



PREPARING PROMOTION AND TENURE DOCUMENTS

**Guidelines for
Washington State University Extension
County and Area Faculty**

July 2007

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This document is designed to assist WSU Extension faculty prepare effective tenure and promotion dossiers in an orderly and efficient manner. Work of county and area extension faculty frequently differs from that of other faculty. To assure the work of county faculty is fully recognized; the candidate must pay close attention to university, college, and unit criteria and be careful and thorough in preparation of the dossier. This manual is designed to help.

Official Instructions

Each year the Associate Vice President and Dean, WSU Extension, issues instructions about the preparation of tenure and promotion materials. These instructions build upon university-wide instructions issued by the Provost. Changes may occur in these instructions from year to year, so always follow the current year's instructions and watch for additional communication from your district director about changes in procedures or criteria.

Keeping Records

It is critical that you keep accurate and complete records of all your contributions from year to year, including annually updated vita. The web-based [WORQS](#) can help you do this. If you update your records in WORQS on a regular basis throughout the year, you will be able to produce up-to-date reports with relative ease. Always keep paper or electronic copies of publications, software, and articles that may supplement your dossier.

Sources of Information

You will find WSU Extension information about performance expectations for tenure and promotion on the Policies and Procedures web page (<http://ext.wsu.edu/admin/>) under "Performance Appraisal." Careful review of these documents will help you prepare a high quality dossier. When seeking advice from peers in preparing your dossier, be sure they are referring to the same instructions and criteria that you are using. Some faculty follow the advice of colleagues that were previously promoted or tenured only to discover later the information was inaccurate because of changes from year to year in the guidelines. In addition to the published guidelines, your career guidance committee and your district director are essential sources of information about the preparation of the dossier.

Helpful Advice

It is important to note that preparing for promotion and/or tenure is an on-going process and not something that is done at the last minute. When preparing tenure and/or promotion materials, there are several time-proven techniques that will help you develop a quality dossier.

1. Maintain good files (including information in the WORQS on-line database) beginning with the first year of employment. Review tenure and promotion criteria and procedures often and assess your progress every year.

2. Discuss tenure and promotion requirements with your district director or guidance committee annually to clearly understand expectations and to collect and summarize the proper information.
3. Schedule adequate time for preparation of materials. Write in blocks with a couple days in between. Review the previously written materials and make corrections before moving to the next block.
4. Be careful about listening to “tenure myths.” Just because someone “went through the T & P Process” does not mean he or she fully understood the process or that your situation or requirements are the same. The best source of information is from those who establish the standards and prepare the evaluative statements based on the materials you present (your District Director or the Associate Vice President and Dean, WSU Extension). Refer to “A Guide to Washington State University’s Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Tenure-track Faculty Members: Tips for Faculty Members, Mentors, Department Chairs, and Deans,” August 2005
<http://provost.wsu.edu/siteindex/documents/2006%20PT%20Guidelines.DOC>.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING TENURE AND PROMOTION DOSSIERS

Academic Writing Style

One of the most common problems found in writing for tenure and promotion documents is the use of passive voice. Use active voice whenever possible. To illustrate the use of active vs. passive voice, please consider the two examples below.

Passive Voice: “The dramatic increase in 4-H enrollment in the county was caused by a new approach we took to recruiting potential 4-H members,”

More Active Voice: “A new approach to 4-H recruiting in our county caused a dramatic increase in 4-H enrollment,”

The active voice demonstrates that the person is actually achieving outcomes. This also makes the statement more concise and direct. You should always strive to use active voice in preparing your materials for promotion and/or tenure.

Also, avoid writing in a pretentious manner. This is often done in a subconscious (or deliberate) manner in an attempt to impress the reader. Avoid using multiple words when one will do or using formal language rather than conversational language. These are symptoms of pretentious writing. Consider the following examples.

Pretentious: “I arrived prior to the time that...”

- Direct:** “I arrived before.....”
- Pretentious:** “The exemplary behavior evidenced by the targeted clientele group was a marked departure from the raucous display generated by the general population in attendance.”
- Direct:** “The target audience behaved extremely well while the rest of the group was very disruptive.”

Also, consider the following example of jargon-laden pretentious writing described by Robert Gordon, writing in the American Association of University Professors Bulletin.

- Pretentious:** “It has been observed that the offspring of familial units in the lower economic brackets demonstrate a frequent tendency to sublimate status-anxiety by means of organized aggression taking the form of vandalistic assaults upon institutional properties.”
- Direct:** “The children of poor parents often try to smother their sense of inferiority by throwing rocks at the schoolroom windows.”

Note that in each case, the meaning of the sentence is far clearer when written in a less formal, more direct style.

Triteness

Trite phrases are those that are ‘worn-out’ or used so many times that they no longer are interesting or effective and therefore serve no real purpose. These are also often called clichés. Do not use trite phrases in your promotion and/or tenure materials.

