Lecturer-Track Renewal and Promotion Guide
Revised March 2021

Overview
This guide complements the AS Handbook by focusing on renewal and promotion for those in the Lecturer track; it describes procedures and gives guidance specific to English, all within the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences’ (DSAS) renewal and promotion criteria and processes.

For general context, Pitt has two “streams”: Appointment Stream (AS) and Tenure Stream (TS). The Appointment Stream includes all faculty who are not in the Tenure Stream, such as Lecturers (of all ranks), Instructors, VLs, VIs, VAPs, PTIs, CAPs, RAPs, and many more titles. Within the AS, Lecturers are the largest in number, and the Dietrich School houses the vast majority of them. Furthermore, English is home to a significant number of the school’s Lecturers, so how we renew and promote our faculty has implications for the school and the University at large.

Lecturers and Lecturer IIs have 3-year renewable contracts; Senior Lecturers have 5-year renewables. A typical timeline—though there are plenty of exceptions—is for a newly hired L to fulfill two 3-year contracts, then be promoted to L2. At that point, the timeline to SrL is less certain: Some colleagues move very quickly, in a matter of just a few years; others take longer. One of the aims of this guide, and of our mentorship and administration in this department, is to help each individual in the Lecturer track navigate that path with clarity and transparency, in ways that are best for their career. There’s no single, set career trajectory through the Lecturer track, but there are many successful options.

Mentors
First and foremost, our department believes deeply in a culture of mentorship. Every L and L2 has a mentor from the AS Mentoring Committee. This colleague will guide you through various aspects of your career. This committee is composed of 8 AS/4 TS colleagues, elected for 3-year terms, who work to ensure that everyone in the L track has adequate support and sees their career path clearly. The department chair and assistant chair co-direct the ASMC. Your AS mentor will work with you to assemble your dossier for renewals and promotions, which means that your mentor will not be on your review committee, in order to avoid a conflict between the mentor and primary evaluator roles.

Resources
There are also many resources to help you along the way. If you would like to attend a conference, workshop, or other professional development opportunity, then please reach out to the chair’s office. We’ll direct you to a form that the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies office provides through which you can request curriculum development funds. Please consult the
AS Handbook for more information on these resources, and visit the Faculty Resources page for further contacts and information.

**FMFL, Leaves, and Buyouts**

Next, it’s also important to ensure that you know about the many other resources available to you for any number of other reasons. Full-Time Appointment Stream faculty can request Faculty Medical and Family Leave (FMFL) if they serve as primary caregiver for an elderly parent in crisis, or for the birth or adoption of a child, for personal medical reasons, and so forth. Please know that the chair’s office and office staff will support you in making an FMFL request, and that they will not ask for any personal or medical information along the way. (For medical leaves, you submit a Physician Certification form that goes directly to HR; no one else ever sees it [see the information in the FMFL link above].) Typically, the leave is granted as a reduction in teaching responsibilities, based on your physician’s recommendation. While on FMFL leave, you continue to receive your full salary and benefits. Contact the chair’s office for further details.

In some cases, AS faculty can also apply for Professional Enhancement leaves if they win prestigious national awards, such as NEA fellowships or grants. These awards replace your salary, or a portion of it, thus allowing you to buy out some or all of your teaching. There are also smaller outside grants or even internal awards that can subsidize or offset the cost of relieving you from teaching, depending on the situation. It’s a complex formula that varies case by case, so just talk with the chair’s office if you are considering one of these opportunities.

The important thing to note regarding any type of leave is that your contract years automatically continue to accrue (or advance) while you take the leave. You may go up for renewal or promotion while on leave; the decision is yours, and you will not be penalized or judged adversely in any way for it. In certain rare cases, you might consider whether you need to make a request to the dean’s office (through the chair) to “pause” your contract for a year—for example, if your leave has left you with little teaching during the contract period, or if you are not in a position to assemble your dossier for any reason—so that you can accrue one more year of experience before promotion/renewal.

