Approved by PSC Spring 04

Approved by the Professional Standards Committee, May 2004.

Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation

Department of History

The Department of History has developed the following criteria and procedures for the evaluation of its faculty in accordance with provisions and requirements of the Faculty Code. All members of the department recognize that the departmental evaluation process, however time consuming, involves both evaluee and evaluators in a professionally valid and productive endeavor.

I

Teaching

The Department of History recognizes teaching as the primary professional responsibility of its members. We expect faculty to bring disciplinary expertise to their teaching and to demonstrate a willingness to offer an appropriate range and variety of courses that contribute to a well-rounded departmental curriculum. The department also values the contribution made by a faculty member's participation in the university's teaching program as a whole. No one style, strategy, or philosophy of teaching should be favored; rather, the effectiveness of the teacher in relation to the subject matter and the application of his or her particular skills must be the primary issue. Syllabi should convey a clear course conceptualization, demonstrate scholarly currency in the subject matter, and present the course materials at an appropriate level of difficulty. The instructors should use an appropriate range of course assignments and methods of student evaluation. Creative teaching, however, involves more than effective structuring and lecturing; it also involves the active engagement of students' minds and the encouragement of their intellectual development within and outside of the classroom.

The evaluation of teaching must rest on peer assessment based on a thorough study of materials in the evaluee's file, including an analysis of Instructor Evaluation Forms within the scope mandated by the Professional Standards Committee guidelines. The evaluation should also entail a reasonable number and pattern of class visitations, such that individual members of the department and the department as a whole possess sufficient evidence to come to an informed judgment. Other relevant information regarding the evaluee's teaching performance may also be considered.

Advising

The department values effective formal and informal advising--a faculty member's willingness to accept a fair share of formal advising responsibilities and to respond to the intellectual needs of students outside the classroom. Faculty members are expected to be reasonably available to students and to keep posted office hours.

Professional growth

The Department of History expects that all its members will display a continuing pattern of scholarly vitality in support of their vocation as teachers. Evidence of scholarly vitality and professional growth can take several forms. The strongest evidence is usually original research and publication, as exhibited in books,

monographs, edited volumes, scholarly articles, or essays. The quality of this scholarship can be ascertained by the professional judgment of departmental colleagues, and the testimony of peers in the profession. A second important sign of professional growth is currency in the discipline, which may be demonstrated by writing conference papers, reviews, and review-articles; preparing or reviewing textbooks and other teaching aids; serving as a professional consultant or referee; presenting public lectures; participating in faculty seminars; or engaging in other forms of professional maintenance and renewal such as self-guided study. This currency can be determined by colleagues' professional evaluation of the written evidence presented. A third and subordinate indication of professional growth is participation in professional organizations, whether by serving as an officer or committee member, planning and organizing conferences or meetings, editing or writing for professional newsletters and publications, or attending scholarly conferences. Participation in professional organizations will be evaluated in line with standards adopted for the evaluation of a colleague's university service.

In applying these criteria, the department recognizes that no departmental member can be expected to devote equal energy or effort to all three areas of professional growth, or to perform at the level of excellence in each. What matters is the evaluation of a colleague's overall performance, in line with generally accepted professional and disciplinary standards of excellence in the field of historical study.

University service

The department expects that its members will be actively involved in service to the University. The department values contribution to the intellectual and cultural life of the campus and to the university's cocurricular program. The department encourages participation in university governance (service on standing and ad hoc committees, attendance of faculty meetings, and other such service that affirms the principle of collegial responsibility in assuring institutional quality). The assumption of special assignments, such as presentations to prospective students or work on projects on an ad hoc basis, is also important and appropriate.

Within the department each faculty member assumes full and equal responsibility for informed participation in deliberations on policy and procedures, hiring and evaluating colleagues, course scheduling, library ordering, and other professional obligations that involve the department as a whole. Service as the department chair is also considered a valued form of contribution in this area of evaluation.

Although the department expects and encourages its members to take on duties in service to the University, the department agrees that University service alone cannot justify faculty advancement. Moreover, the quality of such service is more important than the quantity.

Community service

Consideration should be given to community service outside the university that is related to professional interest and expertise and that enhances a person's value to the university or enriches teaching.

II

Departmental evaluation procedures

Evaluation of departmental colleagues is an ongoing, vital professional obligation conducted according to the Faculty Code (Chapter III) and should express each individual member's informed and best professional judgment. Only tenure-line members of the department, tenured and non-tenured on an equal basis, are eligible to participate in the departmental evaluation and deliberation. Only those members who are submitting their evaluation letters to the Faculty Advancement Committee through the department chair may participate in the department's deliberative meeting. Colleagues on leave may or may not choose to participate in a particular evaluation. Only those tenure-line members of the department who are themselves evaluated by and within the department are eligible to participate in the departmental process of evaluating other tenure-line members of the department. All members of the department who participate in advancement decisions must themselves be evaluated at times designated in the Faculty Code.

Evaluation requiring only the department chair's written assessment (Chapter III.2.b) does not require a departmental recommendation, although, in gathering information and drawing judgments, the chair may consult with departmental colleagues. The letter of assessment goes to the Dean, with a copy to the evaluee and one copy available for perusal to interested tenure-line members of the department.

A colleague up for an evaluation requiring a departmental recommendation prepares a file of materials for review (see Chapter III.4.a(1)(a) and III.7). This file should include a personal statement of self-assessment and present evidence of achievement in the areas of teaching, professional growth, advising, and service; this evidence may take varied forms, but commonly consists of syllabi, exams, class handouts, publications (including reviews), papers, and other appropriate documents for the relevant period of assessment. The file also should include students' evaluations and any and all other relevant materials as specified in the Faculty Code.

Each colleague responsible for evaluation should read with care the file provided by the evaluee, observe the evaluee in the classroom, and independently reach a judgment of the evaluee's quality and a clear recommendation regarding the relevant issue of evaluation (retention, tenure, promotion, or quality of performance at full-professor level). Each departmental evaluator writes a letter of evaluation that provides specific information on the timing and frequency of class visitations and that addresses the evaluee's performance in terms of evaluation criteria as specified in the Faculty Code and in the departmental statement. Individual letters should state the basis of judgment (evaluation file, classroom observation, and so forth). The letters are to be finished and complete before the department's deliberation. The chair of the department calls a special department meeting of eligible members other than the evaluee at which each faculty member reads or reports the contents of his or her letter of evaluation. The department then engages in the discussion of the evaluee's performance in order to arrive at, if possible, a unified departmental recommendation. A formal vote is taken at the end of the meeting. Within two working days of the evaluation meeting, members of the department may submit to the chair an addendum to their individual letters in light of the group discussion.

Individual letters, including any addenda, and the content of deliberations at the departmental meeting provide the basis for the departmental chair's summary letter, which should include a clear statement of the department's recommendation, a summary of the departmental deliberation, and a substantive analysis of the evaluee's performance in illustration and support of the departmental recommendation or recommendations in the case of a split decision. The summary letter, a copy of which goes to the evaluee, also should include "a list of those individuals participating in the department's deliberative process and those who submitted letters to the head officer," as required by the Faculty Code (Chapter III.4.b(2)(a)). Along with individual letters and any addenda, the summary letter goes with the evaluee's file to the Office of the Academic Vice President. These procedures complement but do not supersede or modify any of the Faculty Code's requirements and provisions regarding faculty evaluation.

Habits of collegiality and professional courtesy inform the department's custom of follow-up conversation between the chair and the evaluee at the conclusion of the evaluation process at the departmental level.

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