Preparing a Tenure Dossier

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Tenure

“a status granted after a trial period to a teacher protecting him from summary dismissal” Webster’s

- 71% of U.S. institutions had a tenure system in 1987
- 64.9% of faculty were tenured in 1987/88
  » 59.2% of the women, 74.9% of the men
The Academic “Ladder”

- Postdoc
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Professor
- Professor
- Chaired Professor
- Department Head
- Associate Dean
- Dean
- ...
Tenure Process

Usually a six year “clock”

- Find out the rules at your institution (read the published tenure guidelines)
- Find out the evaluation process
  - Yearly oral evaluations by Dept. Head
  - Regular written evaluations by Dept. P&T Committee, Dept. Head, and Dean
  - Sixth year promotion and tenure review with letters from external evaluators
What’s Important

Teaching

Research and Scholarship

Service
Types of Institutions

- **Strong research focus**
  - PSU, MIT, Stanford, UCB, UIUC, ...
  - But good teaching is also important

- **Strong teaching focus**
  - Clarke, Rose Hulman, Goucher, ...
  - But some research is also required
Dossier Preparation

- **Teaching**
  - Teaching evaluations (students and peers)
  - Student research supervision

- **Research and Scholarship**
  - Refereed publications (journals, conf. proceedings)
  - External funding

- **Service**
  - Service to your University, College, Dept.
  - Service to your profession
Data Collection

- Sample of PSU “rainbow” promotion and tenure dossier file dividers
P&T Survival Skills

- Establish your P&T data file right away (practice good data collection)
- Make a “hit list” of people to serve as external evaluators; groom them
- Take oral and written evaluations seriously; your dept. does!
- List actions to take to address areas of weakness; get feedback on them
- Find a good mentor in your dept. or college
Teaching

- Articulate your teaching goals/plan - write it up and update it yearly
- Shoot for a positive slope on in-class evaluations
  - Take advantage of campus support programs
  - Ask dept. colleagues for help
  - Use texts that provide support material
- Set up your on-line “kudos” file now
- Try to teach a blend of courses (small/large, undergrad/grad, etc.) but not too many different ones
Research

- Articulate your research goals/plan - write it up and update it yearly
- Establish research independence from your PhD advisor quickly
- If coauthors can not serve as external evaluators at your University, be careful with wide-ranging collaboration
- **Quality before quantity** in publications
- Understand the importance of publishing in referred journals
Research, con’t

- Recruit good graduate students
  » Offer grad level reading course as overload
  » Use start-up RA and equipment monies wisely
  » Serve on dept. grad recruiting committee
  » Learn when and how to say “no”

- Target prime funding opportunities
  » Industry career development monies to dept.
  » NSF/ONR/ARL CAREER competitions
    - borrow sample proposals from successful dept. colleagues
Service

- Find out how/what service really counts
- Learn when/how to say no
- Good service - graduate recruiting committee, colloquia chair (in 4th, 5th year), student oriented activities
- Become active in professional society and conference activities - volunteer
External Evaluators

- Make a hit list of candidates
  - knowledgeable in your research area(s)
  - from the senior ranks
  - from schools ranked equal or above yours
- Prime the list of candidates (preprints)
- As colloquium chair, invite candidates to give colloquia at your campus
- Invite yourself to give colloquia elsewhere
- Start networking at conferences
Who's Important

- Your Dept. Head
  - work hard to establish and maintain good communication channels
- Senior faculty in your department
- Research colleagues
  - faculty and students at your institution
  - academic and industry colleagues elsewhere
- Your family and yourself