One other option is to buy out one or more of your courses. The current rate for buyouts is available through our payroll coordinator; it is typically ⅙ of your annual two-term salary per course, on an escalating scale. Given the hefty cost, it’s a serious option, and one that you should discuss extensively with mentors and the chair when considering. Once again, your contract years continue to advance even if you buy out a course; however, if you buy out a certain number of courses relative to your overall teaching load, it technically reduces you to part-time faculty, which carries serious consequences. Again, talk with your chair and office staff about this formula and its complexities.
Please consult the Faculty Handbook for more on all of these topics.

Criteria
Get to know these criteria and checklists very well. An important distinction is that renewal at all stages hinges overwhelmingly on excellent teaching and promotion to Lecturer II is overwhelmingly based on excellent teaching, too. It’s only at the stage of consideration for promotion to Senior Lecturer that the criteria and dossier expectations shift substantively (see below). The conversations you have with mentors and colleagues about these criteria and the ways to fulfill them will be vital to your career.

1. Procedures:

At the time of hiring: In the fall of the first term, the chair and/or assistant chair will schedule a group meeting for all faculty new to the department as Lecturers (Lecturer, Lecturer II, or Senior Lecturer) in order to review contract terms and the procedures for evaluation. The AS Mentoring Committee will reach out to the new faculty at this time, too.

Voting: For renewals and promotions, everyone votes on cases in the AS below their rank (so L2s vote on Ls), although SrLs are able to vote on SrL renewals as well. TS faculty vote on all AS renewals and promotions, per University bylaws. In the English department, AS faculty vote on TS hires, but not on tenure or promotion in the TS. (Read more in our department bylaws.)

2. Year-End Review (YER) Dossier: At the end of the school year, all Lecturers (at all levels) are required to submit materials to an online dossier to represent their teaching, service, and professional development for that year. This dossier will be available to the chair and to program administrators only. You will receive a memo from the chair outlining exactly what belongs in your YER and how to use that annual dossier to build toward renewal and dossier. The YER dossier will generally include the following items; but please consult the annual memo from the chair, along with the YER template you receive for uploading your materials, for specific information:

- Current CV (with date)
- A cover letter for the annual review providing a self-evaluation.
- Syllabi for recent representative courses with supporting materials.
- OMET evaluations (and, where appropriate, Writing Center evaluations).
- Supporting materials, if relevant, such as:
  - Unsolicited statements from students or colleagues. (Solicited letters are not appropriate and not to be admitted.)
- Peer evaluations, as scheduled. Lecturers in their first year should have a fall-semester peer review and a second peer review in their second year before renewal. Lecturers who have been renewed may include an additional peer review for each subsequent renewal period.
- Service summary and evidence of contributions beyond assigned courses, such as program administration, key departmental committee work, independent studies, undergraduate research projects or theses, new course proposals; also, as appropriate, contributions beyond teaching may include service on DSAS or other University committees or initiatives, publications and conference presentations, etc.

**Annual Reviews:** The annual reviews are the responsibility of the chair, the assistant chair, and the DUGS of the colleague’s program(s). (For more information on the annual review process, see the chair’s office’s memos in the [Transparency Documents folder](#)). Any potential concerns or problems on the horizon should be indicated in review. The chair and assistant chair will discuss with the AS Mentoring Committee any needs for additional support for the given colleague.

3. **Contract renewal.** In the spring term, all candidates at the rank of Lecturer, Lecturer II, or Senior Lecturer who are scheduled for a Fall term contract review will meet with the chair and assistant chair. (According to DSAS guidelines, “a more thorough review must be conducted at those times when a faculty member is being considered for possible contract renewal.”) This meeting can take place either separately or with the AS Mentoring Committee member present. These meetings will complement the annual review for the current academic year.

At this meeting, the chair, the assistant chair, and the candidate will review past annual review letters and the preparation of the contract review dossier to be considered at the departmental meeting in the following fall. Any concerns or problems on the horizon should be made clear at this meeting.

Typically, the program director and DUGS for the faculty member’s primary teaching responsibilities will take the lead in bringing the case forward to the department for fall review. They will consult with the chair and the AS Mentoring Committee in the process. In some years, a committee rather than an individual faculty member may be appointed to review and write a recommendation to the department regarding the case. In either situation, the entire voting faculty still reviews every case in full and independently, and will make their judgments independently as well.

