

MCC T&P Policy

Document History

Original policy passed unanimously in April 2012
Minor edits to mentoring policy on March 5, 2014

Untenured Tenure-Track Faculty

Tenure and promotion decisions in the Murrow College are based on university guidelines explained in the faculty manual, which is available online at http://facsen.wsu.edu/faculty_manual/Section_III_updated.pdf. The faculty manual is updated periodically and it is the candidate's responsibility to refer to the most current policy. In case of conflicts between guidelines outlined in this document and the Faculty Manual, the Faculty Manual prevails.

Teaching Portfolio

Candidates for promotion and tenure are encouraged to study the criteria for review of teaching found in the faculty manual (Section III, page 10) and components of a teaching portfolio required for tenure and promotion, which are also explained in detail in the faculty manual (Section III, page 25). Curriculum development, teaching innovations, student evaluation of teaching, student advising, and compliance with WSU's policies on teaching are some of the key criteria used to evaluate teaching in the Murrow College.

Curriculum and Innovations

Syllabi and curricular materials are central to a teaching portfolio. The design of meaningful assignments, rigorous testing instruments, grading rubrics, and other materials designed for teaching will be evaluated. Inclusion of civic engagement projects and client-based work in a course and innovations in teaching combined with revising and updating course content also contribute to the teaching portfolio. Likewise, creation of new courses that are central to the mission of the College and innovations in course delivery, such as designing an online course, can add to a teaching portfolio.

Student Evaluation of Teaching

All faculty members are required to administer a standard teaching evaluation instrument in each of their classes at the end of the semester. The college will provide the teaching evaluation instrument. Teaching evaluation scores and student comments will be evaluated in conjunction with grade distribution in a class.

Advising

Advising is an integral part of the teaching mission of the College. Being a member of a dissertation or thesis committee is part of graduate teaching. Advising PhD and MA students and undergraduate honors thesis projects is a valuable contribution the College. However, untenured faculty members are cautioned to take on only a limited number of advisees to protect their time for teaching and research activities. Publishing articles with students is encouraged and counts toward both teaching and research.

Following WSU Policies

All faculty members are required to follow normative practices of the professoriate and WSU policies on teaching. Some of the most obvious requirements, such as informing the College administration when a class is canceled, holding office hours, enforcing the Academic Integrity policy, and not scheduling exams during dead week, should be followed. Faculty members should work collaboratively to ensure that each course achieves its intended objectives and contributes to the overall learning goals of the sequence.

Research

Evaluation of research is based on guidelines and criteria stated in the faculty manual (Section III, page 11). The purpose of this document is to offer interpretation specific to the Murrow College.

A cohesive and systematic program of research of high quality is central to the research portfolio, which will be evaluated on the following criteria: quantity and quality of peer-reviewed publications, programmatic research relevant to the field of communication, ability to demonstrate research independence, grants, translational activities that influence public policy, and training of graduate and undergraduate students in research.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Journal articles, book chapters, monographs, or other publications that undergo a rigorous peer-review process are essential for tenure and promotion. Peer-reviewed publications in high quality outlets, such as flagship journals and top-tier journals are central to a research program. ICA, AEJMC, and NCA journals are central to the field of communication and faculty members are encouraged to publish in journals with these organizations, as well as in interdisciplinary journals with high impact scores that are relevant to one's field of research. Non-refereed works and invited publication, including book chapters can add to a candidate's research record, but cannot be the foundation or the majority of the record.

Quality of Research

The quality of journal articles is determined by the ISI impact factor of the journal or other comparable metrics, such as the ranking of the journal within communication or relevant disciplines.

Given the importance of metrics for assessment of quality, candidates should target publications with objective quantitative metrics. If ISI journals are not the norm in a candidate's sub-discipline, other acceptable scholarly indicators of quality within the discipline will be considered.

The peer-review process is just as important for books, monographs and book chapters. Reputation and quality of the outlet, evidence of peer-review, and acceptance rates are indicators of quality. Textbooks and edited books carry less value than works that emphasize original research or synthesis of original research.

Impact of the Work

The impact factor of the journal and number of citations to the candidate's work listed in the ISI Web of Science or Scopus databases are examples of empirical indicators of impact. Assistant Professors who publish in academic areas for which such empirical indicators are not available, other scholarly indicators will be considered in consultation with Promotion and Tenure committee. Other indicators of impact include membership on journal editorial boards, reviewing articles for prestigious journals, recognition in ComVista, being a member of a scientific review panels, notable presentations, or other discipline-specific indicators of quality.

