

Department of Media and Communication Criteria for Tenure and Promotion (Revised 6-1-2020)

Introduction

In order to contribute to the mission of a regional public university, we recognize that evidence of excellence in teaching, research, and/or creative or professional activity will be necessary for tenure and promotion in the Department of Media and Communication. Service to the department, college, university, profession, or community is also expected.

The department maintains that the burden of proof rests with applicants for tenure and promotion to document their effectiveness in teaching, research/creative/professional activity, and service.

As a department that is aligned with creative professions that often blur the distinctions between teaching, research/creative/professional activity, and service, department faculty understand that crossover within these categories does occur frequently. As such, the candidate for tenure and promotion may be justified in placing the activity in whichever category they feel is the best fit as long as they thoroughly support that rationale.

Faculty member's responsibility for documentation and communication

Candidates shall use the dossier to present a well-organized and well-supported case that their teaching, research/creative/professional activity, and service warrant tenure and promotion. They shall provide the most reliable evidence available to document the quality of their teaching, research/creative/professional activity, and service.

With the permission of the candidate, the department tenure and promotion committee and the department chair may seek additional information beyond what is presented in an applicant's dossier, but they are not obliged to do so. If those evaluating an application gain relevant information not in the dossier, they will share it in writing with the applicant, who may respond orally and in writing. If subsequent discussion warrants, both the information and the applicant's response will be included in the dossier.

Professional degrees, awards, and achievements

The importance of degrees, awards, and achievements increases in direct relationship to the prestige of the specific honor. Thus, national honors are considered to be more influential than regional awards.

Basic expectations for all faculty

The disciplines represented within the department hold that professional career accomplishments could be substituted for academic preparation for tenure and promotion.

While a terminal degree is required, the department acknowledges out-of-field degrees with sufficient professional experience germane to media and communication.

Appropriate terminal degrees in the department include the MFA or PhD. An Ed.D. is acceptable if the course work was completed in a discipline closely related to media and communication. Because of the multi-disciplinary nature of the Department of Media & Communication, faculty holding these degrees may complete academic research, creative works, or professional activities that will be counted towards promotion.

Basic expectations for associate professors

Faculty promoted to or hired at the rank of Associate Professor should meet the following criteria:

- a. Earned doctorate or terminal degree from a regionally accredited institution or comparably recognized non-U.S. institution
- b. Completed five full years at the rank of assistant professor.
- c. Documented evidence of teaching effectiveness.
- d. Documented evidence of university, college, department, and/or community service activities.
- e. Documented evidence, as accepted by the discipline, of scholarly productivity in research or creative/professional endeavors.

Basic expectations for full professors

As noted in the ETSU promotion policy, "Since there is no higher rank, promotion to professor is taken with great care and requires a level of achievement beyond that required for associate professor. This rank is not a reward for long service; rather it is recognition of superior achievement within the discipline with every expectation of continuing contribution to the university and the larger academic community."

Faculty members promoted to or hired at the rank of professor should meet the following criteria:

- a. Earned doctorate or terminal degree from a regionally accredited institution or comparably recognized non-U.S. institution
- b. Completed five full years in the rank of associate professor
- c. Documented evidence of sustained teaching effectiveness and innovation.
- d. Documented evidence of sustained university, college, department, and/or community service activities beyond the level expected for assistant and associate professors.
- e. Documented evidence, as accepted by the discipline, of sustained scholarly productivity in research or creative/professional endeavors that is recognized at a national or international level.

Criteria for teaching as they relate to consideration for tenure and promotion in rank

In terms of teaching, to be recommended for tenure and/or promotion candidates must demonstrate their mastery of relevant subject matter, their competence as teachers, and their commitment to teaching as a central element of the academic life.

While a variety of subjects are taught in the department, some elements define the quality of teaching regardless of subject matter. The department values teaching methods that:

1. intellectually challenge students of all ability levels
2. require students to use and develop critical thinking skills
3. require students to use and develop oral communication skills
4. require students to use and develop writing skills
5. require students to use and develop creative skills
6. require students to use and develop research skills
7. require students to use and develop computer or technology skills
8. help students apply skills and concepts outside the classroom
9. challenge students to assume responsibility for their own learning behavior
10. are informed by thorough and up to date knowledge of the subject
11. present material in a clear, well organized manner
12. display the instructor's enthusiasm for the subject matter
13. display instructor work habits that can serve as a model for students
14. are responsive to relevant feedback from students or peers
15. are shared with colleagues to help them improve their teaching

It is expected that a candidate will accomplish several, but not necessarily all, of these elements of good teaching.

