

A Guide to Standards for Tenure and Promotion  
**Women and Gender Studies Department (WGS)**  
**San Francisco State University**  
Approved by Provost August 2017

San Francisco State University's "Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Policy," as found in the Revised Academic Senate Policy (F11-241) states, "It is the responsibility of the department to establish clearly the department's expectations for retention, tenure, and promotion consistent with the University criteria." This document reflects the department's priorities and shared principles for scholarly, pedagogical, and community engagement.

## I. Documentation

- **Materials.** Candidates will prepare curriculum vitae and submit select supplementary information for the use of the department RTP Committee in years 2, 4, and 6, and for subsequent promotion reviews. In exceptional circumstances, the candidate can request or may be requested to undergo a partial or comprehensive review in years 3 and 5. The supplementary information should include evidence of the candidate's professional education, teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and campus and community service, as listed in Sections II to IV.
- Following Academic Senate Policy F11-241, it is recommended that candidates use the **curriculum vitae format, size recommendations, self statement guidelines** located on the Faculty Affairs and Professional Development website.
- **Prior Retention Documentation.** Candidates should include retention letters from previous cycles of review in their WPAF for pre-tenure reviews.

The Women and Gender Studies RTP Committee and the Department Chair will be available to provide assistance as needed with the compilation of the candidate's curriculum vitae, self-statements, and supplementary materials. The department strongly suggests that candidates meet annually with the WGS RTP Committee and/or department chair. The candidate should feel free to request written documentation of any such meetings. In addition to these meetings, candidates should be aware of informational meetings and resources provided by the Office of Faculty Affairs.

The National Women Studies Association's tenure and promotion guidelines highlight four concepts that have historically shaped the field and that continue to be key to how scholarship, teaching and service are evaluated: the politics of knowledge production, social justice, intersectionality and transnational analysis (<http://www.nwsa.org/files/2013-NWSA-Tenure%20StatementFINAL.pdf>). The WGS department follows these general principles in evaluating the substance of teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and contributions to community and campus. The WGS Department also considers institutional obstacles (identified by the NWSA as including pay inequities, asymmetrical workloads, and gendered-racialized service obligations) in its accounting of a candidate's contributions.

## II. Teaching Effectiveness

The primary mission of San Francisco State University is teaching. According to the Academic Senate guidelines for Tenure, Retention, and Promotion (F11-241), “Effective teaching is demonstrated when faculty join with students to develop knowledge and skills through classroom experiences, scholarly research, creative activities, and community service.”

Following in this tradition, the Department of Women and Gender Studies expects all faculty to stay up to date in their field, revise course content, and demonstrate ongoing improvement of their teaching. Evidence of teaching effectiveness can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including democratic and responsive teaching methods, strong classroom leadership and governance, and/or innovative syllabi.

The following are expected activities and modes of assessment for teaching effectiveness:

- **Range and breadth of courses.** Faculty in the Women and Gender Studies Department are expected to teach across the curriculum, from lower-division undergraduate and General Education courses to upper-division Women and Gender Studies courses, and graduate-level courses. All faculty are expected to support and build the undergraduate and graduate curricula by teaching required and core courses in the Major/Minor and M.A. programs, as the opportunity arises. Candidates for promotion from Associate to Full are expected to propose new courses or revise and update existing courses.

The WGS department values instructor improvements to courses. Improvement can be demonstrated in a number of ways, such as making changes to the course in question, and/or making use of teaching resources on campus.

- **Course materials.** Syllabi and relevant documents (selected bibliographies, reading lists, class assignments, assessment activities/materials, and examinations) are used by the Department RTP committee as evidence of course organization, course level, and the expectations the faculty member sets for student learning. Please include only the most recent syllabi and relevant documents for courses taught repeatedly. Unusual or exceptionally innovative course materials may be submitted for consideration if they go beyond the expected effort of faculty.
- **Peer class evaluations.** Classroom observations by fellow faculty members are used to assess the level of the faculty member’s expectations, style of classroom presentation, and method of engagement with students. The RTP Committee will supervise and assign peer reviews ideally once a semester for each probationary faculty member, and at least once a year for each Associate Professor. In such evaluations, members of the RTP Committee and other faculty members of higher rank than the person evaluated will visit classes and provide written comments concerning the quality

of teaching. Specific areas of evaluation will be: a. evidence of preparation and class organization; b. clarity of lecture or presentation; c. level of student engagement in discussion; d. knowledge of subject, and other evidence of teaching methods deemed relevant by the evaluator.

- **Student evaluations.** As the NWSA guidelines for tenure and promotion state, “given the field’s overtly political approach to knowledge and power, women’s and gender studies scholars often face resistance in the classroom ... for example, teaching evaluations may reflect students’ discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking about the world around them, especially if the candidate teaches required courses” (p.9).

