



**2025-2026**

# **Tenure and Promotion Guide**

Includes information about the tenure and promotion process  
for candidates, administrators, and reviewers

*Updated January 2025*

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# About this Guide

This document brings together all of the policies and related material surrounding the various promotion and/or tenure processes at UNLV. This guide does not supersede UNLV Bylaws or NSHE Code.

## Major Changes

While not a recent update, an amended bylaw is worth highlighting here as it is not updated in the UNLV Bylaws public link. This amended bylaw provides information related to committee membership at the academic department and college/school levels:

Approved Amended Bylaw

### **Chap 3, Section 6. Personnel Recommendations for Academic Faculty**

6.1 Academic Department/Unit Personnel Procedures Authorized. The faculty of each academic department/unit shall establish its own procedures and criteria for all personnel recommendations in accordance with college/school and departmental/unit bylaws.

6.1.a. Only tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as faculty in residence, research faculty, clinical faculty, and lecturers (hereinafter referred to as non-tenure track) may attend or serve on departmental/unit personnel committees at which recommendations for promotion, tenure, merit or annual evaluations will be made, or vote in such meetings, subject to the exceptions detailed. Excluded from serving are department or school chairs and directors, assistant and associate deans, deans, vice and associate provosts, and provost and all other executive faculty as defined in the Board of Regents handbook, University Bylaws, or as designated by the President.

6.1.b. Only tenured faculty may vote on applications for tenure.

6.1.c. Only tenured faculty of a rank equal to or higher than that to which the applicant aspires may vote on applications of tenured faculty for promotion.

6.1.d. All academic faculty of an equal or higher rank to which the applicant aspires may vote on applications of non-tenure track faculty for promotion.

6.1.e. Individual academic faculty members applying for tenure or promotion may not serve on departmental/unit personnel committees, attend personnel committee meetings at which recommendations for promotion, tenure, merit or annual evaluations will be made, or vote in such meetings.

6.1.f. It shall be the responsibility of those in attendance to write a detailed report specifying majority and minority opinions. The administrative procedures of each department/unit and college/school shall ensure that the input of administrators is a formalized part of the process. Unit chairs or directors may call a meeting of the personnel committee within a reasonable time after recommendations have been made and only for clarification of the personnel committee report to the unit chair or director.

6.2. Academic College/School Personnel Procedures Authorized. The faculty of each academic college or school shall establish its own procedures and criteria for all personnel recommendations in accordance with college, school, and institutional bylaws.

6.2.a. College/School personnel committees must be comprised of elected representatives from the college or school. Only tenured faculty, promoted (associate or full) faculty in residence, promoted research faculty, promoted clinical faculty, and senior lecturers (hereinafter referred to as promoted nontenure track) may serve on college/school promotion and tenure personnel committees. Excluded from serving are department or school chairs and directors, assistant and associate deans, dean, vice and associate provosts, and provost and all other executive faculty as defined in the Board of Regents handbook, UNLV Bylaws, or as designated by the President.

6.2.b. Only tenured faculty may vote on applications for tenure.

6.2.c. Only tenured faculty of a rank equal to or higher than that to which the applicant aspires may vote on applications of tenured faculty for promotion.

6.2.d. All academic faculty of an equal or higher rank to which the applicant aspires may vote on applications of non-tenure track faculty for promotion.

6.2.e. Individual academic faculty members applying for tenure or promotion may not serve on college/school personnel committees, attend personnel committee meetings at which recommendations for promotion, tenure, merit or annual evaluations will be made, or vote in such meetings.

6.2.f. It shall be the responsibility of those in attendance to write a detailed report specifying majority and minority opinions. Deans or directors may call a meeting of the personnel committee within a reasonable time after recommendations have been made and only for clarification of the personnel committee report to the dean or director.

# 1. Policies Governing Tenure and/or Promotion

Learning about the tenure and promotion process at UNLV begins with the documents surrounding the process, starting with this guide. It is also advisable to seek guidance from peers and/or leadership within the unit (department and/or college/school).

Details on the tenure and promotion process at UNLV, including instructions and forms, are provided on the [Tenure & Promotion website](#). There is also a biannual Tenure and Promotion Forum, sponsored by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Office of Faculty Affairs, and the UNLV Faculty Senate. This interactive session is designed to give faculty members planning to apply for tenure and/or promotion an opportunity to ask questions about university policies and procedures. These forums are held in the Fall and Spring. Check the [Information for Candidates webpage](#) for the latest forum information.

Prospective candidates for tenure and/or promotion are also advised to review their employment contracts for the timing of mid-reviews and tenure and/or promotion. Maintaining a copy of the guidelines for tenure and/or promotion (in place at the time of hire) is also advisable.

## Tenure and Promotion Policies

The tenure and/or promotion policy for tenure is outlined in two important documents: Title 2, Chapter 3 of the NSHE Board of Regents Handbook (“the Code”) and the UNLV Bylaws. The complete [Board of Regents Handbook](#) can be found on the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) website.

Within the [UNLV Bylaws](#) policies on tenure, promotion, and other relevant matters are found in:

- Chapter I, Section 4.3: “Tenure”
- Chapter III, Section 6: “Personnel Recommendations for Academic Faculty”
- Chapter III, Section 8: “Annual Evaluation of Academic Faculty and Nonacademic Faculty”
- Chapter III, Section 9: “Faculty Personnel Files”
- Chapter III, Section 16: “Guidelines for Promotion or Appointment to Academic Rank for Academic Faculty”
- Chapter III, Section 18: “Guidelines for Rank 0 and Unranked Positions”

The material in Chapter I defines different types of faculty (academic vs. administrative, tenured vs. nontenured vs. nontenure-track) and specifies who is eligible for tenure, as well as the circumstances surrounding tenure at hire.

The material in Chapter III, Section 18 describes the different types of nontenure-track faculty appointments (faculty-in-residence, lecturer, and research faculty) and specifies who is eligible for promotion. Per UNLV Bylaws III.6.1.A, the process for promotion is outlined within the unit’s

procedures and criteria for personnel recommendations and in accordance with the unit and college/school bylaws.

## **Tenure-Track Faculty**

Tenure policies are described in NSHE Code Title 2, Chapter 3: "[Tenure for University Faculty.](#)"

According to the Code, a candidate must demonstrate excellence in either research, scholarship, creative and entrepreneurial activity, or their teaching/performance of assigned duties to receive tenure.

Faculty who do not teach must show "a record of effectiveness, efficiency and ability to perform assigned duties" (Title 2, 3.42.). Per UNLV Bylaws III.6.1, the faculty of each academic department/unit must establish its own procedures and criteria for all personnel recommendations in accordance with college/school and departmental/unit bylaws.

