

USA College of Arts and Sciences
Promotion to Senior Instructor Statement of Criteria and Procedures (2026-27)

Achieving promotion at the University of South Alabama is a multi-step process that begins in the department and ends with the Board of Trustees. University policies pertaining to promotion are set forth in the Faculty Handbook, and include additional guidelines:

<http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/facultyhandbooks.html>

In the event of an inconsistency between this Statement and the current Faculty Handbook policy, the policy of the Faculty Handbook prevails. The present document describes promotion procedures for the College of Arts and Sciences, and is maintained on the College's website:

<http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/facultypolicies.html>

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I. Eligibility and Criteria

Eligibility

The rank of senior instructor is open to faculty holding a minimum of a Master's Degree appropriate to the field in which they are teaching. Their primary duties include teaching in their field, academic advising, active involvement in departmental and university governance, research, scholarship, creative activity and public service, or equivalent academic activity. Senior instructor is a non-tenure track rank.

Criteria

The following requirements must be met for promotion from Instructor to Senior Instructor.

- The candidate must have at least seven years of full-time professional experience at the University of South Alabama as an Instructor. For prior experience or other professional experience to count toward promotion eligibility, the individual's initial letter of appointment must so specify and indicate the extent to which it will be counted. Lacking this specification, no prior experience can be used to establish eligibility to be considered for promotion. The prior experience must have been at an institution of higher education approved by the University and must have been fulltime. A maximum of three years credit for the prior experience may be applied toward the probationary service period for promotion eligibility. The granting of prior service credit is never automatic. The decision to grant credit and the amount of credit to be granted is based on the recommendation of the departmental chairperson and the dean and approved by the Executive Vice President and Provost, if applicable, and the President.
- The candidate must display evidence of excellence in teaching and in student advising or equivalent academic activity.
- The candidate must display evidence of professional development appropriate to the faculty member's assigned academic role.
- The candidate must demonstrate significant and sustained work in departmental, college and/or university-related services.

II. Senior Instructor Promotion Procedures

Peer review is required in arriving at promotion decisions; departments and the College are required to indicate explicitly how recommendations evolved during the review process and must communicate these procedures to the candidates and to the administration. The procedural steps below must be completed by the deadlines indicated in section V.

Any challenge of promotion decisions must proceed according to the University's Grievance Procedure, which is found in the Faculty Handbook, Section 4.2, Faculty Grievance Procedures.

1. A candidate must upload materials relevant to the promotion decision to a specially designated Google Drive folder, as described in section IV below. Some of these materials will be in the form of a report generated from Watermark Faculty Success.
2. The Department Promotion Committee reviews the candidate's materials in the Google Drive folder, makes a recommendation, and completes the Department Promotion Committee Recommendation Form at:
<http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/facultypolicies.html>
3. The Chair of the Department Promotion Committee uploads the Promotion Committee recommendation to the Google Drive folder by creating a "Reviews.pdf" file for them and uploading it.
4. The department Chair reviews all materials submitted by the candidate and the Departmental Promotion Committee. The Chair develops a written recommendation for or against promotion along with a justification for the recommended action, and appends his or her recommendation to the front of the "Reviews.pdf" in the candidate's Google Drive folder. The Chair then meets with the candidate and informs the candidate of the recommendations, giving the candidate a printed copy of the Chair's written recommendation and justification. Upon receiving a copy of the Chair's report, the candidate signs the Departmental Review Notification form, acknowledging receipt of the Chair's report.
5. If the candidate wishes to include additional materials supporting his/her candidacy for promotion, the candidate has one week after meeting with the chair to submit them for inclusion in his/her portfolio. These materials will be added to the candidate's electronic promotion portfolio folder for review at the college/school level where they must be appended to an electronic copy of the signed "Promotion and Tenure Recommendation and Justification" form and titled "Departmental Review Notification.pdf". The candidate must check the appropriate box on the form, indicating the inclusion of additional supplemental materials. This document is added by the Dean's Office to the candidate's Google Drive folder. If additional evidence is submitted, the College Promotion Committee may, at its discretion, consult with the Departmental Promotion Committee to clarify questions related to the additional materials.

