

# **Policy on Tenure, Promotion, Annual Evaluations, and Merit Increases**

## **Department of Philosophy**

**Approved by the Department of Philosophy (October 10, 1997)**

**Approved by Provost Nancy Mergler (November 3, 1997)**

The Department of Philosophy is committed to excellence in teaching and research, and expects its faculty members to be good teachers at all levels of the curriculum and to produce substantive research of a high quality. Service to the department, the university, the profession, and the community is also important and will play a role—though one secondary to teaching and research—in the evaluation of faculty members.

Faculty members should be acquainted with university policies on tenure, promotion, and merit increases as discussed in sections 3.7 and 3.11 of the most recent *Faculty Handbook*. What follows supplements this discussion and provides details about the role that teaching, research, and service play in the department's own policies on tenure, promotion, and merit increases.

### **I. Tenure**

Tenure decisions are the most important decisions departments make; a recommendation to grant tenure must reflect an assessment that the candidate's work is of very high quality, measured against national standards. Tenure is not given as a reward for doing a certain amount of work, but for excellence in teaching and research over a number of years and strong evidence that the candidate will continue doing high-quality work.

Probationary faculty members will meet each year with Committee A to discuss their progress toward tenure. Committee A will then send a progress-towards-tenure letter to the faculty member that assesses the member's cumulative work on research, teaching, and service. Probationary faculty members, particularly those whose tenure decisions are near, should be familiar with the detailed discussion of tenure procedures issued yearly by the Provost in addition to the discussion of tenure in the *Faculty Handbook*.

The department takes the third year, midpoint evaluation very seriously. Early in the third year, the Chair will appoint a committee of two tenured faculty members to oversee the assembly of the candidate's third-year review. The dossier will contain all the candidate's research, teaching materials, reports of peer evaluations of teaching, and other relevant material. However, outside letters on research will not be solicited. The dossier will be available to the faculty at least two weeks before the entire faculty meets to vote on the candidate's reappointment. The meeting will take place in the spring semester of the candidate's third year. After the meeting, the Chair and Committee A will prepare a progress report based on the contents of the dossier and on the discussion in the meeting. Copies of the report will be sent to the candidate and to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Another copy will also be kept in the candidate's file in the department.

Late in the spring of the year before the tenure recommendation is to be made, the Chair will appoint a **tenure committee** of two or three tenured faculty members to oversee the evaluation of the candidate. This committee will meet with the candidate that spring and discuss the various steps in the tenure process and give any advice and answer any questions about it that they can. At least six weeks before the department meets to make a recommendation on tenure, the candidate should submit copies of all publications, along with any other work on which he or she wishes to be evaluated, to the tenure committee. The candidate will ultimately be responsible for assembling the contents of the tenure dossier. The dossier will be made available to all members of the department for their inspection at least two weeks before the meeting at which the decision on a recommendation is to be made. It should include the external referee reports and copies of all publications and work under editorial review, as well as other material that will be relevant to the evaluation; for example, information on teaching and advising, service, and so on.

**Research.** Although an amount of published work consistent with peer departments at other institutions is expected, the quality of work is more important than the quantity. Philosophical work of a high quality typically finds expression in papers published in philosophical journals, but also, of course, in books. Work under editorial review and presented papers will also count as part of a person's research, though not as heavily as work that is published or accepted for publication.

Late in the spring before the fall in which the tenure recommendation is to be made, the candidate's tenure committee will invite faculty members at other universities to evaluate the written work of the candidate. The candidate may suggest people to serve as outside referees, but subject to the Chair's final approval the selection will be made by the committee, which in general will not confine its selections to the suggestions of the candidate. The referees must be recognized as leading researchers in the fields in which the candidate is working, and except in unusual circumstances, none should have close professional ties with the candidate (such as being a former teacher or a collaborator; in no case should the majority of referees have such contact with the candidate). In the late spring or early summer before the tenure decision is to be made, all published work and any other work the candidate wishes to have considered will be sent to the referees. Should the candidate wish to have additional papers sent after the original group has been submitted, he or she may do so, though last-minute additions may not be received in time for evaluation.