Examples: *We’re all in the same boat.*
When it rains it pours
The bottom line,
In reality
Interpersonal relations
Political unrest

Additional Resources

Writing problems are certainly not limited to the topics mentioned above. Other common problems include poor sentence structure, lack of sentence variety, dangling participles, improper word usage, and sexism.

Remember to use the spelling and grammar check program on your computer. But keep in mind that your word processor’s spell check and grammar check will not catch all errors. Have someone else read your materials. They will often find overlooked errors.

There are a number of good books designed to help people improve writing skills. Some well-known resources are:

- (1) William Zinsser's *On Writing Well*, published by Harper and Row.
- (2) *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, published by Macmillan
- (3) *The Art of Readable Writing* by Rudolf Flesch, published by Collier.
- (4) *The Business Writer's Workshop Notebook* by Lawrence Ragan Communications, Inc., 407 Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL, 60605.

Layout

Consider the reader when writing your materials. Use the following guidelines for your promotion and/or tenure dossier including context and contribution statements.

1. Use 11-12 point fonts.
2. Use a 'standard' font such as Arial, Times New Roman, Garamond or Stone Serif.
3. Maintain 1.25" left margins and 1 inch top, bottom and right margins
4. Bold the heading on page one and all category titles
5. Single space all documents
6. Pages must be numbered

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Faculty seeking tenure and/or promotion must provide examples of their work. This provides reviewers supportive documents and adds clarity beyond information in your contribution statement or vita. Organize these supporting materials in logical sub-sections, with your most significant contributions at the front of each sub-section. Clearly list the materials and indicate what your contribution was on a cover sheet for each subsection. Translate anything written in a language other than English, or describe the document for the reader in English. Items to include in the supporting materials:

- Copies of publications, curricula, software, videos, newspaper columns, and radio scripts that you developed, or were substantially involved in developing. Press clippings that clearly show the outreach or impact of your work, e.g., professional interviews, feature stories about your program and a list of papers with circulation figures that print news articles you write.
- Letters providing substantive information about an aspect of your work that is not given in the vita. This might include evaluation letter or letters describing the outcomes of a program that you did. Do **not** include general thank-you letters, letters asking you to serve on committees, and award letters.

CONTEXT STATEMENT

The Context Statement should not exceed two pages and can be much shorter. The statement allows you to describe any special circumstances that you feel may impact the tenure situation. It may include a description of expectations created by circumstances in local communities, research and extension centers or branch campuses, requirements of joint or split appointments or other special circumstances such as changes in responsibilities or commitments not fully addressed in your position description.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The Contribution Statement is a brief introduction clearly describing your professional contributions to those reviewing your dossier. Although this document is one of several which comprises the total dossier, it is probably the single most important and usually the most challenging to prepare. Therefore, plan to spend a significant amount of time gathering information about your work, analyzing the information, selecting significant efforts, developing a framework for telling your story, and then writing and editing. Consider the following when writing your contribution statement.

Audience

The people who read and make recommendations or decisions about your dossier include:

1. WSU faculty in your tenure unit. These reviewers will include all tenured faculty at or above the rank you are seeking. These faculty will complete a Tenure and Promotion or a Promotion ballot based on your dossier.
2. Outside reviewers are typically extension faculty and administrators at other land-grant universities. These reviewers may include experienced county directors or senior faculty members.
3. The WSU Extension District Director prepares the primary evaluative statement based on your contribution statements and the other materials in your dossier.
4. WSU Extension Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee evaluates each dossier and makes recommendations to the Associate Vice President and Dean.
5. The Associate Dean and Director, WSU Extension, prepares an additional evaluative statement.
6. WSU Provost examines the entire dossier, including all evaluative statements, and makes a final decision regarding tenure and/or promotion.

The evaluations and decisions of the persons listed above are crucial to the process, but each person has different perspectives and knowledge about you and your work even

though all will receive the printed criteria for promotion and tenure. Carefully consider the roles, perspectives, and knowledge of all these groups of readers as you prepare your contribution statement. Make certain that you accurately and clearly describe your contributions.

Keep in mind that many, including the Provost, will have little or no prior knowledge of you or your work and will, therefore, rely heavily on the image you portray of your contributions. As you prepare your statement, continually try to put yourself in the reader's place.

Criteria

To understand how your contribution statement will be judged by the readers mentioned above, carefully read the document entitled *Policies and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure of Washington State University Extension County-based Faculty* and the annual instructions from the Provost and Executive Vice President and the Associate Vice President and Dean, WSU Extension.