In the fall of the final contract year, the department will review a case for contract renewal. This review will be conducted by a committee composed of all Tenured and Tenure-
Track faculty members, and Lecturers of higher rank. (That is, colleagues at the rank of Lecturer II and Senior Lecturer will review Lecturers; Senior Lecturers will review candidates at the rank of Lecturer II as well as other Senior Lecturers; T/TS faculty review all AS faculty.) At the fall meeting, the departmental committee will discuss each case and vote on renewal. The chair will submit a recommendation to the dean on behalf of the department along with the appropriate supporting dossier.

4. **Contract Renewal and Promotion Dossiers, L2 and Senior Lecturer.** According to the by-laws of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, the criteria for promotion to Lecturer II or Senior Lecturer are as found here. The promotion review will follow the same process as the review for contract renewal. It will require a dossier containing the same materials as the dossier for renewal (see above), with one exception: the materials should represent the candidate’s work since their hire (for cases of promotion to L2) or last promotion (for cases of promotion to Senior Lecturer).

The case for renewal and/or promotion will be represented by the Contract Renewal Dossier, which includes materials from the candidate’s portfolio, as described above, with the following modifications or additions. The dossier should cover the last three years for Lecturers and Lecturers II, or the last five years for Senior Lecturers. The following list aligns with DSAS “Guidelines for Evaluating Faculty Teaching,” “General Guidelines for the Promotion to the Rank of Lecturer II,” and “General Guidelines for Promotion to the Rank of Senior Lecturer.” Accompanying each renewal criterion is information on the additional criteria for promotion to Lecturer 2 or Senior Lecturer. See also the video on promotion to Senior Lecturer at the bottom of this page (Pitt credentials required for login): https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/governance

There are slight differences in the checklists of documents required for renewal and promotion (See below). The chair’s office and your mentors will work with you on the details of these dossiers.

From the department:
- A. ____ Cover Letter from the Departmental Chair to Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, which includes: the promotion process; internal committee recommendation and vote; faculty recommendation and vote; and chair recommendation.
- B. ____ Employee Record Form
- C. ____ Departmental Committee Report (if reviewed prior to discussion by full faculty).
  
  [Note: in English, this is usually either the program recommendation or the review committee letter]
- D. ____ Copies of annual letters of evaluation by Dept. Chair since most recent reappointment and most recent letter of reappointment

From the candidate:
E. **Portfolio Materials in addition to the YER dossier** (outlined above).

a. **Renewal**
   i. Syllabi for four representative courses taught during the last three years; additional materials may be included, not to exceed a total of five pages in length for each course.
   ii. OMET evaluations (and, where appropriate, Writing Center evaluations) for six courses representative of programs and course levels taught during the last three years. If you’ve taught Seminar in Composition, please include at least one OMET.
   iii. Peer evaluations of teaching (2 minimum; others optional) that include peer review of syllabi and course material and, if appropriate, a classroom visit along with the candidate’s responses when appropriate.

b. **Promotion (to Lecturer 2)**
   i. Syllabi for six representative courses taught during the last five years; additional materials may be included, not to exceed a total of five pages in length for each course.
   ii. OMETs for the entire period of the candidate’s teaching at their current rank.
   iii. Peer evaluations of teaching (2 minimum; others optional) that include peer review of syllabi and course material and, if appropriate, a classroom visit along with the candidate’s responses when appropriate.

c. **Promotion (to Senior Lecturer)**
   i. Syllabi for six representative courses taught during the last five years; additional materials may be included, not to exceed a total of five pages in length for each course.
   ii. OMETs for the entire period of the candidate’s teaching at their current rank.
   iii. Peer evaluations of teaching (2 minimum; others optional) that include peer review of syllabi and course material and, if appropriate, a classroom visit along with the candidate’s responses when appropriate.
   iv. Letters of reference (3) from referees outside of the faculty member’s primary department that attest to the candidate’s contributions beyond the department. _Referees are nominated by the candidate and selected by the department. The department solicits letters for the candidate’s suggestions._

F. **Personal Statement**: Personal Statement of approximately two to three pages that focuses on the faculty member’s teaching philosophy but places the faculty member’s other activities and roles in the context of their teaching and mentoring roles. Required for all renewals and promotions.

