

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
GUIDELINES  
FOR PROMOTION FROM THE RANK OF  
LECTURER TO SENIOR LECTURER  
&  
FOR THE APPEAL OF A NEGATIVE DECISION**

This policy is meant to be consistent with the university's prescribed use of titles of lecturer and senior lecturer in the Academic Appointment Manual. It does not alter the principle that non-renewal of a contract may result from programmatic, financial, or other reasons related to the needs of the institution to eliminate or change the position and unrelated to the performance of the candidate.

I. General Policy

Promotions will become effective July 1 and January 1. Deadlines for submission of a dossier to the dean shall be May 1 and November 1 respectively.

Lecturers are given the opportunity to be considered for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer in their sixth year at the rank of lecturer. A review for promotion may coincide with consideration for reappointment. Part-time lecturers will be given the same opportunity after six years of part-time service. Lecturers will be promoted if their performance is excellent and they contribute strongly to the overall instructional program. They may elect to defer or decline promotion review without prejudice to their renewability or their opportunity for future review for promotion. The decision not to be reviewed should be provided by the lecturer in writing to the chair. The opportunity for review should be discussed at the time of each reappointment and documented in the letter of reappointment.

Excellent performance of lecturers includes a very high quality of:

1. Classroom teaching
2. Specific contributions to the design, pedagogy, syllabi, and organization of specific courses
3. General contributions to pedagogy in the subject. This may be exhibited in helping shape courses at Cornell, in the creation of teaching materials or teaching methodologies, or in helping to train and supervise colleagues.

Excellent performance at a major academic institution is predicated upon continuing professional development. It is not possible to establish, at the college level, detailed criteria for promotion that would be applicable to all units, since departments are encouraged, upon the approval of the dean, to delineate more detailed criteria for performance required for successful candidacy in their disciplines.

II. Procedures for Conducting Reviews

- A. Departments must provide each candidate with a copy of this document, the "College of Arts & Sciences Guidelines for Promotion from the Rank of Lecturer to Senior Lecturer and for the Appeal of a Negative Decision", as well as departmental guidelines and procedures.

The departmental guidelines and procedures must, of course, conform to those of the college. If an individual review deviates from either the college or the departmental guidelines, the candidate, the department chair, and the dean must

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approve the deviation in writing. Departmental reviews of lecturers are internal reviews and do not require soliciting the opinion of external referees. If the candidate's professional activities have impact outside of Cornell, external letters may be solicited and included in the dossier.

- B. The department, usually by appointing a particular professorial faculty member or committee, will assist the candidate in assembling a dossier for review. The dossier will include:
- curriculum vitae
  - letter from the candidate describing her/his past and proposed contributions to teaching in the department
  - course evaluations and analytic summaries of course evaluations
  - letters from students, including a sample of the solicitation letter and a list of individuals solicited
  - evaluations by professorial and lecturer faculty who have first-hand knowledge of the candidate's teaching
  - letters from other colleagues
  - examples of course materials, including syllabi and any other materials the candidate and those responsible for assisting the candidate consider appropriate

Upon completion of a departmental review the following items should be added to the dossier that is submitted to the dean for review:

- department review committee's written statement summarizing the departmental review and its recommendation to the chair
  - department chair's written statement to the candidate of his/her recommendation
  - department chair's written recommendation to the dean
- C. The departmental review may be by the full faculty or by a standing or ad hoc committee. In the formulation of a body or bodies responsible for conducting the departmental review, consideration shall be given to the inclusion of senior lecturers as members of the department's faculty. The review committee will prepare a written statement indicating the outcome of the review and summarizing the reasons for the committee's recommendation.
- D. The dossier and the written statement from the committee will be forwarded to the department chair for review and recommendation to the dean. The chair has final responsibility for determining the department's recommendation, which may differ from that of the committee. Within three weeks from receipt of the committee's recommendation, the chair provides the candidate with a written statement of her/his recommendation on behalf of the department and the reasons for the decision, subject to the constraints necessary for maintaining confidentiality. A copy of this statement should be included in the dossier.

If the department's decision is negative, the candidate shall be given three weeks to appeal this decision (see p. 3, III., for appeal procedures) before the department's recommendation is forwarded to the dean. If the candidate elects not to appeal, the department chair shall provide the dean with a written statement summarizing the departmental review and its final decision.

If the department's decision is positive, the chair then forwards the dossier and department's recommendation to the dean.

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- E. Upon receiving the dossier, the dean shall submit it to a committee chaired by an associate dean. The committee and the dean shall review the evidence of professional merit and the department recommendation, recognizing the central role of peer judgment in promotion decisions.

Within three weeks of receipt of the associate dean's committee recommendation, the dean will convey a written decision and explanation thereof to the department and to the candidate.