Per the NSHE code, a tenure-track faculty member cannot, at the end of their probationary period, be reappointed at any rank without tenure (Title 2, 3.3.4). In addition, for many years at UNLV, it has been the practice not to grant tenure unless the candidate is also qualified to advance in rank.

## **Nontenure-Track Faculty**

Nontenure-Track Academic faculty (designated as Rank 0 faculty in the bylaws) are not eligible for tenure but are eligible for promotion. The following nontenure-track academic positions are eligible for promotion: lecturers, faculty-in-residence, and research faculty. Faculty having other titles/designations are subject to the terms of their contracts or official offer letters signed by the President. There are different promotion tracks for nontenure-track faculty depending on their position.

- **Research Faculty** - The primary role of research faculty members is to perform scholarly research and generate publications. The title of Research Faculty is used for an appointment at the professional level for individuals with a terminal degree. Research faculty members may be promoted in accordance with the general guidelines for academic rank (i.e., from Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor and from Associate Research Professor to Research Professor). Research faculty are promoted in a unit-driven process with reviews up to the dean and conferred by the Provost.
- **Faculty-in-Residence** – The primary role of Faculty-in-Residence is to perform instructional duties. Per approval by the chair and dean, other duties may include but are not limited to: research, service, administrative duties, and other scholarly/creative activities, and are outlined within the faculty member's offer letter or position description. The title Faculty-in-Residence is used for an appointment at the professional level for individuals with a terminal degree. Faculty-in-Residence

may be promoted in accordance with the general guidelines for academic rank (i.e., from Assistant Professor-in-Residence to Associate Professor-in-Residence and from Associate Professor-in-Residence to Professor-in-Residence). Faculty-in-Residence are promoted in a unit-driven process with reviews up to the dean and conferred by the Provost.

- **Lecturers** - The primary role of lecturers is to provide instruction. The title of Lecturer is used for an appointment at the professional level where a terminal degree is not required. Lecturers can be promoted to Senior Lecturers in a unit-driven process with reviews up to the dean and conferred by the Provost.

The duties of nontenure-track faculty, particularly faculty-in-residence and lecturers, can vary by unit and are organized into the following areas: teaching, teaching related duties (e.g., advising, mentorship, and curricular enhancements), administrative duties (e.g., undergraduate coordinator, program director), research, or service. Faculty may have duties that fall into one or more areas or have a hybrid of responsibilities, which should be outlined in role statements. It is also important for department chairs/directors to document job duties (i.e., primary, secondary, and tertiary duties) in annual evaluations to appropriately and accurately assess performance and progress toward advancement. Candidates will be asked to upload their role statements (or offer letter and/or job description documentation) so that reviewers can better understand their position duties.

## 2. Tenure and/or Promotion Timeline

### Tenure-Track Faculty General Timeline

*Note: Units may begin the external review process earlier. Below is the latest date by which the process must start.*

**January-February:** Faculty members notify their department chair/director or dean of their intent to apply and begin planning for the submission of their application. The list of potential reviewers should also be provided at this time.

**March 1:** The chair or dean's office notifies the Office of Faculty Affairs of the college's tenure and/or promotion candidates for the upcoming year. OFA staff then create the cases for the candidates by April 1.

**May 1:** By this point, all activities needed for the external reviewers should be up to date, including a current CV, external waiver, research/creative portfolio, and any other materials required by the candidate's unit (i.e., preliminary application). Candidates can still add to and edit their cases, including the opening statement, until September 1 (or when the first internal review step begins, whichever is sooner).

Resources:

- [Faculty 180 Sections Used in the T&P Application for Academic Teaching Faculty](#)
- [Faculty 180 Sections Used in the T&P Application for Non-Teaching Faculty](#)
- [Using Google Drive to Add Files to UNLV Folio](#)

**May-early July:** Chair/director or other designated administrator solicits and receives external reviews via UNLV Folio.

**May 15:** Chairs and personnel for all department/unit and college/school tenure and promotion committees must be selected and OFA notified to grant them access in UNLV Folio.

**July 15:** Preferred due date for external review letters. The Office of Faculty Affairs begins reviewing cases and those without all external reviews should redouble their efforts.

**August 15:** Final deadline for receiving external reviews; promotion cases without at least four reviews may be held over until the following year; tenure cases will be evaluated, with evaluators reminded that, per the UNLV Bylaws, applications are not complete without four external reviews.

**September 1** or when the first internal review begins, whichever is sooner: Last date when candidate can add to or edit materials in their case. After this time, candidates can ask their chairs to submit Supplemental Achievement Notifications to the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Resources:

- [Filling out Forms in UNLV Folio: Targeted guides for reviewers](#)

- [Guide to Adding the Department Vote or Recommendation](#)

**October 1:** Last date on which a candidate can request a Supplemental Achievement Notification.

Resource:

- [Supplemental Achievement Notification Form](#)

**First Friday in October:** Deans send tenure and promotion cases forward for review by the University Tenure and Promotion Committee (Faculty Senate).

**October - December:** The University Tenure and Promotion Committee conducts their review of cases.

**December:** The University Tenure and Promotion Committee provides recommendations to the President and Executive Vice President and Provost.

**January (the following year):** The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost disseminates application notification letters to candidates.

