

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 evaluatee and evaluators in a professionally valid and productive endeavor.

In accordance with the Faculty Code (Chapter III.3.d), colleagues undergoing review for tenure are evaluated in the following categories:

1. Teaching
2. Professional growth
3. University service
4. Departmental and university needs

A positive recommendation for tenure requires “evidence of excellence” in teaching and “distinct evidence of professional growth.”

Colleagues undergoing review for promotion and promotion to full should consult with the Faculty Code (Chapter III.3.e) for evaluation categories and expectations

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 a range and variety of courses that contribute to departmental curricular needs. The department also values the contribution made by a faculty member's teaching courses that meet university curricular needs. The department does not favor one style, strategy, or philosophy of teaching; rather, the effectiveness of the teacher in relation to the subject matter and the application of the teacher's particular skills must be the primary issue. Syllabi should help the teacher 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 multiple types of course assignments and a diversity of 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 evaluatee's file, including an analysis of evaluations by students within the scope mandated by the Faculty Evaluation Procedures and Criteria Guidelines. The evaluation should also entail multiple 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 evaluatee'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 accessible to students and to keep posted office hours.

Professional growth

Professional growth is a vital component of our role as members of the faculty and the department of history. We affirm that the nature of professional growth may vary across subfields and over the course of a department member's career. All members should be engaged in some form of historical scholarship, which we define, following the American Historical Association's Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct (2017), as "the discovery, exchange, interpretation, and presentation of information about the past." We believe that historical scholarship is a process, not a product (though of course that process can lead to the creation of many kinds of products).

Professional growth can take many forms, as suggested by the following three tiers. The strongest evidence is usually demonstrable progress toward the production of substantial works of scholarship such as:

- Original research and publication in media such as books, monographs, edited volumes, scholarly articles, essays, and substantial review essays.
- Publicly engaged or collaborative scholarship. This may include community archives projects; oral history; digital history; courses and research initiatives that produce original research with students; and collaborations with museums, historical societies, and other groups that engage with public history.
- Critical editions and translations of original texts
- Writing, creating, or editing published pedagogical materials (such as textbooks, source collections, or digital media resources)

For this first tier, the department understands that while some works of scholarship are peer-reviewed in the narrow sense of blind review, other equally substantial works may be invited competitively and/or reviewed by peers and editors in other ways.

A second tier of scholarly vitality and professional growth is showing currency in the discipline by:

- Writing book reviews
- Presenting conference papers based on original research
- Editing a journal or serving on a journal's editorial board
- Giving public lectures
- Refereeing books and articles
- Writing encyclopedia entries
- Writing invited contributions to professional newsletters or blogs
- The acquisition of new skills that bolster the department member's professional development. This may include additional language training or technological training.
- Serving as an outside evaluator of peers, departments, and institutions

A third and subordinate tier of professional growth is the realm of participation in the broader scholarly community, as shown through activities such as:

- Attending conferences, symposia, seminars, or professional development events
- Participating in professional organizations and their leadership, organizing conferences or conference panels, and serving as a discussant on conference panels
- General writing for professional newsletters, or editing or writing for professional blogs

In evaluations for tenure, work in all three tiers will be considered as part of the record of professional growth. A case for tenure must include at least one completed item from tier I, and show that the candidate's scholarship makes an original and substantive contribution to the field of history.

In evaluations for promotion to full professor, work in all three tiers will be considered as part of the record of professional growth. A case for full professor must include at least one item from tiers I or II to demonstrate a pattern of sustained growth.

The department values substance over quantity, and it is incumbent on the candidate to make a case for the substance of their scholarly production. In considering scholarly vitality and professional growth, the department recognizes that some projects can be brought to fruition quickly, while others require extensive preparatory work –

such as learning new skills, or spending extensive time in archives – before writing or other dissemination of scholarly work can begin. The department thus encourages colleagues whose work in the above categories is in-progress to be clear in their personal statements about what steps of the project have been accomplished during the period under review, and to include as much evidence of that in-progress work as possible in their files.

