

Performance Evaluation Criteria for Tenure and Promotion  
in the Department of Political Science

Under the terms of the *UNM Faculty Handbook* (<http://handbook.unm.edu>) faculty performance is evaluated in four principal areas: Teaching, Scholarship, Service, and Personal Characteristics. The department expects faculty to be competent and effective in all areas, but teaching and publication constitute the chief basis for tenure and promotion, in accordance with the department's academic mission.

I. Teaching

Teaching is considered to include “a person’s knowledge of the major field of study, awareness of developments in it, skill in communicating to students and in arousing their interest, ability to stimulate them to think critically, to have them appreciate the interrelationship of the fields of knowledge, and to be concerned with applications of knowledge to vital human problems.” This *Faculty Handbook* definition forms the basis for evaluating teaching in the Department of Political Science. The departmental standards include good communication skills, showing evidence of strong preparation that reflects the current state of knowledge in the field, organizing topics in a meaningful sequence, interacting with students in an encouraging and stimulating way, and showing a lively commitment to and enthusiasm for learning and the discipline. The indicators of teaching performance include:

- IDEA (or successor evaluation system) student course evaluations
- Peer observation
- Course syllabi and descriptions of courses taught
- Undergraduate honors thesis supervision
- Graduate student thesis and dissertation supervision
- Class enrollments (including independent studies)

- Teaching awards
- Involvement of students in academic research (e.g., paper presentation, co-authorship of articles).

As easy grading may produce high student evaluations, the department will consider average course grades in conjunction with IDEA and other indicators of teaching performance, to the extent permitted by the university's data management systems.

Because graduate students in political science generally and rationally choose senior faculty members as their primary dissertation advisors, it is not expected that probationary faculty in political science will direct dissertations; however participation on dissertation committees and committees-on-studies, as well as co-authorship of articles with graduate students, are important contributions to the teaching mission of the department. The number of enrolled graduate students varies across subfields, such that specialists in some areas may have few opportunities to chair dissertation committees. Thus for the purposes of promotion to Professor, direction of dissertations is a positive indicator regarding contribution to the graduate program, but it is not a fixed expectation and in its absence other contributions to the graduate program are recognized.

## II. Research

The *Handbook* stipulates some general minimum standards. It is expected that research and scholarship, “will normally find expression in publication and, where appropriate, be reflected in teaching.” For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate’s research contribution should be of such quality that it provides the basis for developing a national or international reputation in the profession. Promotion to the rank of Professor calls for a maturing of this reputation on the basis of significant additional contributions to the faculty member’s field of research.

For political science, in common with most other academic disciplines, publication of peer-reviewed articles and books represent the most important means of disseminating research. There are a large number of journals in political science and related disciplines where political scientists publish their work. Beyond the particular subject matter of the research, the two general questions in evaluating a research record are where the research is published and how much is published.

### A. Where should you publish?

1. Refereed Journals. The quality of the journal provides an indicator of the quality and visibility of published work. There is rough hierarchy in terms of the reputations and visibility of political science journals, which changes slowly in response to editorial leadership and policies, new technology, and the appearance of new journals. Specific rankings differ according to methods (reputation versus empirical citation and network analysis), and scholars in different subfields tend to rank journals differently (Garand and Giles 2003, McLean, Blais, Giles and Garand 2009; West, Bergstrom, and Bergstrom 2010; West 2010). An ideal record for tenure and promotion would include publication in one or more of the most prestigious journals in the discipline, such as *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *International Organization*, or *World Politics*. A strong national reputation can be built through publication in other high quality general or subfield journals, as identified by contemporary rankings. While the norm is to publish in the discipline's journals, a comparable scholarly achievement for political scientists is to publish in similarly well-ranked social science or interdisciplinary journals. An adequate research record for tenure and promotion would include at least some publications in the higher visibility general or subfield journals.

2. Books: Books are an important means of scholarly communication in political science. Here the reputation of the press is often used as a guide to the quality of the book itself. Generally an academic press is preferred over a commercial press. The reviews a book receives in scholarly journals and elsewhere provide further evidence on the scholarly achievement that it represents.

