

Department of English

Guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor

The purpose of this document is to make more transparent the procedures and criteria by which Associate Professors are considered for promotion to the rank of Full Professor.

Expectations

General expectations for promotion to Professor are outlined in the UW Faculty Code and in the UW Arts and Sciences promotion guidelines.

UW Faculty Code:

According to the UW Faculty Code (Section 24-34), "Promotion to the rank of Professor requires outstanding, mature scholarship as evidenced by accomplishments in teaching and in research as evaluated in terms of national or international recognition."
(<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/FCG/FCCH24.html>)

UW Arts & Sciences:

The UW Arts and Sciences "Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines" further specifies: "The decision about promotion to the rank of Professor is based on the same three fundamental criteria that guide evaluations for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, namely scholarship, teaching, and service. For promotion to Professor, the expectations of attainment in these three areas are higher than for promotion to Associate Professor. The precise expectations vary widely over the units within the College and across the University, but the common denominator is documented evidence of outstanding quality, productivity, and scholarly impact. However, there are general principles that are applied as uniformly as possible across all cases by the College Council and the Dean.

Faculty members, especially post-tenure, can take various approaches to scholarship, teaching, and service, emphasizing one or another at different times in a career. The College of Arts and Sciences values the many and varied contributions made by faculty. Promotion to the highest academic rank will be consistent with the expectations of a research university. Each promotion case is evaluated on its own merits, taking into account the specific expectations of each department and the general expectations of the College and the University." (For a detailed description of the guidelines, see [Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines--https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines](https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines)).

Timing and Procedures

As stated in the UW Arts and Sciences guidelines, unlike promotion to Associate Professor with its six-year tenure clock, promotion to Professor has no mandated time period. Statistically, within the College of Arts and Sciences, time in rank at the Associate Professor level varies by division, but there is also a significant range of time in rank within the divisions. Sustained productivity is important, but we also acknowledge that there may be valid reasons for an interruption in sustained productivity such as heavy administrative or mentoring loads, extensive public service, primary caregiving, etc.

By Faculty Code, every faculty member below the rank of Professor should be considered annually for possible promotion and has the right to request a promotion review. Also, by Code, Associate Professors meet at least biannually with their chair to discuss progress toward promotion. It is important that the faculty member and chair candidly discuss progress toward promotion and the department's and College's expectations for promotion (see below for more information about criteria).

Within the department, there are several pathways by which an Associate Professor can be brought to the department's Full Professors for promotion review. **One pathway** is via the biannual meeting with the chair, at which point the chair and faculty member can discuss progress toward promotion and the department's and College's expectations for promotion. **Another pathway** is via the annual chair's announcement to Associate Professors, inviting faculty who are interested in meeting to discuss their plans for promotion to full professor. **Another pathway** is via the annual merit review process, during which the department chair and other Full Professors can identify candidates for promotion review. As described in the Faculty Code, **another pathway** is via a faculty member's request to be considered for a promotion review.

Once a faculty member has been identified for a promotion review, the case is brought to the Full Professors in early Winter quarter. Candidates are asked to provide an updated CV along with a career statement that traces the arc of one's career since tenure. The career statement is akin to a cover letter in scope and length (approximately 1-2 pages) and should not just gloss the CV but describe intellectual through-lines that include scholarship, teaching, and service. Voting members of the Full Professors screen the materials using the criteria described below and vote on whether to put the candidate forward for promotion. A two-thirds majority, voting by secret ballot, is required for a promotion review to be recommended. Once a case is recommended, the full professors on the EC will be charged to select a promotion committee of two individuals. Candidates will be consulted on their preference regarding who should or should not be on the committee and will have the opportunity to approve such a committee before it is announced/formalized. Candidates will also be asked to supply the department chair as soon as is practical with a list of potential external reviewers, ideally six or so (the chair will explain criteria for selecting external reviewers). These should be full professors at "peer institutions" (a guideline that can be fairly broadly interpreted). Candidates will also have an opportunity to provide any names of people that they would prefer that we not contact. The department chair, in consultation with the promotion committee, will decide on a final list of typically five (minimally four) names of possible external reviewers. The goal is to have the external reviewers arranged by the end of March at the latest. The main other task for candidates by the end of the first week of May will be to gather hard copies and electronic copies of

all their publications since tenure that they would like to go out to the external reviewers. The Assistant to the Chair in the Main Office will work with candidates to make sure that they have all the right materials assembled and sent out in a timely fashion. The remaining part of the process (personal statement, teaching evaluations, etc.) are explained by the chair.

Criteria

In developing its criteria for promotion to Full Professor, the department of English follows general principles as described in the Faculty Code and the College of Arts and Sciences [Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines \(https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines\)](https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines). These principles are described below.

While scholarly productivity, quality, and impact are primary criteria for promotion to full professor, the department of English also recognizes that a faculty career may consist of various phases during which scholarly activity, teaching, or administrative/professional service are afforded different priority, creating a composite professional life. Where a candidate has made truly extraordinary contributions in the areas of teaching or service, that record may warrant promotion in combination with a less extensive, though impactful record of continued scholarship.

Scholarship

There is no single scale that can be used within a single academic unit when assessing scholarship, as there are many compelling combinations of quantity, quality, and pace of scholarly activity, but the common denominator is documented evidence of outstanding quality, productivity, and scholarly impact. The College of Arts and Sciences “Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines” provides some general principles for assessing scholarship:

As a premier research university, our expectations regarding the independent scholarly record of our faculty are high. In general, quality is more important than quantity, although there must be sufficient quantity to provide evidence of a significant level of scholarly productivity and impact. For promotion to Professor, the faculty member should have established him/herself as a major researcher, scholar, or creative artist at the national and often international level. At this stage of career, the scholarly record will normally be larger and also reflect a more mature formulation of questions and a richer exploration of them. A faculty member's entire scholarly career is evaluated, with emphasis placed on work developed since the time of promotion to Associate Professor.

Several factors influence the assessment of the quality of a scholarly record:

Quality can be demonstrated by indicators of the impact of scholarship such as citations and prestige of the journals or presses in which the individual publishes or of the exhibit or performance venue.

Outside funding of research from prestigious foundations and institutes (in those disciplines in which it is available) can be viewed as a significant part of the scholarly record.

In the creative arts, promotion portfolios will reflect the faculty member's creative work, including works of art, exhibitions, performances, and reviews thereof. As with all faculty members, the significance of the work and career trajectory are paramount.

Invited presentations to talk at other universities and prestigious events add to the scholarly record but generally play a relatively minor role independent of other measures of the scholarly record.

We do encourage collaborative work; thus coauthored books, articles, and creative works are given important weight by the Council. In general, largely technical achievements do not count as much as contributions of a more fundamental and substantial nature. A significant portion of the overall scholarly record should include works to which the candidate (and as appropriate, his/her students) has made the primary contributions.

Sustained scholarly activity as seen in conference participation, publications, grants, or performances and exhibitions demonstrates scholarly engagement and attainment.

When assessing outstanding quality, productivity, and scholarly impact for promotion to Full Professor, the department of English looks for evidence of a second body of sustained work. Such evidence is most commonly measured, in part, by the publication of a second scholarly or creative book, beyond that required for tenure (publication can include a book that is published or in production with final revisions completed). Sustained scholarly or creative projects of comparable weight to a second published book may also be considered, such as co-authored books and large-scale digital projects (or, in the case of linguistic research, a substantial number of single-authored articles or book chapters in highly ranked journals), especially in the case of associate professors working in fields in which monographs are not considered a standard research product. Additional evidence of scholarly productivity, such as edited collections, essays, articles, book chapters, scholarly editions, conference presentations, invited lectures, workshops organized and led, readings of creative work, and book reviews will also be considered as contributing to a second body of work and as part of attaining measurable national or international recognition. All such work may be distributed in the form most appropriate to its content or to the candidate's field.

The department of English seeks to be expansive in its understanding of what constitutes research and scholarship in order to be inclusive of the various ways research is conducted and distributed, from traditional forms of publication (books, articles, chapters, anthologies) to digital sites of publication, local practice-based research that has national impact and recognition, public scholarship, national or international research grants received, and/or participation in cross-institutional and cross-disciplinary scholarship.

Teaching

As described in the College of Arts and Sciences “Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines”:

A good teaching record is a necessary part of a successful promotion case. Promotion will not be granted in the College of Arts and Sciences without evidence of good teaching. An exceptional teaching record can compensate for a more limited scholarly record, but it cannot substitute for an unacceptable scholarly record. Teaching is viewed broadly, including curriculum planning, course design, student reactions and success, and mentoring. Evidence of success in these areas will be judged using the following materials: teaching evaluations, peer evaluations, and mentoring record.

Concerning the mentoring record: A very important part of our teaching responsibilities takes place outside of any specific course. The advising of students, both undergraduate and graduate, is a significant contribution to the teaching mission of the University. At the time of promotion to Professor, a faculty member will have a significant record of working with and mentoring students, including, where appropriate, chairing graduate student committees. The demonstrated success of one's students (both undergraduate and graduate) can be valuable testimony of a faculty member's contributions. (See the “[Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines](https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines)” at <https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines> for more details.)

Candidates for promotion to Full Professor, beyond the regularly required number of student and peer evaluations, are required to have a peer teaching evaluation completed the year prior to going up for promotion.

When evaluating teaching quality, the department of English follows the advice presented in the UW Center for Teaching and Learning’s “A Guide to Best Practice for Evaluating Teaching,” which describes best practices for self-assessment, peer review of teaching, and student evaluations. (See <http://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/assessing-and-improving-teaching/evaluation/> for more details.) When documenting their teaching as part of the promotion materials provided to the promotion committee, in addition to providing student evaluations and peer reviews, candidates are encouraged to include supporting materials (syllabi, course materials, assignments) as well as a self-assessment (1-2 pages) that provides the instructor’s perspective on and analysis of their teaching as well as contextualizes other forms of data submitted to the committee, including peer reviews and student evaluations. Such supporting materials can take the form of a teaching portfolio (see “A Guide to Best Practice for Evaluating Teaching” for more details).

Service

As described in the College of Arts and Sciences “Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines”:

Communities thrive when all members contribute to the common good. Thus we expect that candidates for promotion will have been involved in the life of their department, in the life of the University, and in their national associations. The University and the College have also made

engagement with the broader public one of our institutional goals, and encourage public scholarship. It is desirable to show evidence of contributions to or engagement with the broader community and in some cases may be part of the job expectations. Whereas junior faculty commit less of their time to service, tenured faculty members are expected to play a greater role in this area.

In the area of service, candidates are expected to have built a record of significant professional service at the College, University, and national levels, while also continuing to provide high-quality service to the Department. Such service can include chairing of committees, faculty governance, inclusion and equity work, and other forms of leadership at the university and national level. Although not required, evidence of professionally related public service at the local, national, or international levels is also recognized.