

A Guide to Standards for Tenure and Promotion in the History Department
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Approved by Faculty Affairs, effective Fall 2024

The requirements and criteria for retention, tenure, and promotion as set out in a series of policies adopted by the Academic Senate and approved by the President are divided into three areas: (1) Teaching Effectiveness, (2) Professional Achievement and Growth, and (3) Contributions to Campus and Community. As required by University Policy on Retention and Tenure (Policy #F11-241), all faculty members in the History Department who are being considered for retention, tenure, and promotion will be evaluated in each of those categories. In general, in order to merit tenure and/or promotion a candidate is required to meet a high standard of effectiveness in teaching and professional achievement and growth, followed by contributions to the campus and the community. The departmental Retention, Tenure, and Promotions Committee, along with the Chair of the department, will consider and evaluate all of the achievements of a candidate for tenure and/or promotion according to the criteria listed below. Following University policy, “achievements in the current rank should demonstrate promise of meritorious activities comparable to the achievements and services expected of all faculty who serve at the rank to which the individual is to be promoted.”

1. Documentation:

The candidate should follow the guidelines set out in the “Preparing for Tenure and Promotion Handbook” available at
<http://facaffairs.sfsu.edu/sites/sites7.sfsu.edu.facaffairs/files/TandP-NEW-2014.pdf>

2. Professional Education and/or Equivalency:

A Ph.D. is necessary for tenure or promotion in the History Department. The degree will typically be in History, except in cases in which the department has hired an individual on tenure-track with a Ph.D. in another field.

3. Probationary Period, Early Promotion/Tenure, Appointment with Tenure¹

- A. The normal probationary period for awarding of tenure and promotion from assistant to associate is six years. Candidates may have their application for promotion from associate to full professor evaluated starting at the beginning of their sixth year after promotion to associate. Exceptions for early promotion (assistant to associate *and* associate to full) can be made (see sections 3.C and 3.D).

¹ See Senate Policy: https://senate.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/F22-241_Revision_to_F19-241_Retention%2C_Tenure_and_Promotion_Policy.pdf

- B. A new hire to the department may be awarded tenure by the President at the time of their appointment only after department recommendation. The department will evaluate the hire based on the criteria used for regular tenure and promotion. If appropriate, the department may recommend appointment with tenure for the candidate to the President.
- C. Early tenure and promotion from assistant to associate may be awarded after a comprehensive evaluation of the probationary faculty member's entire probationary period up to their application for tenure and promotion based on departmental criteria established for tenure and promotion of candidates in their sixth year. If early tenure and promotion is not granted, the candidate may apply again in their sixth year. Candidates may not apply for promotion and tenure more than twice unless there were documented procedural irregularities in their earlier reviews. The schedule for probationary faculty member's request for review for early tenure and promotion is based on service credits (see Section 13.4 of the CBA for policy on "service credit"):
 - No service credit: October of the 4th or 5th year after appointment
 - One year of service credit: October of the 4th year after appointment
 - Two years of service credit: October of the 3rd year after appointment
- D. Early promotion from associate to full professor may be made as soon as the requirements for promotion to full professor in service and/or professional achievement and growth are met

4. Teaching Effectiveness:

- A. Teaching effectiveness is required for every year of probation, as well as for tenure and promotion. To be considered for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, as well as for promotion from Associate to Full Professor, a faculty member must demonstrate a high level of effectiveness in their teaching performance, including maintenance of high academic standards and a scholarly level of instruction. The standards for judging teaching are the following:
 - (1.) *Course materials.* Syllabi, bibliographies, reading lists, and examinations are used by the RTP committee as evidence of course and class organization, the level at which the course is taught, and the expectation of student learning.
 - (2.) *Student evaluations.* Students will evaluate all courses each semester. The RTP committee regards these surveys as important because they provide a large representative sample of student reactions. Scores of below 1.5 on the questions of the survey instrument suggest highly effective teaching. Scores of 2.0 or higher suggest a need for improvement. We expect candidates for tenure and promotion to receive overall mean scores between 1.0 and 2.0. The department values improvement over time and places greater emphasis

on the final two years prior to tenure if the earlier teaching evaluations fall outside the recommended range. (Score ranges are subject to the department's future reappraisal of the impact of the new on-line teaching evaluation instrument).