The department RTP committee thus regards student surveys as important but limited. Though it is primarily the responsibility of the RTP committee to analyze student evaluations, probationary faculty may address the evaluations in their teaching narratives as they see fit.

The Women and Gender Studies Department values and prioritizes qualitative evaluations. Qualitative evaluations provide a fuller and deeper representation of student impressions of teaching, and the department shall consider such comments more significant, though not to be separated from, student quantitative evaluations. Quantitative evaluations are thus supplemental and provided because they are a normalized form of evaluation at the university. The RTP committee will consider overall quantitative averages for all classes each semester (i.e. aggregate of all courses taught in one semester). This aggregate balances the variety of courses a candidate teaches in any one semester. Additionally, the committee will consider individual course averages. These quantitative averages are generally compared to the departmental average. For individual course averages, these can be useful in tracking semester-to-semester improvement if an instructor teaches a course multiple times. In interpreting quantitative averages, the committee will consider the size and nature of the courses involved, course objectives, and qualitative evaluations.

- **Supervision of MA Thesis/Culminating Experience.** Each faculty member is expected to supervise MA culminating experience projects as first or second reader. Candidates in their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> years are not expected to serve on more than 1 or 2 committees per year. Candidates for promotion to Full are expected to stay involved in their service on MA Thesis committees, as the department needs dictate.

- **Advising.** All faculty are expected to advise students and familiarize themselves with major and general education requirements. However, advising, both in informal and formalized ways, is a key part of what the NWSA identifies as “institutionalized obstacles, such as ... gendered-racialized service expectations (i.e. who does the institutional ‘housekeeping’ or ‘reproductive labor,’ that is, the often unrewarded work required to sustain people and institutions)” that is erased or undervalued (p.10). The WGS department thus recognizes the ways advising expectations and work loads may

be uneven, particularly in non-formalized advising relationships (students who prefer to speak to and consult with faculty for various affinity reasons; faculty who are asked to serve as advisors for student organizations; and so on). The RTP Committee shall weigh invisibilized service labor and help candidates mitigate or document such instances. This may include soliciting student and peer qualitative documentation of extraordinary service. While participating in the department's formalized advising system is expected of all candidates, the department also values other forms and sites of advising that are not formalized.

### **III. Professional Achievement and Growth**

**The Women and Gender Studies Department expects that all faculty will be actively engaged in the production of an original body of research that develops innovative and thoughtful modes of inquiry and engagement; asks questions; creates knowledge; and/or imagines alternative futures. Active engagement can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including recognition by the WGS department, external reviewers, and through publication.**

**By the end of the probationary period, the Department expects the production of a body of work (traditionally a series of articles, book or equivalent) that has been published or accepted for publication by peer-reviewed scholarly journals or presses.** This work should reflect the candidate's research and engagement with questions central to the field of women/gender studies, which can include: the politics of knowledge production, social justice, intersectionality and transnational analysis (<http://www.nwsa.org/files/2013-NWSA-Tenure%20StatementFINAL.pdf>). Excellence in Women and Gender Studies scholarship engages with the fact that knowledge is not neutral, that collaboration is necessary, that categories of difference and systems of inequality can never be taken in isolation from each other, and that power circulates globally.

The candidate's entire body of research and scholarly work should reflect their contribution to the interdisciplinary field of women/gender studies. However, because many scholars in women/gender studies come to the field with disciplinary training, each candidate's publications and professional activities in their respective discipline are also valued. Since WGS is an exciting, expanding and interdisciplinary field, it is not expected that any of the candidate's writings appear in conventional women studies venues. The department encourages feminist interventions in a variety of contexts.

Collaborative (co-authored) books and articles are considered significant publications, especially given the value that the discipline of women/gender studies places on collaboration, which is emphasized by the National Women's Studies Association. Collaborative publications shall count as the equivalent of single authored publications for all authors. Unlike in other fields, such as the sciences, collaborative authorship in WGS entails that each author contributes

significant writing and research. Unlike with single-authored works, collaboration also includes the added labor of weaving multiple voices into a single narrative. The department recognizes this, as well as the significance of collaboration for the field of Women and Gender Studies historically, and weighs collaborative publications accordingly.

For promotion, the candidate is expected to produce a secondary original body of work (traditionally in the form of a series of articles, a book or equivalent). This work might be an extension of previous scholarship, or stake new research ground. As with tenure, the candidate is expected to demonstrate how their original body of scholarly research has been peer-reviewed. Such work is also expected to demonstrate the candidate's impact on the field. The Committee shall consider all venues of peer-reviewed publications as equally important.

