

CBDNA Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for Marching and Pep Band Directors

It is strongly recommended that institutions define expectations for newly hired marching and pep band directors pertaining to tenure/promotion at the outset of employment.

The college marching and pep band director position is a unique academic appointment on campus. The marching and pep band director is often a member of the music faculty with significant responsibilities to music and non-music majors as well as to constituents with objectives outside the scope of the artistic and academic mission of the music program.

The following guidelines are intended to assist evaluating committees by clarifying the duties of the college marching and pep band director, providing a broader sense of what the nature of these positions entails, and outlining some of the factors that impact the success of the marching and pep band director. It is recommended that experienced marching and pep band directors be included in the peer review.

DUTIES

The marching and pep band director position at most institutions places a larger than usual percentage of the faculty members duties into the areas of teaching and service. The marching and pep band director prepares student ensembles (often with minimal weekly rehearsal time) for many performances in front of large audiences. On many campuses the marching band has numerous performances during the fall semester, each one under the intense scrutiny of its constituency. The basketball bands also have a large number of performances per year. Additional ensembles for athletic events may add even more to that number. Therefore, the focus of the college marching and pep band director must largely be placed on preparing ensembles for public performances.

TEACHING

There are a number of aspects that committees can evaluate in the area of teaching:

- 1) **Quality of Teaching and Performance.** Issues to consider are musicianship of the director, suitability of music for performance, pacing of rehearsals, sequencing of instruction, effective communication, and overall level of performances. Factors that should inform the evaluation include understanding the musical level of students in the ensemble; amount of support staff for the ensemble; budgetary support for instruments, music, and equipment; and the amount of time available to prepare performances.
- 2) **Leadership Ability.** Does the director consistently unite, motivate, and inspire students and staff to achieve to the best of their ability?
- 3) **Organizational Ability.** Is the director able to manage the myriad of administrative details in order to position the ensemble to have successful performances including event planning, travel arrangements, management of finances, problem resolution, and accessibility?
- 4) **Music Education.** Does the band director utilize the program to effectively prepare future music educators?

- 5) Communication. Does the director communicate effectively with the different constituencies: students, faculty, administration, athletics, general public, music educators?
- 6) Goals and Progress. Does the director have a clear vision and purpose for the ensembles under his/her direction, and a plan to execute that vision? Are there well-articulated mission/vision statements?
- 7) Recruitment and Retention. Does the director consistently demonstrate the ability to recruit and retain students in the program? Factors that should be considered in the evaluation include determining the adequacy of scholarships for recruitment and retention, reasonable time expectations for participating students, budgetary support from the university and athletic department for the program, and appropriate facilities, instruments, and equipment to support students.

RESEARCH/CREATIVE WORK

Due to the unique nature of this faculty position, committees are encouraged to permit a flexible consideration of research and creative work. Because there is such an emphasis on public performances for the director, focus should be more on creative work, which may fall into the following categories:

- 1) Drill Design. Some directors may design the formations for the band shows, a very creative and time-intensive activity.
 - 2) Music Arranging. Some directors may custom arrange the music for their marching and pep bands, again, a very creative and time-intensive activity.
 - 3) Show Design. The director is often responsible for the overall creative aspect of field shows.
 - 4) Music Composition. Some directors may write original music.
 - 5) Performances. The actual performances may be considered creative work.
 - 6) Recordings. Production of CDs and DVDs may be considered.
 - 7) Publicity Materials. Production of recruiting materials, web site design, and yearbooks may have the oversight of the director and may be considered in the review.
- In addition, traditional research activity including publication and juried presentations may be considered as part of the review.

SERVICE

Marching and pep bands by their very nature are service organizations in addition to their academic function. They serve the university community by providing entertainment, spirit, and pageantry to athletic and university functions. The ensembles are often highly visible at these events, and can further an institutions reputation. Each performance by a marching and pep band may be considered service to the university community.

Often, the university marching and pep band and its director provide service for the music education community outside the campus through exhibition performances, sponsorship of high school marching band competitions, school visitations, and summer leadership camps.

Additionally, some bands may involve themselves in charitable work (performing at various functions outside the official university activity) as well as raising direct funds for charitable organizations. These activities often enhance the university's mission and garner community support for the institution.

Marching and pep band directors can also be involved with department and university committees, as well as professional organizations such as the College Band Directors National Association, National Band Association, and the National Association for Music Education.

SUMMARY

It is in the best interest of academic institutions to acknowledge the unique nature of marching and pep band director positions, align expectations to reinforce those qualities the institution wishes to promote for this position, and make known at the time of employment the expectations for tenure and promotion so that the faculty member has ample opportunity to work for a successful outcome. With clear and reasonable expectations that reflect the true nature of the marching and pep band director position for the particular campus, the institution gives itself the ability to hold candidates to high standards for tenure and promotion.