

Department of English Promotion and Tenure Policy Guidelines

Promotion to Associate Professor

Consideration of an assistant professor for tenure and promotion to associate professor is ordinarily determined by statements set forth in letters of appointment, statements that in turn follow AAUP guidelines mandating the timing of tenure review. The formal consideration of assistant professors for tenure and promotion to associate professor begins in the spring semester prior to the academic year during which the candidacy will be considered. The process follows the schedule and guidelines published by the Dean of Faculties and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Promotion to Full Professor

During each spring semester, and no later than the Monday following Spring Break, the department head will send to all associate professors and full professors an invitation for nominations or self-nominations for preliminary consideration for promotion to full professor. Self-nominations and nominations are regarded as having equal standing. Each nomination should include a statement indicating that the nominee has been consulted and is willing to have his or her materials considered. Each nominee will provide a current vita and representative publications for review by all full professors. The full professors will then meet and discuss each nominee. The purpose of the meeting is to offer a response and advice to each nominee regarding the prospects for promotion, and the substance of the discussion will be shared with the nominee at a meeting with the department head. Regardless of the perspectives of the full professor and the department head, the decision about whether or not to pursue the promotion lies with the individual faculty member.

Research

The Department expects all members to be active in pursuing a research agenda that leads to regular publication of work in professionally recognized outlets. Typically, a candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor will have a book completed, but this is not the only appropriate research profile. Depending on the field, for example, a thematically linked series of articles may be more appropriate. In English, a first book is customarily an extensively revised version of the doctoral dissertation. In addition, the candidate is expected to demonstrate evidence of progress beyond the original dissertation work.

Promotion to full professor signifies national recognition. Excellence in teaching and significant service are expected, but normally this level of promotion rests primarily on demonstrated accomplishment in research and publication subsequent to tenure and promotion to associate professor. The primary criteria for research productivity are the quality of the research, the prestige of the venue, and the impact of the publications. In English, promotion to full professor typically has been based on the publication of a single-authored monograph or substantive scholarly edition from a reputable scholarly press judged to represent high-quality research. In some cases, national recognition may rest on a different scholarly profile, e.g., a series of edited collections, substantive articles, publications in refereed electronic venues, or an equivalent body of creative work.

Research productivity is judged by quality foremost as determined by such measures as: refereed vs. non-refereed journals, presses, and electronic sources; professional standing of journals, presses, and electronic sources; reviews, awards, and other evidence of impact on the discipline.

More specifically:

- Single-authored books; substantial scholarly critical editions; substantial articles in refereed journals; chapters in refereed books; refereed edited collections of essays; co-authored/co-edited work; and collaborative work are normally the most highly valued research products as reflecting the most serious investment of scholarly research and creativity.
- Reviews are normally valued least (with the exception of substantial review articles), but again, the professional standing of the outlet may affect its weighting.
- Conference papers and internal research grants are valued, but primarily as evidence of research in progress.
- Given the scarcity of external grants available to faculty in English, the absence of such grants is not deemed significant.
- In the case of creative works (stories, poems, essays, novels, etc.) similar standards apply, in that, again, both quantity and quality are considered, as well as the stature of the publication or press.
- For interdisciplinary work the same criteria in terms of venue and refereed status apply.
- Differences in the customary handling of such publications (e.g., reliance, at some prestigious journals, on an editor rather than a referee process) are also recognized. (See the University list of indicators of excellence and effectiveness in scholarly activities attached.)

Teaching

The department expects every faculty member to teach at a consistently effective level and encourages excellence in teaching. Evaluation of teaching will not be based solely or primarily on student course evaluations, but will reflect a review of such related indicators as course syllabi, evidence of course development, peer evaluations (required for pre-tenure reviews), direction of graduate students, service on committees of graduate students, direction of individual studies, publications relating to teaching, receipt of grants for development of courses, faculty statements on the annual checklist about their aims and methods, etc. (See the University list of indicators of excellence and effectiveness in teaching, attached.)

Evaluation of teaching must also take into account the nature of the course being taught. For example, large-enrollment sections present particular challenges, as do courses normally enrolling a high percentage of non-majors who take the course to satisfy a requirement.

Service

The department expects every member to participate constructively in the life of the department. Such participation is normally demonstrated by regular attendance at meetings, constructive participation in decision-making and other aspects of the functioning of the department.

- Assistant Professors are not expected to perform service beyond the demonstration of good citizenship; there is an expectation, however, that service will increase after third-year reviews.
- For Associate and Full Professors, service includes such activities as advising students (as distinct from teaching), constructive collegueship (i.e., mentoring or assistance of others in fulfilling their duties and maturing as scholars), service on elected and/or appointed committees, and administrative appointments. It may also be demonstrated by service on the Faculty Senate or on College or University committees and service to the profession (such as reviewing papers for journals, chairing sessions at conferences, or serving as an officer of a professional society).

This statement should be read in conjunction with the Tenure-Promotion Procedures of the College of Liberal Arts, which acknowledge the possibility of exceptional situations.

March 22, 2007

Approved by English faculty vote
April 5, 2007

Approved by Dean of Faculties and Dean of Liberal Arts
July 30, 2007