

## Criteria for Tenure and Promotion for the West Lafayette Campus

This document supplements the policy on [Academic Tenure and Promotion \(I.B.2\)](#). Refer to the policy for contact information and applicable definitions.

Effective date: July 1, 2017

### I. Introduction

- A. On the Purdue West Lafayette Campus, to be considered for promotion, a tenured or tenure track faculty member should contribute to all mission areas appropriate to their position (in most cases, contributing to all three areas of discovery, learning and engagement), meeting minimum thresholds in each. They should also have demonstrated excellence and scholarly productivity in at least one of these areas – discovery, learning and engagement – with the understanding that, ordinarily, strength would be apparent in more than one. Documentation of teaching accomplishment is required for any tenured or tenure-track faculty member who teaches. Documentation of engagement accomplishment is required for any tenured or tenure-track faculty member who has formal engagement responsibilities or appointment. Similarly, even if a candidate is applying for promotion based on learning or engagement, they must have demonstrated accomplishments in research/discovery as well. Commitment to active and responsive mentorship, as well as an active role in mentoring, advising and supporting the academic success of students and postdoctoral scientists, will also be documented as part of the process that defines tenure and promotion.
- B. Colleges, schools, divisions and departments shall establish more specific criteria applying these standards to their faculty members. Such criteria must be approved by the dean and must be consistent with college and University guidelines. Where these guidelines conflict, please note that University and college guidelines take precedence. The Provost may require that a college or department revise guidelines to eliminate conflicts. Note that on the West Lafayette Campus, the term “college(s)” includes the Libraries.
- C. Primary Committees in particular disciplines may wish to develop examples and guidelines for scholars in their discipline to help them understand what materials will count for promotion in each category (Discovery, Learning and Engagement), what constitutes excellence, and which outlets and types of activities count as impact.
- D. Length of service in rank by itself should not ensure promotion or cause denial of promotion. Normally, a faculty member’s entire record is relevant for tenure and promotion at all levels. Primary Committees should guard against unsubstantiated interpretations of gaps or delays in the record. Ideally, issues of timing should not be paramount, and discussions should focus instead on the question of whether the faculty member has provided evidence of a sustainable and impactful record that warrants promotion and/or tenure as appropriate, applying the relevant disciplinary and

interdisciplinary standards and norms.

## II. Discovery

- A. Excellence in discovery is manifest in a record of scholarly achievement and evidence of national/international visibility. The candidate must offer a substantial record of published original research or its equivalent. Such a record would likely include accomplishments such as refereed publications, external funding (where it can be said to reflect the positive, rigorous assessment of peers and the scholarly promise of the topic), national and/or international reputation (if appropriate), awards and other contributions to knowledge. It may also include patents, licenses, prototypes, and entrepreneurship activities that move products from the bench to the marketplace; these activities are particularly encouraged in disciplines where there is a focus on addressing societal needs. For the purposes of tenure and promotion review, published work includes that which is in press. A letter from the editor can support the claim that all the preparatory revisions have been completed and the work is on the production schedule. Note that faculty in particular disciplines and fields will weigh some types of accomplishments more than others. For example, in many fields, peer-reviewed publications tend to receive greater weight than those that were not peer-reviewed. In considering the role of external funding, committees should keep in mind the not-for-profit status of the University and the centrality of academic integrity and freedom to the University mission. In all cases, the focus of review should be on the impact of the individual's discovery activities rather than the numbers of such activities.
- B. The varying nature of academic accomplishments across and within disciplines is to be taken into account when promotions are considered. For example, within disciplines, different standards may apply in different sub-fields. In addition, discovery may take a variety of forms even within disciplines. For example, an artist's portfolios and performances may simultaneously represent unique discoveries and their communication. The same is true of innovation in diagnostic activities, patents, and entrepreneurship.
- C. Administrative functions, committee service, special program management, contributions to staff development, leadership in community affairs, participation in scholarly and professional societies, membership on review panels, other peer reviewing activities (manuscript reviews), invited lectures, consultation to government agencies, are additional examples of the recognition of expertise and stature in the field and are professorial roles worthy of appropriate recognition.
- D. Accomplishment in discovery may also extend to guided inclusion of undergraduate students in faculty research activity that results in published work, scholarly presentations, patents and entrepreneurial activity.
- E. Faculty also may contribute by assisting in the production of scholarly publications, devising curricula, developing courseware, counseling students, organizing laboratories and libraries, officiating in professional societies, and so on. Many other equivalents

