

Promotion & Tenure Guidelines for Astronomy  
Adopted June 2020

For most promotion cases in tenure-track and research faculty appointments, the Department of Astronomy's criteria for promotion are aligned with those outlined by the College of Arts & Science's "Promotion Considerations" (<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-considerations>).

There are, however, a number of considerations that are applicable to certain subfields of Astronomy, but that are not fully captured by the College's guidelines. The most relevant to Astronomy are promotion cases of faculty whose scholarly activities are primarily focused on developing new scientific infrastructure, which can include both instrumentation and software. Both are essential for enabling subsequent scientific discovery, as well as being areas of scholarly activity on their own. Faculty members who are engaged in leadership roles in major instrumentation and software efforts are performing important, field-specific intellectual work that typically involves multi-year investments. While the multi-year, intensive nature of this work often suppresses the traditional journal publication by these projects' leaders, that same work can have a significant "multiplier" effect for creating new knowledge by the subsequent users of these important tools.

Substantial work in instrumentation or software infrastructure that is "science enabling" should therefore be considered a significant part of the scholarly record, with work that demonstrates notable creativity, innovation, quality, and/or likely scientific impact being of particular merit. It should also be considered that faculty who have taken on leadership roles in these areas will often have done so at the expense of other, more traditional forms of scholarly output.

Guidelines for Promotion: Department of Astronomy, first established June 2020

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