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6. The candidate may choose to withdraw the application for promotion by submitting a written request to both the Chair and Dean at any point prior to the submission by the Dean of the materials to the Executive Vice President and Provost.
7. The College Promotion Committee reviews the candidate's portfolio in the Google Drive folder. It forms its recommendation and the committee chair appends its signed recommendation and the completed committee recommendation form to the front of the "Reviews.pdf" file.
8. The Dean reviews all materials relevant to the promotion decision and appends her/his recommendation to the "Reviews.pdf" file in the candidate's Google Drive folder. The portfolio is then reviewed by the Executive Vice President and Provost, who appends her/his recommendation to the "Reviews.pdf" file for the President to review.
9. All submitted materials relevant to promotion will be held until the Board of Trustees takes action on the promotion application.

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III. Responsibilities

i. Candidate Responsibilities:

In addition to this Statement, candidates should review the current Faculty Handbook policies governing promotion (3.10).

1. Candidate's Electronic Portfolio

The candidate must prepare an electronic portfolio that includes the content items indicated in section IV (Candidate Portfolio Contents) below. The candidate is responsible for uploading all electronic files to a secure Google drive folder by the submission deadline indicated in section V, below. The secure Google drive folders are created and maintained by Academic Affairs; candidates will receive an email with notification of access to their drive folder from Academic Affairs via Google Drive.

All uploaded files must follow the naming conventions indicated in section IV below. All items must be uploaded as Adobe PDF files, except for supplementary digital recordings or images, which may be uploaded in standard audio or image formats in Watermark Faculty Success or in the Supplementary Materials folder: see section IV, below.

Note that candidates cannot access their secure Google drive folder after the submission deadline published in section V.

The candidate is also responsible for entering the relevant information into Watermark Faculty Success for the Promotion to Senior Instructor report. The College of Arts and Sciences has created a guide for using Watermark Faculty Success at:

<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/digitalmeasures.html?>

In preparing their electronic portfolio, candidates for promotion may list materials produced throughout an academic career.

2. Meeting with Chair and Recommendation and Notification Form

After the Departmental Promotion Committee and the Department Chair have prepared their recommendations, the Department Chair meets with the candidate and informs the candidate of the recommendations, giving the candidate a copy of the Chair's written recommendation and justification. The candidate also receives a copy of the "Promotion and Tenure Recommendation & Justification" form, which the candidate must complete and sign within one week of receipt and submit to the Dean. Any additional supplemental items must also be submitted as electronic documents to the Dean within one week of the meeting with the Chair as electronic PDF documents.

ii. Department Promotion Committee's Responsibilities

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The members of the Department Promotion Committees are responsible for the strictest professionalism and confidentiality during and after the review process. In addition to these procedures, Department Committee members should also review the Faculty Handbook departmental instructions for Promotion (3.10.3.1). The departmental Committee review(s) should be completed by the deadline published in section V, below.

1. Department Committee Review Standards

The Department Promotion Committee should review all material with the realization that evidence of continuing scholarly/creative productivity as well as teaching effectiveness are typically the essence of all promotion recommendations.

The Department Promotion Committee is expected to determine if the candidate for promotion to Senior Instructor exhibits:

- evidence of excellence in teaching and in student advising or equivalent academic activity,
- evidence of professional development appropriate to the faculty member's assigned academic role,
- significant and sustained work in departmental, college, and/or university-related services.

2. Department Committee Review Process

The Department Promotion Committee should meet to discuss the candidate. A secret ballot vote concerning the candidate is taken after the discussion. Proxy voting is not allowed.

Faculty members who serve on both the departmental promotion committee, and on the collegiate promotion committee, shall vote concerning the candidate at the departmental promotion committee only, and must recuse themselves from participating in the review of the candidate and from voting at the College Promotion Committee when department colleagues are considered. Department Chairs should not participate in Committee deliberations or voting.

The Department Promotion Committee recommendations, which are written in narrative form, must communicate the sense of their deliberations and decisions and should address teaching and student advising, professional development, and service. Departments that have a written policy on expected standards of performance for tenure and promotion should include this information in their recommendation.

Each member of the Department Promotion Committee must personally sign the Committee's recommendation form.

3. Reporting the Department Committee Recommendations

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After Committee deliberation and voting is complete, the Chair of the Department Promotion Committees must prepare the following as PDF documents:

- i. a recommendation, in the form of a narrative, for each candidate, and;
- ii. the appropriate Promotion Recommendation Form. Forms are found at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/facultypolicies.html>

Each member of the Department Promotion Committee, including the Committee Chairs, must personally sign the Department Promotion Recommendation Form. In the case of split decisions, the Department Promotion Committee recommendations must clearly represent both the majority and minority viewpoints.

