

Department of Political Science: Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

The purpose of this document is to make more transparent the procedures and criteria by which Assistant Professors are considered for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with Tenure.

The UW Faculty Code is the starting point for promotion policies. Section 24-34 describes general standards to promotion to Associate professor, while section 24-54 describes the general process.

<https://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/FCG/FCCH24.html>

The Arts and Science website provides additional guidelines for promotions within the college:

<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/personnel/guidelines-promotion-associate-professor-tenure>

Procedures and Timing

The chair meets with Assistant Professors annually to discuss their research, teaching, and service contributions, and to answer questions about the process and departmental and College promotion expectations.

As noted in section [24-41](#) of the Faculty Code, Assistant Professors are initially appointed for three years. In their second year, they are considered for reappointment for an additional three years. During their sixth year, Assistant Professors must be reviewed for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

Second year review. The candidate prepares materials to be shared with a faculty committee, typically including a personal statement, C.V., publications, and teaching materials, including student and annual peer evaluations. The committee reviews the candidate's record to date and presents its findings to a meeting of tenured faculty. The faculty then vote on whether to recommend reappointment for another three years. The department chair then makes a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

As noted in the document linked below, the second year review also serves as an important opportunity to discuss the candidate's progress towards a record of research, teaching and service that will meet the tenure standards of the department and College.

<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/personnel/reappointment-procedures#reqs>

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure. Each year the department considers every faculty member below the rank of full professor for possible promotion. A faculty member may also request that the department proceed with a complete promotion review.

<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/personnel/junior-faculty-review-and-awards>

Mandatory review of Assistant Professors occurs during the 6th year. By approximately June 1 of year 5, the candidate provides the chair with a list of potential external reviewers (tenured professors at peer institutions) and scholars who should not serve as external reviewers (if desired).

The chair appoints a promotion committee that includes three tenured professors, one of whom is designated chair. In consultation with this committee, the chair identifies five or six (minimally four) external reviewers. The candidate's materials are provided to the external reviewers in early July, and their confidential review letters are due in September.

The materials shared with the external reviewers include a C.V., personal statement and copies of relevant publications and manuscripts. Teaching materials are included in the materials shared with members of the department but not with external reviewers.

In late September (beginning of 6th year), the promotion committee prepares a report that includes a recommendation. The candidate is asked to respond to this report within 7 calendar days. In early October, tenured faculty meet to discuss and vote on the candidate's promotion. The department chair prepares a summary of this discussion and vote. The candidate is asked to respond to the chair's summary within 7 calendar days.

The final step at the department level is for the chair to draft an independent evaluation and to submit all of the documentation to the College by mid-October.

Section [24-54 \(c-e\)](#) of the UW faculty Code describes what happens once a case has been transmitted to the college. Section [25-41](#) describes the decision process and possible outcomes of a tenure decision.

This link provides information about the materials required by the college. (The chair and department administrator assist the candidate in ensuring that the file is complete.)

<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/personnel/guide-documentation>

Promotion Standards

In developing its criteria for promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure, the Department of Political Science follows the general [guidelines](#) of the College of Arts and Sciences website.

Scholarship

As noted in the College guidelines, *“In general, quality is more important than quantity, although there must be sufficient quantity to provide evidence of a significant level of scholarly productivity.”*

Our department does not rely on any specific metric, such as requiring a book or a specific number of articles. A typical successful research record could include a book with a major university press and several peer review articles and/or book chapters. It might also include a larger number of articles, some of which have been published in top disciplinary journals (and no book). We also acknowledge the importance of research grants and less conventional research contributions, such as databases and software.

The personal statement represents an important opportunity for a candidate to summarize their contributions and to explain aspects of the record that may be otherwise underappreciated. This statement should explain how the candidate’s research agenda contributes to the discipline and how specific publications and activities contribute to that research agenda. The chair can provide examples of personal statements upon request.

The department and college also encourages collaborative research. In such cases, the College specifically requests details about the candidate’s contributions to each work. A significant portion of the overall scholarly record should include works to which the candidate has made primary contributions.

Teaching

As described in the College of Arts and Sciences guidelines:

A good teaching record is a necessary part of a successful promotion case. Promotion will not be granted in the College of Arts and Sciences without evidence of good teaching. An exceptional teaching record can compensate for a more limited scholarly record, but it cannot substitute for an unacceptable scholarly record.

Evidence of teaching success is primarily judged using teaching evaluations, peer evaluations, and information about graduate and undergraduate student advisees. Assistant professors must have at least one peer evaluation annually.

In addition to providing the teaching materials listed above, a candidate may choose to include a self-assessment (1-2 pages) and additional supporting materials (syllabi, course materials, assignments).

Service

As described in the College of Arts and Sciences guidelines:

Communities thrive when all members contribute to the common good. Thus we expect that candidates for promotion will have been involved in the life of their department, in the life of the University, and in their national associations. The University and the College have also made engagement with the broader public one of our institutional goals, and encourage public scholarship. It is desirable to show evidence of contributions to or engagement with the broader community and in some cases may be part of the job expectations.

Service expectations are lower for tenure promotion cases than Full Professor promotion cases. Nevertheless, candidates are expected to demonstrate engagement with the department and their discipline. Service can include (among other things) serving on departmental committees, participation in public events, organization of speaker series or seminars, inclusion and equity work within the university, public scholarship, contributions to disciplinary organizations, community involvement etc.