Overview of the Tenure Process

Tenure track faculty members at CCC undergo a five semester tenure process before a final decision regarding their tenure is made. Each semester has its own objectives and outcomes, which increase in depth as the tenure track faculty member moves closer to the end of the process. Each semester is outlined in detail in this manual. Here we provide a brief overview of the entire process.

Faculty members begin the tenure process with the Tenure Orientation Seminar the week prior to the start of classes. The goal of the orientation is to familiarize the tenure track faculty member with the tenure process, introduce the Talents of Teaching, and assist with the development of two of the required documents for this semester – the syllabus with explanation and the assessment with explanation.

Tenure track faculty members are required to participate in the Mentor Program for the first two years of the tenure process. Mentors will be tenured faculty from outside of the tenure track faculty member’s department. Mentor and mentee visit each other’s classes and engage in reflective discussions about teaching and learning. The mentor/mentee relationship is completely confidential and non-evaluative. Please refer to the Mentor Handbook for more information.

The Department Chair and an administrator will formally evaluate one of the tenure track faculty member’s class sessions each Fall semester. During the Spring semesters, the tenure track faculty will be formally evaluated by two tenured faculty members.¹ After each classroom observation, the tenure track faculty member must complete a post-observation reflection, meant to provide a context for the class session and a space for the tenure track faculty member to practice critical reflection and consider how observer feedback will be integrated in the future.

By the end of each Fall semester, the tenure track faculty member will complete a portfolio documenting progress towards tenure.² The contents and descriptions of each portfolio are described in detail in this manual.

During the second semester, tenure track faculty members are required to actively participate in the Second Semester Seminar. This is a graduate level seminar which engages the tenure track faculty members in thoughtful conversations regarding the Talents of Teaching and theories of learning. Through this seminar, tenure track faculty members will each design a teaching and service philosophy, and discuss how this philosophy is put into practice in their own classrooms.

By the end of the Second Semester Seminar, tenure track faculty members will also have created an Individualized Learning and Service Plan (ILSP). This document is the tenure track faculty member’s individual plan to achieve tenure. The ILSP documents the tenure track faculty member’s strengths and areas for growth, based on the Talents of Teaching and feedback received through classroom observations. It then lays out a systematic plan to address the identified areas for growth in the Talents as well as ways strengths will be used to provide meaningful service. The ILSP is reviewed and approved through the Second Semester Review, a meeting between the tenure track faculty member, the department chair, and an administrator. Though the ILSP must be approved, it is not to remain a static document but

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¹ These observations will occur in the reverse semesters in the case of Spring hires.
² Portfolios will be completed in the Spring semester in the case of Spring hires.
rather, is considered a *living document* that can and must change if circumstances change so that it stays a relevant and meaningful plan. The tenure track faculty member, in discussion with the department chair and administration, is allowed to deviate from the original plan as long as the areas for growth are still being adequately addressed, and the deviations can be defended through the tenure track faculty member’s final argument for tenure.

The tenure track faculty member spends the last three semesters of the tenure process enacting the ILSP, and developing a strong argument for tenure. The argument for tenure is the culminating document of the tenure process. This is where the tenure track faculty member demonstrates knowledge of learning theory, provides examples of putting theory into practice in the classroom, discusses how identified areas for growth were addressed and offers evidence of competence in the *Talents of Teaching.*