

J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

Personnel Document Department of Theatre

Mission Statement

The published mission statement for the Department of Theatre as conceived by the faculty in 2007 reads as follows:

**“The Department of Theatre strives to create an environment in a diverse and international university community where students discover, experience and celebrate what Theatre does best:
Inspire the imagination, illuminate the spirit and awaken the intellect.”**

As a matter of practice, our undergraduate coursework is intended to provide a basic foundation in all aspects of the discipline with options for specialization among the various performance and production specialties. However, we believe that the BA degree in Theatre, within the context of the College of Arts and Sciences, should remain a generalist training in the field with as much involvement in the college general studies curriculum as possible.

The MFA degree in Theatre is a pre-professional degree, offering specialized training in one of several focused study tracks including performance, design directing and playwriting. This three year curriculum is intended to provide graduating students with the necessary skills as well as artistic sensibilities to compete favorably with their peers in the profession as well as prepare those who choose to teach at the college and university level, as the MFA is currently accepted in most institutions of higher education as a terminal degree.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall make recommendations to faculty and chair of the department concerning personnel matters to include annual peer review. The Personnel Committee is composed of three full-time faculty members elected by and from the faculty as a whole. Tenured and non-tenured faculty are eligible but two of the elected committee must be tenured. Visiting faculty are not eligible. Each member serves a 4-year term and can be eligible to succeed him/herself for a period of at least one additional 4-year term. Election to the Personnel Committee is by simple majority vote of the faculty. Elections are conducted annually to elect the new member(s) with two members being elected in alternate years. The duties of the Personnel Committee are to advise the chair, to represent the faculty in matters of departmental policy and procedures and to carry out specific duties as liaison between the faculty and the chair. It is expected that the chair will regularly avail him/herself of the advisory capabilities of this committee, thereby facilitating the mechanism of consulting with the faculty and the formulation of administrative objectives.

This same philosophy applies to the annual review process, combining the evaluative process and peer review.

Personnel File

Fulbright College maintains a personnel file for each member of the staff holding faculty rank. Each department in the College shall also maintain a personnel file for each member of its faculty. Together, the college and departmental files constitute the official record of each faculty member's employment. Files are held in the Department Chair's office and are available to the respective faculty members for review and copying upon request, with all policies of privacy respected.

Work Assignments

The typical workload for faculty in Theatre follows the College's 40-40-20 policy. Regarding the 40% for teaching, as a matter of course, tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to teach three classes each semester, with one class equivalent dedicated to research or creative/artistic endeavors. Class load reassignment is also provided for departmental production assignments. Typically stage direction of a main stage show carries a one-class reduction for the semester. Faculty design/technical direction assignments also carry a class load reduction, as do special research projects and atypical administrative assignments.

Adjustments to the 40-40-20 workload distribution may be considered in conference with and at the discretion of the Chair and with the approval of the Dean.

Initial Appointment

A. Criteria for Initial Appointments

Only in most exceptional circumstances will the Department recommend the appointment or promotion or tenure of candidates who do not meet the following minimum qualifications as well as the highest standards of Drama as an academic discipline. The criteria are given by rank.

1. Assistant Professor. Appointment to this rank normally shall require a terminal degree (MFA or PhD) appropriate to the specific area of instruction. In addition, appointments shall require successful college-level teaching experience and documented indication that the candidate possesses strong prospects for accomplishment in research or creative or artistic endeavors, and professional service.
2. Associate Professor. Appointment to this rank shall require, in addition to the requirements for lesser ranks, a documented record of excellence in teaching, in research or creative / artistic endeavors, and in professional service commensurate with years of university experience.
3. Professor. Appointment to this rank shall require, in addition to the requirements for lesser ranks, a documented record of outstanding teaching, research or creative / artistic endeavors, and in professional service commensurate with years of university experience. The candidate shall have a record of significant scholarship or creative / artistic achievement supported by publications or equivalent documentation, with work recognized as outstanding.

B. Procedure for Initial Appointments

When a faculty vacancy arises, and authorization to fill that vacancy has been received from the Dean, the tenured and tenure-track faculty will effect the following: announce the vacancy, screen the applicants and their professional credentials, personally meet with the top ranked candidate(s) and

make a collective recommendation to the department chairperson who will then forward the recommendation to the Dean. Every effort will be made to insure that all faculty members are involved in all steps of the process.

Successive Appointments and Annual Review

A. Criteria for Performance Review and Reappointment Recommendations

- a) The department chairperson formally assesses the performance of faculty members once each year in a process that begins during the fall semester with consideration of faculty for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. All performance assessments will evaluate a faculty member's contribution in the areas of teaching, research and/or creative activity, and service. Professional collegiality will be considered as well, relative to the process of teaching, research/creative activity and service. The guidelines, procedures and criteria set forth in the approved University and College personnel documents will be followed.