- (3.) *Signed written comments* from students are considered, but because they usually represent a small sample, they are not regarded as highly as classroom surveys.
 - (4.) *Peer class observations.* Class observations by fellow faculty members are vital for assessing teaching effectiveness. They serve as a check on student evaluations, which can be affected by student grades, prejudices, and workloads. Probationary faculty members receive at least two observations each year, one from the chair and one from an RTP committee member or designee. Tenured faculty members receive one observation each year by either the chair or an RTP committee member of equivalent or higher rank.
 - (5.) *Instructional development.* Scholarly level of instruction can also be demonstrated by evidence such as continuing study, attendance at professional conferences and workshops, and curriculum development.
 - (6.) *Advising.* The candidate must be effective in advising, which may be documented by descriptions of the nature and extent of advising activities, student letters and interviews, and descriptions of B.A. Honors thesis, M.A. thesis, M.A. exam, and special project advising.
- B. Although Student Evaluation Scores are suggestive of whether or not a faculty member is an effective teacher, the final determination will be based on the RTP Committee evaluations of all of the above factors.

5. Professional Achievement and Growth:

- A. The University and the Department of History maintain that faculty professional achievements and intellectual growth enhance the lives of students, the department, and the university itself. Thus the department expects that the pattern of intellectual activity and growth established during the probationary period will extend beyond tenure. Our department evaluates scholarship according to its quality and impact, not according to quantitative measures of productivity alone. Because historical scholarship typically requires extensive time for research and writing, we expect important projects to take a number of years from inception to publication. Consequently, in weighing merit for tenure and/or promotion, the department may adjust the quantitative measures of scholarly output employed below to take into consideration the depth of research associated with a project, or the project's impact on the field. The department's RTP committee will offer explicit justifications for such a determination, in consultation with external

referees. We have established the following guidelines for assessing professional achievements and growth at various points in a faculty member's career.

(1.) *Retention:*

The Department of History expects candidates for retention to exhibit a pattern of professional achievement and scholarly growth during their probationary period. Unless otherwise specified at the time of hiring, this means that probationary faculty members are expected to make a significant scholarly contribution to the field and to continue to grow intellectually within their given areas of expertise, demonstrating clear progress toward meeting the standards for tenure and promotion.

(2.) *Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor:*

For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, professional achievement and growth will have been demonstrated by the candidate's publication of original research, either in the form of a monograph, or three articles in appropriate peer-reviewed journals, or three essays or chapters in peer-reviewed books or anthologies, or an equivalent combination of articles, essays, and chapters. (See 4.B.1 below)

(3.) *Promotion to Full Professor:*

For promotion to Full Professor, the department expects a candidate to have produced a second book or its equivalent in articles, essays, and chapters as described above, and to have demonstrated a sustained record of scholarly achievement. As the candidate will have developed into a mature scholar, merit will be accorded both to published works based largely on original research and those that synthesize and integrate knowledge, revealing new patterns of meaning and new relationships between the parts and the whole. Consequently, a textbook offering original insights, or a critical edition or annotated translation, or an edited anthology may carry the same weight as a monograph (see 4.B.1 below). In addition to the production of a second book or its equivalent, a sustained record of scholarly achievement will have been demonstrated by engagement in some of the activities enumerated in section 4.B.2 of our departmental policy (see below).

- B. Because opportunities for publication and forms of presentation of research vary within the fields of history, it is not possible to produce a truly exhaustive list of worthy professional achievements, which may vary by subfield. Above all, the department, through its RTP committee, expects a candidate for tenure or promotion to make a significant contribution to the field.

(1.) The usual evidence of Professional Achievement and Growth in the Department of History are publications in the faculty member's field of specialization. These works, whether monographs, other books, textbooks, anthologies, or essays and chapters in anthologies, must be published by university presses or other presses appropriate to the faculty member's field that employ a rigorous process of peer review. Articles must appear in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. The RTP committee will employ standards common to the profession in identifying the quality of the press or journal in question. The following publications are deemed appropriate:

- Books
- Textbooks deemed by pre- or post-publication scholarly reviewers to offer original insights and perspectives.
- Articles in refereed journals
- Other essays (such as chapters in anthologies)
- Manuscripts that have been accepted for publication and are in production (but not those that are only under contract)
- Critical editions and annotated translations
- Edited anthologies

(2.) In addition, the following works and activities are considered when presented in combination with items above. [No individual item or combination of items below will be considered appropriate for tenure or promotion in the absence of items from list (1.) above]:

- Peer-reviewed manuscripts under contract but not yet in production
- Book reviews and review essays in scholarly historical journals or scholarly internet sites (e.g., H-Net, but not such sites as Amazon)
- Senior editor of a journal or encyclopedia
- Books or articles for popular audiences
- Encyclopedia entries
- Oral and written presentations of research at professional meetings and to other scholarly audiences
- Contributions to historical websites and exhibits, public history and archival projects
- Electronic contributions to scholarly enterprises
- Recognition of professional achievement in the form of honors, appointments, and grants, including selection for participation in summer institutes or the like
- Grant writing for federal and other funding for the individual's scholarly research and for the establishment of such programs as summer institutes

The term *publication* as used above is not intended to be restricted to publication using paper and ink; we assume that electronic publication of books, journals, and other scholarly media will continue to become more and more common. The key to

determining the significance of an item is not the medium of publication but the review process, the scholarly reputation of the journal or other publisher, and the critical reception of the item by the discipline.

The History Department also considers works in languages other than English, when subject to the same standards of peer review, to qualify as equally meritorious to English-language works.

The RTP Committee shall judge the significance of scholarly work and the venue in which it appears, seeking consultation with others as appropriate. *Significance* is, of course, the key for either tenure or promotion. Significance is a determination to be made by those most intimate with the field—in this case, the RTP committee, on behalf of the department, based on the prevailing standards and expectations of the discipline, as demonstrated by the full range of evidence, including outside evaluations solicited by the RTP committee after reaching agreement with the candidate as to the appropriateness of the referees (see 4.C below).

- C. Candidates may propose up to six outside reviewers. The RTP committee, in consultation with the department chair, may add up to six additional outside reviewers. The RTP committee, the candidate, and the department Chair will discuss the list of up to twelve possible reviewers to arrive at a final list of six potential reviewers. During this stage of the process all parties have the right to veto suggested reviewers while maintaining a balance between the two lists. The RTP committee will select and rank reviewers from the final list with the goal of securing at least three reviews for inclusion in the candidate's WPAF. The RTP committee will not reveal to the candidate the names of the final evaluators until their letters have been received.
- Reviewers shall not have been the candidate's dissertation chair or committee member, or have a close, extensive collaborative relationship with the candidate.
 - Reviewers shall not be close colleagues within SFSU, nor relatives.
 - Reviewers shall be from CSU comparable institutions or higher, and hold a higher rank than the candidate being reviewed.
 - Reviewers will be asked to include a description of their relationship to the candidate and state potential conflicts of interest they might have in doing the review.
 - Reviewers will be informed that candidates have access to their letters.
 - Candidates shall provide the RTP committee with the following materials to be sent to reviewers by June 1 before the fall semester in which the candidate's file is due:
 1. Personal statement
 2. Current CV
 3. One book or three other items from the candidate's professional work of the candidate's own choosing. (The candidate is free to submit more.)

- The RTP Chair will begin the invitation process, track the process of securing the external reviews, answer questions from the reviewers, receive review letters, and place letters in the candidate's WPAF.
- The RTP chair will add a biographical sketch of each outside reviewer to the WPAF.

6. Contributions to Campus and Community

A. Campus Service:

Contributions to the campus may include, but are not limited to, administrative assignments, faculty governance, departmental, college, and university committee work, special advising assignments (e.g. credential advising, minor advising), program development, sponsorship of student organizations, and the direction of both instructional and non-instructional activities and projects.

- (1.) Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor should have made important contributions on departmental committees.
- (2.) Candidates for promotion to Professor should have made some contributions at the College and/or Campus and/or System as well as Department level.
- (3.) Candidates will be credited for contributions to interdisciplinary programs, General Education, and the like as well as contribution within the History Department itself.

B. Community and Professional Service

(1.) For historians, it is likely that many of their opportunities for applying professional expertise to community endeavors will take place in the form of contributions to professional societies and organizations. This might mean chairing or commenting at sessions of professional organizations, helping with local arrangements for professional meetings, and serving on professional committees or as elected officials in professional societies. Also included would be participation on editorial boards or in refereeing journal articles and book manuscripts, and services provided as a consultant.

(2.) Another venue for contributions to the community would be presentations to professional groups of non-historians on topics related to one's field.

(3.) Historians also provide service by applying their professional expertise in the community at large by giving lectures to non-professional audiences, supplying background information to the media (for example, being interviewed on radio or television, or for documentaries, op-ed pieces or other contributions to the press), consulting with governmental agencies or NPOs, participating in local historical societies, involvement in the teaching of history in the schools, or serving on school boards..

(4.) Historians also serve the larger community by consulting on and reviewing textbooks and other course materials for middle schools, high schools, and colleges and universities.

(5.) While the participation in summer institutes and other similar activities is primarily an intellectual activity, it also constitutes a service to the community. Other similar activities would include the reading of Advanced Placement exams and the preparation of teaching materials for secondary and tertiary schools.

(6.) Editing an H-Net List or other scholarly electronic lists also constitutes a service to the wider academic and educational community.

These activities may be documented with letters or emails of invitation or thanks or similar documentation.