

Merit, Promotion, and Tenure: Policies and Procedures  
Department of English and Philosophy  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
Approved by the faculty, October 2003

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## **I. FACULTY EVALUATION AND MERIT**

The department complies with the University's policies on Faculty Evaluation and Merit Pay, as outlined in section E-20A.

### **1. Membership and Elections**

The departmental chairperson and the Executive Committee shall be responsible for the yearly evaluation of faculty performance and for assigning merit to faculty members. Executive Committee members will not evaluate or rank their own merit applications.

### **2. Procedures for Merit Ranking**

Only faculty members submitting annual reports and requesting to be considered for merit will be evaluated and eligible for merit. Required and recommended items to be included in the annual report as evidence of teaching, research, and service activity are listed in Section I. 4.

Recommendations for merit pay increases will be made by the Executive Committee. The committee rates the teaching, research, and service activities of each applicant on a five point scale: 0 = non-meritorious, 1 = satisfactory, 2 = good, 3 = excellent, and 4 = outstanding. Mid-point ratings of 0.5, 1.5, 2.5, and 3.5 are allowed.

The department feels that applicants with serious deficiencies in even one of the areas of teaching, research, or service are not deserving of merit pay raises. Therefore, an applicant must receive a 2.00 or greater in teaching, 1.00 or greater in research, and 1.00 or greater in service to be eligible for any merit pay. Persons failing to receive these scores in any of the three areas are removed from merit consideration. The higher minimum score in teaching reflects the department's emphasis on teaching.

While teaching, research, and service are all important, they are not viewed equally by the department. Teaching activity is judged to be the most important while service is the least important. Reflecting this, the teaching rating received by an applicant is multiplied by 50; the research rating is multiplied by 30; and the service rating is multiplied by 20. An applicant's total number of points is then obtained by adding together these three products (teaching rating times 50, research rating times 30, and service rating times 20). Each applicant's percentage of the final total points will also be their percentage of whatever merit money is made available to the department.

The role of the department's chairperson will be to oversee the merit process, to schedule meetings of the executive committee to consider merit applications, and to make sure that all candidates are treated fairly. If the chair feels that the committee's rankings are inconsistent or that the committee has failed to follow policy, he / she may reconvene the committee to discuss its merit rankings.

### **3. Necessary Merit Application Materials**

Faculty members applying for merit shall:

- a) complete an online annual report
- b) submit complete course evaluations for all courses taught during the academic year
- c) complete a cover letter requesting merit and summarizing his / her annual activities
- d) submit other materials as desired that demonstrate teaching effectiveness, scholarly and creative activities, and service (copies, of publications, student letters, ect)

### **4. Evidence of Effective Teaching, Scholarly and Creative Activity, and Service**

Recommended Documentation of Teaching Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of teaching activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, promotion, or tenure. Additional documentation may be stipulated for tenure or promotion by university guidelines. (See the department chairperson for copies of university guidelines for tenure and promotion.) In compiling both the required and recommended evidence of teaching activities, the intent is to provide a set of information that allows the department chairperson and executive committee to conduct a “holistic assessment” of teaching accomplishments. The actual importance of any piece of evidence must be judged in the context of the faculty applicant's overall teaching efforts. The exclusion of a specific recommended item by an applicant is not meant to imply a weakness in that area. The recommended items are:

1. description of teaching in relation to the “Learning Goals for Department Programs” (copy available from the department chairperson), or an overview of instructional goals in each course;
2. innovative teaching efforts, such as the use of technology, strategies for encouraging writing, substantial updating of course content, and study abroad courses;
3. recognitions or awards for teaching;
4. development of a new course;
5. participation in university-wide teaching initiatives, such as the Teaching Excellence Center and SFA101;
6. student advising activities (e.g., number of students advised and types of advising activities);
7. documented improvement of teaching over time (recommended for tenure applications);
8. peer teaching reviews;
9. membership on thesis and dissertation committees;
10. attendance at workshops designed to enhance teaching skills;
11. feedback from others that reflects learning outcomes, including former students, alumni, and department majors pursuing advanced degrees; and
12. other information deemed appropriate for consideration (by the faculty member).

## b) Scholarship and Creative Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of research activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, tenure, or promotion.

13. Books
  - a. Scholarly or creative, single-authored, recognized publisher
  - b. Scholarly or creative, single-authored, locally published
  - c. non-edited book, dual or multiple-authored
  - d. edited book (single-authored/multiple-authored)
  - e. training manual / test bank / teaching manual(Books should be published or forthcoming as evidenced by contract).
14. Refereed journal articles
  - f. Reviewer should consider originality and/or extension of previous work.
  - g. Articles accepted for publication (e.g., forthcoming or in press) may be included for consideration. Such material, however, may only be counted once in the evaluation process.
15. Published creative work
  - a. fiction
  - b. short story
  - c. poetry
  - d. screen plays
  - e. creative non fiction
16. Book chapters
17. Invited articles
18. Editor of journal (provide copy of journal)
19. Funded grant applications (size of grant should be considered)
20. Papers read at national meetings
21. non-funded grants (size and difficulty of obtaining funding should be considered)
22. Papers read at other professional meetings (includes proceedings)
23. Panelist at a professional meeting
24. Scholarly articles not in journals but refereed
25. Articles in non-refereed journals
26. Book reviews
27. Reviewer activities

## c) Recommended Evidence of Service Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of service activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, tenure, or promotion.