exist and should be recognized by members of the successive committees on promotions.

- F. Regular discussion and identification of indicators of impact should occur within all units, and these indicators must be clearly communicated to all faculty.

### III. Teaching and Learning

- A. Faculty members are eligible for promotion and/or tenure based on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Those seeking nomination primarily on the basis of teaching excellence must have accomplishment in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Each college should identify discipline-specific criteria for the assessment of excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning. In general, indicators of such excellence are similar to the standards used to evaluate the scholarship of discovery: faculty seeking promotion on the basis of the scholarship of learning should provide a record of scholarly teaching and student success-related publications and evidence of national/international visibility. Examples of such publications or impact include a widely-adopted and well-regarded textbook, publications in a pedagogical journal, or products which enhance student learning. In all cases, the impact of the individual's work should be the primary focus of review.
- B. Additional criteria can also be important in documenting excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Such excellence should also be manifest in the demonstrable relevance of the course material to the lives of students and their success, the field, and/or the broader community. For example, such relevance might include necessary preparation for higher level classes or work, connections to efforts to build skills such as critical thinking, or to develop higher order cognitive processes, or relevance to one's ability to function as a productive citizen of a democratic community, diverse society and modern workplace.
- C. Other indicators of excellence may constitute responses to questions from teaching evaluations, involvement in supervising student research, internships, study abroad or other experiential and service learning. Equally important is the evidence that students have learned under the candidate's instruction. Teaching awards and other formal recognitions (both internal and external to Purdue), pedagogical publications and presentations of research, diversity, range and number of classes or students taught, substantial curricular or pedagogical innovation, and efforts to improve the persistence and success of diverse populations of students are also important indicators of the candidate's accomplishments. Participation in teaching workshops or lectures, letters from those who have observed the candidate's teaching or evaluated his/her course *in toto* (including teaching mentors and peers), as well as the accomplishments and success of undergraduate and graduate advisees are relevant for consideration in this category.
- D. Evidence of excellence in Teaching and Learning may also extend to substantial activity to innovate pedagogical models and materials that lead to scholarly publications and the creation of comprehensive textbooks and other materials.

- E. For all faculty who teach, even those who do not seek promotion primarily on the basis of the scholarship of teaching and learning, documentation of accomplishment in teaching and learning is necessary for promotion and tenure. At a minimum, for all faculty who teach, documentation of teaching efforts and accomplishments should include: enrollment by course, syllabi, information and teaching evaluations as appropriate; self-evaluation of teaching effectiveness, including efforts to improve teaching and learning, and contributions to department/program student learning outcomes. Letters from teaching mentors and peers can also be used to provide documentation of teaching efforts and accomplishments. Note that documentation of teaching activities includes not only classes taught and evaluations, but also mentoring, advising, curricular and pedagogical innovation and other supervisory activities aimed at students and postdoctoral scientists. Candidates may offer additional evidence of their efforts to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching. While each of these elements offers insight into a candidate's teaching performance, no single indicator should be used as the sole indication of excellence, but rather these elements should be used together as part of a holistic assessment of accomplishment in teaching and learning. In particular, care should be exercised in using standardized scores on student evaluations to compare candidates to each other, as bias in these scores is well documented.