The following teaching activities are considered useful to the department and university, although they do not necessarily reflect the quality of teaching:

1. teaching large classes
2. teaching more than two preparations per term
3. teaching new preparations
4. assuming extra teaching duties
5. supervising interns, independent studies, labs, or practica
6. directing graduate work (theses, etc.), serving on graduate committees, teaching graduate courses
7. teaching night courses and off-campus courses
8. teaching Internet and ITV sections
9. teaching honors courses or courses that support the core
10. effective use of resources
11. innovating through collaboration, experimentation, and/or community engagement and partnerships.
12. creating pre-professional opportunities for students

Candidates must document teaching effectiveness by citing the following kinds of evidence:

1. samples of syllabi, assignments, tests, or other materials used
2. chair evaluations of teaching in the evaluation of Faculty Activity Reports
3. peer evaluation of teaching, preferably based on multiple visits to classes, examination of teaching materials, and interviews with currently enrolled students or with alumni
4. reports of teaching workloads
5. demonstrations of how assessments and assignments in courses align to course or program learning outcomes
6. descriptions of how the candidate developed or revised instructional resources or teaching practices as a result of participation in instructional development or in response to university-approved student assessments of instruction, peer reviews, or other evaluations of teaching
7. data analyses, published or unpublished, of how the candidate's instructional resources or teaching practices have affected student learning or performance in a course or in subsequent courses
8. descriptions of how the scholarly literature on teaching and learning has guided the candidate's teaching practices
9. descriptions of how the candidate has supported her or his students' college success, e.g., participating in ETSU's Academic Alert process; teaching students study skills; or interacting with students outside class
10. descriptions of how the candidate has created an inclusive and accessible instructional environment
11. awards and other recognition of the candidate's teaching
12. SAIs as required by the University.

In addition, candidates may further document teaching effectiveness by citing the following kinds of evidence:

1. examples of lecture notes and other teaching materials
2. copies of written or other assignments by students, showing quality of student work and level of feedback provided by instructor
3. exit interviews with students or alumni, conducted by the chair or other appointed faculty
4. testimonials from students, former students and others acquainted with the candidate's teaching
5. evidence of achievements by recent graduates of the program, demonstrating the quality of the training they received
6. attendance and/or presentations at professional conferences and other teaching workshops, noting skills or material learned or delivered and examples of how it was applied
7. dissemination of teaching methods through workshops, publications, etc.

The more kinds of evidence a candidate provides, the less critical any one kind of evidence becomes.

Criteria for research, scholarly, creative, and professional activities as they relate to consideration for tenure and promotion in rank

In terms of research, scholarly, creative, and professional activity, to be recommended for tenure and/or promotion, faculty must conduct and disseminate original research or creative and/or professional activity that contributes to the development of their respective disciplines. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion must demonstrate success in producing research or creative projects that have met the test of review by experts in the field, as well as promise for future growth.

Because the Department of Media and Communication is aligned with professions that value creative activity, the department will also value the creative and professional activity of its faculty on par with research and other scholarly activity.

ETSU Workload Policy allows for flexibility in a faculty member's contributions to teaching, research and creative and/or professional activity, and service. When being considered for tenure and/or promotion, the level of expectation in each of these areas will be dependent on the distribution of the candidate's workload. For faculty with teaching loads greater than 9 credits per semester, expectations in research and service will be reduced.

Research and Scholarly Activity

In the department, research is defined as the development and validation of new knowledge. Research involves significant humanistic or scientific studies of communication using historical, philosophical, economic, political, sociological, psychological, and technological perspectives. Criteria considered when evaluating the quality of research include:

1. originality of study
2. actual or likely impact of the work
3. difficulty or complexity of the subject matter
4. the significance of subject matter covered
5. thoroughness of analysis
6. clarity of expression
7. peer review, editorial review

Creative and Professional Activity

In the department, creative and professional activity is understood to mean significantly original or imaginative accomplishment in the arts or professions. Creative and professional achievement may take a variety of forms, including (but not limited to) journalistic writing or broadcasts, photographic presentations or graphic designs, films, documentaries, scripts, professional or institutional research, campaign development and execution.

Creative achievement should be of such nature as to lead to new understandings of a field and/or to break new ground in modes of expression in a field. While columns or brief articles or broadcasts in the mass media will be evaluated under professional service, works involving a thorough examination of a problem or issue based on investigative research and presented in any mass medium may be considered for evaluation as scholarship or creative activity.

