Fall 2013

TO: Department Chairs, Directors and Deans

FROM: Simone A. Schweber, Chair, Social Studies Divisional Committee

RE: Tenure Reviews during the 2013-2014 Academic Year

Documents relevant to the submission of tenure dossiers to the Social Studies Divisional Committee, including the most recent version of the committee’s tenure guidelines and template letters, are available at:

www.secfac.wisc.edu/divcomm/social

The divisional committee seeks to work with departments to ensure fair and judicious reviews of candidates. Please contact me or the divisional committees coordinator (Lindsey Stoddard Cameron, divisional@secfac.wisc.edu) with any questions, comments or suggestions.

The committee’s tenure guidelines describe the divisional committee’s standards and expectations. Below are some brief highlights:

• The department chair’s cover letter is the single most important document in the dossier. Please take the time to write a concise yet comprehensive review according to the guidelines. More than half the cases that are denied by the social studies divisional committee are due to weak dossiers that did not fully articulate support for the candidate’s promotion.

• We expect a tenure file to explain how a particular mixture of activities relates to the department’s mission, the terms of the candidate’s appointment and the communication of expectations and support provided to the candidate.

• Outside reviewers should be outstanding scholars in the candidate’s field. The reviewers should not be UW faculty and should be at arm’s length from the candidate (i.e., independent and on an equal footing). Questions regarding the application of this ideal should be directed to me or to Ms. Stoddard Cameron.

• Research collaboration should be documented indicating the effort among team members.

• Teaching should be fully documented, highlighting innovations as appropriate. The committee expects to see clear evidence of annual departmental peer review of teaching. An example of a peer evaluation of teaching form is available on the website, if that is helpful to your department.

• Extension/Outreach activities where appropriate should be fully documented and their impact on the faculty member’s research and teaching efforts.
A number of exemplary dossiers from past successful tenure cases are available for review. To arrange a time to look over these dossiers or to seek assistance with any questions or problems relating to the tenure process and the divisional committee, please contact the divisional committees office (262-3931 or divisional@secfac.wisc.edu).

A closing plea: The committee’s calendar commonly gets overloaded in the spring. Please submit dossiers sooner rather than later.

Thank you.