**March (the following year):** The Board of Regents confirms decisions.

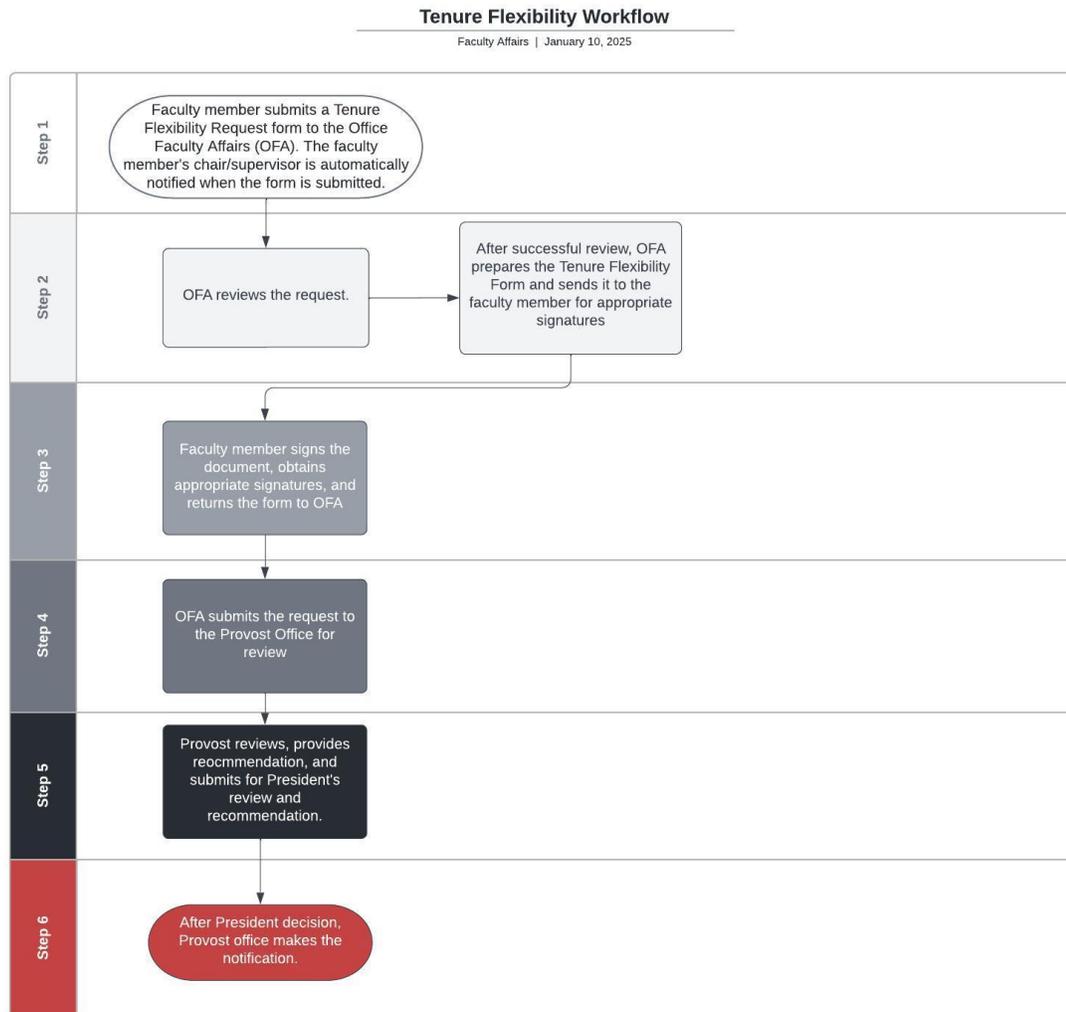
**July 1 (the following year):** Tenure/Promotion decision becomes effective.

## **Delaying or Accelerating Tenure**

The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost recognizes the need for tenure flexibility based on personal and/or professional reasons. The [Flexibility of Pre-Tenure Probationary Period Policy](#) is intended to provide career flexibility as well as protections when events that significantly impact productivity may occur (e.g., mid-year appointments, natural disasters, facility impediments, or personal or family demands that afford protection under the Family Medical Leave Act). Tenure-track faculty members may apply for an extension (delay) of their tenure clock, or apply to seek tenure early (accelerate their tenure clock). Candidates may only apply for tenure once, so tenure flexibility applications will include a new agreement of the candidates' expected tenure cycle. Candidates must apply for an additional tenure flexibility arrangement if a new tenure review cycle is needed.

When ready to make a formal request to adjust the date of a tenure review, candidates should complete a [Tenure Flexibility Request](#) and any other forms required by the department/unit, college/school, and the University. This form goes to the Office of Faculty Affairs, and is appropriately routed for approval.

# Tenure Flexibility Workflow Diagram



## Nontenure-Track Faculty Suggested Timeline

Below is a suggested schedule to guide academic and administrative units having nontenure-track faculty seeking promotion. Candidates should check with their department chair/supervisor to confirm their unit's practices for promotion reviews. Faculty promotion cases with all recommendations are due to the Office of Faculty Affairs by January 15.

**January (prior to the semester of promotion review):** Faculty members notify their department chair/director or dean of their intent and begin planning for the submission of their application. If external review letters are required, the list of potential reviewers should be provided.

**May 1:** If external review letters are required: The chair or dean's office notifies the Office of Faculty Affairs of the college's tenure and/or promotion candidates for the upcoming year. OFA staff then create the cases for the candidates by April 1. All activities needed for the external

reviewers should be up to date, including a current CV, external waiver, research/creative portfolio, and any other materials required by the candidate's unit (i.e., preliminary application). Candidates can still add to and edit their cases, including the opening statement, until September 1 (or when the first internal review step begins, whichever is sooner).

Resources:

- [Faculty 180 Sections Used in the T&P Application for Academic Teaching Faculty](#)
- [Faculty 180 Sections Used in the T&P Application for Non-Teaching Faculty](#)
- [Using Google Drive to Add Files to UNLV Folio](#)

**September 1:** If external letters are not required, the dean's office submits case creation requests for candidates.

Resource:

- [Submit a Request for Case Creation](#)

**October 1:** Suggested deadline for candidates to submit their application materials to UNLV Folio and submit their final packet.

**November 1:** Department chairs/supervisors and unit committees complete a review of the submitted promotion cases and forwards all materials to the next reviewers.

Resource:

- [Filling out Forms in UNLV Folio: Targeted guides for reviewers](#)
- [Guide to Adding the Department Vote or Recommendation](#)

**December 1:** Promotion cases, with recommendations from the unit, chair/director, and school/college committee, are due to deans.

**January 15 (the following year):** Deadline for submission of complete nontenure-track promotion packets to the Office of Faculty Affairs. Packets should include all application materials and all recommendations, including those of the dean.

**July 1 (the following year):** The new rank for faculty members who received promotion becomes effective.

## **Timeframe to Apply for Promotion**

According to the UNLV Bylaws, "An associate professor is normally expected to be in rank for five years prior to applying for promotion to professor. In exceptional circumstances an application for promotion may be considered earlier" (III.16.7.3).

For research faculty and faculty-in-residence seeking promotion from assistant to associate rank, this may also serve as a guide, but applicants should follow up with their department chair/supervisor as individual units may have specific guidelines. There is no university-wide standard on the time in rank for lecturers before applying for promotion to senior lecturer, but individual units may have guidelines.

## Tenure and/or Promotion Case Creation

Notifications about applications for all tenure and promotion cases must come from the candidate's chair/director or dean's office. Information must be supplied via the [Request for Tenure and/or Promotion Case Creation form](#)

For requests to create mid-tenure and mid-promotion cases, please use the [Request for Mid-Review Case Creation form](#).

