

**Department of Literature
Criteria for Reappointment, Tenure and
Promotion: Scholarship, Teaching, and Service**

May 2016

TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

SCHOLARSHIP:

The *Faculty Manual* specifies that “Faculty members’ thorough understanding of and significant contribution to their field are essential to the mission of the university and to the advancement of knowledge. All teaching units or academic units must have criteria that require creative, scholarly, and professional achievements of the highest quality and with national or international impact. 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. The work should relate directly to the criteria established by the teaching unit or academic unit. An additional required assessment addresses the likelihood of continued successful achievements.”

The Department of Literature further specifies that, by the sixth pre-tenure year, a faculty member must demonstrate solid evidence of significant scholarly or creative-writing contribution to his or her field in the form of a book or a completed book-length manuscript that has been contractually accepted for publication by a reputable press.

To determine the quality of the publication venue the Department of Literature takes into consideration a range of criteria, including: the historical position and reputation of the press or journal in the field, the rigor of the review process for manuscripts, the impact of the press or journal in emerging fields and its leadership position in specific areas of scholarship, the scholarly impact of specific book series, the list of authors already published by the press or journal, and the overall participation of the press in advancing academic scholarship. In addition to its own research, the Reappointment and Tenure Committee considers comments and evaluations by external reviewers and readers to gauge the impact and quality of a press or journal.

A book or article will be considered to have met the expectation of acceptance for publication if the final manuscript has been accepted by the publisher with an editor’s letter confirming that fact before the Reappointment and Tenure Committee makes its recommendation on tenure. We define “significant” as entailing outside evaluation of the work’s value and importance. Such outside evaluation includes external references, readers’ reports, and the quality of the place of publication. We consider the book to be primary evidence of ongoing scholarly productivity.

However, we expect to see significant evidence of a clear scholarly trajectory beyond the book. Such evidence may take the form of one or more of the following: published or accepted articles/essays in academic journals or poems/translations/nonfiction/stories in nationally recognized print and non-print media and venues; an edited book; conference presentations and /or readings of new work; invited lectures; etc. High-quality peer-reviewed articles/creative work

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and edited books will count more than conference papers and lectures/readings. Given the rarity of external funding in the humanities, the awarding of a national fellowship to support a scholarly / creative project will enhance greatly its claims of significance.

The Department of Literature further specifies that when a faculty member joins the department as an Assistant Professor, the cumulative record of publication, including any book published within the two years (or longer, in exceptional cases) before the appointment, will contribute to the publication requirement for tenure, provided that the faculty member can demonstrate substantial evidence of continued scholarly/creative growth and productivity since the book's publication in the form of published articles in refereed journals, conference participation, and other evidence of scholarly/creative activity in the field.

When a faculty member joins the department as an Assistant Professor and elects to count prior years of service at another institution, any book published within those years of prior service will contribute to the publication requirement for tenure (The two-year limit described above does not apply in this case, since the prior service counted may have been for a longer period.) This consideration of prior scholarly work will only be allowed if the faculty member can demonstrate substantial evidence of continued scholarly / creative growth and productivity since the book's publication as detailed above. The guiding principle for such activities is peer review or other markers of prestige and the primary criterion is refereed publication, with evidence toward a second book given particular weight. In reviewing a file for action, emphasis will be given to work completed while at American University. For faculty bringing substantial credit toward tenure, the balance can be adjusted accordingly.

TEACHING:

The *Faculty Manual* specifies that “effective teaching enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and become active participants in the learning process. Faculty are expected to provide timely, fair and objective evaluations of student performance Each teaching unit or academic unit establishes guidelines for evaluating teaching by members of that unit. In each case, these evaluation metrics must extend beyond Student Evaluation of Teaching scores. Faculty may demonstrate effective teaching in a variety of ways, including course design, development of new curricular initiatives, up-to-date course content, student engagement and achievement outside the classroom, and adherence to evaluation procedures that accurately reflect student accomplishments. Teaching units or academic units may also view publication and presentation of teaching materials and methodologies as a contribution to teaching. Additional ways of evaluating teaching may include, but are not limited to, the items made available to faculty by academic units and on the Office of the Dean of Faculty webpage.

The Department of Literature further specifies that, by the sixth pre-tenure year, a faculty member must have demonstrated his/her effectiveness as a teacher, supported by student evaluations of teaching that are generally in line with departmental and CAS averages; fully-developed syllabi along with other effective teaching materials; willingness and ability to teach

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courses requested by the department chair as well as to propose and develop new courses within the department's curriculum; availability to students inside and outside the classroom; and other evidence of effective teaching. Recognizing that many junior faculty members are undertaking full classroom responsibilities for the first time when they join the AU faculty (and that even experienced professors may find the AU student body to be different from students elsewhere), the department looks not only at the absolute levels of the SET's but also may, when appropriate, take into account improvement over the course of the pre-tenure years.