WGS as a field recognizes there are many different forms of reviewing work. Non-peer reviewed work is also considered a significant research intervention and an important site where teaching, PAG and service come together. As the NWSA Guidelines state, WGS was established, in part, to transgress institutional norms, including false divides among scholarship, service, and teaching. Non-peer reviewed work is considered a form of scholarly activism that produces and changes knowledge inside/outside the academy.

The candidate's professional achievements should be assessed by reputable scholars in appropriate fields, and these external reviews will be included as part of the WPAF. The RTP committee, in consultation with the candidate, will generate a list of potential external reviewers (senior scholars in the candidates fields of expertise). Once a list of potential external reviews is compiled, in consultation with the candidate, the Department Chair or RTP Committee Chair shall solicit outside letters the spring prior to fall review. Ideally a candidate's file will have no fewer than 3 and no more than 6 letters. External review is a crucial part of evaluating professional growth and achievement, and shall be weighed and considered accordingly. Letters from editors of journals/presses (if applicable) to which the candidate has sent materials for review can also contribute to an assessment of the work but are considered supplemental, and generally speak to progress toward publication.

## **IV. Contributions to Campus and Community**

The Department of Women Studies expects all candidates for retention, tenure and promotion to offer service to the campus and community. This service may overlap with activities described under Teaching Effectiveness (in program advising) or Professional Achievement and Growth (in public talks, for example). For tenure-track faculty, the primary emphasis will be placed on the candidate's active participation and involvement in service to the department. Candidates for promotion to Full are expected to provide service to the College or larger campus community as well as continued service to the department. Service to the department should contribute to the department's larger mission and goals, but when assessing all types of

service to campus and community the RTP Committee will take “collegiality” into account. Collegiality is not the same as congeniality but is defined as the candidate’s record of building productive cooperative working relationships with other members of the faculty, with university staff, and/or with personnel in community and professional organizations.

For promotion to Full, it is expected that the candidate’s contribution to campus and community include significant service to the department but also areas of service beyond the department, as outlined below. The impact of a candidate’s work is measured not by breadth but quality of critical intervention, for example by their role in reviewing manuscripts, editing journals, serving on editorial boards, chairing committees and other activities that demonstrate a leadership role in the candidate’s intellectual community. The department also recognizes that there are other, non-professional forms of community engagement; that community is more than the formal spaces of the professional community. Service and leadership in these areas is valued in equal measure to professional service.

## **A. Campus Service**

Since Women and Gender Studies is a relatively small but growing department, candidates will be credited the most for their contributions to the Women and Gender Studies department. All candidates are expected to provide impactful participation on departmental committees. In addition, the department expects that by tenure review, junior faculty will have engaged in additional meaningful activity, such as providing peer review observations for lecturers. In addition to these activities, candidates to Full are expected to take leadership roles such as chairing committees. The following are types of service may be assessed by the department’s RTP Committee:

### **1. Service to Women Studies Department**

- Impactful participation on departmental committees
- Special advising roles (GE, undergraduate advisor, graduate advisor, etc.)
- Special assignments for program development and assessment (grant writing, assessment, etc. generally tied to external reviews of the department)
- Supervising and/or mentoring undergraduate or graduate teaching assistants or research assistants
- Mentoring junior colleagues
- Taking leadership roles (chairing the department, serving as graduate coordinator, chairing committees, coordinating lecture series, etc.)

### **2. Service to College and/or University**

- Service on College of Liberal and Creative Arts committees
- Service on university-wide committees
- Interdisciplinary program development or involvement
- Sponsoring or mentoring student organizations
- \* Serving on MA thesis committees outside the department (when appropriate)

- Planning and/or participating in on-campus events

## **B. Community Service**

The Women and Gender Studies Department expects service to the university's wider communities. Such work may include service to the profession or to municipal, local, state, national, and/or transnational organizations and communities. The department recognizes that service takes a range of forms and occurs at various sites both inside and outside the academy, and may be documented differently. Faculty should judiciously select service commitments. The department has a commitment to challenging the theory-practice divide, and thus we encourage faculty to forge connections among teaching, research, and service. Tenure-track faculty are encouraged to seek out service opportunities that meaningfully connect their research and teaching interests to communities beyond SFSU.

Evidence of community service may drawn from, but is not limited to, the following:

- Organizing community workshops or events
- Contributing to media (newspapers, radio, TV, computer blogging, etc.)
- Consulting with and/or serving community colleges, high schools, or other education-related organizations
- Consulting with or serving other community organizations
- Participating in professional associations
- Cross-campus scholarly collaborations

The following community service roles, while valued in candidates seeking tenure, are considered to be more appropriate to expect of candidates seeking promotion to Full:

- Taking a leadership role in professional organizations
- Serving on editorial boards for academic journals
- Serving as an external reviewer for departments on other campuses
- \* Reading manuscripts for academic journals and presses
- \* Serving on editorial, organizational or executive boards