For tenure-track candidates, the Office of Faculty Affairs needs to receive all of the information by March 1 of the year in which the candidate is seeking tenure and/or promotion. For nontenure-track candidates, OFA should be notified by September 1, or May 1 if the unit requires letters from external reviewers. When a case request has been made, the chair/director and dean will be notified. The Office of Faculty Affairs will review the request prior to creating the case.

Cases will not be created, and reviews will not be conducted, if the necessary information is not received by the Office of Faculty Affairs by the specified deadlines.

## 3. Candidates: Applying for Tenure and Promotion

### The Candidate Application

Applications for tenure and/or promotion are processed via [UNLV Folio](#), the university's academic faculty reporting and evaluation system. Candidates can begin by verifying or completing information in the "Profile" section, including their employment history, tenure and promotion history, and degrees. They should be entering accomplishments in the "Activities" section as they occur. For more information on the Activity section, and where to categorize items, see the [UNLV Folio-Where Does it Go?](#).

Candidates should prepare their materials for review by multiple and varied audiences. For this reason, as candidates are compiling their packet, files should be organized and named so that reviewers can easily locate and identify the record. If using Google Drive (or other external sites), candidates should set the permissions to "anyone with the link" so that all parties in the review process can view the drive. Candidates are prohibited from adding additional items after they have submitted their case for review.

### Declaring Intent to Apply for Tenure and/or Promotion

For faculty seeking tenure and/or promotion, the process starts early during the spring semester (i.e., January-February) prior to the tenure review date. Applicants should notify their supervisor (e.g., department chair/unit director or dean) about the intent to seek tenure and/or promotion.

To declare intent to apply, provide the following information to supervisors by email:

1. Your name, unit, date of hire at UNLV, and your current rank/title. If you have been tenured or promoted at UNLV, provide the date(s) of those personnel actions.
2. A declaration of your intent to apply for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor (or other, as applicable) during the upcoming review cycle.
3. For tenure, a statement about whether this is a timely application (i.e., you are applying in the time frame specified by the bylaws, typically in your sixth year of employment). If it is not, indicate that you have read the [Flexibility of Pre-Tenure Probationary Period Policy](#) and attach a copy of the Tenure Flexibility Form (Early or Extension request) with your portions of the form completed
4. An affirmation that you have read and understand the standards under which your application will be evaluated. Attach a copy of the standards to ensure that your understanding of your evaluation standards corresponds with those of your supervisors.

Department chairs, supervisors, or dean's offices notify the Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) through a request to create a tenure and/or promotion case in UNLV Folio.

## UNLV Folio

UNLV Folio is a faculty activity reporting system that provides a secure and convenient web-based environment for faculty to enter and report on their scholarly activities, teaching, and service. UNLV Folio is used for various processes, including tenure and promotion.

For instructions on how to log in to UNLV Folio, accessing cases, creating packets, and/or submitting materials for review, visit the [UNLV Folio webpage](#). Resources, including user guides, answers to frequently asked questions, and instructional videos, are available.

Training on how to use UNLV Folio is offered throughout the academic year. Please visit the [UNLV Folio webpage](#) to view the current schedule of workshops and to register.

## Candidate Materials

The candidate's application for the tenure and/or promotion case consists of the following elements. For details on these elements, see [Applying for Tenure and/or Promotion](#).

- **Faculty 180 Vita**
- **Opening Statement**
- **Synopsis**
- **CV**
- **Research/Creative Portfolio**
- **External Waiver Release**
- **Teaching**
- **Performance Evaluations**
- **Tenure and Promotion Guidelines**
- **Tenure Flexibility Request (tenure cases only, if applicable)**
- **Role Statement (nontenure-track cases only)**
- **Additional Materials (unit-specific)**

## Linking Files within UNLV Folio

As candidates prepare their applications, external files may need to be linked within their cases (e.g., articles, annual evaluations, etc.). Also, most units require candidates to submit other materials along with the vita, such as a research statement, course syllabi, and/or a portfolio of scholarly or creative work.

There are three options to include external files or materials through UNLV Folio:

- **Via a personal Google Drive folder:** The candidate's materials can be uploaded to a Google Drive folder owned by the faculty member. Within UNLV Folio, the candidate can insert URLs that direct reviewers to additional materials in the Google Drive. Within UNLV Folio, the option to insert a URL will appear near the

bottom of the activity input screen. Be sure to set the permissions to “Anyone with the link” so the drive is available to all parties in the process.

- Via the Candidate’s Packet in UNLV Folio: The candidate’s materials can be uploaded directly to the appropriate section within the candidate’s packet. Items should be uploaded in the relevant sections with appropriate file names.
- Via an attachment to a record added in UNLV Folio: In certain Activities sections in UNLV Folio, the candidate can upload attachments to recorded achievements and activities. For example, published articles can be added to the article’s activity entry. The option to attach a file will appear at the very bottom of the activity input screen.

## **Regarding Time in Rank Prior to Hire at UNLV**

As noted in [NSHE Code](#) Title 2, 4.3.3, “up to three years full-time employment at other accredited institutions of postsecondary education, including such institutions in the System, in positions equivalent to positions providing eligibility for appointment with tenure may be included in the probationary period. Such decision must be made at the time of initial employment.”

In addition, faculty members who are interested in UNLV policies about shortening the probationary period should refer to the [Flexibility of Pre-Tenure Probationary Policy](#).

## **Submitting the Candidate Application**

### **Preliminary Application**

For all tenure-track cases and nontenure-track cases that require external review letters, the preliminary application is submitted first. This preliminary application includes the external waiver, CV, research/creative portfolio, and any other materials needed for the external referees. Candidates can continue to add and update activities, files, and statements until September 1 (tenure-track cases) or October 1 (nontenure-track cases), or when the first internal review begins, whichever is sooner.

### **Final Application**

Candidates can continue to add and/or edit their application materials up until the internal review (e.g., department committee) begins their review, or September 1 for tenure-track and October 1 for nontenure-track cases, whichever is sooner.

Once all sections are complete, the candidate will need to submit their case so that others have access to the application.

To submit case materials, candidates may either submit their packet sections separately or they may submit all sections at once. Regardless, *no case materials are visible to anyone other than the candidate until the candidate has submitted the section(s).*

## 4. Reviewers: Evaluation of Tenure & Promotion Applications

### Evaluation of Candidate Applications

Review committees should limit their review to documented material evaluated under the appropriate standards. In addition, their contributions to the process should be guided by three principles: equity, consistency, and confidentiality.

