

CRITERIA FOR RETENTION, TENURE, AND PROMOTION

SCHOOL OF THEATRE & DANCE

Approved by Faculty Affairs, effective Fall 2024

OVERVIEW: UNIVERSITY POLICY AND ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

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. Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities (RSCA)
3. Contributions to Campus and Community

As required by University Policy on Retention and Tenure (policy # S24-241), all faculty members in the School of Theatre & Dance who are being considered for retention, tenure, and promotion will be evaluated in each of the above categories. For information pertaining to this process and eWPAF, the candidate can utilize the resources provided by SF State's Office of Faculty Affairs: <https://facaffairs.sfsu.edu/rtp> and <https://facaffairs.sfsu.edu/ewpaf>.

GUIDELINES:

The guidelines described here clarify the expectations of the School of Theatre & Dance in relation to the University's criteria for the determination of retention, tenure and promotion.

To begin, it must be noted that university performing arts programs, in particular a School of Theatre & Dance, are unique in the breadth of the areas of study that are encompassed by their degree programs. Criteria and personnel that base their thinking on standard models of academia must necessarily expand their vision to the broad array of instruction that is the identity of a performing arts program. Subjects in dance and theatre include courses in history, literature, writing, acting, dance technique performance skills, choreography, and design and tech areas that include: sets, props, costumes, make-up, lighting, sound, and management. ALL of these areas of study are covered and considered to be crucial to a standard BA program. Necessarily, in criteria for review this variety of learning calls for approaches that are knowledgeable and appropriate to each area.

The RTP review process shall consider previous reviews at SFSU and build upon them. Any suggestions for improvement, recommended actions and expressions of concern in earlier reviews will be reexamined in later reviews. The reexamination should include indications of whether previous concerns have been successfully resolved or what further steps are determined to be necessary. The School of Theatre & Dance is committed to challenging the theory-practice divide, and thus we encourage faculty to forge connections among teaching, scholarly research, creativity, performance and service, and to demonstrate this integrated approach in their activities.

It should also be noted that the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) accredits the Theatre Arts degree programs at SFSU and NAST policies inform the framework of the criteria for Retention, Tenure, and Promotion for instructors of Theatre Arts. The following excerpted passages from NAST documentation are particularly applicable to the RTP process for Theatre Arts faculty:

From Purposes of the Institution - Size and Scope:

The study of theatre performance, production, or design requires opportunities for daily interaction with other theatre students and professionals. In academic settings, this interaction is critical not only in

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performance, production, and design, but also in the development of all types of theatre knowledge and skills.

From **Faculty and Staff Qualifications:**

NAST recognizes the Master of Fine Arts as the appropriate terminal degree for performance, design/technology, and playwriting faculty. At the same time, the Association recognizes that some highly qualified artist-teachers may hold other academic degrees; others may not hold any academic degrees. In such cases, the institution should base appointments on experience, training, and expertise at least equivalent to those required for the master's degree in the appropriate field.

Academic degrees are a pertinent indicator of the teacher's qualifications for instructing in theoretical, historical, and pedagogical subjects. In general, the Ph.D. and comparable doctorates are the appropriate terminal degrees in these fields; however, creative work, research, and publication are indicators of a teacher's qualifications, productivity, professional awareness, and contribution to various aspects of theatre and theatre-related fields.

From **Appointment, Evaluation, and Advancement:**

Creative activity must be regarded as being equivalent to scholarly efforts and publication when the institution has goals and objectives for the preparation of theatre professionals in practice-oriented specializations.

All faculty should have sufficient time for artistic, scholarly, and professional activity in order to maintain excellence and growth in their respective areas of expertise.

Normally, the teaching loads of those having administrative, consultative, and/or production duties are appropriately reduced.

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1. Teaching Effectiveness:

The standards for evaluating teaching are as follows:

- a. **Range and Breadth:** Faculty in the School of Theatre & Dance are expected to teach a range and breadth of courses, from lower-division undergraduate and General Education courses to upper-division courses or graduate-level courses.
- b. **Course materials:** Syllabi, and relevant documents including selected bibliographies, course readers, and the expectations the faculty member sets for student learning, 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. Faculty members are expected to frequently update their syllabi, learning objectives, and assignments in keeping with the continuing changes in the field. Syllabi should be clearly written, outline learning objectives and grading rubrics as well as other required university policies.

