

Tenure & Promotion Guidelines

Department of Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies, University of Washington

Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality (GWSS) guidelines for tenure and promotion incorporate recommendations from the [National Women's Studies Association \(NWSA\) Statement on Tenure](#) and aim to: 1) make criteria for tenure and promotion evaluation more transparent; 2) detail a clear process for career advancement for tenure- and teaching-stream faculty; and 3) orient reviewers, especially those trained in disciplinary fields, on assessment standards for scholarship in Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies as an interdisciplinary field. This last aim is unique to NWSA as a professional organization and to our department.

The tenure and promotion guidelines detailed in this document build upon those established by the University of Washington Faculty Code and College of Arts & Sciences.

UW Faculty Code

The UW Faculty Code ([Section 23-34](#)), “Qualifications for Appointment at Specific Ranks,” contains university-wide guidelines for tenure and promotion.

UW College of Arts & Sciences

“The decisions to grant tenure or promote a faculty member are some of the most important decisions that we make. When promoting, we are making a decision that combines an assessment of the individual’s record to date, in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service, as well as a projection of a career into the future.” At more senior levels, expectations shift toward continuing “evidence of outstanding quality, productivity, and scholarly impact.”

The UW College of Arts & Sciences has [specific guidelines for promotion and tenure](#) in the following categories:

- [Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor](#)
- [Promotion to Teaching Professor](#)
- [Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure](#)
- [Promotion to Full Professor](#)

At the outset and as elaborated in the following section, we affirm the commitment of our department since its founding in 1970 to the work of fostering diversity, equity, and justice. In accordance with the 2012 and 2018 revisions to the Faculty Code ([Section 23-34](#)) we value “any contributions in scholarship and research, teaching, and service that address diversity and equal opportunity” and will include and consider them as “professional and scholarly qualifications” at all stages in the promotion process.

These departmental guidelines are a living document. Approximately every five years, the GWSS faculty will review this document and vote to affirm or revise its content.

GWSS Field-Specific Overview

The following introduction to the field is excerpted in part from the [National Women's Studies Association \(NWSA\) Statement on Tenure](#), with adaptations and updates that reflect shifts in the field since publication of the white paper in 2014 and our department's contributions to them. The NWSA, established in 1977, is the professional association for the field.

Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies is a field in its own right. Its intellectual genealogy is shaped by and advances critical interdisciplinarity, in which scholarship and teaching seek to not just solve problems in new ways and produce definitive answers but to ask questions with an analytic rigor and capaciousness that pushes at the boundaries of what counts as knowledge. It is a field that deconstructs and challenges epistemological norms while simultaneously critically examining gender and sexuality in relation to one another as well as other intersecting vectors of power such as race, class, citizenship status, and ability. Effectively evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion in GWSS requires that evaluators understand the field as heterogeneous and account for the consequent variability of GWSS scholarly forms, methods, and contributions. Approaches to knowledge production in GWSS are divergent and responsive to debates across academic and community/public domains of knowledge production.

An understanding of GWSS as a coherent field, rather than an addendum to traditional disciplines, should guide assessment. Key concepts central to GWSS scholarship, teaching, and service include the following:

The Politics of Knowledge Production: The intellectual project of GWSS develops new modes of inquiry and engagement, asks new questions, creates new knowledge, and imagines new futures while foregrounding forgotten or subjugated ways of knowing. GWSS analyzes how knowers and systems of knowledge are situated; reflexivity about the impact of social location, power asymmetries, and cultural contexts on the knowledge process are thus central issues.

Social Change Imperative: GWSS analyzes the social constitution and material realities of power relations and traces the workings of systems of oppression and privilege, historically and contemporarily. Its practitioners conduct research and design curricula that address the persistence and tenacity of inequities as well as their changing forms, often through collaborative work. Assessment measures should therefore account for collaboration—with other scholars as well as community partners and organizations—in ways that do not devalue such profiles as signaling less rigorous work or lower levels of “productivity.” Indeed, GWSS holds that collaborative work is often more challenging and rigorous than solitary scholarship.

Critical Intersectionality: GWSS rests on the understanding that systems of inequity and complex structures of domination are interdependent. Norms and systems of gender, sex, sexuality, race, class, ability, citizenship, etc. cannot be adequately analyzed or transformed in isolation. Critical intersectionality—counter to superficial instrumentalization of identity-based initiatives or politics—is deployed in multiple ways as an intellectual genealogy, theoretical analytic, mode of inquiry, methodological tool, and approach to social justice that renders visible how systems of inequality function in overlapping ways.

