

**Breakout Session #3**  
***Making Your Case: How do I put it all together?***  
**Development Seminar on Tenure and Promotion**

***TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR TENURE AND PROMOTION DOCUMENT***

General Tips collected from writers and readers of promotion documents:

1. Check with your department and college to see how other successful faculty in the recent past have arranged their documents.
2. Include an updated vita with items in reverse or regular chronological order. Make certain as you are writing your narrative that the titles, dates, and other details match your vita.
3. Number the pages in your narrative, perhaps using a header or footer.
4. Do make an argument to show relevance and accomplishment rather than simply listing what you did. Remark on matters that may not be known outside your field (e.g., whether conferences are national or specialized in some particular way; special features of journals, research, papers, study or courses you've developed or revised that address newly developing research interests or that relate to older ones in a particular way) and comment on your advising and activities with students and your service work in a way that shows their relevance and usefulness if it's not already obvious.
5. Do remark on teaching evaluations to demonstrate that you've read, considered, and used them to grow as a teacher.
6. Do not necessarily group your items in chronological or numerical order. Readers can look at your vita for the chronological view. It may help your argument to group your accomplishments and information in a way that supports your argument. For example, you may group or sub-group courses by type (gen ed, service to other majors, undergrad major, grad) or teaching method or topic. You may group research and scholarly activities by type, topic, etc. Within groupings, you may want to put the most important, interesting, relevant or successful item first to showcase it.
7. Select. Don't include every thank you note or all committee minutes or every student evaluation for five years' worth of classes in your materials. Be fair but selective.
8. Don't unnecessarily bring in negative items ("I submitted this paper to 35 journals and they all turned it down"). But do remark, for instance, on problems you addressed (for instance, scores on teaching evaluations that moved you to make changes, and what those changes were and how they worked).
9. Whatever organization you choose, make it clear to the reader. Some methods you could use:
  - Use informative headings and subheadings;
  - Include an overview at the start of each of the five criteria sections where you specify the divisions and give a summary of your argument for this section, including the division headings in it; and

- Include an overview of the entire document (like an executive summary or abstract) at the beginning in which you introduce the document and devote a paragraph to each criteria, giving a brief summary (less detail than an overview at the start of a criteria section) of your argument for each criteria.

10. In the supporting materials section of your document,

- Make sure you label each item, so readers know what it is;
- Highlight the part you want them to see (e.g., your name on a conference program);
- Number the pages (you might want to use a letter for each criterion too, so pages are A7, B7 etc.); and
- Refer to the page in the narrative part of the document as you discuss it.

11. Toot your own horn. Don't be excessive, but don't minimize your information by using modest disclaimers ("Like everyone else in my field, my research confirmed that..."). If you have trouble, imagine you are talking about the accomplishments of someone else to convince a dean of his/her worth. Or imagine an audience--an interested, friendly person who knows very little about your field or your work.