28. committee service on the university, college, or department level -- include position held, the number of times met and approximate number of hours spent working on each committee
29. service as graduate school representative on thesis and dissertation committees
30. office in professional organization (what position? how much time and energy

- 31. spent on position)  
committee member in professional organization (specify which organization and how much time and energy was required)
- 32. specific university assignments by president, vice-president, or dean -- note time required and nature of task
- 33. papers, presentations, or speeches on topics relevant to your profession delivered for education, civic, service, or church groups
- 34. consulting/committee service to community
- 35. other pertinent university service
- 36. organizing session at a professional meeting (if this activity involves considerable evaluation of papers, it should be placed under research activities, lowest priority)

## II. PROMOTION

The department complies with the University's policy on Promotion, as outlined in Section E-3A. In applying for promotion to any rank in the Department of English and Philosophy, the faculty member will be evaluated according to the criteria outlined in the present document, 1.4, "Evidence of Effective Teaching, Scholarly and Creative Activities, and Service." In addition, the faculty member should prepare the application according to section 1.4, "Recommended materials for submission," in the present document.

- a. Individuals applying for promotion to a specific rank shall be evaluated by the departmental chairperson as well as the faculty members who occupy this rank. Professors shall assist in evaluating the materials for faculty members applying for the rank of Professor. Professors and Associate Professors shall assist in evaluating the materials for faculty members applying for the rank of Associate Professor.

The University's set of criteria for promotion to various ranks reads as follows (E-3A, I.b.1-3, I.c):

- b. Beyond adequate credentials, the following levels of performance should be present for promotion:
  - 1) An individual promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor should have the demonstrated capabilities to be an effective university teacher, a productive scholar/artist, and a contributing member of the academic and general communities.
  - 2) An individual promoted to the rank of Associate Professor should have a proven record of effective teaching, scholarly or artistic activity, and professional contributions to the academic and general communities [since promotion to Assistant Professor].
  - 3) An individual promoted to the rank of Professor should be a teacher whose effectiveness is generally recognized, a scholar whose contributions to knowledge or artistic performance are substantial and are recognized beyond the confines of the local campus to be of high quality, and a citizen whose professional contributions to

the academic and general communities are significant [since promotion to Associate Professor].

- 4) To fulfill the appropriate steps toward promotion at each rank, the individual should provide evidence of scholarship. Under 4:B above, the individual seeking promotion, for each rank, should have at least one publication from items 13-17 and at least three activities from items 18-27.
- c. In order to hold either of the upper two professional ranks, an individual is expected to have some previous teaching experience and to have held a lower rank. To apply for the rank of Associate Professor, an individual should have held the rank of Assistant Professor for at least five years. This means that the application will profile five complete years in the rank of Assistant Professor. To apply for the rank of Professor, an individual should have held the rank of Associate Professor for no fewer than three years. In exceptional circumstances when warranted by extraordinary performance, faculty members may be reviewed for promotion earlier. The evidence to support early promotion must be unequivocal.

### **III. TENURE**

The department complies with the University's policy concerning tenure, as outlined in Section E-50A. In applying for tenure in the Department of English and Philosophy, the faculty member will be evaluated according to the criteria outlined in the present document, 1.3, "Areas for Evaluation." In addition, the faculty member should prepare the application according to section 1.4, "Recommended materials for submission," in the present document. To fulfill the appropriate steps toward tenure, the individual should provide evidence of scholarship. Under 4.B above, the individual seeking tenure (and, if applicable, simultaneous promotion) should have at least one publication from items 13-17 and at least three activities from items 18-27.

Individuals applying for tenure shall be evaluated by the departmental chairperson as well as members of the tenured faculty.

The specific responsibilities of an individual department regarding tenure according to University policy are as follows (E-50A, III):

A faculty member may be nominated or apply for tenure. A nomination may be initiated by an individual faculty member, the department chair, or other appropriate administrative officer of the University. The candidate is responsible for developing and submitting to the department chair a packet of supporting materials, including a current vita. A faculty member who occupies an administrative position will submit his/her packet of supporting materials to his/her immediate administrative supervisor. The administrative supervisor alone will receive all recommendations of the tenured departmental or tenured divisional faculty. (Faculty members with concurrent appointments in two departments and/or two colleges will be evaluated by both departments and/or colleges.)

Each "Promotion/Tenure Application," including all supporting materials, will be evaluated by all tenured faculty from the applicant/nominee's department with regard to the candidate's credentials, performance as a faculty member, and the programmatic needs of the department. Each tenured faculty member will submit a written positive or negative (as regards the granting of tenure) recommendation to the department chair with supporting comments. (If there are no tenured members in the candidate's department, this step will be omitted.)

The chair of the candidate's department will evaluate the packet of materials submitted by the candidate and will forward these materials along with his/her recommendation with supporting comments and the recommendations of the tenured faculty of the department to the dean of the college.