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- c. ***Student evaluations:*** Two types of student evaluations are considered in the review process. Although student evaluation scores are suggestive of whether or not a faculty member is an effective teacher, the final evaluation will be based on the RTP committee evaluations of all of the factors outlines herein.
- i. ***Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE):*** Students are asked to evaluate all courses each semester. The RTP committee regards these SETE surveys as important because they provide a large representative sample of student reactions. The School of Theatre & Dance 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. We expect candidates for tenure and promotion to receive overall mean scores between 1.0 and 2.0 regardless of the modes of instruction. However, the School of Theatre & Dance recognizes that different types of courses require different modes of instruction and that these are inherently not comparable. Thus, the School of Theatre & Dance also gives equal weight in its evaluation to students' qualitative comments contained in the in the SETEs.
 - ii. ***Signed written comments:*** Students may elect to write a letter to be included in the candidate's WPAF. These letters are thoughtfully considered, but because they typically represent a smaller sample than the SETEs, often cannot be weighed at the same level as SETEs. Unsigned letter shall not be included in the WPAF.
- d. ***Peer class observations:*** Classroom observations by fellow faculty members are vital for assessing the level of the faculty member's expectations of students, style of classroom activities, and method of engagement with students. Probationary faculty members should receive at least two observations each year, one from the Director and one from an RTP committee member or designee. Responsibility of scheduling classroom observations shall lie with the School Director or the RTP Committee.
- e. ***Curricular innovations:*** Curricular and/or programmatic innovations in the discipline, across disciplines, or for the benefit of general education qualify as elements of teaching effectiveness. Such activities may include the development of original academic programs, new courses or course content, new disciplinary and/or pedagogical approaches. Innovative forms of development of new areas of instructional expertise may also be considered in this category, as well as creative work developed for student performance on campus.
- f. ***Supervision of MA and MFA Thesis and/or Culminating Experiences:*** Any faculty member's supervision of MA and MFA thesis or culminating experience projects as a first, second, or third committee member should be included as an aspect of the faculty member's teaching effectiveness. Written material serving as guidance and distributed to students to support culminating experience work is evidence of teaching effectiveness, as is any written material developed by faculty for culminating experience related advising.

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- g. **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 work with graduate students.

Standards for Retention:

The School of Theatre & Dance expects candidates for retention to exhibit a pattern of teaching progress during their probationary period. All new faculty enter our institution with varying levels of teaching proficiency. Therefore, specific benchmarks shall be set in the document of expectations developed during the first semester after hiring for each candidate based on their particular level of experience in the classroom.

Standards for Tenure and Promotion to Associate:

By the end of the probationary period, the School of Theatre & Dance expects to see a verifiable and sustained level of excellence or noted improvement over time. In particular, candidates for Tenure and Promotion should be actively engaging in curricular innovation, furthering the breadth and depth of their courses to the extent that the School can sustain, and participating in culminating experiences or MA and MFA thesis oversight.

Associate Professors seeking promotion to Full Professor:

Candidates must demonstrate continuing efforts to improve their teaching in the abovementioned areas. They must demonstrate leadership in developing teaching in the School of Theatre & Dance more broadly by contributing, for example, in: mentoring junior faculty through classroom observation and sharing of teaching techniques; leading program development and evaluation; ongoing curriculum innovation and development. Candidates for Full Professor are required to host one peer class observation each year. A written report should be submitted to the candidate within a month of the classroom observation.

2. Professional Achievement and Growth:

The University and the School of Theatre & Dance maintain that faculty professional achievements and intellectual growth enhance the lives of students, the school and the university itself. Thus, the School of Theatre & Dance expects that the pattern of intellectual activity and growth established during the probationary period will extend beyond tenure.

Scholarship, creative research practices, and professional activities vary widely among artists such as actors, directors, designers, technicians, choreographers, scholars and theatre professionals who teach in the School of Theatre & Dance. In the first semester of hire, the RTP Committee will arrange a meeting with each candidate to establish how best to align the various evaluation practices in the field, research goals of the candidate, and the School of Theatre & Dance RTP criteria.

It should also be noted that there are many common misconceptions as to the level of expertise practiced in forms of public review of the performing arts. In particular newspaper and media reviewers generally do not bring training or expertise to their tasks that is commensurate to the training of the performing artists. Therefore, the RTP Committee's role is crucial in determining what factors constitute effective review.

