and appropriately applied **at all levels** in evaluating the candidate’s file and forwards its recommendation on the file.” (FM)

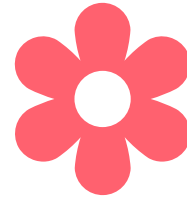
Unit T&P Criteria Review

- Review and approve Unit T&P Criteria and Procedures

UCTP members from your unit will not be able to consult the file, participate in the discussion or vote on the candidate.



WHICH T&P CYCLE?



Cycle	Typical Candidates
Fall 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistant Professors seeking tenure and promotion with August 16 start dates
Spring 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associate Professors seeking promotion to Professor• Assistant Professors seeking tenure and promotion with January 1 start dates

- Candidates seeking tenure before their decision year are recommended to apply in the same cycle as their decision year.
- Associate Professors seeking promotion can apply in the Fall but Spring is preferred.



TENURE CLOCKS

Decision Years for Assistant Professors seeking tenure

*For Associate Professors seeking tenure subtract one year.

Start date	Original	1 TCE	2 TCEs	3 TCE
August 2021	Fall 2026	Fall 2027	Fall 2027	Fall 2029
January 2022	Spring 2027	Spring 2028	Spring 2029	Spring 2030
August 2022	Fall 2027	Fall 2028	Fall 2029	Fall 2030
January 2023	Spring 2028	Spring 2029	Spring 2030	Spring 2030
August 2023	Fall 2028	Fall 2029	Fall 2030	Fall 2031

TCE = Tenure Clock Extension



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

CAN FACULTY GO UP “EARLY”?

- “ ... assistant professor(s) ... **normally** will not be recommended for tenure until they are in at least their fourth year at the University of South Carolina.” (*Faculty Manual*, p. 30)
- “ ... associate professor(s) or professor(s) ... **normally** will not be recommended for tenure until they are in at least their third year at the University of South Carolina” (*Faculty Manual*, p. 30)
- “There is no difference between the standards applied to faculty who apply for tenure in the penultimate year of the probationary period and those who apply for tenure prior to the penultimate year.” (*Faculty Manual*, p. 30)
- If you receive a negative decision prior to your decision year, then you can reapply “without prejudice with respect to future consideration.” This situation includes tenure clock extensions.
- Consult Unit Criteria for exceptions to “normal” conditions for earlier T&P, such as holding a tenure-track position elsewhere.



UNIT T&P CHAIR TIMELINE (PART 1)

dates not in bold are suggested dates

Action	Fall Cycle	Spring Cycle	Notes
Candidates notify the chair, director or dean that they will be filing for T&P	April 15	Oct 1	
Unit T&P Chair provides timetable to candidate(s)	May 1	Oct 15	including dates of unit T&P meeting(s), materials for external reviews and unit review
Deans report candidates to Provost	May 5*	Oct 20*	*names of faculty seeking T&P must be sent from Chair → Dean prior to May 5 or Oct 20
Unit T&P committee compiles list of potential external letter writers	early May	early Oct	
Unit T&P Chair contacts prospective letter writers	mid May	early Oct	The minimum is 5 letters but > 5 recommend in case of conflicts or missing letters
Candidate submits file to Unit T&P Chair	mid June	mid Oct	Send relevant portions of file to external reviewers. Include unit criteria. Please contact the Office of the Provost if you need a template for the letter sent to external reviewers.
Unit T&P Chair coordinates the process of developing teaching summary	June	Oct	Can be a senior faculty member or group of faculty but usually not the T&P Chair

