

Department Standards and Expectations for Promotion and Tenure

Department of Psychology

The University's Policy on Academic Freedom and Tenure specifies that probationary faculty are to be evaluated in the four categories of teaching, scholarly work, service and personal characteristics. Successful candidates must demonstrate *competence* and *effectiveness* in all four categories, and must have demonstrated *excellence* in at least one of the categories of teaching or scholarly work. The following descriptions discuss the expectations of the Department of Psychology in these four areas, the criteria to be used to judge effectiveness and excellence, and the standards to be applied to these criteria.

Research

Peer-reviewed publications. The most important component of a research record demonstrating competence, effectiveness, and excellence in this area consists of peer-reviewed publications. Candidates demonstrating these qualities in research will have generated a corpus of work, published or in press, that has had, or promises to have, substantial impact on their field of inquiry. Naturally, not all peer-reviewed papers contribute equally in this regard. Publications can be differentiated based on several criteria:

First, some papers are judged to have *greater potential impact* than others. This feature is, naturally, not perfectly assessed. Nonetheless, there exist several bases by which to judge potential impact: (a) Some papers may have already achieved a substantial impact, as reflected by citations in the scholarly literature. (b) Very recent papers have had little chance to be cited numerous times. In these cases, the science citation journal impact factor (or comparable impact factor; e.g., Scimago) can be used as a rough guide to likely impact. Papers published in higher impact journals contribute more heavily to a record of competence, effectiveness, or excellence than papers published in journals with weaker impact factors. Importantly, given that the range for impact factors (and their interpretation) varies significantly across fields, the impact of journals will be evaluated relative to other journals within the person's field (c) External referees may comment on the importance of papers a candidate has published.

Second, *first-authored papers* contribute more strongly to a person's record of achievement than 2nd or nth-authored papers. However, in some content areas the last/contributing authorship position is reserved for the individual who is responsible for the project. In such cases the "contributing author" position will be viewed similarly to first authorship. Nonetheless, it remains important for candidates to publish as first author on some papers.

Third, papers that are published *independent of graduate or post-doctoral advisors* (or other senior colleagues who have played mentorship roles) offer stronger evidence of ability to conduct publishable research than papers that include these individuals as authors. Relatedly, in many content areas it is important for candidates to publish papers that report data that the candidate has had a major role in collecting at UNM, a local data collection site, or a site that the candidate has played a major role in establishing.

Papers that exhibit all three of these qualities; namely, first-authored papers, published in high impact journals, independent of senior advisors or mentors, offer especially valuable evidence of competence or excellence in research. The reason is simple: Such papers uniquely offer clear evidence of the candidate's ability to independently take the lead in formulating, executing, and communicating the results of a research study judged by peers to be of sufficient quality to be accepted for publication in leading, high impact journals. For this reason, for instance, several papers that possess all three qualities could very well be judged more favorably than a corpus of twice as many papers, half of which were published in high impact journals but of nth-authorship by the candidate, and half of which were first-authored but published in low impact journals.

It is difficult to specify in unambiguous terms the quantity and quality of publications that demonstrate competence/effectiveness or excellence in research. As implied above, evidence of effectiveness requires some first-authored papers in higher impact journals and independent of senior advisors. Ideally, a successful candidate will have published, on average, multiple papers per year, of consistent quality throughout the pre-tenure period, with a substantial number appearing in high impact journals (relative to a person's field), first-authored, and independent of senior advisors or mentors. A record typically would raise concerns about a candidate's effectiveness in producing scholarly work if, even were the record to contain multiple papers per year, including ones in high impact journals and first-authored papers, the record lacked any single paper that was simultaneously first-authored, in a high impact journal, and independent of senior advisors or mentors. A record of excellence requires multiple first-authored publications in high impact journals, independent of senior authors.

Chapters, books, and book reviews. All papers can contribute to the judgment that a candidate has demonstrated effectiveness or excellence in research. In general, however, publication of chapters in edited volumes (even if first-authored) or book reviews cannot substitute for publication of scholarly articles in high impact peer-reviewed publications. Most untenured faculty do not undertake the writing of a book, whether it be a textbook, a trade book, a popular book, or a research monograph, and perhaps for good reason – their efforts are typically best put toward execution of research and publication in peer-reviewed journals. The impact of a book on judgment of effectiveness and excellence in research will typically depend on assessment of the extent to which the book's contents contribute intellectually to a person's field of study. (For instance, a monograph putting forward a novel theoretical approach and integrating research findings in important ways could have meaningful positive impact, whereas a textbook typically would not.)

