Criteria Governing Tenure and Promotion

Department of Philosophy

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While it is recognized that faculty members display different strengths and abilities, it is normally[*] expected that they will be effective as teachers and that they will be presenting and publishing scholarly work and participating in professional societies. Contributions to the Department and university through service on committees and relevant public service will also be considered. Normally, teaching and research will count more than service of any sort. Teaching and research will have equal weight. Other relevant professional and personal characteristics may also be taken into account, such as length of service in the profession, relevant experience elsewhere, special administrative duties performed and supplementary education and training, as they affect the work of a faculty member; see the section on tenure and promotion procedures in the Faculty Manual.

In tenure and promotion decisions, the exact value placed upon any aspect of the candidate's record must in the end depend upon a judgment of its quality. The record must show significant achievements and give promise of further such achievements. Decisions take into account the complete professional record of the candidate. For the Departmental Committee on Tenure and Promotion (hereafter "DCTP"), the following considerations are especially important:

I.   Teaching

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The criteria are the same in all cases.

1.   The DCTP expects that a candidate be a good teacher. A poor teacher will not be recommended for tenure or promotion regardless of achievements in other areas.

2.   At a minimum, a teacher must perform the routines of teaching adequately: meeting classes, grading and returning papers promptly, and keeping regular office hours.

3.   The Department of Philosophy expects the administration of a student evaluation form in every course offered in the fall and spring semesters. Normally a good teacher should receive student evaluations averaging between "good" and "excellent" in a range including "very poor, poor, fair, good, excellent." But student response is only one factor in the evaluation and it is not always sufficient evidence of good or poor teaching.

4.   The candidate shall have at least three class sessions observed by one or more tenured faculty peers. These visitations shall occur during the period between the previous successful application for tenure and/or promotion, if any, and the current application. Written reports from these observers will serve as one source of evidence of the candidate's teaching ability. Evaluation will be included annually for non-tenured faculty.

5.   Evidence that a candidate has contributed significantly to the academic and intellectual development of students is an additional item relevant to an assessment of the candidate's

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[*] Where the words 'normally,' 'usually,' or 'it is possible that' occur, the intent is to provide for a rare exception to the stated general rule. In such a case, a justification for the departure from precedent will be sent forward with the file.

teaching effectiveness. The successful performance of students in advanced courses is one such kind of evidence, as are solicited or unsolicited letters from graduates.

6.   Courses should contain adequate content, be suited to the curriculum of the Department, and be of a rigor appropriate for a given level of instruction. To assist the DCTP, candidates shall make available several representative course syllabi and samples of examinations and handouts used in their courses.

7.   Further evidence may include the direction of theses and dissertations as well as the direction of students in independent study.

8.   Other relevant items that may be considered in an assessment of teaching are the candidate's having developed new, appropriate, and successful courses or having introduced effective new teaching techniques, such as the development or implementation of effective and appropriate teaching software, or having been a nominee for, or a recipient of, a teaching award or grant to support instructional innovation. A successful course is one that contributes to the undergraduate program or the graduate program of the Department, as determined by faculty approval and student response.

II.   *Research*

Three sections, A, B and C, follow. Section A specifies how the specific criteria set out in Sections B and C are to be understood. Specific criteria follow in sections II-B and II-C. Criteria set out in B apply only to candidates for tenure at the Assistant or Associate rank and to candidates for promotion to Associate rank. Criteria set out in C apply to candidates for tenure at full professor rank and to candidates for promotion to full professor rank.

A. *Framework governing tenure at all ranks and promotion to associate and to full professor rank*

1.   The DCTP draws a distinction between *major* and *minor* pieces of research. While the determination has to be made by the DCTP, a minor piece of research typically consists of a book review, a short contribution published in a volume of un-refereed proceedings, a commentary delivered at a conference, or a short contribution in applied Philosophy. Minor pieces of research provide a fuller picture of the candidate's interest and abilities, but by themselves are not sufficient evidence of adequate scholarship. Major pieces of research provide this evidence by testifying to sustained inquiry, and by being of greater depth and/or significance than minor ones. Such major pieces of research typically consist of single or co-authored books, substantial refereed articles in journals or volumes of proceedings, professionally significant translations, or extensive contributions to applied philosophy. Major pieces of research address other professionals in the same area of research, or, if they address a wider professional audience or the general public, their subject matter must be of interest to professional philosophers. All major pieces of research should be presented in some public fashion.

2.   The DCTP recognizes the legitimacy and merit of work that crosses boundaries traditionally establishing philosophy. While the committee recognizes the need to show how such new work is connected to traditional philosophical methods or concerns, the committee is open to alternative approaches that broaden the philosophical domain. This includes, but is not limited to, making connections between and across other disciplines, applying philosophical analyses to specific contemporary problems and policy issues, and/or considering the societal implications of technological development.

3.   In the case of co-authored work, when the co-authors have shared the work equally, each may receive full credit for the work.

4.   Invited papers, edited volumes, textbooks and computer software may be judged to be either major or minor, according to their merits.

5.   Papers read at professional meetings or at the invitation of other universities are expected to show evidence of new work on the part of the candidate. They will be assessed according to such criteria as the scope, depth and quality of the paper, the nature of the occasion, and other relevant factors.

6.   While neither necessary nor sufficient for tenure, promotion, the DCTP will consider a candidate's pursuit of external funding.[#] The DCTP recognizes that it is not normal for most philosophers to be active in this regard. Nonetheless the DCTP also recognizes that it is important to credit such work by those faculty members who do pursue outside funding. Thus the DCTP regards the pursuit of external funding as positive evidence for tenure and/or promotion, but the failure to pursue outside funding is not considered negative evidence in this regard. In its consideration of a faculty member's activities in pursuit of external funds, the DCTP takes into account the kind of grant involved, the amount, the duration and the importance or quality of the research proposed.