In this context, equity can be interpreted as “fairness to everyone involved.” It starts with the concept of “comparable rigor” but goes far beyond it. Similarly, committee members must strive for equity not only in the meeting and when conducting the evaluation but must ground the entire process in the principle. Equity starts with transparent tenure and promotion standards that are clearly communicated by the chair, the committee, and the senior faculty. It also includes pre-application mentoring for all candidates, fairness in the application review itself, and ends with post-application support and a continuing respect for confidentiality.

Furthermore, committee members should understand that they take upon themselves the responsibility and obligation to protect the integrity of the tenure and promotion review process. They must disclose any real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest between themselves and a candidate to the Office of Faculty Affairs and strive to be impartial and fair in their treatment of each candidate. They should guard against any inaccuracies or distortion made by either omission of or undue emphasis on certain information.

Consistency is linked strongly to “comparable rigor,” as well as the principles of equity and inclusion. Essentially, it means that all candidates should be treated similarly. Committees should avoid all discussion or action due to protected activity. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, whether the candidate is now or has ever been involved in a complaint against the university or any individuals; if the candidate has issues relating to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and/or whether the candidate has taken leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

It is important to avoid not only bias but also any appearance of bias. This does not mean that the committee must spend the same amount of time discussing each candidate, or that each candidate’s recommendation must be of the same length. Rather, it means that each candidate is given the same opportunity for a fair evaluation.

At both the department and the school/college level, the principle of consistency demands comparable rigor in evaluating candidates. The standards for tenure and/or promotion should be approximately equal across departments, allowing for the unique circumstances of each discipline. Candidates should not be judged in comparison to each other but rather by the standards specified in the unit guidelines.

Confidentiality means not publishing, divulging to any unauthorized persons, or making public any information obtained from observations, conversations, or documentation of any sort

pertaining to the personnel review, including but not limited to the substance of committee discussions, the contents of internal and external reviews, and the committee's vote.

Confidentiality is serious: a breach of confidentiality or other policies relating to the tenure and promotion process may result in sanctions under Title 2, Chapter 6 of the Nevada System of Higher Education Code ("Rules and Disciplinary Procedures for Faculty"). If a violation has occurred, or is suspected, please document the concerns (see above NSHE Code section for details) and contact the Office of Faculty Affairs immediately. Do not wait until after the process is over to raise concerns or share rumors; do so while the process can be corrected.

## **Promotion Evaluation Standards**

While the larger impact and reputation of scholars may be due to work done before hire, tenure, or the previous promotion, the UNLV Bylaws (III. 16.7.4) state that the criteria for promotion includes accomplishments during the period since the last promotion.

For that reason, the official period under review should be only time in the previous rank. UNLV Folio will be set to automatically pull the record of activities since the last promotion. Notable previous activities or accomplishments can, however, be referenced in narrative statements or in supplemental materials.

## **The Role of the Chair/Director in the Process**

Chairs (or, as appropriate, directors or deans) have numerous responsibilities that touch on the tenure and/or promotion process. These include having a role in guiding and mentoring candidates and providing candid assessments of progress before tenure throughout the probationary period, as well as defined responsibilities within the tenure and/or promotion application process.

These responsibilities include handling all communication with external reviewers, providing feedback on the appropriateness of early tenure, and working with the department or school committees to provide an equitable, fair evaluation for tenure and/or promotion. In addition, the chair is usually the candidate's primary contact with the administration and will answer any questions even before the process officially starts.

## **External Reviewer Letters**

For all tenure-track faculty (including post-tenured faculty) applying for tenure and/or promotion, and for some nontenure-track faculty applying for promotion, letters from external referees are required. For tenure-track applications, these external referees should be from outside the university with an academic rank that exceeds the candidate's rank. For all nontenure-track faculty applying for promotion, external letters are only required if mandated by the unit. You should refer to your department and college/school bylaws and promotion standards for further guidance.

At least two letters will be from persons selected from a list of names provided by the candidate, and at least two will be persons not suggested by the candidate. The latter two letters are usually selected from a list generated by the department chair/unit director or dean, although in some units, faculty have input to the process as well. It is the department chair's responsibility to assure all external letters are solicited and received.

For nontenure-track faculty requiring outside letters, they may be solicited externally, as described above, or internal from UNLV. Applicants should refer to their unit-specific promotion guidelines for the procedure to follow in obtaining these letters.

In the spring semester before their review, candidates should submit the names and contact information of four prospective external referees, along with the reasons for their selection, to their chair/director. It is required to provide a listing of four referees so that if individuals initially contacted are unable to perform the review, alternates have already been identified.

### **External Reviewer Selection**

With fewer than four external review letters, the application is not in compliance with the Bylaws, which can only negatively impact the application. In the case of promotion only, the case can be withdrawn. The department chair is ultimately responsible for obtaining external review letters.

In general, an external referee should be an academic scholar from a peer institution who has already attained the rank the candidate is seeking, though in certain fields (e.g., fine arts), an appropriate referee may be without an academic background but have preeminent standing within a particular area of endeavor (e.g., a prominent musician or artist).

Keep in mind that these external reviews are assessments of the portfolio, not personal recommendations. As such, candidates should NOT recommend those with whom they have worked closely in the past or with whom they have a professional relationship (e.g., dissertation committee member or chair, co-author on publications, friend, etc.). If it is the case that the candidate's area of inquiry or creative endeavor consists of such a small group of scholars/artists that avoiding referees who are their collaborators in research/creative activity is virtually impossible, the chair should make that argument in the explanation of the selection of the reviewers.

The [University Tenure and Promotion Committee](#) has issued [Guidelines: External Reviews](#), which sums up that group's guidance on soliciting the most effective external reviews.

These guidelines must be adhered to. Per the UNLV Bylaws (III.16.2.3), "All external review letters shall be obtained in accordance with guidelines created by the University Promotion and Tenure Committee."

### **External Waiver Release**

Candidates are asked to either waive/not waive their rights to view an external review letter. The external referee, who should serve as an independent evaluator of the candidate's work, will be notified about whether the candidate did or did not waive their right to see the review letter. If a

candidate for tenure and/or promotion has waived the right to see the letter of reference, internal reviewers can be more assured that an objective evaluation of the candidate's work was received. Therefore, it is highly recommended that candidates waive their right to see the external letters.

Note that the above guidance does not apply to certain disciplines (e.g., law) where it is expected that the candidate will have access to all external review letters that are received.

### **External Reviewer Solicitation Process**

As department tenure and promotion reviews normally begin in mid-August with no margin for extension, it is crucial to start the solicitations for external reviews early. It is suggested that official solicitations are ready to go out no later than May 1, when the candidate is expected to submit their preliminary application (i.e., materials relevant to the external reviewers).