To qualify as research or creative achievement, the results of the endeavor must be disseminated and subject to critical peer evaluation in a manner appropriate to the field in question. Complexity of the project must be clearly articulated, and contribution of author/contributor must be clearly established. Financial considerations should be taken into account including the acknowledgement of grants/monies secured and the restrictions imposed by financial limitations (e.g. funding for film festival submissions; University Film and Video Association Policy Statement, 2018)

In terms of professional activity, the equivalent of peer review in the professional world generally happens prior to production. Professionals have arguably reviewed at the time of hire/funding based on past performance and their proposal(s) for rigorous and effective execution of the professional work (University Film and Video Association Policy Statement, 2018).

The following alphabetized list outlines some of the specific forms scholarly and creative achievement to be considered for review may take:

1. books
2. chapters in books
3. commercial distribution of work
4. commissions or awards resulting from competitive peer review
5. editing projects
6. exhibitions
7. film festivals
8. grants obtained
9. invited lectures, seminars, screenings, presentations, or artist-or scholar-in-residences
10. journal articles
11. memoranda or briefs of law
12. monographs
13. presentations at state, regional, national, or international meetings
14. published abstracts or proceedings
15. published book reviews and reviews of others' work
16. radio/television and film productions, including acting, direction, script.
17. videos or films in distribution
18. Institutional or professional research projects which are published or shared with industry in a public presentation
19. works licensed or purchased by university libraries, research centers, or other organizations

Refereed, juried, or invited work should carry more weight than non-refereed work. In addition to evaluation of the quality of individual publications and presentations, the faculty member's total production will be judged with consideration of the following criteria:

- a. regularity of publication or presentation

- b. creative and intellectual development over time
- c. development of the work into a program of research or creative endeavor
- d. reputation in the field
- e. local impact
- f. complexity and sophistication

By way of further clarification, the following factors will also influence evaluations of the quality of research/creative activity:

1. prestige of the medium of dissemination will be considered
2. publication in appropriate academic or professional journals will normally carry more weight than presentations before professional meetings, but again, prestige will be a moderating factor

Candidates shall provide evidence not only of research/creative/professional activity, but also of the quality of this activity. Evidence of the quality of research/creative/professional activity may include:

1. acceptance rates of publications and similar evidence for juried creative activities
2. requests for reprints for research or for dissemination of creative work
3. honors or awards for research/creative activity
4. awards or other recognitions for research or creative activity by others in the field
5. reviews of research, creative activity, or professional activity by others in the field

The department encourages its faculty to remain current in their disciplines and maintain close working ties with practitioners in the field. Accordingly, we value faculty development activities such as participating in temporary professional assignments or internships and attending professional conferences. Applicants for tenure and/or promotion may cite such activities in at least two parts of their dossiers--teaching (insofar as the activities are shown to contribute to improved teaching) and research/creative activity (as evidence of applicants' regional/national reputation in their discipline). To receive full credit for such activities, candidates shall provide evidence of the prestige or importance of the assignment and evidence of the quality of work performed. If specific research or creative accomplishments occur during internships or other professional development activities, these may be cited in the usual manner.

Criteria for service as they relate to consideration for tenure and promotion in rank

In terms of service, to be recommended for tenure and/or promotion, faculty must engage in some forms of service, but not necessarily all kinds. The department values service to students, colleagues, the university, the discipline or profession, the community, and the region. Junior, tenure-track faculty are expected to provide service to the department, university, or external groups, but given expectations that these faculty should develop their teaching skills and research/creative programs, they are not expected or advised to devote major portions of their time to service activities.

To receive full credit for service, candidates shall document the quality of their service. The following kinds of evidence may be used to do so:

1. documentation of tasks performed as an adviser of a student organization, and of organizational accomplishments the advisor helped achieve
2. documentation of attendance and tasks performed as a member of departmental or university committees
3. evaluations by superiors and subordinates of administrative performance
4. descriptions of professionally relevant service to community, discipline, or profession
5. documentation of duties and achievements when serving as an officer or member of a professional organization
6. service to the university, college, or department in an administrative or committee role

Professional service will be valued more highly if candidates can document how such work has enhanced their teaching, resulted in original research/creative activity, or otherwise directly benefited the university (e.g., through creation of internships for students).

While professional service may be at the department, college, university, national or international level. Industry service or service to the community will also be valued. Faculty should also demonstrate a willingness and ability to advise students when necessary.

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