

Department of Government

Criteria for Junior Faculty Tenure and Promotion

Revised January 9, 2016

Central to the mission of the Department of Government is the production and dissemination of knowledge by its faculty as they engage in high-quality research and teaching as well as service to the academic and larger communities. The processes of promotion and tenure are two of the most important procedures through which we recognize and reinforce these values.

To be granted tenure and be promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, a faculty member has to demonstrate that he or she meets or exceeds all criteria in the areas of research and publication, teaching, and university and public service. Superior performance in one area does not lessen the expectations for performance in another.

Research

1. Cases for promotion and tenure require evidence of the sustained productivity, quality, originality, scholarly repute, visibility and impact of the faculty member's research. Emphasis is given in reviewing a file for action to work completed while at American University. For candidates bringing in to American University substantial credit toward tenure, the balance can be adjusted accordingly.
2. In evaluating the candidate's research record, attention will be given to the quality and quantity of published research in the various scholarly outlets.
3. Evaluations of each of these dimensions will be based on the faculty's assessments of the candidate's research with serious consideration given to the evaluations provided by leading national scholars in the candidate's field of specialization.
4. Candidates' research records should reflect a clear research agenda.
5. Candidates' research records will be evaluated in their entirety, and must demonstrate published work beyond the dissertation, research productivity while at American University, and plans for continued research productivity following promotion.
6. The research record should demonstrate independent intellectual contributions. Collaborative publications are valued no less than individual ones so long as there is evidence of the candidate's individual intellectual contribution to the work. Collaborations in which the candidate is less than an equal contributor are less valued.
7. The department values books, article or chapter-length publications, shorter publications and external funding. Independent of the quality of each publication and its outlet of publication, authored books are valued more highly than edited volumes, and peer-reviewed journal articles

are valued more highly than book chapters, non-academic publications and book reviews. Success at winning competitive externally-funded research awards will be regarded as evidence of the quality of the candidate's research and thus will be considered of value independent of the research publications that result from it. Nevertheless, we encourage all junior faculty to publish in the top journals in the field.

8. The Department will also take into account the following in assessing the quality of a candidate's research record:

- a. evidence of the quality, influence, and ranking of the journals that have published the individual's work, including, if possible, evidence of the acceptance rates of the journals.
- b. the reputation and quality of the press that publishes a book.
- c. the judgment of leading scholars in the field, as provided, for instance, in external tenure letters.
- d. evidence of the impact of the individual's research as measured, for example, by citations in the work of other scholars. Published reviews of the candidate's book(s) will also be considered as indicators of impact.
- e. other significant contribution to scholarship, such as compilation of data or provision of other public research goods.
- f. success at winning professional awards.
- g. success at winning competitive externally funded research grants.

9. Work completed as a graduate student will be included in the evaluation of the quantity and quality of research. As with evaluating other research, the value and significance of this work will be evaluated in light of the candidate's independent contributions, its placement and its relevance to the candidate's research agenda.

10. The date of submission of the file for action to the departmental rank and tenure committee is the last relevant date for reporting publication of scholarship, other than updates regarding publication acceptances of materials already referenced in the file (as provided in the CFA's "Instructions for Submitting Files for Action." At 2).

Teaching

1. American University values effective and high quality instruction of its students. Faculty shall provide timely, fair and objective assessment of student performance.

2. Evaluations of faculty teaching will be based on various aspects of the candidate's record, including: student evaluations, syllabi, departmental needs, teaching outside the classroom and participation in faculty development activities which might include peer observation of teaching. Engagement with students outside the classroom includes service on comprehensive exam and dissertation committees, supervision of independent studies, and other forms of mentoring."
3. When available, student evaluations of teaching (SET) will be used in assessing a professor's teaching performance, but they will not be the only means to conduct such an assessment. In considering the SET data, we should take into account the number of respondents, variation in scores, grade distribution, whether the course is required, and the number of times the professor has previously taught the course.
4. These student-completed evaluations should be looked at in their entirety, not just on a select few questions.
5. Because of the potential for the difficulty of the course negatively impacting student evaluations, tenure reviews must take into account the level of difficulty of the courses taught, as well as the grading distribution in those courses.
6. Evaluation of teaching should also consider the size of the classes and the level of the classes.
7. Consistently high teaching evaluations as well as improvements in teaching evaluations over time are valued.
8. Junior faculty members may opt to have a senior professor observe him/her teaching classes so that the senior professor can provide a written assessment of the junior professor's teaching. This written report will be included in the junior faculty member's file. It will be used to assist in the review of the junior professor, and it should also be regarded as a means for the junior faculty member to receive advice on how to improve his or her teaching.
9. Faculty members who are up for review are required to include in their Action Files the syllabi for every course they have taught at American University. These syllabi will be used to evaluate the quality of teaching by the faculty members.
10. Faculty members should demonstrate an ability and willingness to teach courses of varying sizes, at different levels (introductory, upper division undergraduate, and graduate), and in various special programs (General Education, University College, and Honors) depending upon the needs of the Department.
11. The Department of Government values and expects faculty to pursue opportunities in teaching beyond the confines of the classroom. Such teaching is done through the supervision of senior theses, serving as a capstone advisor, serving on Ph.D. dissertation committees, and advising Master's research projects and independent studies.
12. Faculty should be aware that the University provides numerous opportunities for faculty

development, and faculty members are encouraged to partake in them to the extent that such activities enhance the teaching record. These opportunities include teaching conferences, seminars, and workshops on the integration of technology into the classroom.

Service

1. Every member of the faculty at American University is expected to perform service. Active faculty involvement in the life of the department, school, and university is essential for effective faculty governance and is a responsibility of every member of the faculty. Service outside the university, to the discipline of political science, the scholarly profession and the broader community, is also valued.
2. The department expects some service of junior faculty but recognizes that research and teaching should be the priorities of junior tenure-line faculty.
3. A record of service may include the following:
 - a. Service to the department. This may include administrative appointments and membership on departmental committees. Evaluation should take into account the time burden on individual faculty members.
 - b. Service to the School and the University. This may include election to or service on school or university-level deliberative bodies or committees. This may also include other service that benefits the faculty or the student body as a whole.
 - c. Service to the profession. This may include service on professional committees, conference committees, peer review activities for journals, presses and granting bodies, and editorial duties.
 - d. Service to the community. This may include public service, public lectures, expert testimony before government committees or courts of law, participation in public forums or media appearances and similar activities.