Conversations with the candidate and their department chair/director should commence much earlier – early March is suggested. This will allow ample time to solicit candidate input for external reviewers and for the department chair to augment that list.

It is important to keep the following points in mind before solicitations are sent. First, when potential reviewers are contacted, it is required to provide a copy of the candidate's CV and to note that the external review will be focused primarily on the candidate's research record. Note that some external reviewers may decline the invitation to review. For this reason, the department chair/director should be prepared by having additional names each on the candidate's list and the department list.

The bylaws require four external review letters for tenure-track faculty, two from the candidate list, two from the chair list. External reviewers need enough time for a thorough evaluation, but reviewers at the next step in the review process (e.g., department committee) also need to have the letters as part of their review. For that reason, it is strongly recommended that chairs begin soliciting letters before the end of the spring semester and that letters be received on or before July 15. If the required letters have not been received by July 15, consider reaching out to additional reviewers.

External referees should be at or above the rank that the candidate is seeking. If there is an exception, a justification should be provided on the External Review Summary Form. In general, letters should be from faculty at peer or aspirant institutions, although a referee from a highly regarded program in a lesser-ranked school is permissible. Please note such a discrepancy on the External Review Summary Form.

Current vitas from all external referees should be submitted as part of the external review process via UNLV Folio. Department chairs/directors are strongly encouraged to solicit ONLY four letters but have additional referees identified in the event that one of the selected referees does not complete their review by July 15. ALL external letters received should be attached to the candidate's case.

The Office of Faculty Affairs has provided communication templates on our webpage; see [External Reviews](#).

## First Communication

Your first contact with a potential reviewer should briefly introduce the candidate and respectfully request a candid review, with a due date of when the letter is needed. The first communication to potential reviewers should occur outside of UNLV Folio.

The Office of Faculty Affairs has provided a template for the first contact email as well as formal solicitation by review type below.

## Formal Solicitation

Once the potential reviewer has tentatively agreed to provide a review, you should send a formal solicitation through UNLV Folio. Formal solicitations to external referees should:

- Describe your relationship to the candidate (e.g., department chair/director, dean, etc.).
- Ask each referee to describe their relationship to the candidate, if any, and disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
- Include the following description of UNLV: UNLV is an urban public university with rigorous educational programs that's immersed in innovative research, scholarship, and creative activities. With approximately 31,000 students and 4,000 employees, UNLV holds the nation's highest recognition for both research and community engagement – distinctions which underscore its vision to become a premier university in service of one of the nation's fastest-growing and most enterprising regions. Every day — in its labs and classrooms, in neighborhoods, and out in the field — UNLV is working to fuel Nevada's economic engine. The university is proud of its home within the heart of a global destination, where its students, employees, and alumni build community, create partnerships, advance healthcare, and spark innovation that moves the region forward. Learn more at [unlv.edu](http://unlv.edu).
- Include an accurate description of the unit, including number of faculty and degrees offered and history of degrees. For example: "UNLV's Department of ABC was established in 1998 and has 12 tenured faculty members and 8 on the tenure-track."
- State whether the candidate has waived or has not waived the right to see the letter.
- Instruct referees to base their evaluation of the candidate on the unit tenure and promotion standards at UNLV and not on those at their institution. Do not ask referees to state whether the candidate would receive tenure or promotion at their institution.
- Refrain from the use of any biased or leading language.
- Instruct the referee on how to complete their recommendation via UNLV Folio, including links to support documents.
- Ask the evaluator to upload, as a separate document, their current CV.

All reviews received must be made visible via UNLV Folio. They are viewable by default, so this is an injunction not to delete any reviews received.

Once the external referees have agreed to provide the evaluations, the chair/director should send them a formal solicitation message via UNLV Folio that provides the information they need to access the candidate's materials and complete their review within UNLV Folio. A [video tutorial is available](#).

To formally solicit a review via UNLV Folio:

1. On the case page of the candidate, scroll down to the External Evaluations section and click "Request Evaluation."
2. Under "External Evaluation Information," enter the name and email of each external evaluator.
3. In the "Subject" line, please use a variation of "Tenure Review for UNLV Department of"
4. Enter the email message to the evaluators—you can add all four names and then copy/paste the message in once. It is suggested that you download a template, adapt it as necessary, and then copy/paste it in.
5. In the **Files** section, click **+ Add Files** button to add the files you want the reviewers to have access to. You can use the **Sections** drop-down to filter the file list by the section the files are in. Select the checkbox next to the file(s) you want the reviewers to have access to. At minimum, these must include:
  - a. Candidate CV
  - b. A portfolio of the candidate's scholarly or creative work
  - c. The standards under which the candidate is to be evaluated.

**NOTE:** Evaluators will NOT have access to any files, including the application vita, annual evaluations, and performance evaluations, **unless you give them access.**

6. If the unit mandates that reviewers consider additional documents, or if other documents or sections are relevant to the candidate's application type, they should be added here as well.
7. Set Response Settings. A deadline of July 15 is strongly encouraged unless they are wanted earlier. This date can be changed if necessary. Also, check the "Yes, allow the evaluator to submit additional files" button, and do not change "Access," which is set by default to "Administrators & Entire Committee."
8. Click "Send Request" at the bottom of the page. If it is appropriately sent, UNLV Folio will return to the main case page.

As part of the required documents submitted with the case, the chair will complete the **External Review Summary Form**. This form, provided in UNLV Folio, will ask chairs to indicate the name, title, and institution of the reviewer, as well as who chose the external reviewer. When

explaining the rationale for selecting each reviewer, please be as specific as possible; “has published a widely-used textbook and is the editor of a leading journal” is infinitely more informative than “eminent in field.” Also, in this section please discuss any potential conflicts of interest for the reviewer. This form should be completed AFTER the external reviewer letters have been received.

## Late/Missing External Review Letters

UNLV Bylaws specify that each tenure and/or promotion application for tenure-track faculty must have no fewer than four external review letters. If one or more reviews has not been received by the deadline, you will need to **manually extend the reviewer deadline**; once the deadline passes, the reviewer cannot submit an evaluation, and you will have to send a new request.

If four external reviews have not been received by August 15, the chair, the candidate, and the unit academic leadership have a difficult decision to make. As the Bylaws specify that four external reviews are required, some faculty may refuse to consider or will automatically recommend against tenure and/or promotion for cases with fewer reviews. If there is no prospect of getting all four reviews by the time the first level review begins, promotion candidates may be best served by withdrawing from the process and applying again the following year. Tenure cases, which must be heard before the end of the probationary period, may proceed, but the chair should be prepared to explain to all faculty and administrative reviewers why they received fewer than four reviews. Faculty may nevertheless recommend against tenure since the Bylaws do require four reviews.