III. Appealing a Negative Decision

A. Grounds for Appeal

Any appeal of a decision not to promote must be grounded in evidence germane to the criteria for promotion or in an unauthorized departure from the procedural guidelines for promotion review. The candidate must state the specific reasons for the appeal. In particular, one of the following must be demonstrated:

1. In the conduct of the review there were departures from the established procedures and practices of the department or the college so serious that they may have affected the outcome.
2. The evaluation of the appellant was influenced by unlawful discrimination.
3. The evaluation of the appellant was substantially influenced by consideration of factors unrelated to the performance of the appellant in carrying out the professional and collegial responsibilities of his or her position, or by improper and unprofessional consideration of factors which, if properly considered, would be material and relevant. The irregularities were so serious that they may have affected the outcome.
4. The decision was so inconsistent with the evidence that it must be judged arbitrary or capricious<sup>1</sup>.

It is impossible to make precise and universally agreed-upon evaluations of candidates. Therefore, the possibility that a different group of reasonable people might have come to a different conclusion concerning the merits of the appellant is insufficient grounds to sustain an appeal.

Comparisons with other promotion review cases may be used in certain cases. However, departments have the right and duty to raise the standards for promotion to senior lecturer or to take into account different departmental needs or particular individual circumstances, so long as this is not done as a pretext. A weak previous promotion to senior lecturer shall not by itself be taken to define the departmental standard for promotions.

B. Waiver or Loss of Right to Appeal

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<sup>1</sup>The term arbitrary and capricious fundamentally describes actions which have no sound basis in law, fact or reason or are grounded solely in bad faith or personal desire. A determination is arbitrary and capricious only if it is one no reasonable and unbiased mind could reach.

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The candidate may waive the right to written explanations of a negative decision from the department chair or the dean, or may decline to pursue the appeals procedure at any stage. However, the appeals procedures and deadlines herein described must be followed sequentially beginning with the point in the process at which a negative decision is rendered, i.e., a positive departmental decision followed by a negative dean's decision would not require the appellant to begin the appeal at the department level. Waiver at any stage shall cause the candidate's right to proceed further to be forfeited. Further, failure to raise a particular reason when filing an appeal (see III. A.) may be treated as a waiver of such a claim in this appeal process.

C. Appeal at the Department Level

1. Within three weeks after being notified in writing of a negative departmental decision, the candidate may request and shall be provided with a separate written statement of the reasons for the decision and the nature of the evidence. The statement shall respect the limits set by the need to preserve confidentiality.
2. If the candidate wishes to have the departmental decision reconsidered, s/he shall appeal to the department chair in writing within three weeks of receipt of the department chair's written statement, and may submit additional or revised materials for consideration.
3. The same departmental body responsible for the initial review will review the appeal. A second vote shall be taken and a final recommendation made to the department chair. The chair will consider the vote and any comments from the committee in making a final departmental decision and recommendation to the dean.

The departmental decision on the appeal and the reasons for it shall be provided in writing to the candidate within three weeks of receipt of the candidate's request for appeal.

The candidate's appeal and the responses of the departmental review committee and the department chair will be forwarded to the dean's office and considered as part of the dossier for review at the college level.

4. If the department's decision on the appeal is negative, the candidate may appeal to the dean within three weeks of receipt of the department chair's written statement. If s/he does, the dean shall, within three weeks of the candidate's request, seek the advice of a committee chaired by an associate dean before deciding whether to promote the candidate. If s/he does not appeal, the dean will not conduct a review.

D. Appeal at the Dean's Level

1. If the dean's preliminary decision is negative following a positive departmental recommendation, the dean shall, within three weeks of receipt of the report of the associate dean's committee, furnish the candidate and the department with a preliminary written statement of the reasons for that decision and the nature of the evidence within the limits set by the need to preserve confidentiality. For a three-week period following receipt of the

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statement, the candidate and/or department shall have the opportunity to respond to the dean, prior to the dean's final decision.

2. If the dean's positive or negative decision follows a negative departmental decision, the dean shall, within three weeks of receipt of the report of the associate dean's committee, furnish the candidate and the department with a written statement of the reasons for that decision, within the limits set by the need to preserve confidentiality.
3. The candidate or the department may appeal that decision. The appeal must be filed in writing with the dean within three weeks of notification of the dean's decision, and must include any new or revised material in support of the appeal. For the purpose of expert evaluation and interpretation of such new or revised material, the dean may solicit assistance from the department (see II.E.).

E. Dean's Final Decision

Within three weeks after the appeal of the dean's decision, the dean shall charge the same associate dean's committee responsible for the initial review to consider the appeal. Within three weeks of receipt of the dean's charge to the committee, the committee shall review the appeal and make a written recommendation to the dean. Within three weeks of receipt of the committee's recommendation the dean will provide the candidate and the department with a written statement of the final decision, including the reasons for the decision.

The final decision rests with the dean and there is no further appeal of that decision.

IV. Future Reviews

In the event of a denial of promotion, the department or dean may specify a period of time after which the department can initiate another review for promotion of the individual. If neither does, the standard period will be three years. The new review will be considered an independent event and carry the same procedures and rights as the initial review. A subsequent review should not be scheduled in less than three years unless the dossier is expected to contain significant new evidence of performance and activity related to the position accumulated in the shorter intervening period.

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