

DEPARTMENT CRITERIA FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

Department of Sociology

Introduction

Department criteria for tenure and promotion are intended to serve as guidelines and standards, not as inviolable rules. These criteria reflect the broad disciplinary and academic interests of the Department, as well as various sub-disciplines. The Departmental criteria for promotion and tenure spelled out below incorporate the College and University criteria.

The granting of tenure and promotion are formally two separate decisions, but in fact the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor and those for the award of tenure are identical. Technically, tenure is a commitment by the University to continued employment of faculty members, whereas promotion recognizes substantial scholarly and professional achievement.

It is assumed that the candidate's portfolio will be consistent with and conform to recognized professional standards for the ethical conduct of research and publication, as enunciated, for example, in the ASA Code of Ethics.

CANDIDATE NOTIFICATION: New faculty members will be provided a copy of the department/school Promotion and Tenure Guidelines at the time of appointment. *[If appropriate add: letter of acknowledgment signed by the faculty member; indicate an opportunity for the chair to explain expectations; assignment of a temporary mentor; or other types of information to assist faculty.]*

CUMULATIVE PROGRESS EVALUATIONS (CPE): Cumulative Progress Evaluations normally begin the second year of employment, as detailed in the *Collective Bargaining Agreement*. Each year faculty are apprised of their progress toward promotion and/or tenure. Evaluations are cumulative.

Performance Categories for Tenure and Promotion

The mission of the Department is the creation, enhancement, preservation, application, and transmission of sociological knowledge, information, understanding, and ideas through teaching, research, service, and professional development. The Department recognizes three basic categories of performance as essential to promotion and tenure: teaching, research, and service. Successful candidates will perform their duties in all three areas with distinction.

I. Teaching Activities (the following activities are not rank ordered)

- a) Classroom instruction.
- b) Direction of independent studies, student research projects, internships, theses, and dissertations.

- c) Academic advising.
- d) Involvement and participation in workshops, seminars, and other forums which have as their principal themes or foci curricular interests, teaching, or the learning process.
- e) Program and course development.

II. Research Activities (the following activities are not rank ordered)

- a) Published refereed research.
- b) Other scholarly activity.
- c) Acquisition of grants and contracts.

III. Service Activities (the following activities are not rank ordered)

- a) Activity devoted to the administrative function of the Department, College, and University.
- b) Activity which facilitates the objectives of the Department, College, and University.
- c) Participation in professional organizations related to faculty members' disciplines or general faculty roles, including holding offices or chairing and sitting on committees of professional organizations, refereeing for and editing disciplinary journals, and related forms of service to the profession.
- d) Participation in courses, workshops, seminars, and the like designed to enhance competence and understanding.
- e) Seeking and developing new ways to improve performance and make contributions to the Department, College, and University.
- f) Activity which utilizes one's professional background and expertise in the community outside of the University, whether local, regional, national or international.

Other activities may be included under any of these categories by negotiation or special circumstance recognized by the Chair. Except for invitations (lectures, speaking engagements, service on grant review panels, etc.) intended to recognize distinction, unassigned activities compensated by sources other than the University (e.g., reviewing book proposals for pay) generally will not be credited towards tenure or promotion.

Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

It is incumbent upon faculty to demonstrate prior to earning tenure that they have established a strong record of teaching, research, professional development, and service activity that will be sustained throughout their academic careers. Faculty members seeking tenure shall provide evidence of meritorious achievement in all three basic categories of performance. Evidence of academic performance shall meet University, College, and Departmental reporting requirements and standards. Substantial and meritorious achievement in both teaching and research, and ample indication that such achievement will be sustained in the future, are necessary for tenure. An appropriate level

of activity in professional development and service is also required. To acquire tenure, in short, faculty members must have made significant positive contributions to their discipline, department, College and University and show substantial evidence of continuing contributions in the future.

Evidence of the quality of performance in teaching must include student evaluations for all courses taught while at the University. Other evidence may include course syllabi, examinations, grade profiles for courses taught, special reviews, peer visits, teaching awards, or other information which reflects the quality of instruction provided by the faculty member. The evidence provided will be interpreted in terms of the type of courses taught, the level of students, instructor familiarity with the subject matter (whether a course is or is not a new preparation), and other relevant information.

The sociology department believes that all faculty should be active in the instruction of both undergraduate and graduate students. For undergraduates, this includes not just classroom instruction but working directly with students on research papers, internships, Honors in the Major theses, and the like. For graduate students, in addition to seminars, meritorious teaching would usually include serving as advisor for graduate student theses and dissertations, membership on graduate committees, development of the graduate curriculum in the person's specialty area, special symposia for graduate students (e.g., participation in professionalization seminars), and, if appropriate, preparation and administration of comprehensive exams.

Evidence of meritorious performance in research must also be provided in order to acquire tenure. Faculty members must demonstrate a successful research program through publications in refereed outlets, external research funding, or other appropriate venues. Normally, faculty seeking tenure are expected to have published or have in press a minimum of eight refereed articles or book chapters at the time the file is submitted. However, the judgment of whether a clear trajectory leading to national impact or recognition is present is complex and cannot be communicated as a simple number of publications. Normally, most of these publications would reflect scholarly work accomplished since the initial tenure-earning appointment at UCF. The file should show sustained, continuous research productivity since the initial appointment at UCF. All else equal, a scholarly research monograph typically counts as four journal publications, although in general research monographs are given more weight if they are published by prestigious presses and have received positive published reviews. Normally, successful tenure candidates will be sole or senior authors on at least a third of their publications. Publishing papers with graduate student co-authors is also looked upon with favor. It must be stressed that quantity of publications is not the sole determinant of the significance of a candidate's research productivity. This general expectation for number of publications is accompanied by the stipulation that these will be of high quality such that they demonstrate significant contributions to the discipline, as described below.

