

TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES
Department of Religious Studies
University of South Carolina

I. PROCEDURES

A. Tenure and Promotion Chair: The chair of the department shall appoint a unit tenure and promotion chair who shall represent the department at orientation sessions conducted by UCTP (University Committee on Tenure and Promotion). The unit tenure and promotion chair shall monitor the unit's compliance with departmental and UCTP procedures and timetables.

B. Notification of Potential Candidates: In accordance with the UCTP timetable, the unit tenure and promotion chair shall give written notice to potential candidates for tenure and/or promotion of the timetable for the submission and consideration of files. Copies of this notice will be forwarded to the dean of the college. The letter will ask each potential candidate to prepare and present a file or to state in writing that he/she does not wish to be considered in the upcoming review cycle. The unit tenure and promotion chair shall advise the dean in writing of any faculty who declined to be considered.

C. The Candidate's Committee: Each candidate's case shall be reviewed by a committee of at least five members. The committee shall consist of eligible members of the department and, as needed, additional members from outside the department. Committee members from outside the department shall be selected as follows:

- one member shall be appointed by the dean of the college;
- others, as needed, shall be elected by simple majority vote of all tenured and tenure-track members of the department. Nominations can be made by any member of the department, including the candidate.

The chair of the committee shall be elected by the committee membership. He/she shall be entitled to vote and shall have the privilege of casting the deciding vote in the case of ties.

D. The Candidate's Responsibility: It is primarily the responsibility of the candidate to construct the file that shall be used by the committee in deciding on the candidate's application. The candidate shall place in the file a narrative of his/her record of teaching, research/scholarship, and service. Relevant data to be included in the file are those providing evidence that the candidate has satisfied the criteria for tenure or promotion as set forth in the departmental criteria.

E. Letters of Recommendation: The file shall include at least five letters from external referees evaluating the candidate's research, publications, and professional activities.

The candidate shall provide the names of at least two potential referees, from which the chair of the committee shall select one. The chair of the committee shall also compile a list of external referees with the advice and consent of the members of the committee. The committee chair shall secure the additional external referees from this agreed-upon list.

F. Voting on the Candidate's Case: After due consideration of the candidate's case, the committee shall vote by secret ballot. A simple majority of voting members (abstentions not counted) will constitute the committee's recommendation. Separate votes on tenure and promotion shall be taken. Each member of the committee shall provide a letter stating his/her position and the reasons for it. These letters shall be included in the material forwarded to the dean of the college by the chair of the committee, along with the complete file and the report of the vote.

G. Advising the Candidate of the Committee's Decision: The department chair shall advise the candidate in writing of the decision of the committee. In the case of an adverse decision, the department chair shall assure the candidate that the present decision is without prejudice to future consideration. The department chair shall also advise the candidate of his/her right to appeal the committee's decision and refer him/her to the section of the *Faculty Manual* which outlines the steps for seeking relief. A copy of the department chair's letter to the candidate shall be forwarded to the dean. Any candidate who decides to appeal a negative committee decision can obtain from the department chair a synopsis of the discussion that transpired in the committee.

If the department chair is not privy to the unit proceedings, the responsibilities set forth in the previous paragraph shall fall on the chair of the candidate's committee.

II. CRITERIA

The evaluation of candidates for tenure and/or promotion is based on their performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. The department recognizes that individual candidates will exhibit different strengths and does not expect each candidate to demonstrate outstanding achievement in all three areas.

Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The candidate must demonstrate at least *effective* performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. A candidate normally will not be tenured unless also promoted to Associate Professor

Promotion to Professor

The candidate must demonstrate *outstanding* performance in scholarship and one other area, either teaching or service, with at least *effective* performance in the third area.

Teaching

The department places a high value on teaching. The assessment of the candidate's teaching performance shall be based on three measures: the candidate's teaching portfolio; peer review assessments within the department; and student teaching evaluations.

Teaching portfolio. The candidate must prepare a teaching portfolio that includes the following: a listing of all courses taught during the previous four years (new courses and revision of existing courses shall be identified); syllabi; examinations and other course materials; a listing of independent studies directed and theses or dissertations directed or read; any other items related to teaching the candidate deems important to his/her candidacy; and a statement about the integration of the candidate's professional development with these teaching activities.

Peer reviews. Peer reviews of teaching are required for all tenure and promotion cases. In addition to peer reviews within the department, any member of the university faculty may submit an assessment of the candidate's teaching. Assessments by faculty at the same or lower rank as the candidate will be considered as advisory to the committee.

Student evaluations.

The committee chair's narrative summary shall include a representative sampling of comments made by students and the average numerical rating on the student evaluation instrument. The chair shall place the summary, and the student evaluations upon which it is based, in the candidate's file.

Effective teaching must meet the following criteria: clarity of course design and objectives; techniques that productively engage students in the learning process; and positive peer reviews. Effective teaching would normally include an average rating of 3.0 or higher (4.0 scale) on the student teaching evaluations.

Outstanding teaching must meet the criteria for effective teaching and, in addition, would normally include an average of 3.5 or higher (4.0 scale) on the student teaching evaluations. Outstanding teaching should also include some of the following indicators: positive impact on the intellectual development of students; flexibility in designing and redesigning courses to meet changing departmental needs; positive peer reviews from both within and outside the department; and nominations for or receipt of teaching awards.

Scholarship

Scholarship is of primary importance to the department. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion are expected to have developed a sustained program of research that is guided by a significant set of theoretical or substantive issues in his/her special field or interdisciplinary area. The candidate shall prepare a statement about his/her research program which explains how it arose and evolved, what its contributions to scholarship

have been, and how it is expected to develop in the future. The candidate's scholarly record includes the following:

Category A

- Authored books
- Co-authored books
- Edited books
- Translated works
- Refereed journal articles
- Book chapters
- Editorship of professional journals
- Invited articles for reference works or thematic issues of journals
- Externally funded research grants
- Reprinted articles in peer-reviewed collections
- Work accepted for publication

Category B

- Papers presented at professional meetings
- Invited scholarly lectures
- Citations of the candidate's work by other scholars
- Book reviews
- Evaluation of grants
- Evaluation of books or articles for publication
- Non-refereed professional publications

To receive an *effective* rating in scholarship candidates are expected to show a sustained program of research and publication that is either focused in Category A or spread across the two categories with strong representation in Category A. The quantity of the work is not as important as its significance. In the judgment of the external referees the work as a whole must make a substantial contribution to the candidate's field of specialization or interdisciplinary area.

To receive an *outstanding* rating in scholarship candidates must meet the criteria of effective scholarship and maintain a continuing record of peer-reviewed scholarly activity that receives national or international recognition. In addition, the work must be primarily focused in Category A.

Service

Candidates are expected to make contributions in the area of professional service to the university, the profession, and institutions beyond the academy. Service activities fall into the following five categories:

- Participating in departmental activities (such as advisement of students; service on committees; assistance with departmental promotion and development; serving as

- undergraduate or graduate director; organizing lectures, conferences, and colloquia; etc.)
- Participating on college and university committees
 - Participating in professional societies and organizations
 - Fulfilling university administrative roles (at the departmental or program level and above)
 - Applying professional knowledge and expertise for the benefit of groups, agencies, and religious institutions in local, state, national, or international settings

Effective service is defined as productive and sustained *involvement* in at least three service categories. *Outstanding* service must meet the criteria for effective service and, in addition, must demonstrate productive and sustained *leadership* in one or more of the service categories.