The Chair of the Department Promotion Committee should create a PDF document entitled “Reviews.pdf” in the Candidate’s Google Drive folder. Both the recommendation narrative and the Promotion Recommendation Form must be added by the Committee Chair to the “Reviews.pdf” file by the deadline for the Committee; see section V for deadlines.

iii. Department Chair’s Responsibilities

In addition to these procedures, Department Chairs should review the Faculty Handbook for departmental procedures for promotion (3.10.3.1). Department Chairs should maintain a hard copy of all materials received that are related to the candidate’s application, such as departmental recommendations, for at least one year. The Department Chair must complete the following by the deadlines indicated in section V:

1. Constitute the appropriate departmental committee (see Faculty Handbook section 3.11.4.3). Once the promotion committee is identified, the Chair is responsible for completing the departmental portion of the Tenure and Promotion Committee Form for each candidate from his/her department. This form is available from the A&S Dean’s Office.
2. Provide a report with his or her recommendation for promotion and justification for the recommendation. This should be a carefully documented and considered statement assessing the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses in teaching and student advising, professional development, and service. The statement, which takes into account the Departmental Committee’s report should address all relevant criteria and assess the extent to which the candidate meets them. It should be added by the Chair to the “Reviews.pdf” file, in front of the Department Committee(s) report.
3. Meet with the candidate and inform the candidate of the recommendation, giving the candidate a copy of the Chair’s written recommendation and justification. If the candidate wishes to include additional materials supporting his/her candidacy for

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promotion, he/she will have one week to submit the materials. Notify the candidate that any additional materials should be in PDF format and submitted by the candidate to the Dean for inclusion in the candidate's portfolio within one week of the candidate's meeting with the Chair.

4. Complete the top portion of the Promotion and Tenure Departmental Review Notification Form, initial it, and share it with the candidate. Notify the candidate that he/she has one week to sign and submit the completed form to the Dean.

iv. College Promotion Committee Responsibilities

The members of the College Promotion Committees are responsible for the strictest professionalism and confidentiality during and after the review process. In addition to these College procedures, Committee members should also review the Faculty Handbook for College procedures for promotion (3.10.3.2).

1. College Committee Review Standards

The College Promotion Committee should review all material in the candidate's Google Drive folder, as well as the recommendations of the Departmental Promotion Committees and Department Chair in the "Reviews.pdf" document. This material should be considered with the realization that evidence of continuing teaching and student advising, professional development, and service are typically the essence of promotion to senior instructor recommendations.

Collegiate Promotion Committee members who also serve on the Departmental Promotion Committee for a given candidate shall vote concerning the candidate at the Departmental Promotion Committee only, and must recuse themselves from reviewing, discussing, and voting on that candidate at the College Committee. If the Chair of the College Promotion Committee must recuse from consideration of a candidate for this reason, the Committee members will select an alternate Chair to serve during the consideration of that candidate.

2. College Committee Review and Reporting

The College Promotion Committee should meet to discuss the candidate. A secret ballot vote concerning the candidate is taken after the discussion. Proxy voting is not allowed. The Committee shall prepare a narrative report of the committee's evaluation, and address its recommendation to the Dean. The recommendation for each candidate should be added to the front of the "Reviews.pdf" document in the candidate's Google Drive folder. The recommendation should contain a rationale for the Committee's action and a report of the Committee's vote on each recommendation. The Committee's recommendation shall be signed by all members present for each recommendation for

promotion. Signing will indicate participation in the voting process and attest to the accuracy of the outcome of the vote tally, including abstentions. Proxy votes are not permitted.

IV. The Candidate's Portfolio

The candidate's portfolio must be uploaded to the Google Drive folder by the deadline indicated in section V, below.

A candidate applying for promotion to senior instructor should clearly distinguish materials produced before and after the last promotion. This can be done by adding **boldface** to those Teaching, Research and Professional Development, and Service items produced since the last promotion into the Watermark Faculty Success Promotion to Senior Instructor report.

i. Candidate Portfolio Contents

1. Letter of Application.

Candidates must include a letter specifying what they are applying for, as well as a list of the materials submitted to the Department Chair and the Department Promotion Committee.

2. A current CV.

The CV should be in a style appropriate to the candidate's academic field.

3. A list of all Supplementary Materials that have been uploaded to Watermark Faculty Success or placed in the Supplementary Materials folder.

If a candidate has uploaded materials to a Supplementary Materials folder (item 8, below), these must be indicated separately.

4. The Candidate's Watermark Faculty Success Promotion to Senior Instructor Report.

The College of Arts and Sciences has created a guide for using Watermark Faculty Success at:

<https://login.watermarkinsights.com/connect/universityofsouthalabama>

Immediately prior to running the final report, candidates should complete the "Confirmation and Submission" screen, accessible from the "Manage Activities" page in Watermark Faculty Success.