In addition to refereed journal articles and scholarly monographs, evidence of scholarly productivity might also include non-refereed book chapters, non-refereed articles, and other similar publications. Normally, non-refereed items of this sort can be used to

bolster the record of scholarship but do **not** suffice as a replacement for peer-reviewed publications. Regular participation and presentations at professional national and regional conferences is also expected in addition to, but not as a substitute for, refereed publications.

Also important in a given case may be successful competition for extramural funding of research. Grants are generally given more weight if they are obtained from national funding agencies, such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. Grants contribute to the overall reputation of the faculty, are another measure of contributions to the field, and are a means of supporting research and graduate students. Further, external funding can be a useful means of support that will result in higher quality published research. Certainly, external research funding has increased in importance at UCF over the past few years and will continue to do so. Nevertheless, for untenured professors in sociology, successful publication remains more important than attracting external research funding in the decision to award tenure and promotion.

Increasingly, tenure and promotion committees at all levels will also want to see evidence of scholarly impact as reflected in citations to the candidate's work in other scholarly outlets. Works that are widely read and cited, that is, count for more in tenure and promotion decisions than obscure, unread and uncited work.

It is also true that some refereed journal outlets count for more than others. Publication in respected, highly cited journals, that is, counts for more than publication in unranked journals. The top journals in sociology and all other social sciences are ranked in the Thompson/ISI citation data base (which generates the well-known Impact Factors), in the Scopus data base, and in certain other citation data bases. In general, it behooves faculty to be aware of the prestige rankings of the field's journals and to publish in the highest-ranked journals possible. It is also advisable to include in one's tenure and promotion file information about the Impact Factors or related metrics for the journals where one's papers appear.

Scholarly publication is currently in a state of flux. Many new journals have been established that are electronically published and only accessible online. Sometimes, the e-journals are peer-reviewed and sometimes they are not. The same can be said for what are known as "open access" journals. That is, some of them are peer-reviewed and of very high quality, and some of them are not. The critical issue for tenure and promotion is neither the medium of publication nor the business model of the publisher but the rigor of the peer review process and the quality of the papers.

The broad range of possible research activities in the Department and the variation in acceptable and conventional forums of presentation preclude more precise criteria for tenure. In other words, there is not a single path to research excellence. Instead, the tenure and promotion assessment weighs the entire research portfolio, balancing the mix of articles, books, book chapters, and grants. The research record will be further evaluated on the sociological contributions of the published work, including insight, creativity, innovation, and impact on the field. Measures of impact include citations,

favorable book reviews, and published discussions of the candidate's research. Thus, each candidate's research efforts will be reviewed on an individual basis.

In service, candidates for tenure and promotion should demonstrate that they successfully completed all service assignments made by the Department Chair, and have, in general, demonstrated a commitment to making the Department of Sociology a better place for its faculty and students. Guest presentations to classes, to the department, and to the university may be considered part of service.

Examples of work that qualifies as service to the profession include editorial work, refereeing for journals or granting agencies (a log of papers reviewed, titles, and dates is recommended), membership in committees for professional societies, and organizing sessions at professional meetings. External service can also include activities involving specific professional expertise as applied to work by non-profit and government agencies whether local, regional or national. Further, outreach efforts that contribute to the visibility of the university are also important.

At the time tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are being considered, the candidate should have a record of participation in larger campus-wide activities, and increased participation in regional and national professional societies. By the time of promotion to Full Professor, the candidate should demonstrate respected and effective leadership in at least one of these service levels.

Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor

Promotion to Full Professor requires an outstanding record of scholarship and evidence of national or international recognition over a sustained period. The criteria for an "outstanding record of scholarship" are satisfied by evidence of broadening peer recognition, a continuous record of effective scholarship since the award of tenure, evidence that the candidate is able to secure external funding to conduct his or her research or, at the least, has been making a steady and diligent effort to secure such funding, a steady and substantial stream of peer-reviewed publications, at least some of which will have appeared in the discipline's highly-regarded outlets, and a growing list of citations of the candidate's work by other scholars. Both quality and quantity of publications are important, but precise numbers are impossible to establish in advance.

Evidence of the national impact of the candidate's work is more important than the sheer number of publications. Such evidence includes (but is by no means limited to) being asked to serve on editorial boards of refereed journals in the discipline; serving as the editor of such journals; serving on grant review panels; serving as the external reviewer for promotion and tenure cases at other universities; and above all a widening pattern of citation to the candidate's publications.

Promotion to Full Professor also requires evidence of excellence in teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. For example; successful PhD and MA supervision, demonstrated efforts to improve student learning, efforts to improve the Sociology

curriculum, and mentorship efforts. Evidence of leadership in service to the campus, community, and profession is also important.

Additionally, as in the case of tenure and promotion to Associate, promotion to Full Professor depends heavily on written outside evaluations from nationally recognized scholars that unambiguously verify the candidate's impact, significance, and national stature.

Finally, promotion to Full Professor depends on evidence of the candidate's leadership in the activities and well-being of the department, college, university, discipline and community. Full Professors are expected, that is, to demonstrate that their professional agendas transcend their personal aspirations and embrace a commitment to making the department, college, university, discipline, and community better places in which to live and work.

Approvals

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