**Teaching.** Serious commitment to teaching at all levels and demonstrated ability as a good teacher are necessary conditions for tenure. The department will use all the information it can obtain about the quality of the candidate's teaching, including that gotten from college teaching evaluations, written evaluations by majors and graduate students, reports by the graduate representatives, periodic peer evaluations, and letters from alumni. The candidate is also encouraged to provide any other evidence about quality of teaching—for example, self-evaluation statements, course syllabi, tests or assignments, handouts,

etc. The candidate's work in advising and in chairing or serving on M.A. and Ph.D. committees is also evaluated under the rubric of teaching, and plays an important role in the overall assessment of the candidate.

**Service.** Recommendations on tenure will be based primarily on the research and teaching of the candidate, and only secondarily on his or her service. Insofar as possible, the department strives to spare untenured faculty heavy administrative or committee assignments, believing that the probationary years are better spent developing teaching ability and building a solid base for research. The department is not large enough to exempt untenured faculty from service entirely, but it strongly encourages them not to devote large amounts of time to service outside the department until they have gained proficiency at teaching and have successfully begun a course of research. Nevertheless, the department realizes that a candidate can make an important contribution through service, and it will take service into account when making the tenure recommendation. A letter from the Chair that discusses and evaluates the departmental service of the candidate will be included in the tenure dossier. Any other relevant information about service—for example, letters from people acquainted with the candidate's work—should be included in the tenure dossier.

## **II. Promotion**

A. **Promotion to Associate Professor.** In general the criteria for promotion to associate professor are the same as those for tenure, so that promotion to associate professor will accompany the granting of tenure. Early promotion may be considered in cases where a candidate's research is clearly outstanding, and the teaching is also judged good. Recommendations for promotion to associate professor will be based on an outside evaluation of the candidate's work and will be voted on by the tenured faculty.

B. **Promotion to Full Professor.** Recommendations for promotion to full professor will be based mainly on quality and (secondarily) quantity of research, with continued excellence in teaching and service being assumed. Any tenured associate faculty member can request that he or she be considered for promotion; Committee A may also nominate faculty members for promotion. Following such a request, the Chair will appoint a committee of tenured faculty members to oversee an outside evaluation of the candidate's research. They will select a group of outstanding, nationally recognized scholars working in the candidate's field and ask them to provide written evaluations of the candidate's body of written work. In general, the mechanisms here will be similar to those used in making evaluations for tenure. A dossier containing outside evaluations, copies of publications, and other relevant materials will be made available to tenured members of the faculty at least two weeks before they meet to vote on the recommendation for promotion.

## **III. Annual Faculty Evaluations and Merit Increases**

Annual faculty evaluations are made by Committee A of the department (with each member ranking the other two). At least two weeks before Committee A begins its deliberations, faculty members will submit

a completed yearly summary report and attach copies of papers published or accepted during the year, and other relevant information. Committee A will use this material to evaluate the quantity and, more importantly, the quality, of each faculty member's research. In addition, Committee A will use student evaluations, peer evaluations, and any other available data (for example, course syllabi, tests, handouts, etc.) to evaluate each faculty's member's teaching (which includes his or her advising and service on thesis and dissertation committees). The committee will also use any available evidence to evaluate each faculty member's service.

Recommendation for merit salary increases are also made by Committee A (with each member making recommendations for the other two). Recommendations each year will be based on the evaluation of the candidate's work during the past three years or since the last merit salary increase if more than three years. Committee A will base this overall recommendation on its own evaluation for the previous year, together with the evaluations already made by Committee A each of the two years or more before that. The weight given to each of the 3 components of the candidate's effort (research, teaching, and service) is determined by the candidate's distribution percentages; see Departmental Policy on Variable Workload Assignments.

#### **IV. Interdisciplinary Activities and Outside Assessment**

The department values interdisciplinary activity (of course, this kind of activity will be more appropriate for those working in some areas of philosophy than for others.) When faculty are involved in interdisciplinary activities, their contributions will be considered and included in annual, mid-point, and tenure and promotion evaluations. As appropriate, the department will solicit information about the member's interdisciplinary activity.

The department also recognizes the value of self-assessment. During the academic year preceding a scheduled program review, the Chair will appoint a committee that will survey Philosophy Departments—both nationally and regionally—from comparable institutions to insure that the department's program meets the accepted norms of performance.