

**San Francisco State University
Department of Philosophy
Policy on Tenure and Promotion Criteria
(rev May '08)**

Approved by Provost September 2008

0. Preamble

Philosophy Department personnel actions (hiring, retention, tenure, promotion) are aimed at recruiting, retaining, and rewarding faculty members with diverse but complementary strengths, so as to best serve our exceptionally diverse student body. For this reason the performance standards we expect faculty to satisfy can be met in a number of different ways. We intend this departmental policy document to heighten the collective performance of the department's faculty by elevating the standards individuals must meet without imposing homogeneity on our faculty's approaches to teaching, scholarly interests, and professional and community service.

The criteria laid out in University-wide policy for each of the three personnel decision categories state the conditions for tenure and promotion. This Philosophy Department policy expands the university criteria and sometimes renders their application in the discipline of philosophy more explicit. Further, to reflect the standards and practices of our discipline, and to be responsive to the various avenues for faculty accomplishment, this departmental policy document indicates how both normally expected, and extraordinary, levels of achievement in each category can be documented.

I. Documentation

Probationary faculty will prepare a curriculum vitae and submit supplementary supporting documents for the use of the RTP committee each probationary year. Faculty coming up for promotion will prepare similar documents (unless the candidate chooses not to be evaluated for promotion). The RTP committee(s) and department chair will be available to provide appropriate assistance as needed. (See **Academic Senate Policy F06-241** for further elucidation regarding the responsibilities of candidates, department personnel committees, and department chairs.)

II. Education

A Ph.D. in philosophy or equivalent degree is necessary for appointment to the professorial ranks and therefore for tenure and promotion in the Department of Philosophy. Additional advanced degrees or preparation relevant to the candidate's teaching or research may be given positive weight in tenure decisions.

III. Teaching Effectiveness

Philosophy department faculty are expected to be excellent in the teaching of undergraduate and graduate courses (including independent study and other supervision courses such as the M.A. thesis). Each individual's cumulative student teaching evaluations should reach a score that is at least average, or consistent with the mean, for the department as a whole¹. Further support demonstrating excellence in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels can include such evidence as course materials, testimony of individual students, curricular development, student learning outcomes (including performances on examinations, essays and articles, and theses) and peer visit teaching reports. Evidence of effective advising or mentoring, including teaching assistant and graduate teaching associate training, also may help to establish excellence in teaching.

Evidence to demonstrate extraordinary teaching effectiveness may include (but is not limited to) a record of extraordinarily high student evaluations, success of mentored students in competitive programs (such as essay competitions, publication of student papers, or admission to selective programs), or supervision of outstanding MA theses. The focus here is on documented student learning outcomes.

IV. Professional Development

Philosophy department faculty are expected to be actively engaged in scholarly research and to participate in the broader philosophical community.² It is of vital importance to all our programs - both baccalaureates, the MA, and our vigorous general education program - that our students be taught by faculty for whom philosophy is a vocation, and that students get a sense of how research in philosophy is done: the development from the first ideas or insights through numerous drafts to the finished article or book chapter. Students profit from

¹ There are circumstances in which the department needs to assign a faculty member to an especially difficult teaching assignment, one in which the individual must deal with unprepared or resentful students, or one where the individual is asked to develop a course that is difficult to design but necessary to the department's curriculum. In such cases, student evaluations for the course (especially in an initial year of the course) may be out of line with the candidate's overall record of student evaluations. The weight given to such anomalous scores may be adjusted on the basis of other evidence, such as (but not limited to) a history of excellent student evaluations, classroom visits, analysis of syllabi, or examination of student learning outcomes. This provision is included in the criteria to ensure that faculty are not penalized for, and therefore are not reluctant, to take on, difficult teaching assignments.

² In some cases, a candidate's philosophical research will draw the individual into greater participation in other academic communities – for example, law, medicine, science, women's studies, classics, cinema studies, etc. – or into professional communities that make use of applied philosophical research. The Philosophy Department values such activity, which can inform teaching in many beneficial ways. Professional acknowledgement in such communities is considered equivalent to acknowledgement from the philosophical community, as long as the candidate's work is broadly philosophical and is recognized as such.

taking courses taught by faculty who are knowledgeable about the latest research and developments in their fields, as those actively engaged in scholarship aimed at an audience of professional colleagues must be.

Many of our students go on to attend graduate school in a variety of disciplines, and it often is important for admission to post-baccalaureate programs in philosophy, and in most other fields, that students seeking admission are recommended by active, recognized scholars. To place our students in good post-baccalaureate programs, the engagement and visibility of our faculty in the philosophical profession at large or in applied philosophy in other fields is important. Participation of our faculty in the broader academic professional community raises the profile of the university as well as the department.

Evidence of active engagement in, and recognition of, scholarly activity can include (but is not limited to) the publication of books, journal articles (both peer reviewed and invited), chapters in volumes, and encyclopedia entries, as well as certain online venues and new media³, award of prizes, and funded research or scholarly projects (including projects that apply previous research or professional achievement). This evidence can also include (but is not limited to) invitations to execute book reviews, conference presentations or workshop or other conference or workshop contributions, discussion notes, editorial duties; refereeing applications or manuscripts or bodies of work or programs, organizational roles in scholarly meetings or projects that depend on excellent professional reputation and knowledge, and service on committees established by professional organizations that require a high degree of professional judgment (for example, committees that award coveted prizes or fellowships). Evidence of visibility in the field also can include review(s) of published work, citations, or other marks of the influence of a candidate's scholarship.