In the larger sense, the Contribution Statement should answer the question, "What are the most significant contributions that I made to help solve important problems, resolve issues, or meet high priority needs?" It is essential that you identify works of 'greatest significance' because you cannot include everything. The contribution statement, including the future contributions statement, is limited to four pages. Thus, pick the most important items and express them clearly and concisely. Keep in mind that the people who will read your materials will be pressed for time. When thinking about criteria, think big. Contributions of "significance" might be the three to four issues that you addressed and the durable impacts that you achieved. The timeframe for assessment of impacts should be consistent with your tenure clock (time in tenure-track) or cumulative effort in the case of promotion to E-4. It is also assumed that much of your work was focused on these issues.

Content

Your Contribution Statement should begin with a short introduction outlining your current programmatic and geographic responsibilities. Following that the introduction, use the mechanical structure: NEEDS, ACTION, IMPACT. By using this approach you can describe 1) your role in identifying a problem, issue, or need; 2) what actions you took or strategies you developed; and 3) what changes in the lives of people happened as a result.

Typically, faculty have the most difficulty describing the results or impacts of their work. This is the most important part of the statement. Achieving and documenting measurable change of educational programming is a fundamental part of the educational philosophy of WSU Extension. Your description of the problem and actions are simply a way of expressing what steps you took to reach the outcome. Concrete, measurable, observable impacts of significance are essential to building a strong contribution statement. Your statement must go beyond outlining what you did as an educator. The statement should describe how learners changed their behaviors as a result of the knowledge that they

attained and how this application of knowledge improved their social, economic, or environmental situation.

Deciding upon and describing what is a significant impact often poses problems for faculty. Approaching it as a matter of perspective may help. For example, describing a pattern of actions that resulted in accomplishment of major goals over one or two years is more significant than a collection of shorter-term, unrelated accomplishments. Most significant contributions do not occur in one year. Instead, significant accomplishments are almost always the result of careful need assessment, planned action to address these needs, and recurring evaluation of effectiveness leading to refinement of methodology.

Writing Strategy

Your task is to describe, in four pages, contributions that demonstrate a substantial amount of depth of understanding and perspective about problems, issues, and solutions that matter to people. How you express these contributions is important. Choose three or four major issues that you have addressed. For each issue, give examples of actions that show innovation, adaptability, flexibility, or creativity in dealing with those problems and needs. Show connections among disciplines, over time. Look for patterns in your work. There should be long-term threads in your impacts that demonstrate focus and add up to major accomplishments. Again, you should be able to clearly demonstrate changes in behavior and associated improvement in the social, economic, or environmental situation (impacts) on the lives of people as a result of the actions you have taken.

Also, give attention to the relationship between your contribution statement and the other parts of your dossier. For example, your vita should support the focus of your contribution statement. Additionally, supporting materials should corroborate what you write in your contribution statement.

FUTURE CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Tips on Writing

The Future Contribution Statement describes your professional aspirations and the planned trajectory of your program. It affords you the opportunity to state a vision for the future for both your program and for you as a professional. Therefore, your statement should include the future accomplishments (impacts) anticipated from your program and professional development that you will pursue to make this vision a reality.

Since only four pages are allowed for both the contribution statement and the future contribution statement, the future contributions statement should be brief, powerful and compelling. It should be visionary but specific enough to effectively describe what you propose to accomplish in the next five years. Here are areas you might address:

- **Contributions to the People of the State**
Describe the future direction of your program including anticipated educational and organizational activities, innovative delivery methods, and plans to acquire

extramural funds to support this vision. Future contributions are expected to impact at least the geographic area to which you are assigned, but if it exists, potential for statewide and national impacts should also be included.

- **Contributions to Your Profession**
Discuss how you plan to contribute to your discipline and your plans to assume leadership roles in state or national professional associations, and/or national level involvement in Extension programming.
- **Contributions to Washington State University and Extension**
Discuss how future activities will contribute to the recognition of WSU as the state's land-grant institution. Outline any aspirations for university service or activities that further other purposes of the university, such as enhancing scope and impacts of research, increasing cultural diversity of WSU, improving effectiveness of academic programs, and augmenting student recruitment. You might also discuss your aspirations toward administrative leadership within Extension or the university.

Avoid using words, such as “I plan to,” “I hope to,” or “I will continue to.” This is an opportunity to develop your vision for the future and how to accomplish that vision. Take the time to “think big” and provide some insight on how you will take your program to the next level and not to just maintain the status quo.

The Future Contribution Statement should end with a tight closing sentence. Do not waste valuable space thanking WSU for giving you this opportunity.

PREPARING A VITA

A well-prepared vita (or CV) is an essential part of your tenure and promotion package. In a sense, it is a shorthand autobiography of your professional career. Therefore, it should provide readers a clear and concise view of your qualifications and accomplishments. Included at the end of this document is a CV template for your convenience. This provides examples and standardized format that incorporate requirements as outlined by the Provost's and Associate Vice President and Dean's offices.

