

USC Department of English

Procedures and Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

Revised Spring 2005

I. PROCEDURE

A. Definitions

1. The Tenure and Promotion Committee: Composed of all tenured members of the department, chaired by the Chair of the Secretarial Committee, this committee has the responsibility for meeting to assess the candidates in scholarship, teaching, and service as outlined in the statement of criteria for tenure and promotion. This assessment includes annual review of untenured faculty and an official formal review, described below, at the time a faculty member requests consideration for tenure and/or promotion.

2. The Secretarial Committee: Composed of four tenured faculty, at least two of whom must be full professors, elected during the spring semester for two-year terms, this committee elects its chair from among the full professors and is responsible for assisting candidates in preparing their tenure and/or promotion files.

B. Major Steps in Procedure

1. Each Spring:

a. In accordance with the calendar distributed by the Provost's Office, the chair of the Secretarial Committee notifies all eligible faculty and ascertains their wishes to be considered or not considered for tenure and/or promotion in the coming fall.

b. For each faculty member requesting consideration, the committee will arrange for four colleagues to observe two of the faculty member's classes before the end of the

spring semester, or at the beginning of the fall semester only if there is inadequate time in the spring. The observers must be tenured faculty of higher rank than the candidate. The two observers for each class will meet with the candidate prior to the visit in order to receive a copy of the syllabus and any other information the candidate wishes them to have in order to place the class in context of the entire semester. After the visits, each observer will write a detailed report to the Secretarial Committee about the class, noting its strengths and weaknesses. These reports become part of the tenure and promotion file to be considered by the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

c. The Secretarial Committee will assist the candidate in arranging for a colleague to prepare a summary analysis of all student evaluations for the candidate's courses. All evaluations for all classes during the three years prior to the decision year must be included, and the candidate is encouraged to include some classes for every year since the most recent promotion.

d. The completed tenure and promotion file will include a copy of the relevant criteria, signed by the candidate, in the front of the file folder. The Secretarial Committee will determine that the candidate has chosen the set of criteria that are permissible in his or her case. The choices of criteria available to each candidate are those specified in the Faculty Manual. The relevant passage is under the main head of TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES and the subhead of "Amendments and Transitional Provisions" and reads as follows:

No change shall be made in the university wide tenure and promotion regulations except by vote of the full voting membership of the university faculty or by direction of the Board of Trustees. In no event shall any change in tenure and promotion regulations be made retroactive for faculty hired before January 1, 1995, unless the faculty member chooses otherwise; except that any changes in tenure and promotion regulations shall apply to all faculty, including those hired before January 1, 1995, who are subject to the provisions of Tenure and Promotion in Cases of Reorganization as set forth herein.

Faculty members hired into the tenure track after January 1, 1995, shall be responsible within their probationary period for meeting the unit tenure and promotion criteria and university standards in effect at the time of their hiring. For all subsequent promotions the faculty member shall be responsible for meeting unit criteria and university standards in effect at the time of their application for that promotion.

e. For each faculty member requesting consideration, the committee will solicit possible names for outside reviewers from the candidate and from all members of the

Tenure and Promotion Committee. At least five names of established scholars, at or above the rank to which the candidate is aspiring, from peer and aspirant institutions, will be selected by the Secretarial Committee as outside evaluators, two of whom may be suggested by the candidate, and at least three by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. None of the outside reviewers should have any vested interest in the candidate's career; for example, dissertation directors or co-authors might be considered to have a conflict of interest. The Committee also invites the candidate to submit up to two names of persons who should not be invited to serve as reviewers. The Chair of the Secretarial Committee will solicit the outside evaluators through letters that include a copy of the relevant criteria, notice that the department currently pays an honorarium of at least \$100, and the deadline (around September 1) by which a report is due. A copy of the relevant criteria as well as all books and papers submitted by the candidate are sent to the outside reviewers.

f. The Chair of the Secretarial Committee meets with each candidate to discuss the compilation of the tenure and promotion file. Each candidate is encouraged to attend the information meeting for candidates conducted by the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion and normally held on Reading Day.

g. While the Secretarial Committee will assist the candidate in any appropriate way as requested by the candidate, the ultimate responsibility for a complete and persuasive file remains with the candidate. All data relevant to determining whether the candidate satisfies the criteria for tenure and promotion will be included in the candidate's file.

2. Each Summer

a. The Secretarial Committee monitors progress on obtaining all the letters from outside reviewers.

b. The Secretarial Committee makes available all the scholarship by the candidate, collected and organized by the candidate, for review by any member of the Tenure and Promotion Committee. Since we are a large department and there is not a long time between the beginning of the fall term and the fall meeting of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, this early start gives the faculty enough time to read all of a candidate's scholarship.

3. Each Fall:

a. The Chair of the Secretarial Committee places the letters from the outside reviewers and the peer reports on classroom visits in the candidate's file and ascertains that the file is ready for review by the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

- b.** The Secretarial Committee is responsible for maintaining the tenure and promotion files in a secured office, available only to members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, who are expected to check off their names on a sign-up sheet.
- c.** In accordance with the time-table established by the Provost's Office, the Tenure and Promotion Committee will meet to discuss each candidate's file. Prior to the meeting all members will have given a thorough and conscientious review of all publications and other materials in the files. The meeting is chaired by the chair of the Secretarial Committee/Tenure and Promotion Committee. Members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee have pledged not to discuss in any manner with anyone not a member of the committee, faculty member or otherwise, any of the proceedings or deliberations of the committee.
- d.** After the meeting, tenured faculty members at the appropriate rank will vote on tenure and/or promotion by secret ballot submitted in a sealed envelope to the Chair of the Secretarial Committee by the deadline set by the Secretarial Committee. No ballots will be accepted after the deadline. All votes, including votes of abstention, must be accompanied by a written justification. Each faculty member may vote affirmatively, negatively, or in abstention. A faculty member on leave may vote only if he or she notifies the unit chair or dean of a desire to do so before beginning the leave. A person eligible to vote who does not vote will be listed among the number not voting; a person who wishes to abstain must vote to abstain, not merely fail to vote.
- e.** The ballots will be tallied by the Secretarial Committee, who will give a written tally to the department chair for forwarding through administrative channels. The chair indicates his or her vote in a letter summarizing and evaluating the unit vote.
- f.** A favorable recommendation is a simple majority of "yes" votes from among those voting "yes" or "no."
- g.** The department chair notifies the candidate of the positive or negative nature of the departmental vote as soon as possible after the voting is concluded so an unsuccessful candidate has time to consider an appeal of the file through channels, according to the Faculty Manual. The precise numbers of the vote are not revealed to the faculty member under consideration, but the candidate is given enough general information about the basis for the recommendation that the candidate can make an informed decision about the feasibility of an appeal.

II. CRITERIA

The English Department evaluates candidates for tenure and promotion in terms of three kinds of professional activity: scholarship, teaching, and service. The department recognizes that the overall quality of the candidate's entire record will always be of paramount importance in making recommendations about tenure and promotion. However, as the following criteria for tenure and promotion indicate by their detail and arrangement, scholarship, teaching, and service are evaluated and prioritized in this order. Furthermore, while sustained proficiency in teaching and a record of effective service are expected of all candidates for tenure and promotion, the primary criterion for achieving the rank of professor will be an ongoing record of distinction as a scholar or creative writer.

A. For Promotion to Professor

1. Scholarship

The quality of all publications, whatever their nature, number, or length, is the single most important factor. The successful candidate will demonstrate high quality in published and accepted pieces of original research, criticism, or analysis that warrant recognition as a scholar who has made and who will continue to make significant contributions to the field. For faculty whose work is entirely or partially in Creative Writing, there must be publications or productions of the creative imagination that demonstrate clear and continuing distinction as an author of national or international importance. Judgements about whether a candidate's published research is of "high quality" are the responsibility of the voting faculty; these judgements are aided by the opinions of the outsider reviewers concerning the quality of the candidate's contributions to research and scholarship in his or her field of specialization.

While the candidate's entire career will be reviewed, the most important part of the case for promotion will be the scholarly or creative record achieved since promotion to, or appointment as, associate professor.

Materials presented by candidates in creative writing should have been disseminated in the appropriate media: poets and writers of fiction, in books and periodicals; playwrights and screenwriters, on stage, screen, or television, as well as in print. Although creative writing can be expected to have a wider range of appropriate outlets than scholarship, the significance of the journal or publisher will be taken into account. Likewise, the range of dissemination of non-print materials will be of importance, with regional or national outlets normally being more significant than local ones.

Candidates are not expected to offer materials in every category listed below; nor is the list intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to be illustrative of the

diversity of accomplishments and materials that the department considers in reaching a decision about the quality of scholarship or creative production.

Documents placed in the candidate's file may include:

a. PRIMARY MATERIALS, such as:

- * Books or monographs reviewed by recognized scholars in the field. Reviews may include publishers' readers' reports, published reviews, and/or reports of outside evaluators solicited by the committee;
- * Substantial, refereed articles in scholarly journals;
- * Textual editing or bibliographical scholarship;
- * Textbooks that make a significant contribution to the field;
- * Published novels, plays, screenplays, collections of stories or essays, and books of poems, as well as produced plays, screenplays, or other creative productions. These materials or productions should be reviewed by scholars or critics in the field. Reviews may include publishers' readers' reports, published reviews, and/or reports of outside evaluators solicited by the committee;
- * Substantial stories, excerpts from novels, essays, poems, or one-act plays published in journals, magazines, annuals, or anthologies;
- * Primary material accepted and in production but not yet published.

b. RECOGNITION as a scholar or writer with a major reputation in one's field, as determined by:

- * Favorable and/or significant scholarly reviews;
- * Awards;
- * Election to membership on boards or as officer of professional organizations;
- * Appointment as editor of a scholarly or literary journal;
- * Membership on editorial boards of important journals;
- * Invitation as a keynote (or similar) speaker at major symposia;
- * Translation of one's work;
- * Other demonstrations of recognition submitted by the candidate.

c. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS, such as:

- * Other textbooks or edited collections (such as verse, stories, or essays);
- * Unrefereed articles;
- * Editorial board work for a scholarly or literary journal;
- * Scholarly journals edited;
- * Literary journals or magazines edited;
- * Notes in scholarly journals;
- * Public readings;
- * Reviews of books, plays, or films;

- * Scholarly book reviews;
- * Refereed and/or invited papers read at scholarly meetings;
- * Grants.

The department recognizes that what is here labeled "Supplemental Materials" may in fact constitute a significant contribution to scholarship or significant authorial or professional accomplishment. In all cases, candidates are responsible for documenting the scholarly or creative importance of their work.

2. Teaching

The department expects all candidates for tenure and/or promotion to any higher rank to demonstrate sustained proficiency in teaching. A proficient teacher is one whose classes regularly display clarity and rigor, whose classes are taught at an appropriate level, and whose teaching motivates student learning.

The department will determine the quality of teaching by considering peer evaluations, including class visitations, course syllabi (to include paper and exam requirements), student evaluations and a summary of those evaluations by a colleague--all of which are mandatory. The department will also consider other optional aspects of the record, such as:

- * A Teaching Portfolio, typically including a statement of teaching philosophy, Education Testing Service (ETS) evaluations, reading lists, any audio-visual materials for classes, examinations, and samples of student work;
- * Involvement in teaching, developing, and administering the graduate program, including the formulating and grading of masters' and doctoral level comprehensive examinations;
- * Directing dissertations and theses;
- * Reading dissertations and theses;
- * Student letters (these are not to be solicited by the candidate);
- * Involvement of graduate or undergraduate students in joint research projects;
- * Innovations in teaching and curriculum development, such as proposals for new courses or new programs;
- * Mentoring of students and student groups at the undergraduate and graduate level;
- * Publications and activities that assist other faculty in developing classroom instruction;
- * Demonstrations of a positive impact on the teaching and curriculum development of colleagues in the profession; and
- * Any other information the candidate offers to indicate the candidate's level of expertise as a teacher.

Candidates are not expected to offer materials in every category listed, nor is the list intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to be illustrative of the diversity of

accomplishments and materials that the department considers in reaching a decision about the quality of teaching.

In considering these elements, the department will look for evidence of sustained effectiveness inside the classroom and in other teaching-related activities.

3. Service

The successful candidate for promotion to professor will offer a sustained record of effective service that goes beyond what is required for tenure and promotion to associate professor. In addition to expectations for departmental service, candidates for professor are expected to have a continuing record of effective service at the college or university level and/or within the profession at large. Effective service is defined as regular, conscientious, and valuable contributions to departmental, college, or university programs and/or various committees in the department, college, and/or university, national, and international academic community. The department recognizes such markers of accomplishment as being asked to evaluate manuscripts or grant proposals, being invited to serve on editorial boards, offices held or awards/citations received from regional, national, or international professional organizations.

Professionally related contributions to the community, state, or nation, will also be recognized.

Letters of evaluation from the department chair, program directors, or other appropriate persons, including chairs of committees that a candidate has served on, will be used as documentation in the tenure and promotion file. The department will determine the effectiveness of service by considering the evidence of quality of performance in:

- * Committee assignments;
- * Ad hoc responsibilities assigned by the department chair or other colleague in an administrative role;
- * Participation in the intellectual and curricular life of the department through faculty meetings, committee meetings, and any other faculty decision-making group;
- * Papers, articles, or presentations that represent contributions of service to the profession or to a group or community; for example, reviews of new technologies and summaries of conference proceedings;
- * Academic advising.

B. For Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The English department evaluates candidates for tenure and promotion in terms of three kinds of professional activity: scholarship, teaching, and service. As the following criteria for tenure and promotion indicate by their detail and arrangement, scholarship and teaching are given top priority. While service is an important part of a faculty member's

responsibility, it remains second in priority for decisions about tenure and promotion. While sustained proficiency in teaching and a record of effective service are expected of all candidates for tenure and promotion, the primary criterion for achieving the rank of associate professor will be an ongoing record of distinction as a scholar. The criteria for tenure are identical to those for promotion to associate professor.

1. Scholarship

The quality of all publications, whatever their nature, number, or length, is the single most important factor. The successful candidate will demonstrate high quality in published and accepted pieces of original research, criticism, or analysis that warrant recognition as a scholar making a significant contribution to the field. For faculty whose work is entirely or partially in Creative Writing, there must be publications or productions of the creative imagination to warrant recognition as an author of national importance. Voting faculty of the Department of English are the judges of the quality of each candidate's work; their judgements must be clearly justified in writing and based both on the assessments provided by the outside reviewers, their own careful reading and evaluation of the candidate's work, and their knowledge of the field.

Materials presented by candidates in creative writing should have been disseminated in the appropriate media: poets and writers of fiction, in books and periodicals; playwrights and screenwriters, on stage, screen, or television, as well as in print. Although creative writing can be expected to have a wider range of appropriate outlets than scholarship, the department will take into account the significance of the journal or publisher. Likewise, the range of dissemination of non-print materials will be of importance, with regional or national outlets normally being more significant than local ones.

Candidates are not expected to offer materials in every category listed; nor is the list intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to be illustrative of the diversity of accomplishments and materials that the department considered in reaching a decision about the quality of scholarship or creative production.

Documents placed in the candidate's file may include:

a. PRIMARY MATERIALS, such as:

- * Books or monographs reviewed by recognized scholars in the field. Reviews may include publishers' readers' reports, published reviews, and/or reports of outside evaluators solicited by the committee;
- * Substantial, refereed articles in scholarly journals;
- * Textual editing or bibliographical scholarship;
- * Textbooks that make a significant contribution to the field;
- * Published novels, plays, screenplays, collections of stories or essays, and books of poems, as well as produced plays, screenplays, or other creative

productions. These materials or productions should be reviewed by scholars or critics in the field. Reviews may include publishers' readers' reports, published reviews, and/or reports of outside evaluators solicited by the committee;

- * Substantial stories, excerpts from novels, essays, poems, or one-act plays published in journals, magazines, annuals, or anthologies.

b. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS, such as:

- * Other textbooks or edited collections (such as verse, stories, plays, or essays);
- * Unrefereed articles;
- * Notes in scholarly journals;
- * Scholarly book reviews;
- * Reviews of books, plays, or films;
- * Editorial board work for a scholarly or literary journal;
- * Scholarly or literary journals edited;
- * Public Readings;
- * Refereed and/or invited papers read at scholarly meetings;
- * Grants.

The department recognizes that what is here labeled "Supplemental Materials" may in fact constitute a significant contribution to scholarship or significant authorial or professional accomplishment. In all cases, candidates are responsible for documenting the scholarly or creative importance of their work.

2. Teaching

The department expects all candidates for tenure and/or promotion to any higher rank to demonstrate sustained proficiency in teaching. A proficient teacher is one whose classes regularly display clarity and rigor, whose classes are taught at an appropriate level, and whose teaching motivates student learning.

The department will determine the quality of teaching by considering peer evaluations, including class visitations, course syllabi (to include paper and exam requirements), student evaluations and a summary of those evaluations by a colleague--all of which are mandatory. The department will also consider other optional aspects of the record, such as:

- * A Teaching Portfolio, typically including a statement of teaching philosophy, Educational Testing Service (ETS) evaluations, reading lists, audio-visual materials for classes, examinations and samples of student work;
- * Student letters (these are not to be solicited by the candidate);
- * Directing dissertations and theses;
- * Reading dissertations and theses;
- * Involvement of graduate or undergraduate students in joint research projects;

- * Innovations in teaching and curriculum development, such as proposals for new courses or new programs;
- * Mentoring of students and student groups at the undergraduate and graduate level;
- * Publications and activities that assist other faculty in developing classroom instruction; and
- * Any other information the candidate offers to indicate the candidate's level of expertise as a teacher.

Candidates are not expected to offer materials in every category listed, nor is the list intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to be illustrative of the diversity of accomplishments and materials that the department considers in reaching a decision about the quality of teaching.

In considering these elements, the department will look for evidence of sustained effectiveness inside the classroom and in other teaching-related activities.

3. Service

Effective service is defined as regular, conscientious, and valuable contributions to departmental, college, or university programs and/or to various committees in the department, college, and/or university, national, and international academic community.

The department recognizes that candidates for tenure and promotion to associate professor may have a less extensive record of service than current associate professors and professors because probationary faculty are deliberately given time at the beginnings of their careers to establish themselves professionally; however, the department also expects whatever service appears in the record to have been effectively carried out.

Candidates must have a record of effective service within the department. Effective service beyond the department, i.e., within the college, the university, and the profession, as well as professionally related contributions to the community, state, or nation, will also be recognized, but it is not required for tenure or promotion to associate professor.

Letters of evaluation from the department chair, program directors, or other appropriate persons, including chairs of committees that a candidate has served on, will be used as documentation in the tenure and promotion file. The department will determine the effectiveness of service by considering the evidence of quality of performance in:

- * Committee assignments;
- * Ad hoc responsibilities assigned by the department chair or other colleague in an administrative role;
- * Participation in the intellectual and curricular life of the department through faculty meetings, committee meetings, and any other faculty decision-making group;

- * Papers, articles, or presentations that represent contributions of service to the profession or to a group or community; for example, reviews of new technologies and summaries of conference proceedings;
- * Academic advising.