

Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure

School of Education

American University

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The School of Education expects candidates for promotion and tenure to be demonstrably excellent scholars and teachers, and exemplars of meritorious service. A candidate unable to document impactful and sustained scholarship during pre-tenure years will not be recommended for promotion to Associate Professor or tenure, even if his or her teaching record is excellent. Conversely, an excellent scholar evinced as an ineffective teacher will not be recommended for promotion or tenure.

In assessing a faculty member's attainments, the SOE is directed by the standards, timetables, and procedures for reappointments, promotion, and tenure as stipulated in the Faculty Manual, supplemented by instructions from the Dean of Faculty, the University Committee on Faculty Affairs and the Dean of CAS.

The guidelines that follow are intended to assist faculty as they reflect on their development as scholars and teachers relative to reappointment, promotion and tenure. They are also intended to guide the SOE's Rank and Tenure Committee (RTC) and Dean in fulfilling their responsibilities. These guidelines are only one of several resources for candidates to consult, particularly the university policy guidelines mentioned above.

The field of Education embraces subfields that draw from several academic disciplines and professional studies. Thus, faculty research agendas and products are associated with different epistemological and methodological conventions and different authorship regimens. Assessments of candidates' attainments will expect evidence of commitment to and mastery of one or more of these different conventions and regimens.

Promotion to the rank of Professor is primarily the result of the faculty member's level of sustained and cumulative scholarly achievement, high-quality teaching, and exemplary service. Length of time in rank or at AU is not a factor in promotion to Professor, nor is the number of years taken to warrant consideration for same. Additional elements vital to a candidate's application for promotion to full professor are specified in the respective scholarship, teaching and service sections of this document. Faculty members considering promotion to Professor are strongly advised to review the policies and procedures for promotion and to seek the advice and counsel of the RTC Chair and Dean before submitting a file for action for promotion.

The following three sections delineate criteria currently in use to define and describe excellence in scholarship, teaching and service. As a general principle, faculty members are expected to achieve high quality performance in each area. Particular strength in one area cannot compensate for weak performance in another.

Scholarship

Scholarship refers principally to the creation and dissemination of knowledge to audiences of scholars and, in a professional unit such as the SOE, practicing school and education-related professionals and interested parties among the general public. Because the criterion of excellence in scholarship is connotatively broad, it cannot be measured by a fixed number of publications. Thus, “excellence” in scholarship is measured by work that is significant (1) in advancing a field of inquiry or discipline and (2), in improving educational institutions and the performance of students, teachers and other educational professionals.

Because SOE faculty do work that is grounded in a variety of social science disciplines, scholarship expectations for tenure can be met in several ways. One way is to have published at least one highly regarded and peer-reviewed book with a well-regarded publisher. In other disciplines, the publication of a significant body of impactful articles in refereed, scholarly journals may meet the standard. It is the responsibility of faculty members to clearly articulate the scholarly publication norms in their respective disciplines or educational subfields.

Excellence in scholarship requires a sustained record of impactful, knowledge-expanding scholarly publications and, as noted in the *Faculty Manual*, evidence of “the likelihood of continued successful achievements.” Indicators of a well-grounded future research trajectory include articles under review at peer reviewed journals, contracted book manuscripts and other works-in-progress, and peer-reviewed presentations as evidence of future work. Publication contracts do not count toward published work but rather as indicators of one’s scholarly trajectory. Published scholarly works consist of scholarship that has been submitted and accepted in final form and scheduled for publication. Work under review, even if revised and resubmitted, does not constitute publication.

The SOE encourages faculty to pursue external funding, but acknowledges that funding is not available to all fields of educational inquiry. The SOE expects faculty to pursue external funding in disciplines and subfields where funding is available and there

is a reasonable likelihood of success. The SOE values both the roles of PI and investigator, and researcher on grant proposals. When evaluating external funding initiatives, the SOE will weigh the value of proposals, *per se*, since they are time-consuming and reflect commitment to meritorious scholarly research; nonetheless, the SOE expects faculty to demonstrate both effort and success. Proposals *per se* are not substitutes for works in final form accepted for publication.

