

Tips for Preparing a Successful Promotion and Tenure Dossier at Utah State University: *An Insider's View*

(July 2019)

1. Before preparing your dossier, completely read all the sections that pertain to you in USU Policy 405 (<https://www.usu.edu/policies/405>), and carefully read your role statement that clearly identifies your responsibilities. Also, review the e-dossier training manual that guides you through submitting your materials (see: <http://www.usu.edu/provost/promotion-and-tenure/doc/e-Dossier/2018-candidate-interfolio-manual.pdf>).
2. As you prepare your dossier, keep in mind that it will be reviewed by USU's highly-qualified Central Promotion and Tenure committee members who may have limited knowledge about your field of study. Therefore, make sure your entire dossier is clearly written, concise and, when needed, make sure discussions are placed in a "layman's context."
3. Prepare a "self-assessment" letter that demonstrates that you have achieved excellence in your primary role and effectiveness in your secondary roles. In this letter remember that charts and graphs are helpful, and do not be afraid to "boast" about your achievements. Also, make sure to discuss all the "elements" in your role statement (e.g., in the area of teaching, these elements may include steady and consistent record of teaching activity, assessment of teaching activity, etc.).
4. Although there are no guidelines, self-assessment letters should be brief (e.g., 5-10 pages) and clarify/define terms that may be specific to your discipline.
5. Prepare all your dossier materials in a clear and concise manner and provide "exemplary materials" that showcase your best efforts (e.g., include a couple of outstanding journal articles, syllabi, or presentations). There is no need to include "everything" in the dossier! If you are moving forward in promotion, make it clear to the reviewer that identified materials "pertain to the time period" under consideration for promotion.
6. Excellence and effectiveness are demonstrated through evidence and impacts. Evidence shows such things as an upward trajectory in your research publications/funding or improvements in your teaching evaluations. Impacts can show how others are using your materials or practices.
7. Clearly state your authorship role in a publication and note if one or more graduate students have collaborated on the publication. It is often helpful to state information about the journal (e.g., its quality) and how it gauges (or not) its scholarly publication (e.g., i10 index of *h* index).
8. If publications are part of your role assignment, clearly discuss the status of an unpublished manuscript as different publishers use different nomenclature. For example, define the meaning of terms such as "forthcoming," "under review," "submitted," "pending publication," "accepted," "in-progress," etc., and (if applicable) how the "order of the authors" pertains to the publication.

9. If you are involved in teaching, whether it be your primary or secondary role, include evidence related to it. Evidence should include more than student evaluations (IDEA scores). For example, consider peer evaluations and evidence of improvement based on student feedback or peer comments.
10. In most situations, it is helpful to include the “context” related to the discussion item, especially those related to creative activities and honors and awards. For example, if you are discussing an award, you might note something as follows: “In 2019, I received Utah State University’s Robin Award for Faculty Researcher of the Year. Robins Awards are the most coveted of all Utah State honors, and they are awarded to faculty for their hard work and dedication to their individual goals, as well as the goals of USU.”
11. If you have been given the opportunity to count prior service before coming to USU (typically stated in your offer letter), make sure this is clearly documented and noted in your dossier.
12. Make sure all documents submitted are current, including your CV and signed role statement.
13. Before submitting your dossier materials, review it with one or more of your Tenure Advisory Committee members, and always listen to their advice and suggestions. If you have concerns, meet with your department head.
14. If grants are listed, make sure your role in preparation and administration of the grant is described.
15. If applicable, consider using embedded links in your dossier.
16. Always proofread and submit professional-looking materials. Remember, if you need help in submitting your dossier; contact your College Dossier Administrator (CDA) (<https://www.usu.edu/provost/promotion-and-tenure/>).
17. Clearly display your interactions with students. For example, discuss mentoring activities or how you contribute to their future success.
18. When discussing creative activities (if applicable), be sure to discuss the context and impacts related to these activities.
19. Your involvement in service activities should clearly note your role and responsibilities. Remember, service encompasses a wide range of activities from working with student groups to serving on national professional organization committees.
20. Finally, remember to always be honest and accurate in your writings as your reviewers are very well educated and understand that “life happens.”