3. Other writings: Publishing chapters in scholarly books is an alternative method of disseminating research, and can be appropriate for scholars contributing to emerging fields of inquiry or policy research for which timeliness is essential to the work's value. Such publications are generally less visible to the discipline at large and may not be subject to as rigorous a peer evaluation process as refereed articles and books. Publication and dissemination of research through edited volumes alone does not generally constitute an adequate research record for tenure and promotion. Editing collected volumes, and publishing book reviews in professional journals are also important forms of scholarly communication, but do not generally represent original research. As such, they are viewed as supplements to, rather than as core components of, a promotion and tenure candidate's scholarly record. Chapters that candidates themselves contribute to edited volumes are of course recognized as scholarly contributions in their own right

Presenting papers at conferences is crucial to developing a research program and obtaining feedback, but is not considered a primary or peer-reviewed mechanism of disseminating research. It is indicative of research effort, not of success in publishing research.

B. How much should you publish?

In common with other academic disciplines, it is very difficult in political science to indicate with any precision the number of articles/books a candidate for tenure and promotion should publish. Simply counting the number of articles published is too mechanical a way to assess a candidate's research contribution. Naturally the quantity of publications must be balanced against their quality, and expectations about quantity are lower for a promotion candidate who has published in journals that are generally viewed as especially high quality, or who has published work that has had a particularly significant impact on the discipline. While one publication or more a year in the higher visibility journals would represent an outstanding research record, some very good political scientists have built their reputations on less. An adequate record for tenure and promotion would include at least some publication in the high visibility journals, in addition to publication in less visible refereed and non-refereed outlets. A book on its own, particularly if it is based primarily on dissertation research, is not adequate for tenure and promotion. Evidence of a second major research project is required. For promotion to Professor, the department expects significant strengthening of the publication record beyond the level achieved for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor.

C. Other considerations:

1. Outside funding. Another indication of research achievement is the ability to secure outside funding for projects leading to published research. Generally the amounts received by political scientists are not large by the standards of the natural sciences, yet the competition is stiff and the review process often quite rigorous.

2. Independence of research. With some sub-field variation, it is common for political scientists to work together on research questions and to coauthor publications. Coauthors are

usually listed alphabetically. If it is not alphabetical, and without any specific qualification, then it is assumed that the first author made the more significant contribution.

Co-authorship raises the significant question of the scholarly independence of the researcher. Particularly for junior faculty, it is important for tenure and promotion that their research record show that they moved beyond the work they did for their dissertation and that they have made an independent contribution to research. This can generally be best achieved through single-authorship or by co-authorship with peers or graduate students.

3. Earlier research. In tenure and promotion decisions, the Department of Political Science is most interested in the work done while at the University of New Mexico. Earlier research is primarily a consideration in the hiring decision. While at the University of New Mexico it is expected that there be evidence of a sustained research agenda.

### III. Service

Service includes membership on, or chairing of, department or University committees; editing department news releases, or arranging department colloquia; working for professional associations or serving as a reviewer for professional journals or grant-giving agencies; and service to the local, state, national, or international community, perhaps in the form of lectures, op-ed contributions, media appearances and policy briefs. Although the lack of a service record is not regarded as sufficient cause for denying tenure or promotion, the department values the service provided by faculty. It is expected that the service load of junior faculty should be relatively light, giving them more time for the primary tasks of teaching and research; conversely, candidates for promotion to Professor are expected to have demonstrated significant leadership within and service to the department, university, or profession.

### IV. Personal Characteristics

The *Faculty Handbook* states that of “primary concern here are intellectual breadth, emotional stability or maturity, and a sufficient vitality and forcefulness to constitute effectiveness. There must also be a sufficient degree of compassion and willingness to cooperate, so that an individual can work

harmoniously with others while maintaining independence of thought and action. This category is so broad that flexibility is imperative in its appraisal.”