5. Letter of Eligibility from the College Dean.

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6. Promotion to Senior Instructor Criteria.

These are printed above, p. 2.

7. A copy of the promotion criteria of the Department, if any.

If the candidate's department has additional criteria, include these in the file.

8. Supplementary Materials that cannot be uploaded into Watermark Faculty Success.

This may include copies of books scanned and uploaded as pdf files (do not submit hard copies), as well as digital recordings or images that exceed Watermark Faculty Success' file size limits.

ii. Format of Portfolio Contents

All submitted items must be Adobe PDF documents, with the exception of some of the supplementary materials files indicated in item 8. Candidates are responsible for uploading all electronic items to their assigned Google drive folder. *All uploaded files must be arranged as follows and use the following naming conventions:*

Items 1-3 and 5-7: Create a single PDF document entitled "Portfolio.pdf".

Place items 1-3 and 5-7 above in order within this PDF, with item 1 starting the first page, and item 7 appearing last.

Item 4: Create a single PDF document entitled "T&PReport.pdf".

This document should include the candidate's Watermark Faculty Success report as a PDF with the cover sheet. The report must be saved as a PDF and uploaded. *Do not print the report, scan it, and upload it* – doing so will break the links to supporting materials.

Item 8: Candidates must upload to Watermark Faculty Success copies of all scholarly presentations, publications and documentation of exhibits, productions, and performances as well as other documents evidencing teaching, research/creative activities, and service during the years in rank or the probationary period. Since Watermark Faculty Success file sizes are limited to 50 MB per uploaded file, if any of a candidate's supplementary materials cannot be uploaded to Watermark Faculty Success, the candidate may request of the Dean's Office that an additional folder, titled "Supplemental Materials", be created in the Candidate's Google Drive folder. The candidate should upload to this folder only those additional supplemental materials files that cannot be accepted as uploads in Watermark Faculty Success.

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iii. Summary of Portfolio Files

Below is a summary of the files that should be added to the candidate's Google Drive folder.

File Item Name and Extension	File Creator and Source	Contributors
DMReport.pdf	Candidate, from Watermark Faculty Success Promotion to Senior Instructor Report	Candidate
Reviews.pdf	Chair of the Department Promotion Committee	i. Department Promotion Committee Chair ii. Department Chair iii. College Promotion Committee Chair iv. College Dean v. Provost
Departmental Review Notification.pdf	College Dean's Office, from paper Recommendation & Justification form initialed by Department Chair and signed by Candidate and Dean	College Dean's Office from paper form copy, and from candidate's electronic additional supplemental materials, if any.
Portfllo.pdf	Candidate, from various sources (CV, letter of application, scanned eligibility letter, criteria)	Candidate
Additional Supplemental Materials Folder (<u>Optional</u>)	College Dean's Office, at candidate's request. This folder is to be created only if required for supplemental materials files that exceed Digital Measures' file size limits.	Candidate

V. Promotion to Senior Instructor Deadlines for 2026-7

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| Sept. 3 | The Department Chair provides the Dean's Office with a completed copy of the departmental component of the Tenure and Promotion Committee form. |
| Sept. 11 | The Dean's Office sends completed Tenure and Promotion Committee Forms to Academic Affairs by this date. |
| Oct. 21 | Submission Deadline for the candidate's portfolio. Candidate must upload all correctly formatted portfolio items indicated in section IV above to the Google Drive folder by this date in the correct format. <i>Candidate access to the Google Drive folder is restricted after this date.</i> |
| Dec. 4 | Deadline for the completed Department Promotion Committee reviews. Deadline for Committee Chairs to add their recommendation narrative, and the completed and signed Promotion Committee Forms, to the front of the "Reviews.pdf" document in each candidate's Google Drive folder. |
| Jan. 4 | Deadline for the Department Chair to meet with the candidate and inform the candidate of the recommendation for promotion. The Chair shares with the candidate his or her written recommendation for or against promotion and gives the candidate a copy this report, as well as of the "Departmental Review Notification" form. |
| * | Candidates for promotion have one week from the time of the meeting with the Chair to include any additional materials supporting his/her candidacy by sending them as a PDF to the Dean. |
| Jan. 11 | Deadline to submit all review materials, including Department Chair's recommendation(s) and completed and signed Promotion Recommendation and "Departmental Review Notification" form to the Dean's Office. |