

Department of American Studies Guidelines and Policy for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The Department of American Studies affirms the statement in Section 2.2.2 of the Faculty Handbook* that: “(a) Individuals who have acquired significant experience beyond the terminal degree are appropriate for this faculty rank. They shall have demonstrated competence as teachers and have shown a conscientious interest in improving their teaching. They shall have demonstrated a basic general understanding of a substantial part of their discipline and have an established reputation within and outside the University in their fields of scholarly work. This implies scholarly work after the terminal degree sufficient to indicate continuing interest and growth in the candidate’s professional field.”

In a small department with a focus on graduate studies, a tenured associate professor should be actively involved in all aspects of graduate student education and training and should demonstrate an ongoing commitment to research and publication of national significance. American Studies also offers undergraduate major and minor degrees, and associate professors are expected to participate in the effective teaching and development of these programs. Since the department generally functions as a committee of the whole, associate professors must sustain a consistent, active and collegial presence in department deliberations, decisions and activities.

The Department of American Studies is interested in the entire research record of the faculty member. However, the decision for tenure and promotion to associate professor is based primarily on work done since the completion of the PhD.

A favorable decision for tenure and promotion to associate professor finally “represents” what the Faculty Handbook calls “a judgment on the part of the department, college, and University that the individual has made and will continue to make sound contributions to teaching, scholarly work, and service. The appointment should be made only after careful investigation of the candidate's accomplishments and promise in teaching, scholarly work, and leadership.” (2.2.2.b)

In the case of joint appointments with other units on campus, other evaluative measures will apply as specified in the letters of appointment.

The evaluation of spouses/domestic partners within the Department will be guided by the American Studies Policy on spouse or domestic hires. In specific the following points:

“If one spouse/partner is chair, the graduate director will conduct the annual evaluation for the other partner and, when necessary, write the official department letter for mid-probationary review, tenure, and/or promotion. The graduate director will also be responsible for salary and raise recommendations.

In all cases, each spouse/partner will recuse him or herself from any evaluative decision

about the other. The department expects all members of the faculty to respect the confidentiality of evaluation processes and of all other normally confidential procedures or discussions.”

Teaching:

The Department of American Studies affirms the statement in the Faculty Handbook Section 1.2.1.b that: “Effective teaching is one of the primary qualifications for promotion and tenure. The educational experience provides a student with an increased knowledge base, an opportunity to develop thinking and reasoning skills, and an appreciation for learning. An effective teacher is best characterized as an individual who successfully promotes these goals. Although individual teachers bring to bear different sets of talents in pursuit of these goals an effective teacher, at a minimum, should:

- o Demonstrate effective communication skills.
- o Show evidence of strong preparation.
- o Present material that reflects the current state of knowledge in the field.
- o Demonstrate effective management skills.
- o Organize individual topics into a meaningful sequence.
- o Demonstrate an ability to interact with students in an encouraging and stimulating manner.
- o Demonstrate a commitment to the discipline.” (1.2.1.b)

Evaluations of teaching will take into account the following factors, which are not presented in rank order:

1. Course evaluations: ICES and other student evaluation forms
2. Course syllabi
3. Graduate student work: appointment as undergraduate and graduate advisor, examination committees, thesis committees, dissertation committees, all with some note of those chaired
4. Class enrollments (including independent studies and internships)
5. Peer evaluations of faculty teaching
6. Curriculum development: including new courses designed/taught, departmental curricular planning
7. Solicited letters from graduate students with classroom and/or committee-level contact with the faculty member
8. Teaching awards
9. Involving students in academic research (e.g., paper presentations, grant writing, publications)

The final evaluation will be based on an assessment of balance and quality among the above factors.

Scholarship, Research or Other Creative Work:

The Department of American Studies affirms the statement in the Faculty Handbook (Section 1.2.2.a) that: “The term *Scholarly Work*, as used in this Policy, comprises scholarship, research, or creative work. *Scholarship* embodies the critical and accurate synthesis and dissemination of knowledge. The term *research* is understood to mean systematic, original investigation directed toward the generation, development, and validation of new knowledge or the solution of contemporary problems. *Creative work* is understood to mean original or imaginative accomplishment in literature, the arts, or the professions.” Because we are an interdisciplinary department, individual faculty pursue diverse research paths. Therefore, we define appropriate “expressions” as publications (scholarly and creative), exhibitions, media productions, and prestigious funded projects.

Evaluation of scholarship, research or other creative work will be based on the following kinds of work:

1. Books authored or co-authored
2. Books edited or co-edited
3. Articles in refereed journals
4. Articles appearing as chapters in edited volumes
5. Research/grant funding
6. Major exhibitions and media productions
7. Other writings
8. Book reviews
9. Invited or refereed talks/presentations to professional meetings and seminar or colloquia assemblies
10. Contributed (unrefereed) abstracts and/or oral presentations at professional meetings
11. Works in progress

There should be evidence of ongoing work in a majority of these categories. The weight of the evidence rests in the first six categories. Single-authored books and articles or chapters in significant national and international refereed journals and books are the most heavily weighted. Likewise, research and grant funding from nationally and internationally regarded agencies and foundations is given a high rating.

Service:

The Department of American Studies affirms the statement in the Faculty Handbook (Section 1.2.3.a) that: “Professional service consists of those activities performed within the academic community that are directly related to the faculty member's discipline or profession.”

The Department particularly values active involvement in professional organizations and recognizes administrative service in the department as especially important. Since we are a small department which makes all policy decisions as a committee of the whole, the Department expects that each faculty member must devote substantially more time to

departmental committee work than faculty in other larger units. Hence, we regard this work to be an essential part of the service category.

Personal Characteristics:

In evaluating a candidate's personal characteristics the Department of American Studies employs the guidelines set forth in the Faculty Handbook (Section 1.2.4), "This category relates to the personal traits that influence an individual's effectiveness as a teacher, a scholar, researcher, or creative artist." Therefore, in American Studies such evaluation will be embedded in assessments of the candidate in the categories teaching, research and service.

*Electronic, expanded and updated revision of 2003 edition of the Faculty Handbook maintained by the Office of the University Secretary.

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