In order to expand the department's evaluation of teaching, the Reappointment and Tenure Committee may also consider the faculty member's participation in advising and mentoring students and engaging students outside the classroom. Activities recognized in this framework may include offering independent studies, advising students writing a thesis for their BA, MA or MFA degrees, sponsoring students for the Robyn Rafferty Mathias Student Research Conference, advising student organizations and publications, writing letters of recommendation for students, participating in community events, attending pedagogy workshops and events, and attending lectures or symposia.

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SERVICE:

a. Service to the University

The Faculty Manual specifies that "Engagement at American University is an essential component of faculty responsibility. Faculty members should demonstrate engagement in the university community, including a meaningful level of teaching unit, academic unit, or university service, as well as participation in major campus-wide events, such as opening convocation and commencement. Each teaching unit or academic unit must establish guidelines for evaluating service that include evidence of a willingness to carry an appropriate share of teaching unit or academic unit collegiate service obligations.

b. Service beyond the University

The Faculty Manual specifies that "Faculty often provide service to local, national, and/or international communities and governments as well as hold leadership positions in scholarly associations. Such activities demonstrate an individual's acceptance of the responsibilities that come with being a member of the faculty in a university deeply committed to service to a wider community. Such service must be clearly related to the teaching and scholarly interests of the faculty member and/or advance the academic reputation of the academic unit or university. Service beyond the university cannot substitute for a service contribution to the university but may count toward faculty members' fulfilling their workload obligation. Each teaching unit or academic unit must establish guidelines for evaluating service beyond the university."

The Department of Literature further specifies that, by the sixth pre-tenure year, a faculty member must have demonstrated full and regular participation in the department's and the university's collective work, ranging from service on committees to other forms of service (e.g. **Department of Literature Criteria for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion: Scholarship, Teaching, and Service** *This does not constitute an employment contract.*

participation on graduate thesis committees, reading graduate applications, participating in freshman visiting days, etc.). Though the department values the participation of junior faculty on departmental tasks and service to the profession, we do not expect junior faculty to shoulder undue burdens of service.

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PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

The *Faculty Manual* does not specify specific criteria for promotion to Full Professor but candidates should consult the following language: “In addition to meeting the criteria for the rank of associate professor/librarian, the faculty member demonstrates continuing excellent scholarship and/or prominent accomplishments in the field, high-quality teaching/performance of primary responsibilities, continuing active engagement with students in and outside the classroom (for teaching faculty), continuing relevant and effective internal and external service, and evidence of the potential to sustain excellence in all of these areas.”

The Department of Literature specifies that, to achieve the rank of Full Professor, a faculty member must demonstrate solid evidence of continuing scholarly or creative achievement and distinction in his or her field through a published book or a book-length manuscript— completed since tenure—or other significant scholarly / creative production that has been contractually accepted for publication or production by a reputable press or other venue. A book will be considered to have met the expectation of acceptance for publication if the final manuscript has been accepted by the publisher with an editor’s letter confirming that fact before the Reappointment and Tenure Committee makes its recommendation on promotion to Full Professor. As with scholarly work considered for the tenure decision, we define “significant” as entailing outside evaluation of the work’s value and importance based on external references, readers’ reports, and the quality of the place of publication.

Although other evidence of scholarly or creative activity (a significant edition or translation; published or accepted articles/essays in academic journals or poems / translations / nonfiction / stories in nationally recognized magazines; or an edited book) is encouraged and valued, these activities will not usually be considered adequate for promotion to the rank of Full Professor in the absence of a completed book or contracted book manuscript. We imagine that successful cases could be made on the basis of other significant scholarly / creative production. For it to be successful, the candidate must clarify the extent of his or her contributions to the field. Such cases would be made as exceptions and therefore would only be as compelling as the documentation of significance and contribution.

In addition to the overall measures described above for evaluating the scholarly impact of a faculty member’s research, the Reappointment and Tenure Committee may consider the following: invitations to deliver lectures, talks or readings, organization of conferences, guest editing of journal issues, invitations to submit to books, collections or journals, reprinting or translation of publications in other languages, citations and quotations of research, reviews of scholarship and publications, invitations to collaborate, requests to review manuscripts for presses, invitations to participate in the promotion or tenure review of faculty members in other Universities, and service as

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external reviewer in dissertation committees, fellowship committees and national and international organizations. The Reappointment and Tenure Committee also considers comments and evaluations by external reviewers and readers to gauge the impact of a faculty member's research.

Teaching standards and expectations for a faculty member being considered for promotion to Full Professor must remain in line with departmental norms. The department further specifies that a faculty member being considered for promotion to Full Professor should demonstrate ongoing engagement with the department, the university, and the profession through leadership positions or other substantive service roles within and/or outside the department such as directing a Literature Department program (undergraduate, MA, or MFA program); chairing or serving on CAS committees; chairing or serving on the Committee for Faculty Actions or other major committees of the Faculty Senate; serving on major university committees, including program initiatives or program reviews; serving in a leadership position in a professional or national organization.