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Opportunities for publication and forms of presentation and research vary within the fields of performance, design, production, and theatre and dance studies. It is not possible to produce a truly exhaustive list of worthy professional achievement, which may vary by subfield. Above all, the School through its RTP Committee, expects a candidate for tenure or promotion to make significant contributions to the field.

Professional Achievement and Growth in Theatre & Dance must be demonstrated through a consistent pattern of activity at a significant level resulting in a clear and focused professional career trajectory. The key to determining the significance of professional activity is the review process, the reputation of the institution or individuals providing the review, and the critical reception by the discipline. Our School evaluates scholarship according to its quality and impact, not according to quantitative measures of productivity alone. The School of Theatre & Dance expects that all faculty will be actively engaged in the production of an original body of creative, professional and/or scholarly work within their field(s) of expertise.

The evidence of Professional Achievement and Growth in the School of Theatre & Dance shall be drawn from the following areas as appropriate for the candidate's area of expertise:

- **Scholarly Research and Publication**, including authoring of scholarly or training- centered books, chapters, articles or reviews published by reputable academic presses or arts centered publications, or in peer-reviewed or refereed journals, including electronic journals. Presentation of scholarly work in conference setting should be given appropriate and substantial weight as evidence, but may not be recognized as a substitute for ongoing production of new scholarship or research. The RTP committee itself would generally include the necessary expertise to review the quality of such publication, and can solicit outside review when deemed necessary.
- **Creative work**, including choreographic works, design, directing, play writing, technical production, and managerial achievements; Creative work developed and produced by the School of Theatre & Dance faculty for on-campus performances will generally be evaluated only in the area of teaching effectiveness. However, this work can also be considered in the category of Professional Achievement and Growth, if it receives external recognition at a professional level, e.g., through juried-selection for presentation, performance or publication by a recognized professional organization or venue or if the candidate's involvement in the production is deemed imperative to the School's success AND it impairs the candidate's ability to pursue off campus professional work.
- **Performance** at a professional level in recognized public venues or theatrical productions. There is a range of such recognized public venues, from those that exist in the mainstream and have paid professional artists and performers, to those that are more grass-roots in nature and are often centered in underserved communities where resources are scarce. The RTP committee is best positioned to categorize and judge the value of this range of performance venues.

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- ***Presentations (oral, written, and /or visual)*** such as non-peer reviewed presentations of work at local, regional, national, or international conferences. Moderating or chairing conference sessions.

- ***Other Areas of Professional Achievement and Growth*** can be identified and agreed upon with consultation between the candidate, the RTP Committee and the School Director. All parties must agree that the indicated work is of a significant professional level and be verifiable by all parties. Examples of this type of activity may include active and continual accumulation of knowledge of additional areas of expertise (followed by integration of it into the candidate's known expertise) or pursuit and acquisition of nationally or internationally recognized professional certifications,

- ***External Letters of Review*** may be utilized to demonstrate appropriate levels of Professional Achievement and Growth. Reviews, or external letters, are meant to focus only on professional work and thus not teaching effectiveness or service. The candidate will work in consultation with the Director and the RTP committee to identify a list of potential reviewers. Guidelines for the process are as follows:
 - Candidates may propose up to seven outside reviewers. The School in consultation with the RTP Committee may add up to seven additional outside reviewers. The candidate and the RTP Committee will discuss the list of up to fourteen possible reviewers to arrive at a final list of eight to ten potential reviewers. If the first round of invitations does not result in three or more willing reviewers, the RTP Committee and the candidate shall agree upon an ideal number of reviewers and the list of potential reviewers may be revisited. During this stage of the process all parties have the right to veto suggested reviewers while maintaining a balance between the two lists. If there is substantial disagreement, the School Director will select and rank reviewers from the final list trying to maintain a balance between the candidate's list and the RTP Committee's list. Other guidelines include:
 - Reviewers shall not have been the candidate's graduate thesis/dissertation chair or committee member.
 - Reviewers shall not be close colleagues within SFSU.
 - Academic reviewers shall be from CSU comparable institutions or higher, and hold a higher rank than the candidate being reviewed.
 - The School of Theatre & Dance acknowledges the collaborative nature of professional work in both disciplines. As such, for the evaluation of professional work, the candidate and RTP Committee may identify a list of established professionals with whom the candidate may have collaborated with and are able to evaluate the quality, value and uniqueness of the candidate's professional work and contributions to the field.
 - In cases where a list includes both academic and professional reviewers, the candidate and RTP Committee will work collaboratively to insure a balance between both groups of reviewers.
 - Invitations to reviewer should be sent out no later than May before the fall semester in which the candidate's file is due.