G. **Teaching and Pedagogy: Professional Development**
a. **Renewal**: Documentation of efforts to maintain or advance teaching excellence through revision or development of new course materials, new pedagogical approaches, new teaching or course management technology, or similar.

b. **Promotion (to L2)**
   i. Documentation of efforts to maintain or advance teaching excellence through revision or development of new course materials, new pedagogical approaches, new teaching or course management technology, or similar.
   ii. Documentation of the impact of the faculty member’s teaching or professional activities that extends beyond the classroom to contribute to the program’s and department’s teaching mission.

c. **Promotion (to SL)**
   i. Documentation of efforts to maintain or advance teaching excellence through revision or development of new course materials, new pedagogical approaches, new teaching or course management technology, or similar.
   ii. Documentation of the impact of the faculty member’s teaching or professional activities that extends beyond the classroom to contribute to the program’s and department’s teaching mission.
   iii. Documentation of the impact of the faculty member’s teaching or professional activities that extends beyond the classroom to contribute to the Dietrich School’s or University’s teaching mission or other goals consistent with the faculty member’s contractual role.

Speak with your mentor, the chair’s office, and other colleagues about examples that fulfill the criteria for promotion to Senior Lecturer and how your work beyond the classroom at each stage of your career can build toward that. Gather evidence across your career of contributions of work such as: program administration, key departmental committee work, independent studies, undergraduate research projects or theses, new course and certificate proposals; also, as available, service on DSAS or university committees or initiatives, educational publications or software, publications and conference presentations, and documentation of pedagogical teaching or mentoring provided to faculty colleagues.

6. **Departmental Notes on Guidelines for Evaluating Faculty Teaching**

The Guidelines for Evaluating Faculty Teaching list a number of potential documents that one can include in a dossier. But keep in mind, there is no expectation—by the department or the dean’s office—that any candidate will include everything listed on the menu of options. Faculty should consult with mentors and the chair’s office on what is right for their portfolios and what best represents their pedagogy. The Guidelines list the following:

*From the candidate:*
• A Teaching Philosophy statement (see Personal Statement, above);
• Documentation of professional development in pedagogy (see section 4G, above);
• Documentation of efforts to improve teaching, and the results (see sections 4E through 4G, above);
• Documentation of translation of research/scholarship into course content and pedagogy (this is not generally appropriate for faculty in English but may be included if relevant);
• Documentation of out-of-the-classroom teaching and student mentoring (see section 4G, above);
• Documentation of pedagogical teaching or mentoring provided to faculty colleagues (optional);
• Full student surveys (OMETs) for all courses in the time period under consideration (see section 4E, above).

From the department:
• Results of a focus group of students from a candidate’s course(s), with the focus group organized and facilitated by someone other than the candidate or department (this is not generally appropriate for faculty in English);
• Information on student learning in the candidate’s class(es) (this is not generally appropriate for faculty in English);
• Rigorous peer evaluations of teaching that include peer review of syllabi and course material and, if appropriate, a classroom visit. It may be useful to have senior/junior faculty pairs or members of an appointed committee conduct these peer reviews (see section E, above).

7. **A Note on OMET evaluations:** OMET evaluations are only one part of a general review. The OMET evaluations provide a limited view of a faculty member’s teaching. Scores that are very high or very low should command attention; the students’ written comments are often helpful in these cases, either to indicate strengths or weaknesses. But these OMET evaluations will *always* be considered in relation to the more substantial representations in course materials, peer evaluations, student materials, and self-report. Please see our departmental [Statement on the Evaluation of Teaching](#) for context. *Special note regarding COVID-19 pandemic:* Spring and summer 2020 OMET evaluations, at the discretion of faculty members, need never be included in their YERs, renewal, or promotion files. Although all subsequent evaluations must be included, the provost has also allowed for faculty members to include a statement contextualizing evaluations received in the course of the pandemic.

8. **Appeals.** All Lecturers (at all levels) have the right to appeal a decision of non-renewal to the DSAS dean’s office by contacting the associate dean for faculty affairs (currently [AY 20-21] Kay Brummond) and the assistant dean for appointment stream faculty (currently Lynn Clarke). They will outline the process for appeal as contained in the university bylaws.

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