



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PROMOTION AND TENURE GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA 2023-24

The following guidelines for promotion and tenure in the College of Education are offered with the understanding that reasoned judgments ultimately must be made about the merits of individual cases. The significant breadth of the field of education makes it difficult to provide detailed statements about what successful performance entails within individual branches of the field. Rather, and in accord with [Policy AC23](#), general and broad guidelines are provided herein for promotion and tenure committees within the College that allow for the exercise of skilled, informed, and objective professional and academic judgments. The committees will apply progressively more exacting standards as the candidate moves from assistant to associate to professor. More specific guidelines may be found in department guidelines, College guidance documents, and University guidance documents aligned with Policy AC23.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The College recognizes the scholarship of teaching and learning; the scholarship of research and creative accomplishments; and service and the scholarship of service to the University, society, and the profession. Promotion and tenure shall be based on recognized performance and achievement in each of these areas. The following general guidelines will be followed.

Promotion and Tenure Considerations

1. Promotion and tenure are separate, but not necessarily independent, decisions. The promotion and tenure committees consider the same functional categories in their deliberations on both promotion and tenure. A decision to promote a candidate is based on recognized performance and achievement in each of the areas discussed below (The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; The Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments; and Service and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession), with reference to the responsibilities assigned to the faculty member. Tenure decisions are based on the candidates' potential for future advancement in those areas as indicated by their performance during the provisional period. The tenure decision is a particularly critical one.
2. The University-defined categories for promotion and tenure consideration are not mutually exclusive. Ultimately, the promotion and tenure committees will judge each individual's record as a whole, considering their overall performance pattern while at the same time being cognizant of each evaluation area. In cases where a faculty member has a joint appointment with another unit (within or outside of the College), committees need to be sensitive to the legitimate demands of the other unit on the faculty member's time.
3. Although the College Promotion and Tenure Committee will be aware of the criteria of the department in which the initial review takes place, the College Committee's primary task will be to bring broader faculty judgment to departmental recommendations regarding individual candidates. In these matters, the committee will also monitor the general standards of quality, equity, and adequacy of the procedures and criteria employed consistent with the College's vision, mission, and goals. For favorable consideration, an individual's activity should contribute to the vision, mission, goals, and needs of the College and tend to increase the overall excellence

of the College. Changes in the vision, mission, and goals of the College over time and corresponding accomplishments of the candidate will be considered by the committee.

4. Both the academic and professional merits of candidates will concern the promotion and tenure committees. The reference group for comparison is the candidate's academic peers and colleagues both from within and from outside the University.
5. The sources of evidence to be used in examining each individual's record are those identified in Policy AC23, in department criteria, and in other relevant materials. Candidates should present whatever evidence they believe to be important in assisting the committees to arrive at a fair and impartial judgment of their unique function and competence. The promotion and tenure committees will also consider the faculty member's assigned duties when evaluating each section of the dossier. Candidates will include a single narrative statement at the front of the dossier that indicates their sense of their accomplishments in the scholarship of teaching and learning; the scholarship of research and creative accomplishments; and service and the scholarship of service to the University, society and the profession. The purpose of the statement is to give candidates the opportunity to place their work and activities in the context of their overall goals and agendas.

Procedures

1. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to prepare a dossier which documents the quality of the candidate's contributions and impact of these contributions in the three areas discussed below.
2. Tenured associate professors will be considered for promotion to the rank of professor after being nominated according to the procedures described in *Process for Nomination of Tenured Associate Professors for Promotion Reviews* (below).
3. In the case of a faculty member being reviewed for promotion from associate professor to professor, when the department committee does not recommend promotion and the Department Head agrees, after consulting with the Dean of the College, the Head should discuss with the candidate the advisability of withdrawing the dossier from review.
4. Upon the request of the Department Head, candidates for tenure, early tenure, and promotion to professor will provide the names of individuals qualified to assess the relative merits of their work. Upon receiving the candidate's list, the Department Head will then consult with other experts in the field, including the Professor-in-Charge of the relevant graduate program, for the purpose of adding to this list. The Department Head will then assemble a final list of names that is submitted to the Dean, along with a brief biographical sketch for each potential reviewer. The Dean will independently choose at least four individuals from the list to contact.
5. Candidates should include their narrative statement with the materials that are shared with the evaluators from outside the University. The purpose of this statement is to provide the external evaluators with a contextual framework with which to judge the candidate's line of research. The candidate's supporting materials should include a list of the publications forwarded to the evaluators.
6. If a faculty member is co-funded in an inter-college consortia or institute, satisfactory progress in fulfilling the objectives agreed to by the college and consortia upon appointment will be necessary for the college to retain that co-funding. In such cases, the department head should comment on the nature, extent, and success of the candidate's involvement with the institute or consortium in the department head's letter of evaluation.
7. The candidate is expected to review the portions of the dossier they have access to for accuracy before the dossier goes to the committee for review. In accordance with HR-60, Access to Personnel Files, candidates have the legal right and are encouraged to inspect all information in the dossier including the internal evaluations of committees and administrators and excluding the

external letters of assessment, as provided for in Policy AC23, at the conclusion of the promotion and tenure process.

Process for Nominating Tenured Associate Professors for Promotion Reviews

The promotion process for tenured associate professors is guided by the policies and practices described in the University's [Policy AC23](#) and the [Administrative Guidelines for Policy AC23](#), the College of Education's Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, and the promotion and tenure guidelines of the four departments of the College. This document provides additional guidelines regarding the process for nomination of tenured associate professors for promotion to the rank of professor. Tenured associate professors will be reviewed for promotion only after being nominated as follows:

1. A tenured associate professor interested in being considered for promotion to professor in the near future is encouraged to consult with tenured professors in their department and in the College, ideally tenured professors who serve as mentors to mid-career faculty. Feedback from such discussions, which should focus on strengths and areas for improvement based on review of available materials, will be helpful to candidates in assessing their readiness for promotion. A tenured professor who provides advice or feedback to an associate professor is in no way responsible for the ultimate outcome of a promotion review.
2. Upon review of a tenured associate professor's materials during an annual [AC40 review](#) (or other discussion of the faculty member's professional trajectory), a department head may encourage the faculty member to be considered for promotion to professor in an upcoming review cycle or may suggest a year when being reviewed would seem appropriate. Although ongoing conversations are encouraged, five years after tenure (at the time of the [AC40 extended review](#)), the timeline for a promotion review should be discussed and documented.
3. A tenured associate professor may initiate a consultation with their department head to seek advice about readiness to be considered for promotion to professor. The associate professor is encouraged to provide a draft of the promotion dossier, or at least an updated curriculum vita and evidence of teaching effectiveness, for review by the department head for this purpose.
4. Any review of documents outside a formal review should be considered advisory rather than evaluative.
5. If the department head does not consider a tenured associate professor to be ready to pursue promotion to professor, the faculty member will be asked to delay consideration and specific feedback will be offered. The department head's feedback to the faculty member will include an assessment of strengths and areas for improvement.
6. For cases in which an associate professor disagrees strongly with the department head's recommendation to delay, departments may offer an appeals process that involves review by a subset of the professors on the department review committee. If an appeals process is offered, it must be described in the department level promotion and tenure guidelines.
7. If a tenured associate professor has been asked to delay being reviewed for promotion to professor for two consecutive review cycles, they may put forth their case for review upon their third request.
8. All decisions about associate professors who will be considered for promotion must be made in sufficient time to meet the College's deadlines for identifying external reviewers.

Department and College Committees:

1. Department promotion and tenure committees are constituted according to approved department guidelines.
2. The College Promotion and Tenure Committee is a special committee of the Faculty Council. As specified in the Standing Rules of Order, this committee shall be composed of seven tenured

faculty members in the College. No more than two members from a single department may be on the committee. Five members will be elected by the tenure-line faculty in the College, with selection of members with the greatest number of votes, as long as that will not result in more than two members from any one department. Where the election would result in more than two members from a department, selection will move to the candidate with the next highest votes. Two members will be appointed by the Dean of the College, making sure that no more than two members come from any one department. In the event that a member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee must be replaced, when possible the replacement will be the person who received the next highest vote tally from any department that does not already have two members serving on the committee. The College Committee shall be constituted prior to departmental committee elections are conducted. The Chair of the Committee shall be elected from among its membership. At least three of the five elected members must hold the rank of Professor.

3. No member of a department or College promotion and tenure committee may serve concurrently on more than one promotion and tenure committee. In addition, members of promotion and tenure committees cannot include members who are on leaves of absence, including sabbatical leaves. Candidates under review may not serve on promotion and tenure committees during a year in which they are being reviewed.
4. Committee members and candidates may have personal or professional relationships with potential to pose a conflict of interest. In such cases, committee members should recuse themselves from the candidate's review. Examples of reasons to recuse include being a family member of a candidate or having a significant collaboration with a candidate. Mentoring a candidate is not, in general, a reason for recusal. Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest should occur as early as possible. A committee member who is recused should not be present for the committee's discussion or vote and should not have access to the dossier or committee letter.

CRITERIA

This section outlines the criteria and expectations comprising the basis of judgments to be made in each of the three categories currently provided for in Policy AC23. At this time, Policy AC23 recognizes the following three categories: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; The Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments; and Service and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession. The criteria, kinds of judgments to be made, and the nature of supporting evidence to be considered in making these judgments in the promotion and tenure categories are extensions of, and consistent with, the guidelines provided in Policy AC23.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

A candidate's professional responsibilities in the scholarship of teaching and learning, including course instruction, independent study, thesis direction and assistance, and academic advisement and consultation with students, will be used by the committee to evaluate the candidate within the context of the candidate's job responsibilities. The basis for judgment and the typical evidence used by faculty members to support their proficiencies in this area are explicated below.

Promotion and tenure committees will more heavily weigh evidence that consists of systematic and impartially monitored peer observations of teaching ability and effectiveness gathered as part of the normal arrangements of a department for the development and guidance of its faculty. These peer

observations of teaching will be informed by the goals the College establishes for teaching as articulated in the following paragraph.

The Committee will judge instruction, courses, and workshops, which may include continuing, online, and distance education, service learning courses, international programs, and cooperative extension programs in terms of: (a) suitability of the instructional program's objectives; (b) the degree to which classroom instructional activities contribute to student development and achievement or levels of performance commensurate with these objectives; (c) the maintenance of a teaching and learning environment where students are treated as welcomed contributors; and (d) the correspondence of evaluation procedures to these course objectives and instructional activities. Evidence provided by the instructor may include current or proposed course outlines, syllabi, study materials, and course communications in addition to evidence provided by students and evidence provided by faculty colleagues. For all course delivery modes, including those taught through the World Campus, evaluations by colleagues may include reviews of instructor provided course materials, feedback to students, samples of student work, and instructional strategies found in course communications such as discussion forums, chats, email exchanges, and posted announcements or prompts.

For formal and informal individual instruction (i.e., directing or assisting in independent study, thesis research, or individual projects), the instruction should be responsive to student needs and should enhance curricular and professional goals of the program and department. Evidence supporting a faculty member's proficiency in this area may include illustrative programs, research projects, and study topics developed for and with students.

Judgments regarding academic advisement and informal consultation will rest on the faculty member's responsiveness to student needs and effectiveness in achieving program goals with minimal confusion and conflict. The candidate may provide satisfactory evidence through impartial department procedures, using such things as faculty and administrators' observations and periodically solicited comments from currently enrolled and/or previously graduated students.

The Scholarship of Research and Creative Accomplishments

Research and creative accomplishments consist of original works disseminated to an audience of peers. Promotion and tenure committees will base their judgments on the quality and quantity of such efforts as determined by the extent to which the research and creative accomplishments are: (a) conceptual rather than merely technical, (b) the products of sustained and programmatic activity as contrasted with unrelated and unfocused activity, and (c) significant in their effects on thought and practice.

Evidence of research and creative accomplishments may take many forms including: articles published in refereed journals, especially those that are considered prestigious and well regarded in the faculty member's principal area of emphasis; books and monographs; chapters or parts of books; involvement in funded projects (completed, in progress, and proposed); new computer software programs; papers presented at technical and professional meetings; and, honors and awards for scholarship, creative production, and professional activity, in addition to the other categories enumerated in the University's Promotion and Tenure Guidelines. Candidates are not necessarily expected to present a record that includes entries for every possible type of evidence.

Implicit in these illustrations of evidence is the view that the product has been subjected to the judgment of professional peers who are sufficiently informed to evaluate quality. Research and creative accomplishments which have been favorably reviewed by professional or academic peers will be weighed more significantly than those that have not. Within the constraints described in this section and the candidate's assigned duties, publications jointly written with students are also valued. The extent to which a faculty member stimulates research and creative accomplishment in students and peers is important.

The candidate's active memberships in professional societies (when there was recognition through election to major offices or committees) constitute another source of evidence of accomplishment in this area of performance when such information is accompanied by descriptions of the contributions made to these organizations.

Service and the Scholarship of Service to the University, Society, and the Profession

On the one hand, service and the scholarship of service to the University, society, and the profession encompasses activities that are internal to the University, College, department, or program that contribute to governance, management, and administration for the achievement of the institution's goals. Such activities, for example, include committee work at the University, campus, College, or departmental level; involvement with the College Faculty Council, University Faculty Senate, Graduate Council; and administrative support work such as professor-in-charge of a graduate program or coordinator of an administrative office.

On the other hand, service and the scholarship of service to the University, society, and the profession encompasses activities that involve the faculty member's professional expertise and the application of this expertise for the betterment of organizations and entities that are external to the University. Such activities, for example, include consulting to assist the Pennsylvania Department of Education, schools, businesses, and other institutions or agencies; providing formal and informal credit and non-credit education programs for youth and adults; organizing conferences and service on conference committees making speeches and other responses to requests from citizen groups; and membership and significant participation on task forces, meetings of public, non-profit, or private organizations, governmental agencies, and industry; and service on committees and other invited work for professional organizations and learned societies.

The quality of service will be determined by such indicators as type and scope of professionally related service; offices held within governmental and related organizations; and letters or other written documents that attest to the value and effectiveness of the candidate's contributions. Articles or other written materials that elucidate the intellectual grounds and plans underlying a faculty member's service activities can provide useful insights into the significance of the service being provided.

Endorsed by the College of Education Faculty Council on April 21, 2016; Updated references to current Policy AC23 in September 2018; Included process for nomination of associate professors for promotion reviews in Spring 2022, as required and approved by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs in June 2022; Removed page length for narrative statements (the University guidelines specify this length) and replaced gendered pronouns with "they" and "their," July 2022; Included information about constituting committees and promotion to full reviews, as required by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, and made minor edits for consistency with College guidance and University guidelines in May 2023.