#### IV. Engagement

- A. Faculty members are eligible for promotion and/or tenure based on the scholarship of engagement. Note that the scholarship of engagement is distinguished from industrial projects, service work, community volunteer work, or the good citizenship responsibilities of academia. The purpose of a scholar's work distinguishes engagement from basic research, scholarly learning activities and creative endeavors. In general, scholarly engagement is purpose-driven work for a specific community or group that may be a local or global community or group.
- B. Scholarship in the Engagement context is a reciprocal partnership with the community, involving mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge the creation, delivery and assessment of timely, unbiased, educational materials and programs that address relevant, critical and emerging issues. It should empower people in ways that result in desired outcomes, informed decisions and/or improved quality of life. Note: Extension/Engagement scholarship emanating from a highly integrated research/Extension program is particularly noteworthy.
- C. Faculty seeking promotion for engagement activities should provide a record of scholarly engagement-related publications and evidence of national/international visibility. It may include, innovation and creativity when developing and delivering programs, products and services that promote informed decisions and/or improve quality of life. Additional criteria can be important in documenting the scholarship of engagement. For example, the quantity, strength and impact on stakeholders can take a variety of forms such as the enactment of related legislation, adoption of innovations, and/or widespread changes in professional practice. Publications that translate research for practitioners, entrepreneurs, business/industry leaders, and/or policy makers are valued in the scholarship of

engagement. Connecting research with the appropriate markets (commercialization) may also further our engagement with external stakeholders. Engagement scholarship integrates faculty roles of learning and discovery, so candidates are encouraged to cross-list their scholarship/engagement activities throughout their promotion document. Engaged scholarship may serve the land grant mission by working with government, schools, non-profits, business, and/or industry. These are just examples and are not intended to restrict the many possible indicators.

## V. Other Considerations

### A. Interdisciplinary Work

Individual excellence and scholarly productivity are the basis for promotion, and while these are often defined in discipline-specific terms, the University recognizes that scientific, curricular and engagement activities of faculty are not limited by disciplinary boundaries. Significant interdisciplinary efforts are also recognized and contribute to the excellence and diversity of the academic enterprise; this, too, is recognized when considering a candidate's strength and accomplishments. Disciplinary units may have difficulty assessing interdisciplinary work, and it is advisable to have input on the interdisciplinary nature and value of the work from scholars in interdisciplinary programs and centers, other departments, or even external to the University to aid in the assessment of the record. Department heads/chairs whose faculty are jointly appointed may establish an augmented primary committee. Every college should develop guidelines on how to augment primary committees for the review and evaluation of jointly-appointed faculty for the purposes of promotion and tenure. The procedures of the college in which the tenure home resides are the governing guidelines for any particular candidate. The composition and participation rules of the augmented primary committee will be determined by these college-wide guidelines.

### B. Impact

Scholarship that has a high impact on the academic fields, on society and humankind is particularly valued. Faculty in a particular discipline or interdisciplinary field can best determine what should count as impact. Departments, interdisciplinary programs and other units should determine what factors are appropriate evidence of impact in the fields represented, and deans and department heads/chairs should be informed about field context when presenting candidates. In some fields, journal impact factors may indicate quality or at least may be suggestive of the potential for a piece of scholarship to generate impact, but they are far from the only or best indicator of impact. Caution should be taken with regard to comparing impact factors across disciplines; they may be of comparative value only within sub-disciplines. Citations, republication in excerpts and other evidence of enduring and widespread relevance may also indicate scholarly impact. Somewhat different evidence may be required to demonstrate impact of work that is intended to influence practice directly, such as patents, start-up companies, or letters from practitioners about the importance of research or that testify to the way that research is influencing practice. Evidence of impact on policy (for example, being called to testify in

legislative bodies or consulting work) is also important. Discussion of the research in lay media may also be useful as evidence that research is being spread through indirect conduits that may ultimately influence practice. Each department should regularly discuss and identify indicators of impact, and these indicators should be clearly communicated to all faculty.