Transnational Analysis: In GWSS, transnational analysis theorizes power, privilege, and differences within and across boundaries and through processes ranging from the intimate to the global. It considers the continuum of unequal global systems and their interrelations with colonialism, imperialism, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, and racial capitalism, exploring the way that the center is multiply constituted in and through its relationship to “the periphery.”

Expectations

The assessment of a GWSS candidate’s promotion should account for plural forms of research, teaching, and service, while recognizing that these categories often overlap and inform one another. For example, teaching and community engagement may be intertwined *and* may also generate new forms of scholarly production. Likewise, service often entails: institution-building—at local, nation, and international levels—as our faculty shape the growing field of GWSS, serving as mentors, advisors, and consultants to students, staff, and faculty in other units and institutions; developing courses in emerging areas such as sexuality, queer, and transgender studies; and mentoring junior scholars, especially those of color and from the Global South, through peer review and editorial work. The importance of this work for the field and our local institution should be weighed and valued during promotion and tenure review for GWSS faculty and even more so for jointly appointed and affiliated faculty.

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor

Teaching

As stated in the College of Arts & Sciences guidelines, “The University expects a trajectory of high-quality classroom teaching from Assistant Teaching Professors. This alone, however, is not sufficient for consideration for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor. The promotion case must provide evidence of the faculty member’s ‘extensive training, competence, and experience in their discipline.’” Beyond evidence of sustained excellence demonstrated by student and collegial teaching evaluations, mentorship of students in independent projects, and other forms of recognition such as teaching awards or successful grant applications in support of curricular development, the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies looks for a record of unit-level feminist pedagogical innovation. This impact may be demonstrated through classroom implementation (as documented in syllabi or peer and student evaluations), workshops, or student mentorship. The candidate should solicit peer teaching evaluations each year prior to going up for promotion. Evaluators should recognize that, given the field’s overtly critical approach to knowledge and power, GWSS scholars often face resistance in the classroom. For example, teaching evaluations may reflect students’ discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking. GWSS also draws attention to research on pedagogical assessments that demonstrate evidence of sexism, racism, and xenophobia in student evaluations.¹ Peer evaluations are another important form of contextualizing classroom

¹ See for example: Nalini Ambady and Robert Rosenthal, “Half a Minute: Predicting Teacher Evaluations from Thin Slices of Nonverbal Behavior and Physical Attractiveness,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 64, no. 3 (1993): 431-441; Deborah J. Merritt, “Bias, the Brain, and Student Evaluations of Teaching,” *St. John’s Law Review* 82 (2008): 235-287; Anne Boring, Kellie Ottoboni, and Philip B. Stark, “Student Evaluations of Teaching (Mostly)

dynamics, as are student or alumni testimonials of transformations in their thinking that took place on a timeline longer than a single quarter. In addition to evaluations, candidates may prepare a teaching portfolio that includes supporting materials such as syllabi, course materials, assignments, and statement about pedagogical innovations that support critical feminist praxis in the classroom.

Service

In addition to service to the department, including training graduate student teaching assistants in feminist pedagogical praxis, GWSS candidates for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor are expected to demonstrate sustained contributions to the teaching mission of the University through a greater level of responsibility in unit-level teaching issues and engagement in university or field specific teaching programs. Service at this promotion level can take many forms, including serving on service committees, participating in university-level centers, programs, committees, or task forces, and developing curricular materials and platforms for the field. Whereas GWSS faculty are often called upon to consult and assist with the institution-building work of diversifying knowledge, the professoriate, and the student body, we encourage evaluators to consider the full range of a candidate's service, especially those aspects that can be taken for granted by the institution such as the labor of mentoring and supporting underrepresented students.

Scholarship

As stated in the College of Arts & Sciences guidelines, which follow the Faculty Code on qualifications for appointment at specific ranks, "Published scholarship is thus not an explicit component of most teaching track faculty positions, nor is it a requirement for promotion to the rank of Associate Teaching Professor. However, where published scholarship is considered as part of the promotion case, such scholarship should directly enhance the faculty member's teaching expertise." In addition to publications or research presentations on pedagogy, assessment of GWSS candidates recognizes research and publication in areas of intellectual expertise beyond the pedagogical, which contribute to classroom innovations that bring together content and form. The presentation of research in public scholarship contexts beyond the scholarly conference is also recognized.