Building research programs requires time and opportunity. How much of each depends, to some extent at least, on the field(s) of philosophy in which a candidate has chosen to work. Some require more access to support (for example, data bases or archives) than others, or offer more or more easily visited venues for presentation of research than others. Professional recognition, as distinct from fame, is more readily achieved in some philosophical fields than in others. There may be many more colleagues to influence in some philosophical fields than in others, but in the largest philosophical fields the sheer number of colleagues may make influence harder to achieve.

Noting these disparities of access to professional achievement in different

³ Acceptable online venues or other alternative media will have well-recognized editors and editorial boards, or will be shown in some other way to be influential in scholarship in the field.

philosophical fields, and needing to maintain a faculty where different members possess expertise in different fields, so as to serve the diverse interests of our students and also to meet the philosophical field distribution standards for our degree programs, we do not delineate necessary conditions for documenting extraordinary professional achievement here. There is too much disparity in the practices of the various philosophical fields to do so.⁴

The diverse routes to outstanding achievement now available in our discipline lead us to delineate extraordinary professional development in flexible terms, requiring evidence that draws a compelling picture of scholarly activity and professional recognition that is of admirably high quality and/or great quantity.

V. Service

Philosophy department faculty are expected to make significant service contributions to the Department, the College and University, the discipline of philosophy, and/or the larger local, national and international communities. The forms and distribution of service will differ depending on departmental needs and each faculty member's strengths and opportunities.

1. Service to the Department: Faculty normally are expected to do their share of administrative work, such as (but not limited to) involvement in hiring and other personnel actions, non-teaching components of the department's programs (such as participating in administering and grading the graduate qualifying exam), assessment and program review. Such contribution is not optional.

Extraordinary service may be demonstrated by excellent execution of important departmental activities such as successfully organizing and managing one or more non-teaching activities. Examples are organizing and managing an effective advising program, supporting and guiding a vigorous student philosophy club, creating an exciting speakers' program, and building a demonstrated record of taking the main burden of work in drafting required departmental documents and reports.

2. Service to the College and the University: Philosophy Department faculty can contribute to the College and the University by serving on college, university, CSU system-wide, inter-segmental, legislative or education agency committees or projects. Extraordinary service may be demonstrated by documenting that the candidate has exercised important and successful leadership, or executed

⁴ As an example, in many philosophical fields publication in the elite multi-field journals is the most desirable venue. Fifty years ago, or even thirty years ago, these journals set the standard for philosophy generally. Today, however, publication in these general journals is considered in some philosophical fields to be less worthy than publication in that field's specialized journals. The latter trend has become much more prominent in recent years, but it is not the prevailing practice across all philosophical fields.

crucial major responsibilities, to make substantial contributions to important College or University activities.

3. Service to the Community: Philosophy Department faculty can contribute to the larger community by participating in and/or hosting relevant local, national, and/or international events, projects, or committees, councils or boards. Extraordinary service may be demonstrated by documenting that the candidate has exercised important and successful leadership, or executed crucial major responsibilities, to make substantial contributions to important community activities.

4. Service to the Profession: Faculty can contribute to the philosophical community (or other professional communities) in a variety of ways, for instance by serving on committees of professional organizations, hosting or planning workshops or conferences, or chairing panels. Extraordinary service may be demonstrated by documenting that the candidate has exercised important and successful leadership, or executed crucial major responsibilities, to make substantial contributions to important professional projects, organizations or collective activities.

VI. Criteria for Tenure

To be recommended for tenure, a candidate must satisfy the conditions stated in Section II, must demonstrate achievement of the necessary levels of achievement in each category, as designated in Sections III-V above, and should show evidence of striving for extraordinary achievement (and promise of attaining it in later years) in at least one of the categories.

VII. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor and to Professor

The recommendation for promotion should be based on a record of achievement that establishes the probability the candidate will continue achieving, at an increasing level of sophistication or with an increasing display of leadership, at the next rank.

A. Promotion to Associate Professor requires:

a. evidence that the candidate has established and is pursuing an ongoing research program with results that are acknowledged by professional peers as meeting disciplinary standards;

b. evidence that the candidate is teaching courses or curricula that meet the standards of the discipline and are effective and responsive to department and student needs;

c. evidence that the candidate has been active in service to the department, college and/or university, profession, and/or to the community by contributing professionally related knowledge or skills.

B. Promotion to Full Professor requires:

a. evidence that the candidate is recognized by peers as a source of scholarly or intellectual leadership. Such evidence might include (but is not limited to) a series of published articles developing a topic; book or monograph publication; invitations to present one's work at important conferences, to give keynotes or named lectures, or to make contributions definitive of the topic to collections or encyclopedias; a multiplicity of invitations to speak to other departments or to groups of scholars or the community; or a record of assignments to referee or otherwise judge the work of others in the field.

b. evidence that the candidate maintains all course materials current with the prevailing and cutting edge scholarship in the field and that her/his scholarship is informing and enriching his/her teaching. Also required is evidence that the candidate maintains excellence in teaching by continuing to meet the standards required for tenure and promotion to the previous rank.

c. evidence that, while in the current rank, the candidate has contributed leadership and/or successfully undertaken important responsibilities in one or more areas of service.