In extreme cases, a review may arrive after earlier levels have begun their review. If one or more levels have already provided a recommendation, they must be given the opportunity to decide whether they want to revisit their decision, given the new information that is available. This may mean that all subsequent levels will have to revisit their decisions, as well. For this reason, having all four external evaluations accessible when the review begins is strongly encouraged.

Letters from individuals that were not specifically asked to write a review, or reviewers who did not receive a copy of the standards under which the candidate is being evaluated, **should never be included in the dossier**.

## Review Committee Membership

The [UNLV Bylaws](#) (III.6.1a-f) specify only ranked faculty (including faculty-in-residence) are eligible to serve on review committees, and chairs, directors, and those with “dean” in their title are restricted from participating. Similar provisions cover the formation of college/school-level committees.

Within UNLV Folio, an administrator who is restricted from participating in personnel deliberations or votes may be listed as a committee member. This does not mean that they are a member of the committee; it is only done so that they retain access to the case file, which is

necessary if they are asked to answer questions about the case by the committee. In general, being listed at a review level in UNLV Folio only reflects that the individual has access to the case and does not presuppose that the individual votes or participates in deliberations.

The Office of Faculty Affairs will reach out to units (deans and department chairs/directors) for committee members so they can be provided access to the candidates' cases. Units are responsible for confirming eligibility of committee members per UNLV Bylaws (III.6.1a-f). When committee members have been selected (and administrators, if applicable), all members must complete the [Confidentiality Agreement form](#) and submit it to their dean or chair/director.

Tenure and/or promotion cases are evaluated by the department committee, the chair/supervisor, the college/school committee, the dean, and the University Tenure and Promotion Committee (if applicable). Colleges without departments (for example: Law, Nursing, Libraries) skip the department-level review but still receive recommendations from the college/school committee and the dean. The University Tenure and Promotion Committee evaluates all applications by ranked (tenure-track and post-tenure) faculty and provides a recommendation to the Executive Vice President and Provost. Nontenure-track promotion files are not evaluated by the University Tenure and Promotion Committee but are conferred by the Provost.

Candidates are evaluated for tenure under the standards in place at the time of hire. Candidates for promotion only (including both tenured faculty applying for promotion to Professor and nontenure-track faculty applying for promotion) are evaluated under the standards in place at the time of application.

The UNLV Bylaws require departments to establish unit-specific guidelines for the awarding of tenure and/or promotion, in compliance with the NSHE Code, the UNLV Bylaws, and college/school bylaws. For promotion to associate professor (either with tenure, or as associate professor-in-residence or associate research professor), the bylaws specify “demonstrated effectiveness as a university teacher...or demonstrated effectiveness in other assigned duties,” “demonstrated effectiveness in research, scholarship, creative, clinical or entrepreneurial activity with due recognition for the different forms such productivity may take in the various disciplines,” and “demonstrated effectiveness in service” (III.16.5).

Unit guidelines should explain the recommended teaching, service, and/or research/creative outputs indicative of a candidate who is deserving of tenure and/or promotion. These may specify the type, quantity, or quality of those work products.

All internal and external reviewers of tenure and/or promotion applications are provided a copy of the applicable standards to guide their evaluation.

## **Review Process Steps**

The review process generally follows the steps below, after the candidate has submitted their application materials and the external letters have been received (if applicable):

1. Department committee reviews candidate materials and provides a recommendation (vote and narrative).

2. Chair provides recommendation, with narrative explanation.
3. College/school tenure and promotion committee reviews packet, including previous reviews, and provides a recommendation (vote and narrative).
4. Dean reviews materials and previous recommendations, and provides a recommendation, with narrative.
5. For nontenure-track promotion, packet proceeds to the Provost. The new rank becomes official on July 1 of that calendar year.
6. For tenured / tenure-track applications, packet proceeds to the University Tenure and Promotion Committee.
7. University Tenure and Promotion Committee reviews materials and previous recommendations with an eye toward comparable rigor in criteria and procedures, forwarding its recommendation (vote and narrative) to the Executive Vice President and Provost.
8. Executive Vice President and Provost makes a recommendation to the President.
9. The President accepts or does not accept the recommendation received.
10. Candidate is notified in writing of the President's decision.
  - o If the recommendation is not to grant tenure, the candidate can request a reconsideration. If a negative recommendation is not reversed with reconsideration, the faculty member can file a grievance (NSHE Code, Title 2, 5.2.3).
11. Decisions are confirmed by the Board of Regents (in March).
12. If tenure/promotion is approved, new rank/status becomes effective July 1. See BOR Handbook Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3 and 5.2.4.3. Reviewers: Evaluating Tenure and Promotion

## **Adding Recommendations in UNLV Folio**

All recommendations are added in UNLV Folio via the appropriate form on the "Case Details" tab of the candidate's packet. The case will be visible to reviewers once the previous level has reviewed and advanced the case forward.

To view the application materials and the recommendations of previous levels in UNLV Folio, on the "Case Materials" tab, click on the blue button titled "Read Case". This will take you to the system's document viewer where you can use a drop-down menu to navigate the candidate's packet.

## **Casting Votes: One Person, One Vote**

Faculty eligible to vote may do so only once at either the department, college/school, or university level. The guiding principle is "one person, one vote."

The UNLV Bylaws (Chapter I., Section 4.3.3.B) state that only tenured faculty may vote on tenure decisions; however, unit and school/college bylaws can specify who is eligible to vote on promotion decisions, including promotion for nontenure-track faculty, in accordance with the

[UNLV Bylaws](#) (III.6.1a-f). There is no university-level restriction on untenured faculty offering feedback about tenure and/or promotion applications or participating in discussions of the same, but they may not vote on tenure.

Whether part of a dedicated personnel committee or a unit that votes as a committee of the whole, an eligible faculty member can vote in favor of tenure and/or promotion, against it, or may abstain. Abstentions and negative recommendations should be accompanied by an explanation of the reason(s) for their vote.