Promotion to Teaching Professor

Teaching

As stated in the College of Arts & Sciences guidelines, "The University expects consistently high-quality classroom teaching from Associate Teaching Professors. This alone, however, is not sufficient for consideration for promotion to Teaching Professor." Beyond evidence of sustained

Do Not Measure Teaching Effectiveness, *ScienceOpen Research* (7 January 2016), DOI: 10.14293/S2199-1006.1.SOR-EDU.AETBZC.v1; Friederike Mengel, Jan Sauermann, and Ulf Zölitz, "Gender Bias in Teaching Evaluations," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 17, no. 2 (2019): 535-566.

excellence demonstrated by student and collegial teaching evaluations and other forms of recognition such as teaching awards or successful grant applications in support of curricular development, the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies looks for a record of feminist pedagogical innovation that has made a signal impact in the unit and the university or field. This impact may be demonstrated through classroom implementation (as documented in syllabi or peer and student evaluations), workshops, graduate education and TA mentorship, or pedagogy-focused publications. The candidate is required to have a peer teaching evaluation completed the year prior to going up for promotion. Evaluators should recognize that, given the field's overtly critical approach to knowledge and power, GWSS scholars often face resistance in the classroom. For example, teaching evaluations may reflect students' discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking. GWSS also draws attention to research on pedagogical assessments that demonstrate evidence of sexism, racism, and xenophobia in student evaluations.² Peer evaluations are another important form of contextualizing classroom dynamics, as are student or alumni testimonials of transformations in their thinking that took place on a timeline longer than a single quarter. In addition to evaluations, candidates prepare a teaching portfolio that includes supporting materials such as syllabi, course materials, assignments, and statement about pedagogical innovations that support critical feminist praxis in the classroom.

Service

In addition to service to the department, including training graduate student teaching assistants in feminist pedagogical praxis, GWSS candidates for promotion to Teaching Professor are expected to demonstrate sustained contributions to teaching through service at the university and/or field level. Service at this level can take many forms, including serving on or chairing service committees, participating in university-level centers, programs, committees, or task forces, and developing curricular materials and platforms for the field. We consider as significant but not required involvement in national or international professional organizations or editorial boards; and peer review of teaching-related publications or teaching-track promotion files. Whereas GWSS faculty are often called upon to consult and assist with the institution-building work of diversifying knowledge, the professoriate, and the student body, we encourage evaluators to consider the full range of a candidate's service, especially those aspects that can be taken for granted by the institution such as the labor of mentoring and supporting underrepresented students and junior teaching-stream faculty.

Scholarship

As stated in the College of Arts & Sciences guidelines, which follow the Faculty Code on qualifications for appointment at specific ranks, "Published scholarship is thus not an explicit component of most Teaching Professor positions, nor is it a requirement for promotion to the rank of Teaching Professor. However, where published scholarship is considered as part of the promotion case, such scholarship should directly enhance the faculty member's teaching excellence." In addition to publications or research presentations on pedagogy, assessment of

² See references cited in footnote 1.

GWSS candidates recognizes research and publication in areas of intellectual expertise beyond the pedagogical, which contribute to classroom innovations that bring together content and form. The presentation of research in public scholarship contexts beyond the scholarly conference is also recognized.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

Scholarship

The Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies looks for evidence of a significant trajectory of scholarly productivity that contributes to our interdisciplinary field—addressing new questions, debates, modes of analysis, theories, and/or methodologies. While publication of a book is one such measure of evidence, so are projects of comparable weight such as coauthored books, large-scale digital projects, a set of articles in prominent journals and/or chapters in edited anthologies, editorship of special issues, or some combination thereof. GWSS embraces scholarly and creative production in multiple genres and languages, and values collaborations within and beyond the academy. These contributions can include forms such as artistic expression, documentary film, public performance, curatorial work, lab-based teamwork, collaborative editorial work, archival research, platform development, and successful grant applications. In addition to traditional peer-reviewed print publishing outlets in academic presses and journals, GWSS scholarship may be produced in such fora as online journals, digital humanities projects, op-eds, policy reports, performances, exhibitions, consulting work, public lectures and presentations, curriculum transformation projects, field-defining statements, and advocacy, activist, and coalition work. Peer review of public scholarship and creative work can come in the form of reviews by nationally and internationally established scholars and institutions.

