

**Department of Philosophy**  
**University of Puget Sound**  
**Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion**  
**July, 2015 / Updated November, 2015**

The criteria set out in this document are intended to guide the evaluation process for tenure, promotion, and review of Philosophy Department faculty members. This document should be consulted in conjunction with the *Faculty Code* and the memorandum, "Faculty Evaluation Procedures and Criteria," distributed annually by the Professional Standards Committee (the "Buff Document.")

The five general areas of evaluation, as established by the *Faculty Code*, are:

1. Teaching
2. Professional Growth
3. Academic and Career Advising
4. University Service
5. Community Service

For tenure decisions, the criteria described as "essential" by the *Faculty Code* (Chapter III, Section 3, Paragraph d) concern areas 1, 2, and 4. In particular, successful candidates for tenure are expected to demonstrate "affirmative evidence of excellence" in the areas of 1. Teaching, and 2. Professional Growth, and are expected to demonstrate a "record of service" in area 4. University Service.

## **1. Teaching**

The department recognizes that teaching is of paramount importance in all evaluations.

**1a. Criteria of Evaluation:** Teaching will be evaluated with regard to overall effectiveness. Factors that will be considered include organization, presentation, the appropriateness of selected content, the design of assignments, the fair and thorough evaluation of student work, and the general ability to help students engage with philosophy. When applicable, effectiveness in supervision of independent research projects whether during the summer or the academic year will be taken into account. Informal factors will also be considered, such as philosophical and pedagogical discussion with both students and colleagues.

Teaching philosophy, both in and out of the classroom, is not a matter of making difficult ideas easy, but rather one of encouraging philosophical reflection, drawing students into the difficulties that constitute and motivate philosophical thinking, and helping them to strive for an honest understanding of the issues at hand, to gauge where they stand with respect to these issues, and to contribute to a constructive resolution or deeper understanding of them. These, perhaps more than anything else, are the measure of philosophical teaching excellence.

**1b. Methods for Evaluation:** The methods for judging teaching effectiveness include the review of teaching evaluations, course materials (for example, syllabi and assignments), and the testimony of colleagues visiting classes. It is expected that, normally during the year prior to the period of evaluation, each tenure-line department member who is participating in the evaluation will attend meetings of at least three distinct courses being taught by the candidate. Which courses will be left to the choice of the visiting colleague in consultation with the candidate.

## **2. Professional Growth**

Professional growth weighs heavily in evaluation decisions, both for its intrinsic value to the intellectual life of the department and the university, and also for its impact on teaching. Continued intellectual vitality and creativity promoted through philosophical engagement within the department and with the profession as a whole are essential to the life of the department. Accordingly, we construe professional growth in the discipline as philosophical activity of high quality that actually or potentially makes contact with the wider philosophical public. Such activity, therefore, will typically not include routine course preparation, although it may include preparation and development of new courses, especially where this extends one's philosophical interests in ways that may go public.

**2a. Criteria of Evaluation:** There is no one set path that professional growth must take. The following list describes ways in which professional growth might be evidenced, but the list is not meant to fix necessary or sufficient conditions for growth.

- (i) The publication of a peer-reviewed article, either in journal or as a book chapter.
- (ii) The publication of a book.

- (iii) The publication of a book review.
- (iv) The publication of non-peer-reviewed work.
- (v) The presentation of a paper at a conference or workshop or departmental colloquium.
- (vi) The circulation of an unpublished manuscript.
- (vii) Active participation in professional conferences and meetings, including formal commentary on the work of others, panel presentations, or sustained seminar participation.
- (viii) Long-term engagement with working groups.
- (ix) Regular reviewing, refereeing, or editorial work for journals or publishing houses in philosophy.
- (x) Non-ephemeral relations of advising, consultation, or criticism with scholars involving reading, reflection, and response (e.g., providing comments on a draft of an article or book, serving on a dissertation committee, etc.).
- (xi) Organizing professional conferences or meetings.
- (xii) Taking leadership positions in professional societies.
- (xiii) Course and curricular development undertaken in response to specific departmental or university needs, when the activities in question take one out of one's own familiar philosophical territory, and produce not only the needed curricular results, but also provide a basis for carrying out the kind of philosophical activity described above.

**2b. Methods for Evaluation:** Members of the department participating in an evaluation will examine the work provided as evidence of professional growth and judge whether it has made a contribution to the field or has the potential to make such a contribution. Refereed publications in reputable journals will sometimes be taken as tantamount to satisfying the requirement. So will the publication of a book. In addition, members of the department reserve the right to make their own judgment of the quality of the work in question and, when applicable, the quality of the journals or publishing houses involved.

Members of the department will also judge whether, in view of the quality, the quantity of the work is sufficient. There is no set formula to follow, but the department recognizes that it can take longer to produce higher quality work, and so there are sometimes tradeoffs between quality and quantity.

In the case of tenure review, the department encourages but does not require letters submitted by outside evaluators, experts in their field who can testify to

the quality of the written work of the faculty member or otherwise speak to professional growth.

### **3. Academic and Career Advising**

The department recognizes the importance of advising and counseling as a consideration in coming to a decision on promotion. Reflection on practice reveals that we spend many hours of the semester in consultation with students, which is not directly tied to classroom issues. Some of this time is devoted to routine matters of advising, such as guiding course selection and satisfying graduation requirements. However, members of the department have also tended to devote considerable time and energy to career advising and to counseling students, both majors and non-majors, on a broad range of concerns with which they come to us. The department takes into account such activity in the evaluation of a candidate for tenure and promotion.

### **4. University Service**

The department recognizes and values the importance of service to the university. Such service can take different forms, including but not limited to,

- (i) University committee work and other participation in faculty governance
- (ii) Administrative work within the department ( such as chairing the philosophy department, serving as a head officer, etc.)
- (iii) Administrative work elsewhere in the university
- (iv) Aid to student organizations and/or student events, especially in connection with extra-curricular or co-curricular activities that enhance the intellectual climate of the department or university.
- (v) Contributions to public occasions at the university.

### **5. Community Service**

Service to the community in an area related to one's field of expertise outside the university will be considered favorably in the candidate's total evaluation.

### **Further Evaluation Procedures**

The candidate's review file, including all letters from outside the department, all student teaching evaluations, and all other relevant materials will be made available to department members in accordance with the deadlines specified with the university's Buff Document. Department members participating in the review are required to give careful attention to this material.

The department, excluding the candidate, will meet prior to the evaluation deadline. At this meeting department members will submit to the Head Officer a letter addressed to the Faculty Advancement Committee expressing their personal evaluation of the candidate and recommendations to the Committee. During this meeting all evaluation materials will be discussed and the views of every member expressed and addressed. In cases of tenure and promotion the department will attempt to arrive at a consensus evaluation of the candidate and will attempt to formulate a unanimous recommendation (positive or negative) to the Advancement committee. If such a consensus can be reached, the chairperson or designated department member will then draft a departmental letter of recommendation to the Advancement Committee expressing this departmental evaluation and recommendation. The letter will be signed by all department members participating in the review. If a consensus cannot be reached, the letter will represent the opinions of those in the majority and dissents will be recorded.

Subsequent to the meeting but prior to the submission of the candidate's file to the committee, department members are free to submit to the head officer addenda to their personal letters for inclusion in the file.