For committee and faculty votes, the following information should be recorded via the UNLV Folio voting form (embedded in the case at the review steps):

- Number of eligible faculty members on the committee
- Number of favorable votes
- Number of unfavorable votes
- Number of abstentions/recusals
- Reasons for abstentions/recusals (Note: The chair should encourage all committee members to vote unless there is a valid and compelling reason to abstain.)
- Number of faculty members absent from the vote

### **Voter Abstention**

Faculty should not abstain because they do not know which way to vote or because they are dissatisfied with the process in some way. Instead, they may abstain only if there is a clear reason to do so. Frequently, an abstention is recorded if the faculty member is voting at another level of review, the candidate has/had a professional relationship (e.g., former student, mentee) or personal relationship (related by blood or marriage), and/or the candidate has filed a complaint against the faculty member, or vice versa. The committee chair must provide an explanation of all abstentions on the voting form.

Faculty will be proactively asked to abstain in cases of relation by blood or marriage. A chair/director or dean may, at the request of the candidate, ask a potential voter to abstain for reasons such as a shared financial interest. If there are questions regarding whether a reviewer should abstain or not, please contact the Office of Faculty Affairs to discuss.

### **The Committee Recommendation Narrative**

During the committee's discussion (this includes cases where the entire faculty meets as a committee of the whole), the committee chair or a designee should take notes of the conversation. The notes should reflect the general sense of the discussion and should never, at any time, identify a particular faculty member as supporting or opposing the candidate or any element under consideration.

Per UNLV Bylaws III.6.1, after the vote has been taken, the note-taker should draft a formal recommendation that accurately and honestly reflects the committee's discussion, without identifying individuals making particular points. If the external reviews were discussed, the

recommendation should not mention the name or institution of letter-writers, but merely refer to them as External Review #1, External Review #2, etc.

The recommendation should include summaries of the committee's discussion of the discrete areas of teaching, research, and service, as well as an overall recommendation. If the committee wishes, it can specify a ranking for the candidate in each of the three areas using the four-point scale (excellent, commendable, satisfactory, unsatisfactory).

The recommendation should not mention the precise vote tally, although it can describe the vote in general terms such as:

- “the committee/faculty unanimously agree”
- “by a large majority”
- “the majority of the faculty felt that”

After drafting the recommendation, the drafter must share it with the committee to ensure that the recommendation accurately captures the committee's sentiment. The final recommendation should be entered, along with the vote, into the appropriate UNLV Folio form by the committee chair.

A good narrative statement will provide other levels with insight into the vote, with an explanation of how the committee ranked the candidate for teaching, scholarship, and service. If the vote is uniformly positive, it will note the candidate's areas of strength. If there is a split vote, then the recommendation statement should explain the minority votes, for example: “While the committee as a whole felt that the candidate had demonstrated excellence in teaching and scholarship, some felt that the candidate's publications were in journals of insufficient rank to justify a rating of excellent.”

For all recommendations, it is important to support conclusions (“the candidate is an excellent researcher...”) with facts (e.g., as evidenced by their \$100 million in external grant funding and associated patents). The recommendation should be at least a paragraph and will likely be longer. Typically, negative recommendations are longer than positive ones, as they should contain specific rationales for the negative decision, with references to how the candidate does not meet the standards used for evaluation.

## **Confidentiality in the Process**

Every individual involved with the tenure and promotion process is expected to observe confidentiality and sign a confidentiality statement. The final decision on tenure and promotion cases is made by the University President, and is informed by votes at all earlier stages of review. Maintenance of confidentiality throughout the process is essential. Members of tenure and promotion committees should sign [confidentiality acknowledgments](#) and participate with the understanding that they may not disclose their deliberations.

## Confidentiality Concerns

If there are concerns that the confidentiality of the process has been compromised, first document the concerns in writing, with as many specific details as possible. Please refrain from making conclusory statements (e.g., “my colleague violated the integrity of the process”); instead, provide observations and factual statements (e.g., “I witnessed my colleague on the personnel committee tell the candidate what another colleague said during deliberations.”).

Once the concerns are documented, please share them immediately by contacting the Office of Faculty Affairs at [facultyaffairs@unlv.edu](mailto:facultyaffairs@unlv.edu).

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How much should candidates know about the process?

There are two areas of knowledge in which candidates must have clarity: process and standards.

Clarity of process means that candidates should know, from their start at UNLV, how the process works, who is involved, and where they can find resources to assist them. They should know who reviews their application, who evaluates them, and who votes. There should be no secrets about how the process unfolds.

Clarity of standards means that candidates should know the standards by which they will be judged. This does not mean reducing the tenure and/or promotion system to a “formula.” It means that units will have clear, easy-to-understand statements regarding what is required of successful candidates.

Candidates, however, are not entitled to information about the outcome while the process is still underway. While past tenure and/or decisions may provide a baseline for whether a candidate will receive a positive recommendation, no one can provide an absolute assurance that they will or will not receive a positive outcome.

## Can a faculty committee tell the candidate how they are doing?

Confidentiality is key to the integrity of the tenure and promotion process. Faculty members on committees should *not* advise candidates of the status of their application.

## When will candidates receive news about their application’s progress?

According to the UNLV Bylaws (III, 6.4), if a recommendation is turned down, the individual concerned should be notified. The Executive Vice President and Provost will formally notify candidates of the University’s decision on whether or not to recommend awarding of tenure and/or promotion in late January. This recommendation is made official in March, when the Board of Regents reviews and approves all tenure decisions.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to the chair, dean, or Office of Faculty Affairs. Candidates may not contact faculty committee members directly to inquire about the outcome of their deliberations or status of their applications.

## May a candidate withdraw an application?

Candidates for tenure may withdraw their application at any point in the review process before an official decision has been rendered by the President.

Withdrawal of a tenure application signals a desire to be removed from consideration for tenure at UNLV but does not extend the probationary period. The candidate will then enter into a terminal contract. For that reason, such an important decision should be made after consultation with the chair and/or dean. Following such consultation, the candidate's withdrawal request should be made in writing and delivered to the department chair and/or dean.

The candidate will then receive a terminal contract with the last date of employment at UNLV specified.

Candidates for promotion only or nontenure-track promotion may withdraw their applications at any point in the process and may apply again at any point in the future.

### **Whom should I contact if I have further questions?**

If you have any additional questions, please contact:

Gary Totten, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs  
Phone: (702) 895-0043 | Email: [gary.totten@unlv.edu](mailto:gary.totten@unlv.edu)

For specific questions on policies and procedures, contact:

Allison Sahl, Director of Faculty Services  
Phone: (702) 895-4890 | Email: [allison.sahl@unlv.edu](mailto:allison.sahl@unlv.edu)

For technical queries related to UNLV Folio, contact:

UNLV Folio Help Desk  
Phone: (702) 895-4457 | Email: [unlvfolio@unlv.edu](mailto:unlvfolio@unlv.edu)