7.   The same criteria as those governing books and papers will govern pieces of research that appear as computer software, performances, exhibitions, presentations, or activities in applied Philosophy.

8.   Where possible, the standards used for published work will be used to assess research that does not appear as a printed publication.

9.   To be included in the candidate's file, any piece of research must be documented in a manner amenable to its evaluation by the DCTP and by external reviewers. Copies of publications constitute appropriate documentation. In the case of presentations and commentaries at professional meetings, audio-visual presentations, computer software, exhibitions, or performances, the provision of a transcript, videotape, audiotape, disk, or catalogue may constitute adequate documentation.

10.   In order to demonstrate substantial achievement in the pursuit of their research interests, candidates for tenure and/or promotion have to show how the items in their file address and advance those interests. They should do so by means of a cover-letter to the file.

B. Criteria governing tenure at assistant or associate professor rank, and promotion to associate professor rank.

1.   Candidates for tenure and/or promotion to associate professor must show real promise that they will become leading scholars and researchers. Promise should be substantiated by tangible, developing evidence.

2.   Normally, to be tenured at the Assistant or Associate rank, candidates must have a record of *significant* research since appointment at USC. This record shall include major publications; other evidence of research productivity will also be taken into consideration. In general, *significant* work makes a valuable contribution to on-going professional dialogue on issues in the candidate's field of expertise. Evidence of the significance of research can be supplied by the extent of the reputation of the candidate as demonstrated by, e.g., invitations to deliver papers and speak at conferences, invitations to contribute to edited volumes, requests to reprint the candidate's work, reviews of books, citations in the professional literature, etc. Evidence can also be supplied by judgments of the quality of the work made by Departmental and external colleagues.

[#] The words "external" and "outside" in this context are intended to refer to all funds that come from outside normal Departmental sources. These might include State contracts or grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, but they also might include grants from USC's research and productive scholarship program.

2.   Normally, all candidates for promotion to associate professor must have a record of *significant* research. This record shall include major publications; other evidence of research productivity will also be taken into consideration. In general, *significant* work makes a valuable contribution to on-going professional dialogue on issues in the candidate's field of expertise. Evidence of the significance of research can be supplied by the extent of the reputation of the candidate as demonstrated by, e.g., invitations to deliver papers and speak at conferences, invitations to contribute to edited volumes, requests to reprint the candidate's work, reviews of books, citations in the professional literature, etc. Evidence can also be supplied by judgments of the quality of the work made by Departmental and external colleagues.

C. Criteria governing tenure at the full professor rank, and promotion to full professor rank.

1.   Promotion from associate professor to professor normally should be based on the fulfilled promise of having become a leading scholar and researcher. A move to the rank of professor normally should be accompanied by evidence of attainment of national or international stature in the candidate's field of expertise.

2.   To be tenured at the full professor rank or to be promoted to full professor, requires the publication of major pieces of research since the previous promotion. The complete research record, the candidate's body of work, should be of sufficient scope and coherence to constitute an *important* contribution to a particular field or fields of Philosophy. In general, an *important* body of work will make a sustained contribution that advances the candidate's field of expertise. Several kinds of evidence can demonstrate the importance of a candidate's research record. One is that the candidate's work should have attracted attention in the form of comments, responses and reviews in the professional literature. Another is the reputation of the candidate, as demonstrated by, e.g., invitations to deliver papers and speak at conferences, invitations to contribute to edited volumes, requests to reprint the candidate's work, etc. Important work should be accompanied by national and/or international stature in the field in question. Other evidence is supplied by judgments of the quality of the candidate's research made by Departmental and external colleagues.

III.   Service

Recommendations concerning tenure and promotion are based primarily upon the quality of teaching and research. Although it does not compensate for weakness in teaching and research, service is also an important activity as it contributes to the advancement of the department, the university and the profession. Service will be taken into account as it contributes to the overall value of the faculty member to the department, the university and the profession.

A. Framework governing tenure at all ranks and promotion to associate and to full professor rank

Examples of important service are listed below; all service will be evaluated in terms of level of responsibility and quality of work performed. Normally, service for regional, national or international academic professional organizations, will count more than other kinds of service. The following are considered important service:

1. Departmental, College, or University administration.
2. Service on Departmental committees.
3. Organizing of conferences and colloquia.
4. Supervising library ordering
5. Service on College and University committees, especially those which are policy making or to which the candidate can contribute his professional skills.
6. Representing the Department, college, or university at university hearings of public meetings.
7. Participation in professional societies; reviewing for journals, publishers, and granting agencies; membership on editorial boards.
8. Development of computer software that aids and assists scholarly work.
9. Student advisement.
10. Public service where it draws upon the candidate's professional training or where it furthers the teaching and scholarly work of the Department.
11. The pursuit of grants that facilitates service to the Department, College or University.

B. Criteria governing tenure at assistant or associate professor rank, and promotion to associate professor rank

1. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion from assistant professor to associate professor should normally provide a record of service including participation on various Departmental and/or University committees, participation in professional organizations in the candidate's field of expertise, and/or public service which draws upon the candidate's professional training.

C. Criteria governing tenure at the full professor rank, and promotion to full professor rank.

1. Candidates for promotion from associate professor to professor should normally provide a record of service including participation on various Departmental and/or University committees, participation in professional organizations in the candidate's field of expertise, and/or public service which draws upon the candidate's professional training. Typically this participation will involve more time, effort and/or responsibility—e.g., chairing a committee, or serving in an administrative role in a professional society—than that expected for candidates for tenure and/or promotion from assistant professor to associate professor.