Santa Clara University
Office of the Provost
November 13, 2025
(rev. September 9, 2026 to reflect recent Faculty Handbook changes)

University Procedures for Departmental Review of Candidates for Tenure and/or Promotion

These procedures are based on Section 3.4.4.2 of the Faculty Handbook and replace all prior procedures. The annual "Target Dates for Tenure and Promotion Review" document lists specific dates for the process (found on the Evaluation, Reappointment & Promotion page of the Provost's website).

By March 2, 2026, the candidate should supply a preliminary list of external referees and names of persons not to be contacted. During March, the tenured faculty confirm the availability of candidate selections that are certain, and begin to identify and confirm department external referees if possible. This month, the tenured faculty determine if one or more collaborator letters are needed to identify the nature, extent and quality of the candidate's contribution to one or more scholarly or creative works.

On March 18, 2026, a meeting will be held for department and process chairs, College/ school and University Rank and Tenure Committee members, and deans to review rank, tenure and promotion policies and procedures (12:00-1:00pm, Executive Conference Room, St. Joseph).

By April 1, 2026, the candidate supplies the Dean and department or process chair with official referee lists—including the names of at least two external referees and the names of persons not to be contacted (use this form). The form has a place to indicate the version of the discipline-specific standards the candidate elects to apply in their case. If the petition is elective, this is the final date by which the candidate may withdraw their request to petition (by emailing facultyaffairs@scu.edu).

Between April 1-15, 2026, the department or process chair notifies the candidate of the name(s) of collaborator(s) the tenured faculty would like to consult, if any, so that the candidate can file a written objection with the chair regarding any of the names on the list. The tenured faculty may request a collaborator to write a letter in spite of this written objection if they are unable to determine the candidate's contribution using other means. The tenured faculty subsequently finalize the list of collaborators to contact for letters and confirm that they are available to serve.

By April 15, 2026, the department or process chair provides the dean with the names of two external reviewers selected by the department who have agreed to serve, confirms the availability of the candidate referees, and lists any collaborators the department has identified who are willing to write. If the candidate has filed a written objection to any of the collaborators on this final list and the tenured faculty have nevertheless selected them to write a collaborator letter, the department or process chair will also provide the candidate's written objection to the dean. The department or process chair will also notify the dean of any tenured faculty who are eligible to participate in the department review who, by virtue of their own collaborations on scholarship or creative work of the candidate, might have a conflict of interest. The dean will determine how to manage the conflict and communicate any restrictions on participation with Faculty Affairs staff.

In the fall, the chair shall invite all tenured members of the department to participate in a departmental review of the strengths and weaknesses of a candidate for promotion or tenure.

Following school or college guidelines, the tenured faculty may prepare a summary of the case data identified as essential by the school or college, but avoiding any evaluation of the data. Each tenured faculty member is expected to read the candidate's file, participate in the departmental discussion, and submit an evaluation letter that includes a whole number score (0-5, using the Duggan scale[1]). A tenured faculty member on sabbatical or other leave may choose not to participate in the rank and tenure process. A faculty member who chooses not to participate shall not be involved in any part of the process.

The chair shall schedule a meeting of the tenured faculty to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's petition. This meeting should be scheduled so that all tenured faculty who are not on sabbatical or other leave are able to participate. If a summary of the case data is used, it will be introduced into the minutes of the departmental discussion and revised as needed. A written summary of the departmental discussion will be signed by all participants. **No vote is taken at this meeting.**

Each tenured faculty member who participates in the departmental discussion, including the chair, shall write a letter of evaluation that includes a recommendation with a whole number score. The letter should not advocate for the faculty member, but should provide a concise summary of evidence to support the reviewer's judgment as to whether the standards for tenure and/or promotion have been met. It should not repeat comments that can be found in other sources.

A tenured faculty member who is unable for good reason to participate in the departmental discussion may write such a letter if they have reviewed the candidate's file. In this case, the letter must explain why the faculty member could not participate in the departmental discussion. Those faculty who are members of a rank and tenure committee, either at the school or university level, are expected to write an evaluation letter and assign a numerical evaluation at the department level. They do not assign a numerical evaluation at the committee level.

All participating faculty shall address their evaluation letters to the dean, and shall submit their letters to the department chair. If there is a compelling reason to seek an exception to this rule, the faculty member must have approval of the Provost and will submit the letter directly to the dean.

In addition to writing an individual letter of evaluation, the department chair or another faculty member designated by the chair and approved by the dean shall write a contextual summary letter. This letter is addressed to the dean and shall summarize the individual faculty letters and provide a context to the candidate's petition and to the faculty letters. It shall contain the numerical evaluations found in the individual letters. For example, in a department of 7 tenured faculty where all 7 were participating, the letter might say "the individual votes are 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3." This letter may include information about the field of research or creative endeavor, disciplinary practices of evaluation and publishing, or other items of relevance that may not be known outside the discipline. If a faculty member submits a letter but did not participate in the departmental discussion, the chair should note this in the letter. The contextual summary letter shall not be reviewed by other members of the department as part of the departmental deliberation.

[1] "Ranking of Candidates for Promotion and Tenure as found in the Duggan Report of December 6, 1995 (Revised January 2018)," online, https://www.scu.edu/media/offices/provost/faculty-affairs/evaluation-promotion/Duggan-Report-Definition-Updates.pdf.

By October 16, or a later date agreed upon by the dean, the chair shall forward the case in Interfolio to the College or School Rank & Tenure Committee, having uploaded their contextual summary letter, the signed summary of the departmental discussion, and their own individual recommendation at the "Case Details" tab (at each of the required documents), and the evaluations and recommendations that have been received from tenured members of the department at the "Case Materials" tab, in the "Department Review" section. An Interfolio guide and video tutorial for the department is available on the Evaluation, Reappointment & Promotion page on the Provost's website.

The chair informs the tenured faculty members of the numerical votes, without attribution, reminding them that this information is confidential and may not be shared with anyone.