UNIT T&P CHAIR TIMELINE (PART 2)

dates not in bold
are suggested dates

Action	Fall Cycle	Spring Cycle	Notes
Unit T&P Chair sends file out to external letter writers	June 15	Oct 25	Includes copy of unit criteria, letter with external reviewer's responsibilities, and sample of candidate's research and scholarship
Letters due back from letter writers	mid Aug	late Nov	Recommended dates but you need the letters for the Unit T&P Committee by the dates below
Unit T&P Chair assembles T&P file	end Aug	Oct	Teaching summary, sample letter to external letter writers, peer reviews, and external letters inserted into the primary file
Complete T&P files made available to Unit T&P Committee	Aug 25	Jan 25	
Unit T&P Committee must have voted by this date	Sept 15	Feb 15	
Candidate informed of unit decision	promptly after unit vote	promptly after unit vote	details of unit vote are not revealed
Faculty appealing negative unit decisions notify Unit T&P Chair	Sept 25	Feb 25	faculty appealing unit decisions write a letter which is added to the T&P file
Unit T&P Chair sends file to Department Chair or Dean	Oct 1	March 1	date for files to be submitted to Dean

WHICH FACULTY MANUAL AND UNIT CRITERIA?

T and/or P	Faculty Manual	Unit Criteria
Assistant → Associate	candidate may choose* (current or at time of hire)	candidate may choose* (current or at time of hire)
Associate → Full	must use current	must use current

*Choice of Unit Criteria must be specified on cover page of Primary File.

If there is a conflict between the Faculty Manual and Unit Criteria, the Faculty Manual takes priority.



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

FOR JOINT APPOINTMENTS

- *Faculty Manual* has guiding language
- Use the T&P granting Unit Criteria (primary unit)
- An MOU must be in place
- The secondary unit gets at least one external letter and can propose/comment on primary unit choices
- The secondary unit submits a summary letter to the primary unit. If the secondary unit is not in consensus, a majority and minority report can be submitted.
- “One Person, One Vote” (depending on faculty affiliation with primary or secondary unit).



TEACHING SUMMARY

Responsibility of the Unit T&P Chair to coordinate the preparation of a Teaching Summary. The Teaching Summary should be prepared by a senior faculty member or a committee of faculty members within the unit. This summary must include the following:

1. Summary of the candidate's peer and student evaluations.
2. Other teaching functions and the weight to be given to them in evaluating teaching performance as specified by the Unit Criteria.
3. Copies of peer teaching evaluations.
4. Context for student evaluations: table comparing candidate's evaluations versus unit and/or course averages. See: Provost website → Our Services → Tenure and Promotion → File Review Process → Teaching Summary and Table)

REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL LETTER WRITERS

- Minimum of five external letters (outside of the University of South Carolina)
 - **Recommend >5** due to the possibility of unidentified conflicts or inability to meet deadlines
- Peer or peer aspirant institutions within the candidate's area are preferred
 - Exceptions are leading scholars in the candidate's field
- Majority of letter writers should have academic affiliations
- Must be higher ranked than the candidate
 - Associate or full professors for assistant professor candidates
 - Full professor letter writers for associate professor candidates
- Normally exclude potential letter writers who have:
 - Co-authored publications, collaborated on research, or been colleagues or advisors

MATERIALS SENT TO EXTERNAL LETTER WRITERS

- Initial invitation letter (mid-May or early Oct)
 - Letter with request to serve as an external letter writer and due dates.
 - CV of candidate
- Second letter (June 15 or Oct 25)
 - Formal letter with: (see Provost website for sample letter)
 - Specific instructions (commonly assess research/scholarship using Unit Criteria)
 - Evaluation letter deadline
 - Request for a CV
 - Disclosure of relationship with candidate
 - Copy of Unit Criteria

Examples of materials

The materials sent to external reviewers vary depending on unit (consult Unit Criteria and previous Unit T&P Chair)

- Candidate's primary file
- Samples of candidate's scholarship
- Candidate's personal statement for external reviewers

ASSEMBLING THE PRIMARY FILE, PART 1

	item	candidate	T&P Chair	Notes
	Cover page with signatures and date of relevant unit criteria	X		primary file template (page 1) T&P Chair and candidate must sign
1	Vote Summary form		X	Provost website
2	Tenure clock extension letter(s)	X		
3	Unit Criteria	X	X	
5	Memorandum(s) of understanding	X		usually only for joint hires
6	Vita	X		primary file template (section 1)
7	Teaching	X		primary file template (section 2)
	Scholarship and Research	X		primary file template (section 3)