Contribution to an Article

First-authored publications carry more weight than publications in which the author is not listed first. On papers with more than one author, to help understand the scope of contribution, candidates will be asked to explain their contribution to the paper, both qualitatively and by assigning a percentage contribution. Full-length manuscripts will be given more credit than abstracts or publications in conference proceedings.

Quantity

The candidate should demonstrate evidence of sustained productivity over the probationary period. Relying on a burst of publications just before tenure is problematic and indicative of a weak record.

Grants

Grants can strengthen a tenure case, particularly in an area where grants are widely available. Grants from prestigious federal granting agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF, CDC, etc.), which are awarded on the basis of rigorous peer review, carry more weight than internal or WSU grants. However, internal grants and smaller seed grants are encouraged because they can seed pilot data for other grants. The rigor of the peer review process, the value of the grant, reputation of the

granting agency and the candidate's contribution to the grant-writing process will be taken into consideration when evaluating grants.

Independent Research Program

In most cases, the best research record is one that offers a balance between independent and collaborative work. The blending of the two can help with both quality and quantity.

At the same time, evidence of independent research and scholarship is a key factor for tenure and promotion. Candidates should demonstrate ability to publish without the assistance of senior co-authors. Dissertation advisors, mentors from institutions where the candidate received a degree or tenured colleagues with established research programs are considered senior co-authors. Assistant Professors are encouraged to negotiate authorship and clarify intellectual contribution with senior colleagues before the launch of a project. Before committing to large-scale collaborative projects, untenured faculty members are encouraged to discuss their plans with their mentor and the tenure and promotion committee.

Conference Papers

Presenting papers at conferences helps with networking and establishing a reputation in the discipline. Peer-reviewed conference papers and publications will count toward the research record. Invited presentations and publications that demonstrate recognition of the candidate's expertise by objective third parties will be considered, but do not count as much as peer-reviewed work. Papers presented at recognized national conferences in the field, such as ICA, NCA, AEJMC, or AAPOR, will be given more weight than papers in local or regional conferences.

Typically, conference papers should be converted into peer-reviewed publications. Yield rate from conference papers into research publications is an indicator of a systematic research program. It is the candidate's responsibility to find the right balance between conference presentations, peer-reviewed publications and invited publications.

Mentoring Graduate Students

Advising MA and PhD students is expected. Publications with graduate students demonstrate mentorship and count toward teaching and research. However, it is important to ensure that faculty-student collaborations meet the highest levels of ethical practice and do not violate norms that are commonly practiced within the discipline. When in doubt, the candidate should seek clarification on normative standards of sharing credit with students from the Murrow Graduate Studies committee or the Tenure and Promotion committee.

Service

Along with teaching and research, members of the faculty are required to contribute to service. For details on service contributions recognized by the university, refer to the faculty manual

(Section III, page 12). A well-rounded service portfolio includes service to the College, the University, and the discipline or profession. Serving on College and University committees, reviewing papers for journals, grants, or academic conferences are typical service contributions. Before committing to demanding service appointments, it is advisable for the faculty member to check with the mentor and the T&P committee. Candidates should document evidence of service. For example, if the service involved reviewing papers for a conference, such as ICA, NCA or AEJ, the candidate should maintain a record of their service. Likewise, documentation of other service contributions such as reviewing for journals is recommended. One of the expected service contributions is submission of one or more posters to the WSU Academic Showcase. Media appearances, offering expert testimony and other translational research efforts are also of value.

Mentor

Untenured faculty members are strongly encouraged to consult with the associate dean and select a committee of tenured professors within the college as mentors. More information on WSU's mentoring policy can be found at following link on the provost's website

http://provost.wsu.edu/faculty_mentoring/guidelines.html.

The following verbatim quote from the above website offers a summary of intended benefits of a mentorship program:

(a) assistance in understanding the structure and culture of the department/unit and developing a professional network, (b) individual recognition and encouragement, (c) honest criticism and feedback, (d) advice on responsibilities and professional priorities, (e) knowledge of the "system" as well as informal rules, (f) long-range career planning, (g) support and advocacy from colleagues, and (h) opportunities for collaborative projects.

Although the ultimate responsibility for career advancement rests with the mentee, WSU's mentoring program is designed to provide assistance and guidance.