Citations

In preparing your vita you should clearly define your role in each item listed such as publications and presentations. There are two issues relative to citations that often lead to confusion among faculty.

First, a presentation is designated as an “invited presentation” only when you were asked by your peers or other people with expertise or stature to speak based on your reputation or accomplishments as an expert. If you speak at a national meeting in response to a call for papers, this is not considered “invited presentation.” Even though such presentations

are important and should be listed appropriately, they do not receive the same recognition as an invited presentation. This may seem to be a subtle distinction, but in the preparation of the tenure and promotion dossier, it is important.

The second point of confusion is delineating between ‘co-authorship’ and ‘junior authorship.’ Co-authorship indicates a greater contribution than junior authorship, so your citation should clarify your role. Do not leave it to reviewers to guess. Their interpretation will likely not be to your advantage as they generally assume you were junior author.

Appendix A: Vita Template



INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE VITA TEMPLATE (MS Word 1997-2003 version)

This template provides examples and standardized format that incorporates the requirements for faculty Vita as outlined by the Provost's office. List your accomplishments and experiences in reverse chronological order - most recent first. Please note that references given are examples only and do not represent actual articles or authors. The Vita Example provided is written for County and Area Extension Educators. Both the Vita Template and the Online Instructions can be found at <http://ext.wsu.edu/admin/> under Performance Appraisal.

Instructions and Example:

An example vita for John Doe, Extension Educator, E-3 is provided. The Instructions for the Vita for each section are written in hidden Green Italics text, which will not appear when you print your own vita. The Example vita entries will appear in highlighted Yellow text and will not appear when you print your own vita.

To view the embedded Instructions (Green italics text) and the Example entries (Yellow text) on the Vita Template:

- Under Tools, select "Options"
 - From the folder tab labeled "View" you will find "Formatting marks" section. Click the box "Hidden Text" and click OK.
 - To remove the Instructions and Examples, repeat the process, and click on the box "Hidden Text" to toggle off this feature.

To print the Instructions and Examples, under File, go to the "Print." In the lower left corner is a box labeled Options." Under the "Include with Document" section, click on the box "Hidden Text" and then click OK.

- Remember to repeat the process, and click on the box "Hidden Text" to toggle off this print feature.

To expand a table to include more entries, hit tab while the cursor is in the last cell. By doing so, another row will be added for your next entry.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE VITA TEMPLATE (MS Word 2007 version)

This template provides examples and standardized format that incorporates the requirements for faculty Vita as outlined by the Provost's office. List your accomplishments and experiences in reverse chronological order - most recent first. Please note that references given are examples only and do not represent actual articles or authors. The Vita Example provided is written for County and Area Extension Educators. Both the Vita Template and the Online Instructions can be found at <http://ext.wsu.edu/admin/> under Performance Appraisal.

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To view the embedded Instructions (Green italics text) and the Example entries (Yellow text) on the Vita Template:

Turn off and on selected formatting marks:

- Click the *Microsoft Office Button* (top left hand corner) then click *Word Options*
- Click *Display*
- Under *Always show these formatting marks* on the screen, clear the check boxes for any formatting marks that you do not want to show in your documents at all times.

To print the Instructions and Examples, under File, go to the "Print." In the lower left corner is a box labeled Options." Under the "Printing Options" section, click on the box "Print Hidden Text" and then click OK.

- Remember to repeat the process, and click on the box "Print Hidden Text" to toggle off this print feature.

To expand a table to include more entries, hit tab while the cursor is in the last cell. By doing so, another row will be added for your next entry.

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
 EXTENSION

VITA

OFFICE PHONE:
FAX:

EMAIL:
WEB:

DATE OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT AT WSU:
TENURED? No Yes DATE OF TENURE:
DATE OF PRESENT RANK OR TITLE:

EDUCATION

- A. Degrees Earned
- B. Additional Coursework for Credit
- C. Certificates and Licenses

EMPLOYMENT

- A. University related
- B. Other

HONORS AND AWARDS

FUND GENERATION

- A. Grants and Awards
- B. Grant Proposals – Unfunded

Year	Total Grants	Total Dollars

C. Program Sponsors, Partners, and Revenue

PUBLICATIONS

A. Books and Chapters in Books, Monographs

B. Professional Articles, Refereed or Peer Reviewed

C. Abstracts and Proceedings

D. Extension Publications, Peer Reviewed

E. Curriculum Development

F. Other Publications

PRESENTATIONS

A. International

B. National

C. State

D. Local

OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

A. Media Presentations

B. E-mail List Serves

C. Manuals

D. Computer Programs Developed

E. Video Programs

F. Web Pages

UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTION

A. Credit Courses Taught

B. Additional Teaching

C. Advising

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

A. University

B. Community

C. Review Activities

PROFESSIONAL & SCHOLARLY ORGANIZATIONS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT