

Guide to Tenure and Promotion:  
Procedures and Expectations

Department of English  
University of South Florida

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## **General Comments**

The English department seeks to promote excellent teaching, distinguished scholarship and creative publication, and exemplary professional service to the department, the college, the university, the profession, and the community at large. The best English departments in the nation exhibit these characteristics, and our goal is to achieve and maintain equal ranking with these departments. The English department generally follows the guidelines for tenure and promotion set down in college and university documents, and candidates should begin by carefully consulting those documents. The department is committed to both our teaching and research missions, and one simply cannot gain tenure without demonstrating excellence in both of these areas. We recognize the principles of equity of assignment, resources, and opportunities of faculty across a multi-campus university.

Insofar as the department uses more specific evaluative language, it is noted below.

## **PROMOTION OF NON-TENURE TRACK INSTRUCTORS**

### **I. General Promotion Procedures**

There is no requirement or time limit for continuing instructor I to be promoted to continuing instructor II. Applications for promotion will be reviewed by the Instructor Promotion Committee, which consists of five members who are tenure-line faculty or continuing instructor III. This committee will be elected as needed each year in a secret ballot by the tenure-line faculty and continuing instructors.

Candidates for promotion should notify the Chair in fall that they intend to apply in the spring. Each will be expected to complete the online tenure and promotion application, currently in Archivum. Instruction is provided by CAS, and candidates should work closely with the Chair and the department Archivum liaison to make sure all the elements are entered properly. The range of application materials can include narratives for each of the areas for which they have been assigned work responsibility, e.g. teaching, administration, service; they also should include an updated CV and supplementary materials including service agreements, syllabi, awards, etc. Evidence of teaching success will include teaching evaluations that are archived and available in Archivum, annual review records, and other supplementary materials—such as peer observations, teaching awards, publications in teaching—that the candidate includes.

In accordance with guidelines established by the university and college, the Instructor Promotion Committee will consider and make recommendations to the department Chair on applications by instructors to ranks II and III. (The composition and election of the committee are detailed in the department's Governance Document.) The d

Department criteria for promotion to continuing instructor II will be based on the evidence of the last five years of service as an instructor:

- 1) Appropriate terminal degree;



# TENURE AND PROMOTION OF TENURE-LINE FACULTY

## **I. Procedures for Tenure and Promotions**

The College of Arts & Sciences sets the probationary period for tenure at four to seven years. A candidate must achieve tenure no earlier than the end of the fourth tenure-earning year and no later than the end of the seventh tenure-earning year. Any changes to a tenure clock throughout the probationary period must be approved by the chair, college dean, and provost.

Tenure-line faculty from branch campuses who are pre-tenure on July 1, 2020 will follow the stipulations designated in university policies governing consolidation. All pre-tenure faculty on branch campuses who are hired after July 1, 2020 will follow the tenure and promotion guidelines established here.

Associate professors may apply for promotion to full professor when they have achieved the required professional credentials demonstrating their teaching effectiveness, research excellence, and substantive service (see section III). In general, the department expects at least five years in rank as associate professor before applying for promotion to full. Applicants for full professor will be evaluated on the record that begins no earlier than after tenure; that is to say that, in the area of research, faculty applying for promotion to full professor will be evaluated on the record that begins with work conducted or published as an associate professor with tenure. In the areas of teaching and service, the primary emphasis is on the record for the five years immediately

Ph.D. (or MFA for creative writing candidates) program. They should have no significant relationship to the candidate (e.g., major professor, co-author), unless there are mitigating circumstances that would indicate otherwise (e.g., to review scholarship so specialized that few expert reviewers exist).

Once the candidate has completed the application, the Chair is required to enter the summary of reaching and of research. After the application passes quality review, all tenured faculty will be given access to the application for review.

## **II. Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor of English**

In keeping with the normal practice of major universities, the English department generally considers a candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor under a single set of criteria.

### **A. Teaching Ability and Effectiveness**

Since the department seeks to ensure high-quality teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, candidates are expected to exhibit excellence in teaching, which should be demonstrated in and through the categories below. The assessment of excellence in teaching occurs primarily at the departmental level and should draw on documentation generated

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5. *Evidence of Contribution to the Degree Programs in English:*

a. Graduate Program: When applicable, candidates for tenure will be expected to contribute significantly to the graduate program in English, above and beyond having offered graduate courses. It is not expected that untenured faculty serve as major professors for Ph.D. students; their contributions might include service on M.A. and Ph.D. comprehensive examination committees or thesis and dissertation committees, and the supervision of directed research by graduate students. Untenured faculty in Creative Writing are expected to serve as major professors and readers on M.F.A. thesis committees from the moment of hire. The application should acknowledge if and when faculty on branch campuses do not have the same opportunities to work with graduate students as those on the Tampa campus.

b. Undergraduate Program: Successful candidates for tenure will have made significant contributions to the B.A. program in English or Professional and Technical Communication. Such contributions may include assuming primary responsibility for required courses, supervising honors theses or directed research.

6. *Evidence of Commitment to Pedagogy:* Evidence of commitment to pedagogy may include honors and awards for teaching (both intra- and extra-mural); participation in training sessions, workshops, and conferences devoted to pedagogy in higher education, or in English in particular; and contributions to publications on pedagogy.

## **B. Scholarship and Other Creative Activity**

The department requires excellence in scholarship and other creative publication. In evaluating each candidate, the department shall consider the quality of the work, including its significance to the candidate's field(s); sufficient quantity is necessary both to permit a reliable judgment and to assure continued commitment. Judgments of quality can best be made by colleagues in the discipline, including the external reviewers.

For successful tenure and promotion, candidates are expected to produce a completed book-length project of original scholarship or creative activity, which a respected press has published or accepted and slated for publication, plus two to four published articles, book chapters, and/or short creative works. Since a department builds its reputation primarily on books, they are preferred. However, an equivalent record of approximately ten publications will also count as evidence. In digital humanities work, the completion and peer review or sufficient grant support of a major digital project will also count as evidence.

An additional category of evidence includes papers read at professional meetings and readings or performances of creative work; grants and fellowships received in support of scholarship and other creative activity; review articles and reviews published in magazines and journals; and editorships, assistant editorships, and advisory positions on the boards of nationally distributed journals.

Other evidence can include encyclopedia articles; newspaper articles and reviews; abstracts; active participation in professional organizations and conferences as related to scholarship and creative work; consulting on professional matters related to scholarly expertise; community-engaged scholarship, such as reports, presentations, museum exhibits, films, public events, and websites; scholarly and creative work in electronic media; databases; blogs; prizes and awards; patents and copyrights; and reviews, citations, reprints, and translations of one's own work. The candidate is responsible for providing appropriate descriptive and evaluative documentation pertaining to the publication outlets.

The department recognizes that faculty who are recommended for tenure and promotion will contribute to one (or sometimes more) of our three programs: Literature; Creative Writing; and Rhetoric/Composition and Professional/Technical Writing. A candidate may come up in more than one area by submitting an appropriate combination of publications or an interdisciplinary book that meets the qualitative standards of each, accompanied by other evidence of scholarly activity such as readings, conference papers and grants. While different kinds of publication are valued in the three programs within the English Department, there is no hierarchy *among* programs. Work in one area is not inherently more valuable than work in any other area. There are, however, distinctions *within* programs; not all publication is equally valuable in enhancing a faculty member's and the department's visibility and reputation in the profession. The following

For tenure and promotion to associate professor, a lengthy and textually complex edition of a literary work (or letters, diaries, etc.) derived from manuscript and/or printed sources counts as a book, as does a comprehensive edition of historically significant texts requiring extensive search work and archival research. A new edition (i.e., a new typesetting) or facsimile of an earlier edition that has not been rigorously edited through textual research and analysis-based emendation does not count, though its introduction may be assigned the same weight as a scholarly article. A facsimile that does include extensive analysis of textual history, the book or manuscript as material artifact, language, and scribal and print practices and errors, or reconstruction of a damaged text, may be given the same weight as a comprehensive edition. In the case of promotion to professor, it is expected that a candidate whose primary area of expertise is textual studies will since earning tenure at least have either a scholarly edition and a scholarly book in their own words, or two scholarly editions and a significant body of analytical articles published in scholarly journals or books. To be counted, digital editions will have to undergo equivalent evaluative procedures to a print book.

To count as a book for promotion and tenure, works of bibliographic research will be held to the highest standards regarding their completeness and analytic depth.

## **2. Creative Writing Program**

Publications in Creative Writing will be evaluated on the following bases:

### **3. Rhetoric/Composition and Professional and Technical Communication Program**

In the Rhetoric/Composition and Professional and Technical Communication program, candidates for tenure are expected to produce a book that has been published or scheduled for publication by a university press or its equivalent plus two to four published articles. A strong equivalent record of approximately ten publications will also be considered. In this field, innovative textbooks, pedagogical methodology and research, historical and empirical research, and collaborative and interdisciplinary work are considered primary forms of scholarly achievement and legitimate and regular ways of making knowledge in the profession. Therefore, a candidate for tenure may be able to or even required to demonstrate the standards of critical and original scholarship and prestige of their field with publications of these kinds. In the evaluation of publication, mode of access should not be considered, but rather assessment of the standing of a journal or press based on accepted evaluation criteria should be applied whether digital or print.

*Books:* Books of original scholarship published at respectable presses, followed closely by innovative textbooks (which are considered scholarly in this field) carry the most prestige. Also of significant value are co-authored scholarly books and edited collections of critical essays. Of some value are anthologies of student or professional writing and composition readers.

*Articles:* Full-length articles in refereed, nationally circulated journals or in refereed edited collections published at respectable presses and chapters in collaborative books published at respectable presses carry the most prestige. Also of significant value are full-length review essays and thorough surveys of scholarship.

### **4. Frequently Asked Questions**

Question 1: *When is a book a book?*

Answer: For purposes of promotion and tenure, it is obviously best that the book be published. If your book has not quite reached that stage, however, you must provide evidence that it is in its final form (i.e., has been accepted as a completed manuscript with no further changes and is scheduled for publication). A pre-completion contract, valuable as it is, is not in itself enough to qualify you for consideration for promotion and tenure.

Question 2: *Does work you published before joining this department count toward promotion and tenure?*

Answer: Work published prior to the tenure-earning years can be considered evidence of a coherent and well-

An assistant professor's first book is often a revised dissertation, and such a book, published by a good press, represents a significant achievement. You must, however, demonstrate substantial *and ongoing* research or other creative activity in order to qualify for promotion and tenure. This work might well include an extension or continuation of the dissertation.

Question 3: *How are publication outlets judged?*

The department strongly advises all faculty to place books and articles in the most visible, selective, and prestigious presses and journals possible. The department has no desire to impose a rigid hierarchy in the judgment of presses or journals, but an awareness of the quality of outlets, based on the practice of external reviewing, is important. For example, a book from a solid and respectable press is what the department expects and hopes for, but we recognize that the prestige of the outlet can vary according to the nature of the publication. Outlets considered prestigious vary greatly from field to field. In each area, however, there are good, bad, and mediocre outlets. It is important to seek opinions about presses and journals from others knowledgeable in the field in order to place work as advantageously as possible. Book publication with non-university commercial presses that require an author's subvention may fail to fulfill expectations for excellence in research. In such cases, other evidence, such as reviews of a book already in publication and other publications by the candidate, will be necessary. In the evaluation of publication, mode of access should not be considered, but rather assessment of the standing of a journal or press based on accepted evaluation criteria should be applied whether digital or print.

In order to help gauge the quality of your publication outlets, you need to supply the appropriate material. For example, for critical books, include not only the published work or the manuscript with letter of acceptance (and copies of readers' reports if available) but also the publisher's entry in the *MLA Directory of Scholarly Presses*, and, if available, the publisher's website. For articles/shorter creative works, supply not only offprints (or copies of manuscript for accepted but not yet published works including copy of letter of acceptance and readers' reports if available), but also a copy of the journal's editorial page/masthead (showing names of editors and editorial board) and a copy of the entry for that journal in the most recent *MLA Directory of Periodicals*. The department Chair will write an assessment of your publication record, as well as your teaching record, for your file prior to viewing by the T&P Committee.

Question 4: *Do conference papers and readings count as evidence of ongoing research activity?*

Answer: Yes. Conference papers and readings contribute to the department's reputation and visibility. However, such presentations are not publications, and when preparing for a presentation, you should keep in mind the potential for submitting a version of the presentation for publication.

Question 5:



major digital project. Successful promotion records since achieving tenure meet and exceed expectations for tenure.

Sustained participation in professional life, including a record of significant involvement in regional and national organizations and in departmental, college, and university committees.

Anyone appointed as or promoted to professor should be a distinguished and steadily productive critic, scholar, or creative artist, nationally or internationally visible in their field. A professorship is to a large degree a matter of professional status, not something one earns by time in service or merely quantitative production. By these means, our departmental goal is to achieve and maintain equal ranking with the best English departments in the nation.

Most of what we say above about promotion to associate professor with tenure is equartments in the nh.(ntal, c)4