In the interest of clarity, the following comments are offered for guidance:

- Publishing in online journals will be considered if the editorial and refereeing processes are demonstratively commensurate with established disciplinary standards.
- Refereed book chapters are more highly weighted than invited book chapters.
- Invited articles and edited collections are valued but the weights credited will vary. The former may attest to the stature of a scholar and will be considered in the context of the invitation.
- An edited collection of original scholarship could represent an expansion of established knowledge and would be valued as such, whereas an edited collection of previously published scholarship or conference proceedings would carry a lesser value.
- Other types of publications, such as chapters in edited collections, non-refereed journals, substantive encyclopedia entries and research reports, are valued but generally less so than refereed journal articles and books.
- Review essays, encyclopedia entries, and book reviews carry the least weight in evaluations and will be assessed in the context of their respective contributions to the field.
- Abstracts on their own are not counted as scholarship.
- Professional honors and awards for scholarship serve as evidence of faculty achievement as do keynote presentations at scholarly venues and events.
- The SOE will also weigh the importance of presenting original scholarship at academic conferences and colloquia as a net positive but as not sufficient in and of itself.

Styles of authorship vary across the many specialized subfields within Education. The range of standard usage makes it imperative that candidates detail the nature of applicable protocols relative to his or her contributions. In many subfields, single-authored publications carry the most weight; but co-authorship may be the norm in other areas of specialization. For example, in some coauthored papers, author order is expressly noted as alphabetical, random, or reverse alphabetical order to emphasize the equal contributions of all authors. In another practice authors are listed in order of the

weight of their contribution to the paper, from least to most, for example. Further, in still other fields it is customary to list the PI on the research project that gave rise to the publication as the last author. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to provide information about the normative practices regarding the listing of authorship in her/his subfield.

The *Faculty Manual* stipulates that “The University shall base its assessment of a faculty member’s achievements on the aggregate productivity and impact of the work since degree completion, including evidence that the faculty member is productive at AU.” Accordingly, when a faculty member is evaluated for reappointment, promotion and tenure, in addition to evaluation of scholarly productivity while at AU, her or his publication record prior to joining the SOE faculty will be considered.

Emphasis is given in reviewing a file for action to work completed at American University. For candidates bringing to American University substantial credit towards tenure, the balance can be adjusted accordingly.

The SOE is a professional school and therefore values work that positively impacts policy or practice in schools and related educational organizations, including governmental and non-governmental organizations that influence educational access and delivery. The weight given to such work varies and depends on the amount and quality of the research, the extent of peer review before or after it reaches intended audiences, and formal assessments of the impact of the research on the intended audience and organizations.

Assessment of the impact of a faculty member’s scholarship through quantitative indicators, such as impact factor ratings, have limited use in the SOE, given the fact that many highly regarded outlets for SOE faculty do not have impact factor ratings. The SOE will also consider available impact factor ratings, counts of direct citations in highly regarded scholarly publications, and downloads of publications, testimonials from significant authorities, invitations to speak, and requests to participate in further scholarly work attributable to already published scholarship. The SOE also relies on and values external assessments by established scholars who do not have personal or professional relations with the candidates under review. Such evaluations are required during review for tenure and promotion as determined by the *Faculty Manual*, the Dean of Faculty, the Committee on Faculty Actions and the Dean of CAS. Faculty members are responsible for following the procedures regarding the solicitation of external letters.

To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must demonstrate a continuing and sustained record of outstanding scholarship. This typically

includes publication with a respected publisher of a second scholarly book or its equivalent if that is the norm in a particular subfield. Other possibilities include a work that represents, in scope, significance, and scholarly rigor, an achievement comparable to a second book, such as a demonstrably impactful body of high-quality articles in refereed, scholarly journals important to the candidate's field; or another set of publications, such as multiple edited works or other productions that involve substantial contributions to the field of inquiry.

Other activity appropriate to a senior scholar may include but is not limited to refereed chapters, scholarly refereed presentations, sponsored research, training grants and contracts, or equivalents.

Evidence of the value and impact of published scholarship not identified in this document may be cited in materials presented at the time of review for promotion and tenure and professor.

Teaching

The University's commitment to the scholar-teacher ideal requires evidence that excellence is achieved in both teaching and research. Teaching encompasses a variety of instructional activities including classroom instruction, engaging individual learners using diverse methods, and working proactively to reach audiences in formal and informal settings.

Because of the enduring commitment to prepare many of its students for professional practice as teachers, SOE places particular emphasis on high quality teaching. Achieving and maintaining a superior level of achievement in teaching and, more broadly, in a wide spectrum of instructional activities, is a prerequisite for reappointment, promotion and tenure in SOE.

The evaluation of teaching must reflect assessment of the entire portfolio of teaching and instruction-related activities and accomplishments. Such a portfolio would include the following:

- Input on Teaching from Students (ITS), detailed in both in absolute and relative contexts and including narrative comments by students. However, even a carefully detailed compilation of ITS scores is not sufficient.
- Evidence of rigor in courses taught such as found in faculty members' written assessments statements of how effectively students acquire the knowledge and skills described in course syllabi.
- Evidence that courses taught are well-organized and rigorous, and that course content is integrally influenced by current scholarship. The evidence in these

regards should be manifested in multiple ways, including syllabi, class handouts, assignments, and exams.