The department also recognizes that the world of publication and professional development is rapidly changing. Written work, such as books, articles, reviews, and the like, may now appear online rather than in print. The department does not value one form over the other. In ascertaining the value of a department member's historical scholarship and professional growth, colleagues may rely upon the judgment of others (through various forms of peer review) and on their own evaluation of the materials under review.

Finally, the department realizes that as pedagogy and forms of professional development evolve, many of our endeavors overlap across the above evaluation categories. For example, classroom projects may contribute to online projects that show professional development and serve local communities; professional development may inform university service; and our university and community service may in turn directly overlap with what we do in the classroom. Candidates can make the case that items may be counted towards multiple categories.

University and Departmental Service

The department expects that its members will be actively and consistently involved in service to the university. Recognizing that there are many ways to serve meaningfully, the department gives greater consideration to the quality and consistency, rather than the quantity, of service engagements in its evaluation of faculty. Service might include participation in university governance; membership on standing and ad hoc committees; contributions to the work of other programs and departments; development of and participation in co-curricular programs; other efforts that promote the intellectual vitality and inclusiveness of the campus; and activities that contribute to the mission of the university.

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, and other professional obligations that involve the department as a whole. Service as the department chair is a particularly valued contribution in this area of evaluation.

Community Service

The department recognizes that community service, particularly that which is related to an individual's professional interest and expertise, can be a valued feature of individuals' academic citizenship. Given the increasingly porous boundaries between the various evaluation areas, the department also notes that publicly engaged scholarship and other efforts "in which historians and their various publics collaborate in making the past useful to the public" are a valued form of community service.¹

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. All tenure-line faculty are expected to participate in departmental evaluation of colleagues. Colleagues on leave may or may not choose to participate in a particular evaluation. 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.

Evaluation requiring only the department chair's written assessment (Faculty Code Chapter III.2.b) does not require a departmental recommendation, although, in gathering information and drawing judgments, the chair may consult with departmental colleagues. A copy of the letter of assessment goes to the Dean, the Faculty Advancement Committee, and the evaluatee (Faculty Code Interpretation of Chapter III, Sections 2-4). In the case of post-tenure, streamlined reviews, one copy of the chair's letter will be available for review by tenure-line colleagues in the department.

A colleague up for an evaluation requiring a departmental recommendation should determine whether they want an open or closed file, review the most recent version of the Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures, and then prepare a file of materials for review (see Faculty Code Chapter III.4.a.1.a). 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, assignments, exams, class handouts, publications (including work under consideration or revision), papers, links to any online work products, evidence of university and public service (such as fliers and emails) and other appropriate documents. 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 evaluatee, observe the evaluatee in the classroom, and independently reach a judgment of the evaluatee'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 dates of class visitations and that addresses the evaluatee'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). Letters should be submitted to the chair (or their designee) 48 hours prior to the department's deliberative meeting. Once colleague letters have been submitted, they will be circulated to the other departmental colleagues who have submitted letters. At the deliberative meeting, the department will engage in discussion of the evaluatee'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. Such an addendum will then be circulated to other departmental evaluators.

The head officer is responsible for forwarding all required information, including a summary letter (one that includes a clear statement of the department's recommendation and a summary of the departmental deliberation or recommendations in the case of a split decision) to the Dean and the Faculty Advancement Committee in accordance with Faculty Code Chapter III.4.b.1 and as detailed in the Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures guidelines. The chair will also provide a summary letter to the colleague being evaluated, as detailed in the Faculty Code Chapter III.4.b.2 and the Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures guidelines. At the conclusion of the review process, the chair will meet with the evaluatee to discuss the results of the evaluation process (see Faculty Code Chapter III.4.d.1). Procedures for appeal can be found in the Faculty Code (Chapter III.6).

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¹ "Tenure, Promotion, and the Publicly Engaged Academic Historian," report adopted by the Organization of American Historians Executive Board, the National Council on Public History Directors, and the American Historical Association Council in 2010. Available on the American Historical Association website at: <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-standards-and-guidelines-of-the-discipline/tenure-promotion-and-the-publicly-engaged-academic-historian>.