External grants. Research in some areas may require external funding and in other areas such funding may facilitate research. Hence, candidates in these areas may have spent considerable time and effort writing grant proposals. Successful grant applications to external agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF), particularly those on which the candidate is a PI, contribute to a record of scholarship demonstrating effectiveness and excellence. Hence, the records of two candidates, one candidate a PI on a funded grant, the other lacking a funded grant application, could be judged differently as a result. At the same time, unlike a strong record of independent peer-reviewed publication, grant-getting is neither necessary nor sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness and excellence. Someone with a strong record of independent publication in peer-

reviewed journals could be judged excellent in research, even lacking grant support. And someone who has obtained a funded grant could, lacking a solid record of independent publication, be judged as not having amassed a record of scholarship indicative of effectiveness.

Unpublished papers and unfunded grant applications. Though probationary faculty may be praised for writing and submitting papers and grant applications in annual reviews or other evaluations prior to the tenure evaluation (as these activities represent steps toward achievement in the domain of research), papers that remain unaccepted for publication or grant applications that remain unfunded generally add little to nothing to a tenure candidate's record of achievement. Papers that are in press or grants that are en route to funding (as evidenced by proper documentation), by contrast, will be judged to contribute to the record of scholarly achievement.

Programmatic research. A corpus of papers that appears in high quality journals, particularly those first-authored and independent of senior advisors, will be judged as evidencing effectiveness or excellence in research, whether those papers concern related phenomena as part of a systematic "program" of research, or unrelated topics. However, a clear and systematic program of research may be viewed positively by faculty and external reviewers as an indicator of the candidate's likely research trajectory. Moreover, the programmatic nature of a faculty member's research may affect the interest of graduate students in pursuing a degree and their own research interests at UNM, and the ability of a faculty member to attract graduate students may affect their research success here.

Conference talks and other oral presentations. Oral or poster presentations at conferences offer valuable opportunities for researchers to disseminate their work, elicit feedback and fruitful discussion about their work, and find new colleagues working on similar topics. Such conference activities are looked upon favorably in the review process. Still, they do not substitute for peer-reviewed publication. Invited addresses or talks, typically initiated based on a candidate's published work, can offer evidence that a candidate's research is having an impact on the candidate's field. They are helpful (though, at the level of promotion to Associate Professor, not necessary) components of a candidate's record.

Teaching

The demonstration of competence and effectiveness in teaching (and potentially excellence, if the candidate's *teaching* record is being evaluated as the primary area for excellence) is a required characteristic of the successful candidate for tenure and promotion in the Department of Psychology. Achieving such a status does not require one to become a classical orator or an audiovisual technology expert. However, it does require the accumulation of an array of converging evidence that substantiates the claim that the required level of effective teaching has been reached. It is not necessarily expected that a high level of competence will be demonstrated immediately. Rather, since the fact of hiring in the first place is based in part on predicted teaching potential, it is typical that the level of teaching performance by the probationary faculty member will show a positive trajectory during the probationary period. This is especially so during the years leading up to the mid-probationary review. Further, teaching is not an activity that is limited to classrooms and scheduled classes. The dimension of teaching also includes

mentoring activities in laboratory and independent study venues, and the willingness and ability to establish respectful and productive relationships with students.