Evidence of engagement with students outside the classroom.

- Further evidence of exemplary teaching should be demonstrated through curriculum development activities, regularly revised statements of the faculty member's teaching philosophy, new course development, service to the education and related professions in advancing educational practice, publications and presentations about the practice of teaching, and the innovative use of technology in course and other instructional activities.

Faculty members are expected to actively seek peer support and advice through regular class observations. While such observation should normally be undertaken by tenured faculty members, guidance may also be sought from faculty associated with the Center for Research, Teaching and Learning, and from those with technical expertise in educational technology. All written feedback given to faculty members should be included in the faculty member's *File for Action*.

Evidence of instructional activities beyond assigned courses taught is evaluated in assessing a faculty member's overall teaching effectiveness. Examples of such activities include student advising, supervising independent studies, systematic initiatives to encourage student research, including awards received by students mentored, student presentations at scholarly conferences, and supporting students to be published authors. Student advising is an essential component of a successful educational experience for all students, and engagement in advising is further evidence of a faculty member's commitment to teaching. Student advising may be included as teaching or service, or both, depending on specific contexts. In general, activities that promote interaction between student life and the academic environment are valued.

SOE also considers new curricular initiatives, the development of online courses and the introduction of new instructional modalities and the supervision of internships to be evidence of a commitment to excellence in teaching.

Membership on dissertation and thesis committees in SOE and other teaching units at the University and elsewhere is also encouraged, and should be noted and explained by the faculty member. Faculty members' efforts to organize and conduct workshops for educational practitioners are another indicator of a commitment to teaching and should be documented by the faculty member.

To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must

exhibit a continued commitment to teaching excellence as described above. Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor must be based on continued growth as a teacher, demonstrated, for example, by the development of new courses and programs, revision of existing courses, and the introduction of new pedagogies and instructional strategies, among other activities. Evaluation of these and other activities should include:

- Peer review of teaching
- Teaching portfolio
- Publications in pedagogical journals and presentations at conferences
- Supervision of student research activity
- Self-evaluation of achievement of course learning objectives
- Examples of feedback provided on student work
- Stakeholder feedback (alumni, employers, peers, etc.)

Evidence of excellence in teaching not identified in this document may be cited in materials presented at the time of review for promotion and tenure or professor.

Service

Service embraces a broad range of activities that may occur on many levels within and beyond the University. All academic units depend on faculty service. Indeed, rights and privileges associated with faculty membership evoke a responsibility for service.

The nature and mission of the SOE elicit a broad range of activities in which faculty engage in service to diverse publics and professional organizations. SOE faculty work with schools, school systems and other educational institutions, community organizations, and serve on advisory and editorial boards that serve professional communities. Appointment or election to participate in such activities is an acknowledged as an expression of the regard in which one is held by members of those communities.

The relative weight credited to service depends on the nature, context and function of the services themselves. It is important to note that while American University is committed to service to community in its broadest sense, the *Faculty Manual* states that “service beyond the university cannot substitute for a service contribution to the university.”

The SOE recognizes that expectations associated with research and teaching limit demands for service that should be made on pre-tenure faculty. Accordingly, the SOE expects that tenured faculty provide significantly more service than pre-tenure faculty.

Committee assignments and other service-associated activities must typically be adjusted to reasonable amounts commensurate with a faculty member's years in service and progress toward reappointment, promotion and tenure. Pre-tenure faculty should consult with their SOE mentor, faculty colleagues, and the chair of the RTC to ensure that service activity in and beyond the University will not constrain opportunities to satisfy expectations for scholarly research, publication, and teaching. Although some record of service is expected of all, service does not provide sufficient basis for reappointment, tenure or promotion in the absence of excellent performance in teaching, research, and publication as specified above.

To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must have a record of active and constructive contributions to faculty governance at all levels of the university community, a strong record of mentoring early career faculty, and evidence of outstanding performance in professional service to scholarly and professional communities. Faculty members' consistent service to professional and scholarly associations is evaluated through a range of indicators. These include: election to office in professional and learned societies, holding positions of responsibility (invited or elected) on professional committees; participation on grant review panels; organizing or participating in professional conferences; serving on editorial boards of scholarly journals; refereeing works by scholars submitted for publication; editing scholarly journals; and maintaining active membership in professional and learned societies.

Evidence of excellence in service not identified in this document may be cited in materials presented at the time of review for promotion and tenure or professor.