Teaching

A candidate's teaching record should be consistently strong and documented by student and peer/collegial evaluations of classroom performance at the undergraduate and graduate levels; it should also include evidence of undergraduate and/or graduate training and mentorship. The candidate should solicit peer teaching evaluations each year prior to going up for promotion. Evaluators should recognize that, given the field's overtly critical approach to knowledge and power, GWSS scholars often face resistance in the classroom. For example, teaching evaluations may reflect students' discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking. GWSS also draws attention to research on pedagogical assessments that demonstrate evidence of sexism, racism, and xenophobia in student evaluations.³ Peer evaluations are another important form of contextualizing classroom dynamics, as are student or alumni testimonials of transformations in their thinking that took place on a timeline longer than a single quarter. In addition to evaluations, candidates are encouraged to include supporting materials such as syllabi, course materials, assignments, and/or statements about pedagogical innovations that support critical feminist praxis in the classroom.

³ See references cited in footnote 1.

Service

GWSS candidates for promotion to Associate Professor should demonstrate service contributions to the department and when appropriate to the broader public. We consider service at the university or field level as significant but not required service at the university or field level. Service can take many forms, especially service committee participation but also including involvement in university centers, programs, committees, or task forces; engagement with national or international professional organizations; and peer review of publications. Whereas GWSS faculty are often called upon to consult and assist with the institution-building work of diversifying knowledge, the professoriate, and the student body, we encourage evaluators to consider the full range of a candidate's service in and outside of the university, especially service work that can be taken for granted by the institution such as the labor of mentoring and supporting underrepresented students.

Promotion to Full Professor

Scholarship

The Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies looks for evidence of a sustained post-tenure body of work that has made a signal impact within our interdisciplinary field—addressing new questions, debates, modes of analysis, theories, and/or methodologies. While publication of a second book is one such measure of evidence, so are projects of comparable weight such as coauthored books, large-scale digital projects, a set of articles in prominent journals and/or chapters in edited anthologies, editorship of special issues or of a leading journal in the field, or some combination thereof. GWSS embraces scholarly and creative production in multiple genres and languages, and values collaborations within and beyond the academy. These contributions can include forms such as artistic expression, documentary film, public performance, curatorial work, lab-based teamwork, collaborative editorial work, archival research, platform development, and successful grant applications. In addition to traditional peer-reviewed print publishing outlets in academic presses and journals, GWSS scholarship may be produced in such fora as online journals, digital humanities projects, op-eds, policy reports, performances, exhibitions, consulting work, public lectures and presentations, curriculum transformation projects, field-defining statements, and advocacy, activist, and coalition work. Peer review of public scholarship and creative work can come in the form of reviews by nationally and internationally established scholars and institutions.

Teaching

A candidate's teaching record should be consistently strong and documented by student and peer/collegial evaluations of classroom performance at the undergraduate and graduate levels; it should also include significant evidence of graduate training and mentorship. The candidate is required to have a peer teaching evaluation completed the year prior to going up for promotion. Evaluators should recognize that, given the field's overtly critical approach to knowledge and power, GWSS scholars often face resistance in the classroom. For example, teaching evaluations may reflect students' discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking. GWSS also draws attention to research on pedagogical assessments that demonstrate evidence of

sexism, racism, and xenophobia in student evaluations.⁴ Peer evaluations are another important form of contextualizing classroom dynamics, as are student or alumni testimonials of transformations in their thinking that took place on a timeline longer than a single quarter. In addition to evaluations, candidates are encouraged to include supporting materials such as syllabi, course materials, assignments, and/or statements about pedagogical innovations that support critical feminist praxis in the classroom.

Service

GWSS candidates for promotion to full should demonstrate more robust service to the department, institution, profession, and allied publics and communities than at the previous stage of tenure. Service at this level can take many forms, including chairing service committees, participating in university-level centers, programs, committees, or task forces; involvement in national or international professional organizations or editorial boards; and peer review of publications, tenure files, institutions, and units. Whereas GWSS faculty are often called upon to consult and assist with the institution-building work of diversifying knowledge, the professoriate, and the student body, we encourage evaluators to consider the full range of a candidate's service in and outside the university, including service work that can be taken for granted by the institution such as the labor of mentoring and supporting underrepresented students and junior tenure-stream faculty.

⁴ See references cited in footnote 1.