

Additions in bold approved by Dietrich School Council, October 17, 2017

Revised Criteria for Promotion or Appointment to Tenure Rank

Criteria for promotion or appointment to tenured rank have been published in the Faculty Handbook. These criteria are formulated in rather general terms to cover all divisions of the University so that relative importance within the triune of research, teaching and other professional activities cannot be specified. Even within the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, the variety of individual and departmental goals, some of which are specified in departmental statements, presents obstacles to the formulation of specific and detailed guides that would have general applicability. Individuals and departments are concerned with teaching and research or other creative activities, but the emphasis within this broad area of scholarly concern is necessarily and desirably variable.

Within the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, tenure is awarded for demonstrated excellence together with the promise of continued excellence in scholarship, in whatever form that scholarship takes. Teaching and research (or creative activity), the two principal functions of the University, are also the two principal forms of scholarship. The relationship between the two is complex, and no single formula could serve as an adequate guide in every tenure case. All departments in a University school of arts and sciences should be concerned with advancing knowledge as well as teaching students, but the balance between research and teaching need not be the same for every department, nor for every faculty member. Although the balance may be shaped over time by the faculty member and the department, it must be justified to the University when the faculty member stands for tenure. Excellence in research should not excuse incompetence in teaching, and teaching that is not founded in scholarship can make no claim to excellence.

In judging excellence, the indispensable ingredient for promotion to tenured rank should be creative or intellectual vitality as reflected in the candidate's teaching, and in the candidate's contribution to the advancement of knowledge or in his or her artistic activity. Vitality is best revealed through the candidate's activities—classroom performance, research, writings, artistic creations. These should be assessed for the evidence they reveal of intellectual power and originality. Quantitative measures of productivity and popularity, however useful, are no substitutes for qualitative judgments. Evaluations of the candidate's record of achievement will be used primarily to judge future promise. Elements of this evaluation shall include the quality and originality of the candidate's contributions to the advancement of knowledge, the candidate's status with respect to the standards of excellence in the discipline, and performance as a teacher. Tenure is not a reward for past services, but a kind of contract, a lifetime of security in exchange for a lifetime of continued creative scholarship.

Special care should be taken to establish achievement expectations for tenure for candidates whose work is interdisciplinary, collaborative, multidisciplinary or translational in character, or whose intellectual contributions and innovation are registered in part through significant societal impact, and evaluation processes should take account of unusual aspects of those expectations. For some cases, departmental tenure evaluation committees may need to bring in additional expertise and/or calibrate expectations for external references to ensure that a candidate's full breadth of achievements is evaluated.

The determination of excellence is basically a peer judgment, the responsibility of the faculty. The procedures set forth in this document provide a framework wherein all aspects of creative scholarship are to be evaluated, both by the tenured members of the department concerned and by the faculty at large through the Tenure Council.