

Department of Political Science: Guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor

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

The UW Faculty Code is the starting point: (<https://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/FCG/FCCH24.html>). It describes both general full professor promotion standards (Section 24-34) and process (Section 24-54).

The UW Arts and Sciences website provides additional guidelines within the college (<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines>).

Procedures and Timing

As stated in the UW Arts and Sciences guidelines, there is no mandated time period for promotion to Professor. The department does not consider length of time since promotion when evaluating a record. By Faculty Code, Associate Professors meet at least biannually with their chair to discuss progress toward promotion. Every faculty member below the rank of Professor should be considered annually for possible promotion by the department chair. In addition, a faculty member can request a promotion review by the college without prior departmental support.

Department process. Within the department of Political Science, the chair meets bi-annually with Associate Professors to discuss their progress towards promotion and the department's and College's expectations. In addition, full professors review and discuss the CVs of all Associate Professors annually in a faculty meeting held during Spring quarter. In this meeting, the chair typically presents the cases and makes a recommendation for whether a candidate should be put forward for promotion review (after consulting with the personnel committee). Full professors then deliberate and vote on whether to support promotion review in each case.

When a case goes forward, the candidate assembles their promotion materials (by early July). The materials include a C.V., personal statement (self assessment) describing their research, teaching and service contributions, with an emphasis on post-tenure activities, and copies of relevant publications and manuscripts.

The chair and department administrator are ready to assist and should be consulted early in this process. In addition, by June 1, the candidate provides the chair with a list of potential external reviewers (full professors at “peer institutions”). They may also identify scholars who should not serve as external reviewers.

The chair designates a promotion committee that includes three full professors, one of whom is designated the chair. In consultation with the promotion committee, the chair selects five or six (minimally four) external reviewers. Promotion materials are then sent to the external reviewers in mid-July with an early fall due date for their outside letters. (The letters are confidential and not shared with the candidate.)

During fall quarter, the internal promotion committee prepares a report, including a recommendation. The candidate is given the opportunity to respond in writing within seven calendar days. Full professors meet (typically in November) to vote on the candidate’s promotion. The department chair prepares a summary of the meeting discussion that is shared with the candidate (specific attributions and vote counts are omitted). The candidate is given the opportunity to respond in writing within seven calendar days.

The final step at the department level is for the chair to draft an independent analysis and recommendation and submit all documents produced in the promotion process to the Dean and Divisional Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Section 25-54 (c-e) of the UW faculty Code describes what happens once a case has been transmitted to the college.

Promotion Standards

In developing its criteria for promotion to Full Professor, the department of Political Science follows general principles as described in the Faculty Code and the College of Arts and Sciences.

(<https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines>).

“Appointment to the rank of professor requires outstanding, mature scholarship as evidenced by accomplishments in teaching, and in research as evaluated in terms of national or international recognition.”

Scholarship

A typical research profile might include (since promotion to associate professor) a book with a major university press and a handful of peer review articles and book chapters. Alternatively, a candidate without a major university press book might have published a larger number of journal articles, including some in top disciplinary journals. However, the department recognizes that other profiles can meet the standards of the College of Arts and Sciences (*excerpted below*). For example, we acknowledge the potential value of less conventional research contributions, such as databases, software and edited volumes, and less conventional publication venues and indicators of impact. Research expectations may also differ somewhat for a candidate who is making exceptional teaching and/or service contributions. However, as the CAS guidelines note, “*an exceptional teaching record... cannot substitute for an unacceptable scholarly record.*”

A personal statement provides an excellent opportunity for a candidate to explain aspects of the record and impact that may be otherwise underappreciated. This personal statement should be in narrative form, explaining how the candidate’s research agenda fits into the discipline and how specific publications or projects contribute to the research agenda. It is especially helpful if the statement directly addresses questions that may arise, such as contributions to co-authored articles or impact. The personal statement can be submitted (and updated) annually in conjunction with the faculty activity report. The College has a checklist for promotion cases that is helpful for preparing the C.V. and personal statement.

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

Excerpted language from the College of Arts and Sciences full professor promotion 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 and impact. For promotion to Professor, the faculty member should have established him/herself as a major researcher, scholar, or creative artist at the national and often international level. At this stage of career, the scholarly record will normally be larger and also reflect a more mature formulation of questions and a richer exploration of them. A faculty member's entire scholarly career is evaluated, with emphasis placed on work developed since the time of promotion to Associate Professor.

Quality can be demonstrated by indicators of the impact of scholarship such as citations and prestige of the journals or presses in which the individual publishes or of the exhibit or performance venue.

Outside funding of research from prestigious foundations and institutes (in those disciplines in which it is available) can be viewed as a significant part of the scholarly record.

Invited presentations to talk at other universities and prestigious events add to the scholarly record but generally play a relatively minor role independent of other measures of the scholarly record.

We do encourage collaborative work; thus co-authored books, articles, and creative works are given important weight by the Council. In general, largely technical achievements do not count as much as contributions of a more fundamental and substantial nature. A significant portion of the overall scholarly record should include works to which the candidate (and as appropriate, his/her students) has made the primary contributions.

Sustained scholarly activity as seen in conference participation, publications, grants, or performances and exhibitions demonstrates scholarly engagement and attainment.

Teaching

As described in the College of Arts and Sciences “Promotion to Full Professor 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.

Teaching is viewed broadly, including curriculum planning, course design, student reactions and success, and mentoring. Evidence of success in these areas will be judged using the following materials: teaching evaluations, peer evaluations, and mentoring record. A very important part of our teaching responsibilities takes place outside of any specific course. The advising of students, both undergraduate and graduate, is a significant contribution to the teaching mission of the University.

At the time of promotion to Professor, a faculty member will have a significant record of working with and mentoring students, including chairing graduate student committees. The demonstrated success of one's students (both undergraduate and graduate) is valuable testimony of a faculty member's contributions. (See the “Promotion to Full Professor Guidelines” at <https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines> for more details.)

Candidates for promotion to Full Professor must have a peer teaching evaluation during the academic year prior to being considered for promotion. When evaluating teaching quality, the department follows the advice presented in the UW Center for Teaching and Learning's "A Guide to Best Practice for Evaluating Teaching," which describes best practices for self-assessment, peer review of teaching, and student evaluations. (See <http://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/assessing-and-improving-teaching/evaluation/> for more details.)

The candidate may also 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 "Promotion to Full Professor 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.

Whereas junior faculty commit less of their time to service, tenured faculty members are expected to play a greater role in this area. In the area of service, candidates are expected to have built a record of significant professional service at the College, University, and national levels, while also continuing to provide high-quality service to the Department.

Such service can include chairing of committees, faculty governance, inclusion and equity work, and other forms of leadership at the university and national level. Although not required, evidence of professionally-related public service at the local, national, or international levels is also recognized.