B. Procedures

1. Annual Review

- a) Each faculty member's current vita and any supplementary materials pertinent to his or her achievements in the areas of teaching, research and/or creative activity, and service will be submitted to the Personnel Committee, which will consist of 3 full-time (non-visiting) faculty members of the department excluding the department chairperson. Faculty shall not participate in any evaluation in which they have a conflict of interest, such as a faculty member's own evaluation. The Personnel Committee will submit the committee's assessment to the department chairperson.
- b) The department chairperson will take the Personnel Committee's evaluation under advisement and will evaluate each faculty member's annual performance.
- c) The department chairperson will provide for a confidential meeting with each faculty member to discuss the chairperson's evaluation and those areas where the faculty member should make improvements. A written record of this meeting will be a part of the evaluation report. The department chairperson's annual evaluation is then forwarded to the Dean.
- d) In an instance where a faculty member is not satisfied with the chairperson's evaluation, the faculty member may appeal to the department Personnel Committee, which will consist of four elected members from the department's full time (non-visiting) faculty membership excluding the chairperson. After the appeal has been heard, the Personnel Committee will submit its findings and/or recommendations to the department chairperson. If differences between the faculty member and the department chairperson cannot be reconciled, then a synopsis of the disagreement will be forwarded to the Dean along with the department chairperson's annual evaluation.

2. Reappointment

- a) The Personnel Committee will assess the performance of each non-tenured, tenure track faculty member formally during the annual review process. Recommendations for reappointment will be forwarded to the department chairperson who will make his or her recommendation to the Dean. In the event a recommendation for non-reappointment is made, the faculty member may appeal the decision to the department Personnel Committee that will then forward its findings

to the department chairperson. The department chairperson, after taking the findings and/or recommendations of the Personnel Committee under advisement, will forward his or her recommendation to the Dean.

3. Non-Classified Staff

- a) The chair, who shall solicit commentary from faculty who work with these staff members, shall review non-classified staff members annually. Expectations for satisfactory performance are based on the successful completion of duties as described in the letter of appointment and any supplementary tasks as assigned. Although non-classified staff are not expected to provide evidence of teaching, research/creative efforts or service, unless specifically assigned, notice will be taken of work accomplished above and beyond the basic job responsibilities.

Evaluative Criteria

Annual evaluations of faculty will follow the College format of a four-point performance rating scale in each of the areas of consideration: Teaching, research/creative and service. The following ratings shall be applied: "exceeds expectations" (3), "meets expectations fully" (2), "minimally meets expectations" (1) and "does not meet expectations." (0). Half points may be applied.

- a) As each faculty member is reviewed independently, only a few guidelines can be defined herein. With regard to teaching: meeting assigned classes, providing the requisite course content information, class organization, testing and out-of-class student contact hours would typically be considered as the minimum expectation. Student and peer evaluations should be provided to support all teaching evaluations. Conscientious work in Independent Study, Thesis Committee service and similar tutorial efforts shall be evaluated as a part of the teaching commitment. Research/Creative minimums include successful completion of departmental production assignments and/or equivalent, basic, traditional research. Service minimums include departmental committee work, requested college and campus service.
- b) All evaluations that move beyond the "minimally meets expectations" category are based on both quality and quantity of work accomplished, as measured by the professional standards of the discipline and confirmed by documentation, letters of testimony, media reviews and, where applicable, peer observation.
- c) Local, state, regional and national research/creative and service opportunities are encouraged, with evaluation scores based in part on the individual's level of participation and leadership, and the quality and quantity of the work accomplished. Pursuit of professional activities off campus must occur within the limits of the individual's teaching schedule, and with prior approval by the department chairperson and Dean as provided for by University policy.

Promotion and Tenure

A. Criteria for Promotion

1. To support a recommendation for promotion to Associate Professor, a faculty member shall have, in addition to the criteria stated in the approved campus policies:

- a) Demonstrated his or her scholarly capacity by membership on master's theses committees, or performed equivalent service recognized by the Department for this purpose.
- b) Shown continued scholarly or creative or artistic productivity.
- c) Continued to display high quality in teaching.

2. To support a recommendation for promotion to Professor, a faculty member shall have, in addition to the criteria stated in the approved campus policies:

- a) Demonstrated his or her scholarly capacity by having directed master's theses or performed equivalent service recognized by the Department for this purpose.
- b) Attained an outstanding reputation for scholarly or creative or artistic accomplishments at the national level.
- c) Shown continued productivity in at least one of the non-teaching areas listed in criteria for tenure, if tenure has been granted.

B. Criteria for Tenure

Section IV of "Evaluative Criteria" (the University Personnel Document) describes the university's standards and procedures regarding the awarding of tenure, including probationary period suspension procedures and policies concerning mandatory tenure reviews and terminal appointments. Section A. above applies also to the tenure review process.

In addition to these standards and procedures, a written review of progress toward tenure shall be made of each person on the tenure track no later than the end of the third year of the candidate's probationary period. This **third-year review** shall be made on the basis of a review of annual evaluations by the tenured faculty in the department and an interview with the candidate, and may include other relevant material such as a report of an observation of the candidate's teaching or a review of the candidate's scholarship to date by an external evaluator. The candidate's department chair, or an appropriate designee within the department, shall produce the third-year review for the candidate's file, and a copy shall be given to the candidate and to the dean.

C. Early granting of tenure status

Early granting of tenure may be considered under exceptional circumstances.

D. Suspension of Probationary Period

Suspension of the probationary period shall be granted in accordance with the provisions of section IV.C of "Evaluative Criteria" of the University Personnel Document.