ASSEMBLING THE PRIMARY FILE, PART 2

	item	candidate	T&P Chair	Notes
8	Service	X		primary file template (section 4)
9	Personal Statement	X		primary file template (section 5)
10	List of materials in secondary file	X		primary file template (section 6)
11	Teaching summary		X	Provost's website → Our Services → Tenure and Promotion → File Review Process → Teaching Summary and Table
12	Peer reviews of teaching	X	X	
13	List of external reviewers		X	
14	Sample letter to external reviewers		X	
15	External review letters		X	request external review letters on letterhead

ASSEMBLING THE PRIMARY FILE, PART 3

	item	candidate	T&P Chair	Notes
16	CVs of external letter writers		X	
17	Other letters	X	X	if provided by candidate or for joint hires
18	Unit tenure ballots		X	ballot templates on Provost's website
10	Unit promotion ballots		X	ballot templates on Provost's website
11	Appeal documents and other letters of support	X	X	
12	Unit Chair's letter*	stop here		Added by the Department Chair Unit T&P Chair should not handle

- Assembled into a single PDF document with bookmarks

ADVICE FROM THE UCTP, PART 1



Read the Unit Criteria,
Faculty Manual,
UCTP guidelines, and
Provost website!



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

ADVICE FROM THE UCTP, PART 2

- Explain to the candidate the separate deadlines for materials required by external reviewers and those needed for the Unit T&P vote.
- Instruct the external reviewers to assess the candidate with respect to the Unit Criteria.
- Focus the external reviewers on the areas specified in the Unit Criteria (i.e., scholarship and/or teaching).
- Sample letters to the external reviewers (Provost's website → Our Services → Tenure and Promotion → File Review Process → (scroll down)).
- Encourage candidates to define and describe their contribution in the case of multi-authored scholarly outputs and their financial and intellectual portion of collaborative grants.



ADVICE FROM THE UCTPM, PART 3

- *Extensions to the probationary period:* The probationary period cannot be extended more than three times. The probationary period may not be >10 years. Provide documentation.
- Only the following additions can be made to the file after the Unit vote:
 - ✓ Votes and statements from Unit administrator, Dean, Provost, and UCTP
 - ✓ Faculty letters to unit administrators, Dean, and/or Provost
 - ✓ Notifications of accepted scholarship – if referenced in the Primary file
 - ✓ Notifications of accepted major grant proposals and consequential awards
 - ✓ Information from a UCTP-initiated file remand
 - ✓ **NOTE:** The language of the file cannot be altered after submission. Please add a separate memo to an appropriate part of the Primary File.
 - ✓ **NOTE:** Notification of accepted scholarship, funded grants and consequential awards may be delivered during any part of the process, up to the time of the Board meeting.



ADVICE FROM THE UCTP, PART 4

- Guide the Unit T&P discussion of a candidate's file to focus on the **Unit Criteria**.
- Remind faculty in the Unit T&P Committee that there is no penalty for "early" decisions or tenure clock extensions.
- In the Unit T&P meeting discuss potential errors in the external letters.
- Encourage vote justifications in ballots from *all* eligible faculty, stating "specifically how the candidate meets or does not meet the unit's criteria." (*FM*)
- "One Person → One Vote" (Department Chair and Dean submit separate letters and therefore cannot submit ballots in Unit T&P vote)



ADVICE FROM THE UCTP, PART 5

Reduce candidate stress
with candid and timely
communication.



ADVICE FROM THE UCTP, PART 6

Please consider running for
election to UCTP

or submitting your name for
potential appointment



QUESTIONS?

Scott Gwara

UCTP Chair, 2025-26

gwaras@mailbox.sc.edu

Alan Waldman

UCTP Chair, 2026-27

awaldman@biol.sc.edu



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina