This document establishes departmental procedures and criteria for promotion and tenure which are consistent with the policies and procedures instituted by the University and with the guidelines of the School of the Arts and the university Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures, Virginia Commonwealth University. The criteria reflect the uniqueness of the disciplines within the department as described in the mission statement of the Department of Theatre and address the standards set by the School and University. The departmental guidelines prescribe procedures which assure due process.

This document is to be used in conjunction with VCU Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures and the School of the Arts Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures documents as well as the VCU Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy. Departmental policy may be ‘silent’ on a subject fully detailed in school or university policy. Candidates for promotion as well as members of review committees should consult and familiarize themselves with each of these documents. At the time of this revision, all departmental policies are consistent with university and school policies. At any time the policies and procedures at one level create inconsistencies with another, it should be noted that department policy defers to school policy and school policy defers to university policy. The exception to this is in the area of specific criteria for promotion is noted later in this document.

Term Faculty refers to those who were identified as Collateral Faculty in previous editions of these guidelines. Tenure is only linked to promotion for full-time faculty. The
requirements for promotion at the School level are more rigorous than for the university at large; the departmental policies are consistent with school requirements.

2.0 Faculty Ranks and Appointments

2.1 General Criteria and Criteria Definitions for tenured, Tenure-Eligible, and term (non-tenured) faculty Members

Faculty roles in the Department of Theatre balance individual aspirations and abilities with the departmental mission and needs. Faculty rewards shall recognize individual accomplishments as well as foster departmental and institutional goals and values.

Given that VCU is a doctoral research university, a threshold of scholarly activity by faculty in the Department of Theatre is required to receive tenure and/or promotion as well as to continue as a productive department faculty member. Research which ends in production is considered as important as traditional research resulting in publication. University tenure criteria govern all tenure decisions; therefore various combinations of research, teaching and service by the Department of Theatre faculty member must fulfill both the department and the university missions.

Criteria for evaluating the candidate’s eligibility for promotion and tenure are (1) appropriate credentials and experience, (2) demonstrated continuing scholarship and professional growth, (3) demonstrated quality in teaching, and (4) demonstrated service to the profession and broader community university, school and department. Individual work plans shall be designed to help the faculty member develop professionally by taking into account his or her strengths and weaknesses, evolving interests, and changes in discipline. Work plans shall be established in a manner such that individualized flexibility is mediated by the overall need for teaching, research and service at the department and the university levels. Care must be taken to see that individuals be fairly evaluated and rewarded based on the work that they are asked to do by their department and the university. Goals for work plans shall parallel the expectations for faculty as stated in department, school and university guidelines.

The University policy on “Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance” requires that all faculty are evaluated in writing every year. As part of that evaluation, each Department of Theatre faculty member is expected to develop a written work plan covering at least a year that meets individual, department, and university goals. A plan may utilize a two or three year planning cycle, but with annual review and evaluation of performance. Each Department of Theatre faculty member’s work plan shall have the written approval of the department chair, who is responsible for maintaining an overall mix of research, teaching and service for the department. The agreed upon work plan becomes a part of
the faculty member’s permanent file. Individual faculty work plans developed in accordance with the Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy may guide evaluation of each faculty member’s effort under each criterion. All general criteria shall apply when reviewing a term faculty member for promotion in rank.

Faculty shall also submit an annual report of their contributions and accomplishments in Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth, Teaching and Service and should demonstrate a sustained record of significant accomplishment. The annual report may also include a self-assessment of that work.

1 APPROPRIATE CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE

The candidate is expected to hold an appropriate terminal degree, ordinarily the MFA or a doctoral degree. Professional equivalencies are determined at the time of hire by the dean and department chair and may include a degree or diploma of an equivalent nature earned at recognized institutions, or proven outstanding accomplishments in the professional field.

2 CONTINUING SCHOLARSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The candidate’s scholarship, professional growth and research are prerequisites for promotion and tenure. The candidate must demonstrate continuing accomplishments during the probationary period. Research which ends in production is considered equivalent to traditional research resulting in publication. In a university environment characterized by academic freedom and individual autonomy, it is the responsibility of each faculty member to establish and maintain an individual program of research/creative endeavor. It is not the prerogative of the university, school, or department to place limitations or definitions upon creative, professional and/or scholarly directions explored by each faculty member within his or her discipline. The university, school and department are expected to encourage and foster a diversity of scholarly investigation and creative activity.

The candidate’s work must demonstrate a commitment and contribution reflecting high standards of quality and competence. Information should be collected from all available sources such as:

- Evaluations by colleagues within the department, school and others associated with this university
- Assessments of participation in theatrical productions
- Evaluations of publications
- Assessments of participation in professional associations
- Evaluations of other professional or scholarly activities
• Evidence that, the candidate has remained current in the field and maintained an ongoing program of professional growth

Sufficient quality and quantity indicating a pattern of accomplishments is necessary. Differentiation between local, regional, national and international achievements must be documented so that proper evaluative weighing can be considered.

3 TEACHING

Demonstrated quality in teaching is essential for promotion and tenure. Factors to be considered may include (but are not limited to) the following:

• Knowledge of subject
• Ability to organize
• Use of appropriate teaching techniques
• Ability to communicate and impart knowledge
• Capacity to develop intellectual and creative abilities of students
• Concern for students
• Openness to development of new instructional approaches
• Utilization of a fair, impartial means of a student evaluation
• Maintaining academic ethical standards
• Abilities in student mentoring
• Remains current in the discipline and relates important advancements in the discipline to the student
• Inspires the student to achieve excellence in the discipline

Data substantiating the quality of teaching should be derived from a variety of sources with no single source serving as the sole criterion. Some of the commonly accepted data sources are:

• Self-assessment of teaching
• Cumulative student evaluations
• Assessments by colleagues
• Student surveys and letters of support
• Course materials and documents produced by the candidate as submitted by the candidate
• Classroom visitations by the committee or department chair as agreed upon by the candidate
• Documented efforts to improve teaching effectiveness
• Documentation of student and alumni accomplishments in courses and beyond VCU
Information may be obtained from the candidate’s students by questionnaires sent them. Former students should be contacted via electronic means. Furthermore, the official letter of promotion and/or tenure should be distributed to all students with a note inviting students who have had specific interaction with the candidate in the classroom or on production to submit any information they may wish to pass on to the committee members.

4 SERVICE

Service refers to those activities that contribute directly or indirectly to the well-being of the profession, university, school, department, and the broader community. These activities may be solicited, unsolicited, paid, or unpaid. There are three broad categories of service: Professional Service, Community Service and Academic Service. For promotion and tenure assessment the professional service in the area of the candidate’s expertise is given primary consideration.

In cases where an activity could be listed in either service or continuing scholarship and professional growth, it is left to the discretion of the candidate where in the vitae the final listing is made. However, the candidate is encouraged to seriously consider the depth and breadth of the work and the type of preparation involved in the process of making the final determination.

Professional Service:

Service to the profession refers to such undertakings as participating or holding office in professional associations and societies, professional adjudications and other professional contributions made as a result of professional endeavors.

Community Service:

Community service refers to activities in which the candidate applies professional expertise to the broader community, such as work on committees, administering programs, consulting, lectures, conducting workshops, providing instruction, mentoring, and providing a service or assistance relating to the candidate’s professional discipline.

Service activities outside VCU that relate to fulfilling one’s civic duty should not be considered in evaluating Service.

Academic Service

Academic service refers to activities at all levels within VCU, such as work on committees, overseeing programs, consulting with committees or peers, lectures,
conducted workshops, providing instruction beyond assigned teaching load, and other similar services or assistance.

Faculty are expected to serve on committees, accept special assignments, and assume professional duties within the institution. Since the Department of Theatre functions as a producing organization in the community, faculty are expected to serve in a manner which is supportive of their departmental role.

2.1.1 Application of Criteria and Criteria Ratings for Tenured, Tenure-eligible and Term (non-tenured) Faculty

Faculty member performance with respect to scholarship, teaching, and service shall be rated (in descending order) as excellent, very good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Credentials and experience shall be rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. All written reports and evaluations of faculty performance ratings shall use this terminology.

The candidate’s continuing scholarship, professional growth, and research/creative activities shall be rated according to the following categories:

Excellent Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth

A rating of excellent denotes a sustained pattern of exemplary accomplishment, making an extraordinary contribution to the discipline.

Very Good Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth

A rating of very good signifies research/creative accomplishments notable for their ongoing quality and quantity over several years.

Satisfactory Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth

A rating of satisfactory represents achievements in research/creative activities that suggest future potential for sustained growth and development.

Unsatisfactory Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth

A rating of unsatisfactory represents an absence of research/creative activity, or research/creative activities whose quality or modest quantity does not meet the prevailing norms of the profession.
The candidate’s teaching shall be rated according to the following categories:

Excellent Teaching

A rating of excellent denotes a sustained pattern of exemplary accomplishment in teaching, making an extraordinary contribution to students.

Very Good Teaching

A rating of very good signifies teaching accomplishments notable for ongoing quality over several years.

Satisfactory Teaching

A rating of satisfactory represents achievements in teaching activities that suggest future potential for sustained teaching growth and development.

Unsatisfactory Teaching

A rating of unsatisfactory represents an absence of quality teaching, or modest teaching quality that does not meet the prevailing norms for the department, school, or profession.

The candidate’s service activities shall be rated according to the following categories:

Excellent Service

A rating of excellent denotes a sustained pattern of exemplary service accomplishment, making an extraordinary contribution to the department, school, university, or profession.

Very Good Service

A rating of very good service signifies service accomplishments notable for ongoing quality and quantity.

Satisfactory Service

A rating of satisfactory represents achievements in service activities that suggest future potential for sustained growth and development.
Unsatisfactory Service

A rating of unsatisfactory represents an absence of service activity, or service activities whose quality or modest quantity do not meet the prevailing norms for the department, school, university, or profession.

2.1.1. B Basic Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

Note that the criteria for promotion at the School level are more stringent than the criteria at the University level. The Department of Theatre criteria are consistent with the School criteria.

Appointment, Promotion to Assistant Professor

For promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor, the candidate must be rated “satisfactory” in all areas of Appropriate Credentials and Experience, Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth, Teaching, and Service. Instructors promoted to the rank of assistant professor may become probationary (tenure-eligible) faculty. This designation is made by the chair with the approval of the dean. Years of service accrued as an instructor are not counted towards the tenure-eligible probationary period though the activities and achievements during this period are included and evaluated at the next review.

Appointment, Promotion to Associate Professor

For promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor a candidate must demonstrate a record of sustained achievement. The record must not be sporadic or diffused. There should be evidence of increased recognition for the candidate's work since the time of appointment. The candidate should have regional stature and show promise of developing a national reputation among his/her peers. For promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate must be rated as “satisfactory” in the area of Appropriate Credentials and Experience. The candidate must be minimally rated “excellent” in either Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth or Teaching and “very good” in Service and one other category.

All of the candidate's achievements and accomplishments to date are to be considered in this review, not just those since the last promotion or date of hire as was previous policy. Credits which are in process but not yet realized/published are to be considered as a demonstration of future potential.
Appointment, Promotion to Professor

For promotion from Associate Professor to Professor the candidate shall be recognized nationally or internationally as having a distinguished record of achievement. In evaluation of the candidate’s work, originality and impact of work is to be considered. A sustained record of achievement, reputation, and selectivity of the forum in which the work is presented and depth and breadth of the contribution shall be evaluated. The record must not be sporadic or diffused. For promotion to Professor, the candidate must be rated “satisfactory” in the areas of “credentials and experience”. The candidate must be minimally rated “very good” in Service and “excellent” in both Continuing Scholarship and Professional Growth as well as Teaching.

Promotion to professor shall be reserved for those who have been recognized nationally by their peers for their professional achievements. A candidate is considered to have been recognized nationally by peers if he or she has demonstrated professional achievement so as to bring a geographically spread exposure or acknowledgement to the candidate and to the university, including but not limited to such efforts as:

- Performing, directing, designing, or coaching a play produced in a theater with a national reputation.
- Receiving a review in a publication with a national circulation.
- Having articles or designs in a publication with a national circulation.
- Having books, plays, or operas published in a publication with a national circulation.
- Receiving a grant from a national source.
- Having designs shown in national juried exhibitions.
- Chairing or serving on panels at regional or national conferences.
- Holding an elective office or chairing a committee in a regional or national professional organization.

The significance of an evaluator’s credentials and the stature of publications carrying reviews or of institutions exhibiting work may be used to establish the candidate’s national recognition toward full professorship.

All of the candidate’s achievements and accomplishments to date are to be considered in this review, not just those since the last promotion or date of hire as was previous policy. Credits which are in process but not yet realized/published are to be considered as a demonstration of future potential.
2.1.2 Promotion of Term Faculty

Faculty members with Term appointments are highly valued members of the faculty and are eligible for promotion following the same criteria and procedures described above. The nature of a term position excludes the possibility of tenure. The School guidelines detail the criteria, policies and procedures to be followed when a member of the term faculty is moved to a tenure track appointment. When this occurs, all of the achievements and accomplishments of the faculty member become part of the tenure track review process.

3.2.3 Evaluation of Probation for Tenure-eligible Faculty

Upon employment with the department, each faculty member is expected to make himself/herself thoroughly familiar with the VCU Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures and the School of the Arts Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures, as well as the VCU Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy regarding promotion and tenure. This applies to both Term and Fulltime Faculty but does not apply to those on adjunct contracts. During the first semester of employment with the department, the department chair shall schedule an appointment with the faculty member to discuss in detail policy documents regarding promotion and tenure.

Upon employment with the department, each faculty member is expected to place on file with the chair of the department an updated copy of his/her curriculum vitae. In response to and following the guidelines of the Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy Document each faculty member of the Department of Theatre shall create, before May 15 of each year, an individualized work plan that is personally meaningful, central to the life of the department, and consistent with the mission of the university. This work plan forms the basis of the annual evaluation mandated by the policy.

Faculty work plans shall be flexible, keyed to the department’s mission, and consistent with promotion and tenure criteria articulated elsewhere in this document, and in the School of the Arts and university documents and guidelines for promotion and tenure.

The Annual Review and Evaluation

Evaluation of a faculty member’s performance in relation to the approved work plan shall take into consideration not only the faculty member’s accomplishments but also the weight assigned to particular activities of an approved plan. Therefore, relative importance or value of a particular activity in the work plan must be agreed upon at the time that the work plan is initially approved by the Department of Theatre chair and by the dean of the School of Arts.
Each year before May 15, each faculty member must provide the chair of the department an annual report detailing achievements in Scholarship and Professional Growth, Teaching and Service along with a work plan for the upcoming year. The annual report shall be used as a barometer in determining the progress of a faculty member in teaching, research, and service. In each year’s evaluation, the faculty member shall receive from the department chair specific information related to ways that the faculty member needs to improve performance related to promotion and tenure. These evaluations become a part of the faculty member’s permanent file.

Criteria of excellence shall rely on qualitative as well as quantitative measures for assessment. The Department of Theatre criteria for excellence in the Annual Review process in the areas of teaching, research and service are the same as those stated for areas above.

Information to be used for measures of assessment shall include student evaluations of the faculty member, teaching loads, student outcomes, numbers of performances and publications, the prominence of performance venues and publications, the significance or scope of service activities, amount of service and such like.

The annual evaluation is in writing and contains a summary rating of excellent, very good, satisfactory, need improvement, or unsatisfactory.

**Third Year Review**

A third year review of the probationary faculty member shall be the benchmark determination of progress the tenure-eligible faculty member is making toward promotion and/or tenure. This shall be a thorough pre-promotion and tenure review conducted to assess the faculty member’s performance and determine means of improvement if that is found to be necessary.

In August of the beginning of the faculty member’s third year of appointment, the department chair shall form a third-year review committee and appoint its chair. This committee shall be composed of three tenured faculty members from the department of Theatre and one student member who is not enrolled in a class with the candidate. The student member shall have full voting rights as a committee member.

The faculty member being reviewed shall create a file with the assistance of the chair. This file is to be forwarded to the review committee in December of the third year of the candidate’s appointment. The review committee shall begin an evaluation of the candidate’s performance in January of the third year and shall make its written report to the department chair by May 15 of that year.
The material submitted by the candidate to the review panel may include but is not limited to:

1) A current curriculum vitae
2) Other supportive material

Documents necessary for the review as requested by the review committee shall be made available to the committee by the chair of the department.

The review committee shall conduct a substantive evaluation of the candidate’s record and performance which may include but are not limited to:

• Signed departmental peer evaluations
• Annual assessment evaluations by the chair
• Accumulated signed student evaluations (including electronic signatures)
• Individualized work plans developed in accordance with the Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy
• Other materials deemed useful

Only the peer review committee shall solicit and receive internal evaluations. A list of all persons solicited for evaluations and a copy of all solicited letters shall become a part of the file.

Additional materials which might supplement internal evaluation include reviews of productions, exhibitions, and performances; inclusion in juried shows of professional significance; publication of juried papers and articles in the candidate’s field of expertise.

The review committee shall add a written report to the candidate’s file which shall include:

1) A record of its proceedings
2) An assessment of the candidate’s strengths and areas that would need to be strengthened toward a successful penultimate review. Specific suggestions for improvement should be included. It is noted that this list of improvement is not to be construed as a guarantee for successful penultimate review.

The faculty member, all members of the review committee, the department chair, and the Dean of the School of the Arts shall sign the report, which becomes a part of the probationary tenure-eligible faculty member’s permanent file.
Penultimate Review

The schedule for review and associated deadlines are established by the dean’s office and must be carefully followed.

The review process for promotion and/or tenure begins at the departmental level with peer evaluation. This review process customarily begins towards the conclusion of the appropriate probationary period. Criteria and policies regarding variations to this schedule are found in the School of the Arts document. For tenure and/or promotion, the procedure is initiated by the candidate or department chair.

The chair of the department shall form a peer review committee and appoint its chair. The department chair notifies the candidate and each of the peer review committee members through a letter to the candidate with copies to members of the committee.

The candidate, with the department chair, shall develop a file following the guidelines established by the school and university. The completed file shall be forwarded to the peer committee to conduct a substantive evaluation of the candidate’s record and performance.

The file shall include though is not limited to, the following:

1) A current curriculum vitae
2) A list of potential recommenders and evaluators
3) Other supportive materials, which may include
   • all accumulated signed student evaluations,
   • individualized work plans, developed in accordance with the Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy,
   • prior periodic reviews, including the third year review documents,
   • annual reviews,
   • other relevant materials.

7.0 Academic Review Procedures for Promotion and Tenure for Tenured, Tenure-eligible and Term (non-tenure) Faculty

7.1 Promotion and Tenure Initiated at the Department Level

Letter of Notification

The letter of notification serves to appoint the members of the Peer Review Committee and its chair. The letter must specify a deadline for submission of the candidate’s curriculum vitae and relevant supporting materials. The candidate may be asked to
meet with the peer review Committee. The date of the letter constitutes the beginning date of the review committee’s functioning.

Composition of the Committee

The minimum number of members to be appointed to the review committee shall be five, including at least three tenured faculty members from inside the department, and one tenured faculty member from outside the department. There shall be one student member who has the same rights and privileges as other members and is not enrolled in a class with the candidate during the period of review.

The candidate shall have the right to challenge any member of this committee for cause; such challenges must be made in writing to the chair within five working days of the date on which the candidate is notified of the composition of the committee. A committee member should disqualify himself or herself if there are substantive reasons not to serve.

7.1.1 Peer Evaluation

The peer review committee shall conduct a substantive evaluation of the candidate’s record and performance which may include but is not limited to:

- Signed departmental peer evaluations
- Annual assessment review evaluations by the chair as requested by candidate
- Third-year review documents
- Accumulated signed student evaluations
- Written external evaluations
- Individualized work plans as requested by the candidate.
- All prior periodic reviews as requested by the candidate.
- Materials detailing and supporting the candidate’s achievements and record of accomplishment in Scholarship and Professional Growth, Teaching and Service.
- Letters of support by current students, alumni and professional colleagues.

Only the peer committee shall solicit and receive internal and external evaluations. Evaluations may be solicited from both persons suggested by the candidate and persons suggested by the committee. The file shall list all persons solicited for letters and identify each person as either named by the candidate or by the committee. All
solicited letters must be included in the file. All letters are to be signed and a typed name shall constitute a signature for those letters in digital form.

External evaluations shall be an integral part of the review process for promotion to the rank of associate professor or professor. External evaluators of research and service shall be selected from a list compiled by the departmental peer review committee, including names of potential evaluators recommended by the candidate. The candidate has the right to object to individual evaluators appearing on the list by stating in writing within seven working days the reasons why an evaluator shall be disqualified. The minimum number of external evaluators shall be five. External evaluators shall be carefully selected to ensure that all areas of the candidate’s expertise are examined by qualified reviewers. In accordance with School of the Arts policies, external reviewers must be individuals with expertise in the candidate’s field or a related scholarly field, be from outside VCU, and be an individual who can provide an independent review of the candidate’s work. External evaluators need not have the same academic rank for which the candidate is being considered. Persons who have co-authored publications, collaborated on research, productions, or performances, or been institutional colleagues or academic mentors/advisors of the applicant should normally be excluded from consideration as outside evaluators. Evaluators must be asked to disclose any personal or professional association with the candidate. The committee and chair should state in final reports the qualifications of external evaluators and their positions within the profession, as well as include a copy of the vitae of the evaluators.

The peer review committee shall add a written report to the candidate’s file which shall include:

1) A record of its proceedings
2) The numerical results of a secret ballot for or against receiving promotion and/or tenure
3) A recommendation regarding promotion and tenure
4) The rationale for such a recommendation

The report must be signed by all committee members.

The committee’s full report shall be transmitted to the department chair.

7.1.2 Department Chair

After receiving the file from the peer committee, the chair of the department shall review the file using the department guidelines as a reference, request supplementary material as needed, add a written recommendation, and forward his/her recommendation, the
file, including the peer committee’s complete report to the School of the Arts Promotion and Tenure Committee.

11.2 Post Tenure Review

Each Department of Theatre faculty member receives an annual review from the chair of the department which examines the faculty member’s performance in light of expected contributions to the department as established previously using the University Roles and Rewards Policy.

The annual evaluation is in writing and contains a summary rating of excellent, very good, satisfactory, needs improvement or unsatisfactory. On this scale, the appropriate rating for a tenured Department of Theatre faculty whose overall performance in previous years has been “satisfactory” or better, but whose current overall performance is not satisfactory, is “needs improvement”. If a Department of Theatre faculty member’s previous overall performance was rated “needs improvement” and the current overall performance has not met the conditions for improvement stated in the faculty member’s work plan agreed to by the chair and approved by the dean of the School of Arts at the time of the previous annual review, the appropriate rating is “unsatisfactory”.

11.0 Procedure for Termination of Employment of Tenured Faculty members

11.2.1 Post-Tenure Review Panel

When a tenured faculty member of the Department of Theatre receives one overall “unsatisfactory” annual evaluation a five member panel of tenured faculty members (at least two of who are from the faculty member’s department and at least one of whom is from another department) shall be appointed to conduct a thorough review of the faculty member’s performance.

The specific process to be followed in a post tenure review is detailed in both the School of the Arts Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures and the VCU Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures.

12.0 Procedure for Review and Amendment of this Document

Amendments to the Department of Theatre Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure may be approved by a simple majority vote of all of the eligible faculty and is subject to approval by the School of Arts Promotion and Tenure and the University Promotions
and Tenure Committees. Eligible faculty are those who are tenured or hold a tenure-track appointment.

Periodic Reviews

The Department of Theatre Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure shall be reviewed, approved and/or revised by the department faculty at a minimum of every six years.

Approved, Department of Theatre, April 12, 2016

Approved, VCUarts Promotion and Tenure Committee, April 12, 2016