Classroom teaching. Several factors are taken into consideration when evaluating a faculty member's classroom teaching. Specifically, the faculty member is expected to: (1) develop and execute up-to-date and accurate course curricula, (2) participate in the departmental teaching mission, typically across a range of undergraduate and graduate courses. Generally, by the time of the tenure review the candidate will have prepared several individual courses, (3) use the agreed-upon methods of course evaluation. These methods should assess the effectiveness of the instructor, the course as a whole, and the content of the course. Typically the university's standard evaluation system (completed by students) will be used as at least one of the instruments of evaluation. If the faculty member wishes to use additional methods for evaluating classroom teaching, they must be approved in advance upon consultation with the probationary faculty member's area head, the department chair, and the teaching mentor, (4) have these standard student ratings evaluated primarily by comparing the candidate's ratings to those of the department and to the college overall. Ratings that consistently exceed the Department of Psychology's mean ratings will be viewed with the highest regard. In interpreting the class evaluations, consideration will be given to factors such as class size, inherent content difficulty, and interest and motivation of students, (5) have lectures periodically observed by senior faculty. Typically observations will take place each semester throughout the probationary period, (6) demonstrate appropriate self-reflection and a plan for remediation upon receiving feedback on teaching, and (7) show evidence of respectful treatment of students, including making reasonable course demands, reliably setting and keeping office hours, providing timely student feedback, and demonstrating responsiveness to questions and inquiries posed by students. Evidence of this dimension comes from the standard student ratings, but could be influenced by a history of student complaints to administrative faculty and staff.

Mentoring activities. It is expected that faculty members participate in the training of graduate students throughout the probationary period. Relevant evidence includes serving on thesis and dissertation committees, recruiting students into their own research specialties, and facilitating creative student research activities. The faculty mentor is expected to be able to advance his/her graduate students through to the achievement of their advanced degrees and to facilitate their professional placement. This is seen as evidence of the ability to mentor professional development, which is a central feature of our role in graduate education.

While it is not considered unusual or necessarily problematic for graduate students to change graduate mentors during the course of their training, the consistent inability to retain and develop students through the program may be viewed negatively.

Graduate students will be invited to submit feedback about a candidate. The feedback may be written or verbal. For the latter case, graduate students will be offered a meeting either with the faculty member scheduled to present the candidate's teaching record, or with the Associate Chair for Graduate Education.

The mentoring of honors students and independent study (PSY 499) students is viewed positively as well, but is not generally considered a complete substitute for mentoring graduate students.

Service

The Department of Psychology does not expect major contributions in the area of service by probationary faculty, and so the department chair will be mindful of placing these faculty on committees requiring limited amounts of work. Service commitments outside the department (e.g., reviewing of journal manuscripts, public lectures, uncompensated professional workshops), while desirable, must be balanced against the faculty member's primary responsibilities in the areas of teaching and research.

While attempts will be made to avoid overburdening probationary faculty with service responsibilities, this should not be interpreted to mean that the contributions of the faculty member in major departmental functions are not expected or valued. Indeed, probationary faculty are expected to attend and fully participate in functions such as departmental faculty meetings, colloquia, and hiring.

Personal Characteristics

"Personal characteristics" constitute a fourth area in which faculty performance is to be evaluated, as required by the Faculty Handbook. As defined in the Handbook Policy on Academic Freedom and Tenure, relevant personal traits are those that influence an individual's effectiveness as a teacher, a scholar, a researcher and a leader in a professional area. One trait that clearly influences an individual's effectiveness as a member of an academic community is collegiality. While independence of thought is valued, respect for others and some level of congeniality affect both how the individual's ideas are received and also the general work environment that the department is trying to achieve. Indeed, a sense of teamwork in contributing to achieving shared goals (e.g., attempting to provide an excellent education to our students) is an important potential benefit of being an academic. The extent to which one's interpersonal skills contribute to a harmonious working environment is thus relevant to judgments about one's suitability for a faculty role.

A second general category of traits that can strongly influence a faculty member's effectiveness relates to the domain of character and ethical behavior (e.g., with respect to the protection of human subjects or the care of animals). Perhaps most fundamental is whether one can be trusted. This is applicable to professional behavior, such as statements made in the classroom and in reports of one's scholarly work. Given that universities exist for the preservation, discovery and dissemination of truth, fidelity--the trustworthiness of one's assertions and work--is indispensable to the faculty role. As expressed in the AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics included in the Faculty Handbook, professors "accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty." More generally, the faculty member's role as teacher and member of an academic community carries with it the duty to reflect the best scholarly and ethical standards of the discipline.

One arena in which both independence of thought and interpersonal skills may be manifest is in one's contributions to deliberations in departmental faculty and committee meetings. A willingness to contribute one's own perspective, ideas and work, while also showing due respect for the opinions of others, contributes to the effective functioning as a community of scholars.

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