

Department of Philosophy
Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Criteria
Approved by Faculty Affairs Fall 2021

A Guide to Standards for Tenure and Promotion to Associate and Full Professor, and Post-Tenure Review in the Department of Philosophy

Documentation: Candidates should avail of the resources on the Faculty Affairs website: <https://facaffairs.sfsu.edu/ewpaf>

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 satisfactory and outstanding levels of achievement in each category can be documented.

The Philosophy Department is able to achieve the very high standard of education that it does only because its faculty make significant contributions in all three of the areas considered in personnel decisions: research, teaching, and service. Thus, we wish to emphasize that we weight each of these kinds of contribution equally, and expect all faculty to make contributions in all areas.

Early Tenure and Promotion: To be awarded early tenure and/or promotion, faculty must demonstrate achievements in all three categories that are outstanding or in excess of the required record.

I. TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

The primary mission of the California State University is teaching. To be considered for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor, a faculty member must demonstrate a high level of teaching effectiveness in their teaching performance, including maintenance of high academic standards and a scholarly level of instruction.

The standards for evaluating teaching are:

1. **Range and Breadth of Courses:** Faculty in the Philosophy Department are expected to teach a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with consideration of disciplinary and curricular demands. The Philosophy Department notes that this range and breadth of teaching requires substantial research outside of the candidate's areas of specialization.
2. **Course Materials:** Syllabi, bibliographies, reading lists, and assignments are used by the committee as evidence of course and class organization, the level at which the course is taught, and the expectation of student learning. Faculty are expected to stay current in their fields and frequently update their syllabi, learning objectives and assignments. Syllabi should be clearly written, and outline learning objectives and grading rubrics as well as other university policies.
3. **Student Evaluations:** Tenure and tenure-track faculty are required to submit evaluation questionnaires for all courses except supervisory courses each semester through the SETE system. The committee takes into consideration both quantitative data and qualitative comments. Cumulative student teaching evaluations that reach a score that is at least average, or consistent with the mean, for the department as a whole are generally considered to indicate good teaching. Cumulative evaluations that are significantly lower than the department mean are generally thought to indicate outstanding teaching, whereas cumulative evaluations that significantly exceed the department mean as cause for concern. In numerical terms, scores between 1.0 and 1.5 suggest outstanding teaching, scores between 1.5-2.0 suggest satisfactory teaching, and scores of 2.0 or higher suggest a need for improvement. The committee will take into consideration factors that may affect scores, including well documented biases regarding student evaluations and other limiting factors such as difficult teaching assignments.

4. **Curricular innovation:** Faculty are encouraged to develop new courses, introduce innovative teaching methods, and/or integrate new technology into existing courses, as appropriate.
5. **Advising:** The candidate must engage in advising and maintain regularly-scheduled office hours. There is also the expectation that faculty will supervise and/or serve on thesis committees inside and outside their areas of specialization. Generally speaking, faculty are expected to conduct thesis supervision that conforms to the department averages for both the number of completed theses directed and the number of completed theses for which the faculty serves as a second or third reader. Supervision that consistently exceeds these averages is considered outstanding; supervision that consistently falls below these averages needs improvement.
6. **Instructional development:** Scholarly levels of instruction can also be demonstrated by evidence such as continuing study, attendance at professional conferences and workshops, and curriculum development.
7. **Post-Graduate Placement:** Scholarly levels of instruction can also be demonstrated by a candidate's helping the MA students for whom the faculty member has served as chair place at PhD and/or other post-graduate programs.
8. **Additional testimonia and evidence of effectiveness:** The committee will also take into consideration other evidence of teaching effectiveness at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including testimony of individual students, student learning outcomes (including performances on examinations, essays and articles, and theses), class visitations by fellow faculty members, success of mentored students in competitive programs (such as essay competitions, publication of student papers, or admission to selective programs), supervision of outstanding MA theses, and participation in SFSU programs to foster student excellence (such as the Marcus undergraduate fellowships).

II. PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH

Candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion to Associate Professor are expected to maintain a significant and continuing record of professional achievement and growth, but only achievements and growth accomplished during the period under review will be considered for purposes of evaluation. The Department of Philosophy views professional achievement and growth as having a complementary role to teaching and scholarship.

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. This vocation may manifest as professional development and growth in different ways.

Students benefit from getting a sense of how academic research in philosophy is produced and shared within academic circles, and from learning the standards and norms of writing that are current in the discipline of philosophy. Given this, students profit from taking courses taught by faculty who are actively engaged in scholarship aimed at an audience of professional colleagues. Such scholarship has the added benefit of raising the profile of our faculty, department, and university, which is an asset for those of our students seeking to attend law school or graduate school in philosophy.

Students also profit from learning from faculty who take on the difficult task of shaping the direction of the discipline such that it is more inclusive and innovative. This might involve asking difficult questions about biases embedded in the norms and standards of the discipline, about building bridges between various subfields in philosophy, and about engaging in interdisciplinary projects with researchers from other fields. This kind of scholarship has the added benefit of broadening our faculty's engagement with other disciplines, which is an asset to our many students who seek to attend graduate school in other disciplines, such as women's and gender studies, race and ethnic studies, religious studies, clinical psychology, public policy, political science, and law.

Building research programs requires time and opportunity. How much of each depends, to some extent, on the fields of philosophy in which a candidate works, as professional recognition is more readily achieved in some philosophical fields than in others. Noting these disparities leads us to define professional development in flexible terms, requiring evidence that presents a compelling, holistic picture of scholarly activity and professional recognition that is of high quality and/or great quantity.

That said, candidates for tenure and promotion deserve clear standards and guidance, so we here present one profile of professional achievement that the department would be eager to promote, noting that we expect that different candidates will manifest a variety of successful careers profiles.

Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor: For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, professional achievement and growth will have been satisfactorily demonstrated by the candidate's publication of original research in the form of four contributions, at least three of which have passed peer review. Examples of said contributions are: a journal article, a book chapter, a chapter in an anthology, and editorial work on a volume of academic research produced by other academics. A candidate can meet this standard with fewer contributions, if those are judged by the candidate's external letter writers to be especially impactful.

There are many ways in which candidates may demonstrate outstanding professional achievement and growth. Below are some examples.

1. Candidates produce research with innovative and inclusive disciplinary content. For example,
 - a. Research aims at inclusivity when it shapes the discipline by critically engaging disciplinary biases and canons;

- b. Research aims at interdisciplinarity when it creates connection with other disciplines.
- 2. Candidates exceed expectations to produce contributions such that these contributions are either in a new area of the candidate's research or are additional in number. For example,
 - a. Research extends beyond previously published work (e.g. it significantly extends beyond the dissertation project, or even beyond previously published research);
 - b. Candidates produce more than the four contributions outlined above.
 - c. Candidates produce more than three peer-reviewed contributions.
- 3. Candidates provide documentation of visibility in the field, such as (but not limited to) the following:
 - a. They produce contributions such as: encyclopedia entries, entries in online venues and new media, peer-reviewed presentations, or public philosophy;
 - b. They are awarded prizes, or earn funding for research or scholarly projects, including projects that apply previous research or professional achievement;
 - c. They receive invitations: to contribute book reviews, to conferences or workshops, discussion notes, editorial duties; to referee applications or manuscripts or bodies of work or programs, to serve in organizational roles in scholarly meetings or projects that depend on excellent professional reputation and knowledge, and to offer service on committees established by professional organizations that require a high degree of professional judgment (for example, committees that award prizes or fellowships).
 - d. Their published work is reviewed, cited, and/or has other marks of the influence of a candidate's scholarship.
 - e. Their published work appears in journals and/or is published by presses that have strong reputations, as established by: the scholarly reputations of the editor, editorial board members, and other authors who have published in the same venues; indicators that the publication has been widely read and recognized (e.g., reviews, citations, and awards); and the assessment of external reviewers.

Notes:

1. **Forthcoming Work:** Work that has received final acceptance for publication before the candidates WPAF has closed will be counted as published work.
2. **Electronic publications:** Electronic publication will be seen as equivalent to ink and paper publication. It is the peer review process and the scholarly value and reputation of the journal or outlet in question that matters more than the format.

3. **Work in other languages:** Works in other languages will be deemed of equal value to works in English.
4. **Co-authoring:** Co-authored books, co-edited collections, and co-edited articles will be counted as the equivalent of individually authored works if both contributors did equal work. Candidates who participate in such work should add a note describing their contribution. Articles authored by more than two contributors will normally be counted as “half,” though again, candidates who participate in writing such articles should add a note describing their contribution, and such notes will be taken into consideration.
5. **External letters:** The Department requires that reputable scholars in the field of philosophy or (if interdisciplinary work is done) in other disciplines assess the candidate’s professional achievement. The candidate may propose up to six outside reviewers, at least three of whom are philosophers. The RTP committee, in consultation with the chair, will draw from that collection of six potential reviewers three to five outside reviewers. Both the candidate and the RTP committee have the right to veto at any stage in the process (even once the letter has been written) any one outside reviewer.

Reviewers will be provided with this document, which outlines the criteria by which the dossier of research is to be evaluated. This is important, as reviewers must understand the specificities by which the candidate is being reviewed.

Reviewers may not be the candidate’s dissertation chair or committee member or have a close, extensive collaborative relationship with the candidate nor can they be close colleagues within SFSU, nor relatives. Reviewers must have 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 will be informed that candidates will have access to their letters. For the purpose of the external letters, candidates will provide the RTP committee with a current CV and the main pieces of research included in their WPAF. (They are free to submit more as well). The RTP chair will begin the invitation process, track the process of securing the letters, answer questions from reviewers, receive review letters and place them in the candidate’s WPAF.

III. SERVICE TO CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY

Service is vital to the department’s capacity to carry out its mission, to university governance, to the growth and development of the profession, and to the broader mission of the university to use knowledge in service to humanity. While we understand that taking up a post at a new school requires mastering a variety of new skills, and so make an allowance for less service in the first year, we expect candidates for tenure and/or promotion to contribute fully beginning no later

than their second year. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion will show a satisfactory performance in service. The forms and distribution of service will differ depending on departmental needs and each faculty member's strengths and opportunities. Candidates may demonstrate successful service in the following ways:

1. **Service to the Department:** To demonstrate satisfactory performance, faculty 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.

Faculty are also expected to meet deadlines, keep track of multiple tasks, and answer emails regarding service in a timely manner.

Outstanding service to the department may be demonstrated by highly effective 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, leading major innovations in curriculum, establishing a successful certificate 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 satisfactorily to the College and the University by serving on college, university, CSU system-wide, inter-segmental, legislative or education agency committees or projects. Such service may be demonstrated by serving effectively on at least two committees or on one of the more demanding committees at the college level or higher, such as for Academic Senate or LCA's College Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) committee. Outstanding 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 College or University activities.
3. **Service to the Community:** Philosophy Department faculty can contribute satisfactorily to the larger community by participating in and/or hosting relevant local, national, and/or international events, projects, or committees, councils or boards. Outstanding 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. Outstanding 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. Shared Appointments: Faculty holding joint appointments shall be reviewed by tenured faculty from each department in which the individual holds an appointment.

Promotion to Professor

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.