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- Candidates shall provide to the RTP Committee the following materials to be sent to reviewers by June 1 before the fall semester in which the candidate's file is due:
 - Personal statement
 - Current CV
 - Evidence of creative works, articles, or book chapters from the candidate's professional work of her/his own choosing that is representative of the review period, or a selection of similarly significant work agreed upon by the committee and the candidate after consultation.
- The School Director (or designee, typically the Chair of the RTP Committee) 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.
- Reviewers will be asked to include a description of their relationship to the candidate and potential conflicts of interest they might have in doing the review.
- Reviewers will be informed that the candidates have access to their letters.

In all aforementioned areas, evidence of impact can be in the form of grants and other competitively awarded funding; recognition of professional achievements in the form of awards and honors; and/or the review of work in professional journals or other relevant venues, or in evidence gathered and evaluated by the RTP Committee itself.

Standards for Retention:

The School of Theatre & Dance expects candidates for retention to exhibit a pattern of professional achievement and scholarly growth during their probationary period. The RTP Committee will meet with the candidate to discuss progress.

Standards for Tenure and Promotion to Associate:

By the end of the probationary period, the School of Theatre & Dance expects the sustained production of multiple works or research/publication over time demonstrating a clear trajectory of creative and/or scholarly inquiry and growth.

Standards for Promotion from Associate to Full Professor:

The recommendation for promotion to Professor should be based on a record of sustained achievement at an increasing level of sophistication, which expands on the candidate's work and research. The School expects the candidate will have developed into a mature scholar or artist. Candidates should continue to perform at an increasing level of sophistication, take leadership roles in the candidate's field of expertise, and expand their work to wider professional recognition, ideally national and/or international. Projects that synthesize and investigate creative practices, new techniques and processes, revealing new patterns of meaning and new relationships between the parts and the whole will be given more weight.

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External letter protocol shall be the same as the protocol for promotion to associate. Reviewers cannot be the same reviewers used in previous WPAF submissions.

3. Contributions to Campus and Community

The School of Theatre & Dance expects all candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion to offer service to the campus and community.

Collegiality is an important aspect of service. It is defined as the candidate's record of building cooperative working relationships with other members of the faculty, with university staff, and/or with personnel in community and professional organizations.

The evidence of Contributions to Campus and Community in the School of Theatre & Dance can be drawn from the following:

Service to School of Theatre & Dance

- Active participation on School of Theatre & Dance committees
- Facilities and equipment management
- Advising roles (GE, undergraduate advisor, graduate advisor, etc.)
- Special assignments for program development (grant writing, assessment, etc.)
- Facilitating extracurricular events
- Supervising and/or mentoring undergraduate or graduate teaching assistants or research assistants
- Mentoring junior colleagues
- Taking leadership roles (chairing committees, coordinating lecture series, etc.)

Service to College and/or University:

- Service on committees for the College of Liberal and Creative Arts
- Service on university-wide committees
- Interdisciplinary program development or involvement
- Sponsoring or mentoring student organizations
- Planning and/or participating in on-campus events

Service to the Community

The School of Theatre & Dance values service to the university's wider communities. Such work may include service to the profession or to municipal, local, state, national, and/or global organizations and communities. The School recognizes that service takes a range of forms and occurs on and off campus and may be documented differently. Faculty candidates are advised to consult their RTP Committee and School Director to assist them in judiciously selecting service commitments.

The School's RTP committee expects that all probationary faculty will do service to the School in the form of committee work, advising, etc. Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor should also have experience on College level committees.

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Standards for Retention:

The primary emphasis for tenure track faculty will be placed on the candidate's active participation and involvement in service to the School of Theatre & Dance, but with time, expectations will grow inclusive of service to the college or larger campus community.

Standards for Tenure and Promotion to Associate:

A candidate shall show a record of consistent and significant committee service in the department and at least some contribution to the College. University or system-wide involvement is encouraged.

Standards for Promotion from Associate to Full Professor

Candidates should have served in leadership roles in at least the School and College level. Additionally, candidates seeking promotion to full professor shall have served on University-wide committees, the Academic Senate, or University-wide special groups, ideally in a leadership role, as well. System-wide service shall also hold a high value of measure.