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## *Insights*

### **“Applying for Promotion, Tenure or Continuing Appointment: Recognizing A Member’s Contributions in Academia”**

The tenure, promotion and/or continuing appointment process is fundamental in the career progress of Faculty Members, Librarian Members, Senior Lab Instructors, and Senior Instructors. It also plays an important role in the growth and development of a university.

#### **What is Tenure?**

Tenure signifies the right of a Faculty Member to a permanent appointment that can only be terminated for cause or in very limited circumstances. It exists for one purpose: to ensure that academic staff can fully exercise their academic freedom without fear of reprisal or retribution and thus fulfil the university’s mission as fearless producers and transmitters of knowledge. Indeed, the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized the fundamental linkage among tenure, academic freedom, and a democratic society.

#### **How is Tenure Earned?**

Tenure is only available to Faculty Members hired in a tenure-track appointment and is granted through a rigorous peer review process involving external assessors who are experts in the Member’s field. The tenure-track appointment is normally for a 6-year period, with a review, assessment, and renewal in the third year. The tenure-track appointment is considered a ‘probationary’ period that provides Faculty Members with feedback concerning their development and performance in the areas of teaching, research, and service before applying for tenure. In limited circumstances, a tenure-track period can be extended beyond 6 years due to certain leaves (See Article 22.3.10) or in the case where a Member was appointed in a tenure-track position without having completed the PhD (see Article 22.1.4). Otherwise, a Faculty Member holding a tenure-track appointment must be considered for tenure no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the tenure-track appointment as determined by the due date for tenure applications in September.

A Faculty Member may choose to apply for tenure earlier than the 5<sup>th</sup> year in the tenure-track period, and this is considered an “early application for tenure”. In this situation, if an early application for tenure is unsuccessful,

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the Faculty Member must wait until the 6<sup>th</sup> year in the tenure-track period to re-apply and is given one more opportunity to obtain Tenure.

It is important to note that tenure signifies “job security” but does not come with a financial benefit.

### **What is a Continuing Appointment?**

A continuing appointment is only available to Librarian Members, Senior Instructors and Senior Lab Instructors who were hired in a probationary position and is granted through a peer review process. Continuing appointment is similar to tenure in that it signifies that the individual has earned continuous and permanent employment that can only be terminated under limited circumstances. The time for a Librarian Member, Senior Lab Instructor, or Senior Instructor to apply for a continuing appointment is in the Fall review period directly following the completion of the probationary period.

If the first application for a continuing appointment is unsuccessful, the Member will have one more opportunity at the following Fall review process to be granted continuing appointment.

Like tenure, a continuing appointment signifies “job security” but does not come with a financial benefit.

### **What is Promotion?**

Promotion in rank for Faculty Members, Librarian Members, Senior Lab Instructors and Senior Instructors is recognition of a Member’s growth and development over their academic career. Promotion is not time driven, as in the case with tenure or continuing appointment, but rather is initiated by the Member when the Member is confident that they have met the relevant criteria outlined in the Collective Agreement.

Promotion in rank carries with it a compensation adjustment.

Members can apply for tenure or a continuing appointment at the same time they apply for promotion; however, a successful application for tenure or continuing appointment does not automatically also grant promotion.

Careers of Members can take very different paths, and for this reason all aspects of a Member’s contributions are considered for promotion.

### **How does the Process for Tenure, Promotion or Continuing Appointment Start?**

The first step in applying for tenure, promotion and/or continuing appointment is through submission of a letter of intent to the Dean or University Librarian, which is due on or before June 15<sup>th</sup>. The letter simply informs the University that you intend to submit an application for review in the Fall. The applicant must submit a full application on the Tuesday after Labour Day.



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The Collective Agreement contains specific Articles outlining the full review process from start to final decision, including the criteria the Member must demonstrate in their application depending on the position the Member holds:

- Article 22: Renewal, Tenure and Promotion of Faculty
- Article 24: Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Librarian Members
- Article 25: Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Senior Instructor Members
- Article 26: Promotion and Continuing Appointment of Senior Laboratory Instructor Members

Applicants are peer reviewed by a specific committee based on their appointment (i.e., “Faculty Promotion and Tenure Committee” for Faculty Members, “SLI Appointment and Promotion Committee” for Senior Lab Instructors, etc.); following this first committee level of review, all applications merge and are reviewed at the “University Promotion and Tenure Committee”.

Table 1 in Article 22 (page 87 of the Collective Agreement) provides a helpful chart of the application and assessment deadlines.

The tenure, promotion and continuing application process can seem like a lengthy and confusing process for many Members, so becoming informed about the process well before you apply, and also knowing when you should be applying, can be helpful. For this reason, the Faculty Association in partnership with Faculty Relations holds an annual information session, normally in May. Watch for an announcement to come out soon about this year’s information session and hope to see you there!

