

Tenure and Promotion Criteria
Department of Communication
Purdue University

Adopted by vote of the faculty on October 1, 2008.

In the evaluation of a tenure-track faculty member for promotion, the quality of the achievements, continuity of accomplishment, independence of intellectual contribution, and the impact of this work on the discipline will all be important factors in determining whether an individual has earned promotion and tenure. The evaluation of these same elements insofar as they have impact on significant nonacademic institutions and communities beyond the academy may also be considered as an important ingredient in a case for tenure and/or promotion.

The primary components of tenure-track faculty performance considered for promotion and tenure in the Department of Communication are scholarship in the areas of Discovery, Learning and Engagement. Faculty members may elect to be considered for promotion and/or tenure on the basis of outstanding achievement in any of these three areas and promotion cases may be based on scholarship in more than one area. Insofar as Purdue University is a Research 1 institution, most successful candidates for promotion and tenure will be nominated on the basis of their research scholarship (the area of Discovery).

Regardless of the primary area of excellence that serves as the basis for promotion and tenure, all successful candidates are expected to be effective teachers and to be able to present evidence demonstrating that effectiveness.

In addition to the scholarly activities associated with Discovery, Learning, and Engagement, faculty members are expected to be actively involved in serving their professional organizations, their department(s), their college(s) and Purdue University in general. Service to the profession typically includes such things as serving on committees within professional associations, serving on editorial boards, etc. Service to the department, college or university typically consists of such things as serving on committees, undertaking special administrative assignments, etc. The definition of “reasonable service” is expected to change as a function of professional rank. Prior to earning tenure, while some limited service is normative, faculty are expected to be judicious about their service commitments in deference to building a record of scholarly achievement that will lead to tenure and promotion. In general, greater service is expected from faculty at the higher professorial ranks.

A. Scholarship of Discovery

Research includes both the discovery and creative processes involved with knowledge generation. A wide range of activities attest to faculty excellence in this area including:

- Generation and validation of theories, both descriptive and normative,
- Analysis or synthesis of existing knowledge,
- Application of knowledge to practical problems

Faculty members in this department are expected to generate a body of high quality refereed publications in first-tier journals in the field and/or related fields. In some areas of the discipline, a book published by a high quality press may also be important. Proceedings, book reviews, invited lectures and convention presentations are certainly part of what is expected of an active faculty member but are weighted less heavily.

Both the quality and the quantity of the nominee's research are evaluated. For purposes of the analysis, quality is defined in terms of the importance of the information revealed for the progress of the discipline (or disciplines—if the research is interdisciplinary) or for the improvement of practitioner performance. Quality also is reflected in the creativity of the thought processes and methods underlying the research. Original breakthroughs in conceptual frameworks, conclusions, and methods are considered of higher quality than works making minor variations in the nominee's previous work. The quality of a nominee's scholarship can be evaluated using multiple indicators, such as whether the research: has successfully undergone peer review, appears in important academic outlets, and is cited by peers in the field.

For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, a case based on Discovery should demonstrate some sense of a sustained, cohesive line of inquiry that shows clear evidence of an independent contribution, significant growth and development during the probationary period and promise of future impact on the discipline. For promotion to Full Professor, a candidate's record should demonstrate clear evidence of national or international recognition and evidence of significant research contributions that are widely recognized in the discipline.

While quite properly the quality of the nominee's contribution takes priority, it would be unrealistic to assume that the quantity of his/her contribution plays no role in the evaluation discussed here. Quantity is easier to measure than quality, especially early in a career. However, contributions to knowledge should be nonredundant or be discrete parts of a programmatic, interrelated line of work that results in multiple examples of published scholarly work.

The most difficult phase of the evaluation of research is the weighting of quality and quantity into a single judgment. Analyses of research records require the highest level of professional judgment on the part of evaluators, not only because of the difficulty of the judgments involved, but also because (especially when tenure is under consideration) the

judgment being made concerns both the contribution per se and the nominee's likely future contributions.

B. Scholarship of Learning

The scholarship of Learning is a multifaceted activity that involves expert guidance and student involvement. The evaluation of instructional effectiveness rests on a comprehensive review of both qualitative and quantitative measures of accomplishments in a broad range of instructional activities. While student evaluations are centrally important in this evaluation, it is also important for the instructor to evidence enhanced learning potential through the inclusion of up-to-date pedagogy and content that results in course development and student engagement. A portfolio of teaching activities along with peer evaluation complements student feedback to determine teaching and learning effectiveness.

Faculty members who elect to pursue promotion and/or tenure based primarily on scholarship in Learning should be prepared to present strong evidence of teaching accomplishment, educational administrative responsibility, pedagogical publications and/or grants related to the teaching and/or communication education within the university, discipline and nationally. Typically, faculty members seeking tenure and/or promotion on the basis of teaching will have authored a text book and/or a group of peer-reviewed articles that focus on pedagogical issues. They may also provide evidence of having offered teaching workshops at regional, national, or international professional meetings in the discipline. Although it is not required, promotion cases based on teaching often include a CRET review that is filed by a special committee constituted for the explicit purpose of evaluating a faculty member's entire teaching activity.

For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, a case based on Learning should demonstrate a sustained and cohesive record of pedagogical scholarship that shows clear evidence of growth and development as well as a convincing record of excellence in teaching. For promotion to Full Professor, a case based on Learning should demonstrate a sustained record of pedagogical scholarship that has earned clear national or international recognition and a high level of achievement in the various activities associated with excellence in teaching as described above.

C. Scholarship of Engagement

Scholarship of engagement includes research and publication that has implications for one or more significant issues related to the concerns of local communities, regions, states, nations, or international constituents. It involves the application of a faculty member's scholarly accomplishments beyond the boundaries of one's professional community. The successful candidate who achieves tenure/promotion on the basis of the scholarship of Engagement should be able to demonstrate engagement activity that is centrally related to a line of published scholarship and addresses matters of significant

public concern. Engagement activity at the local level is not necessarily less significant than activity at the national or international level. In evaluating achievements in engagement, the overall impact of the activity will be assessed.

The possible examples of engagement activity are too numerous to list but might include such things as creating public scholarship programs or research centers, working with local, regional, or national organizations in ways that help transmit knowledge from the academy to the public community, serving on a United Nations panel, or testifying regularly before U.S. House or Senate subcommittees.

For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, a case based on Engagement should demonstrate a sustained and cohesive record of scholarship that shows clear evidence of growth and development as well as compelling evidence that the results of this scholarship have made a tangible and practical impact on some public community. For promotion to Full Professor, a case based on Engagement should demonstrate a sustained record of scholarship that has earned clear national or international recognition and a high level of achievement associated with the practical impact of that scholarship on one or more public communities.