

Regis College Rank & Tenure Information on Rank & Tenure Letters

General.

The Committee on Rank and Tenure provides its evaluations in the form of letters that are forwarded to the Administration, the Supervisor and the faculty member. The Chair of the Committee compiles the letters for faculty members in the same category of evaluation or application and sends them as a single document to the administration alphabetized by last name in each category.

These letters serve the purposes of documenting the evaluation of performance by an elected Committee of tenured faculty members in Regis College and in the very large majority of cases providing the Committee with the opportunity to highlight performance accomplishments and to advocate for Regis College faculty members to the administration. Although administrators have given Committee on Rank and Tenure letters substantial weight, they are not the final word in decisions regarding tenure and promotion. These decisions are made by the Provost and President (and in the past the Board of Trustees).

Composition, Structure, & Length. A member of the Committee on Rank and Tenure will serve as primary author for each letter. All members of the Committee look at the submitted materials and the materials in the faculty member's Academic Record file. The full Committee discusses each letter and edit it line-by-line. The letters typically start with an informational paragraph; have three sections on teaching, scholarship, and service; and finish with a concluding paragraph. The letters typically are about $\frac{3}{4}$ page to two pages in length. This length varies based on primary author, if the letter is an evaluation letter or application recommendation, and what is discussed. Do not infer anything from letter length. Content is what matters.

Listing of Accomplishments. Committee letters usually include a re-statement of some of the faculty member's accomplishments and/or challenges from the self-Evaluation or Application. This is not meant to be exhaustive, and the committee does this to highlight these for the administrators who will read the letters and who usually do not have the time to refer to the initial materials. The Committee often chooses the items that would be most important or impactful *for this administrative audience*.

"Is making progress towards tenure [promotion]." Committee letters for faculty members on the tenure track and or/seeking promotion to Associate Professor often state that the faculty member "is making progress towards tenure [promotion]". This means that the faculty member is performing well and performing in a way that suggests that the current trajectory will result in a positive recommendation regarding tenure [promotion]. The Committee states something like this in the large majority of letters of tenure-track faculty members. This statement does not suggest any deficiency and is a positive statement.

"The Committee looks forward to...." Committee letters may include a statement that the "Committee looks forward to" a particular thing from the faculty member. This means that the Committee wants to support and agree with a plan stated/implied by the faculty member or that the Committee wants to highlight something that would be a typical next step for

faculty members in Regis College. It suggests that the faculty members should continue as planned and/or know that the stated thing is a common next step.

“The Committee suggests....” Committee letters may include a statement that “the Committee suggests that Dr./Prof. _____” does a particular thing. Faculty members should take suggestions from the Committee seriously. If the faculty member thinks something else would better address a concern, the faculty member should be sure to do that thing to address the concern. When making suggestions, the Committee is trying to help the faculty member return to or stay on track to meet the performance requirements of tenure, promotion, and/or the current position. Address the suggestions and results in the next evaluation.

The Committee Quotes Itself. The specifics matter for this, but in most cases, this will be the Committee quoting its prior suggestion or concern in a letter. If the Committee quotes a prior suggestion or concern, then this means the faculty member did not satisfactorily address it, and should *do so immediately*.

In general, if you are confused by your letter (which we would hope is not the case—we try to write them clearly), we encourage you to seek feedback. Your department or program chair gets a copy of the letter (and has seen many of these for your colleagues), so could give you feedback. You should also feel comfortable asking the Chair of the committee for feedback if you have questions.

Interpretation of evaluation ranking terms.

Lastly, in the past the Committee has received questions about how it interprets the evaluation terms laid out in the self-evaluation and the handbook—“unacceptable,” “competent,” “noteworthy,” “accomplished” and “outstanding.” In an effort to create better transparency into what guides our evaluations, the Committee’s working understanding of those terms are below (They are also included in the best practices page we provide for supervisor evaluations)

Unacceptable: This means a course correction is required, something needs to be changed or improved in order to meet the requirements of your rank, or to earn tenure if on tenure track.

Competent: This demonstrates a lot of potential in a category, but that it has not yet been proven. A faculty member may have indicated things to work on and is making progress towards those clear goals. This is acceptable and satisfactory work, especially at the rank of an assistant professor who is newer to teaching or research.

Noteworthy: This is good solid work to be proud of. Given the limitations of a place like Regis, this is someone who is putting in a lot of effort and has started to see the fruits of their labor. This is someone who can point to clear achievements in any of the categories, though maybe not as high of quantity or as substantial to their field.

Accomplished: This is someone who over a period of time has demonstrated great work. Their teaching record points to clear effectiveness and continual attention to improving pedagogy. They have demonstrated sustained research output in either quantity or quality of work. They

have demonstrated not only a willingness to serve on committees, but have added quality contributions to their service roles in their department, college, university or for the student body. Typically, faculty at this level have demonstrated a breadth of service areas.

Outstanding: This level of performance is reserved for those who are doing exceptional work. Their accomplishments in teaching, research/creative work, or service are truly extraordinary.