A. Criteria of Evaluation

1. Teaching is of paramount importance. It is to be evaluated with regard to overall effectiveness, along the dimensions of course content, organization, and presentation, as well as informal factors such as discussion and helpfulness outside the classroom. The obvious instruments for judging achievement in the classroom are student evaluations, course materials, and testimony from classroom visitors, these to include not only departmental colleagues but also our colleagues from other departments. For a reason having to do with the nature of the discipline itself, namely, its dependence on actual dialogue, we find that we spend many hours of the week in conversation with one another and with students. We as a department endorse this practice as an essential aspect of our discipline.

Teaching philosophy, both in and out of the classroom, is not a matter of making difficult ideas easy, but rather one of encouraging philosophical reflection, drawing students into the difficulties that motivate and constitute philosophical thinking and helping them to strive for an honest understanding of the issues, where they stand with respect to them, and how to go on from there. These, perhaps more than anything else, are the measures of success and excellence.

2. We fully subscribe to the idea that professional growth must weigh heavily in evaluation decisions both because of its impact on teaching and its intrinsic value for the intellectual life of the department and wider university community. Continued intellectual vitality and creativity promoted through philosophical engagement within the department and with the profession as a whole are essential for the life of the department; vitality in philosophy, more than in other disciplines, calls for dialogue with one's colleagues both near and far. Accordingly, we construe professional growth in the discipline of philosophy broadly as philosophical activity of high quality that actually or potentially makes contact with the wider philosophical public. Such activity, therefore, will typically not include routine course preparation, though it may include development and preparation of new courses, especially where the latter extends one's philosophical interests in ways that may go public. The following specifies various ways in which the activity can be carried out, but does not fix a list of items from which to carve necessary and sufficient conditions of professional growth.

i. Ongoing philosophical writing made available to other philosophers through publication, colloquium presentations, or circulation of manuscripts.

ii. Active participation in professional conferences and meetings, including formal commentary on the work of others, panel presentations, sustained seminar participation, and long-term engagement with working groups.

iii. Regular reviewing, refereeing, or editorial work for journals or publishing houses in philosophy.
iv. Non-ephemeral relationships of advising, consultation, or criticism, with scholars or graduate students in philosophy, involving reading, reflection, and response.

v. Course and curricular development, undertaken in response to specific departmental or University need, where the activities in question take one out of one’s own familiar philosophical territory, and produce not only the needed curricular results, but also provide an additional basis for the kinds of philosophical activity specified above.

With respect to the criterion of professional growth, the Department will apply that criterion somewhat differently on different occasions for evaluation. On all occasions, whether for tenure or promotion, the various channels for dialogue mentioned above will be considered in the departmental assessment. But on the occasion of deciding on promotion to Full Professor, the provision concerning writing, (1), will be given special weight. For purposes of this decision, written work communicated to other philosophers is not just one permissible channel of dialogue. To be advanced to Full Professor, a candidate must have made available to philosophers outside the Department his or her written work. Furthermore, members of the Department will judge whether the work has made a contribution to the field in the sense that it has been well-received by philosophers of substantial merit. Refereed publication in a reputable journal will sometimes be taken as tantamount to satisfying this requirement. So will publication of a book. But members of the Department reserve the right to make their own judgment on the quality of the work published and the quality of the journals or publishing houses involved. Refereed journal publication or book publication does not automatically satisfy the requirement. Members of the Department will also judge whether, in view of the quality, the quantity of publication is sufficient. Publication is not itself a necessity. Manuscripts can be sent to other philosophers, read in seminars, etc. But in that case the favorable reception of the manuscript by philosophers of merit outside the Department must be documented by letters from the philosophers in question or by specific allusion to the manuscript in their published work. For the candidate’s unpublished work, as for published work, members of the Department will make a judgment as to whether the candidate’s contribution to the field is significant.

3. The Department reaffirms its recognition of the importance of advising and counseling as a consideration in coming to a decision on promotion. Reflection on practice reveals that we spend many hours of the week in consultation with students, which is not directly tied to classroom issues. Some of this time can be readily distinguished as time given to routine matters of advising, such as guiding course selection and satisfying graduation requirements. However, the members of the Department have tended to devote considerable time and energy to career advising and to counseling students, both majors and non-majors, on a broad range of concerns with which they come to us. The Department takes into account such activity in the evaluation of a candidate for tenure and promotion.

4. The Department recognizes service to the University as another obligation of its members. This we construe as including University committee work, administrative work within the Department and elsewhere in the University, aid to student organizations, contributions to public occasions at the University, among other things.

5. Service to the community outside the University will be considered favorably in the candidate’s total evaluation.
B. Procedures of Evaluation

1. It is expected that, during the period comprising the semester of evaluation and the preceding term, each tenure-line department member will attend meetings of at least three distinct courses being taught by the candidate. Which courses will be left to the choice of the visiting colleague. The visits will complete the process of classroom visitation ordinarily begun in earlier terms.

2. The candidate's review file, including all letters from outside the department, all student teaching evaluations and all other relevant materials will be made available to department members a reasonable length of time prior to the evaluation. Department members participating in the review are required to give careful attention to this material.

3. The Department, excluding the candidate, will meet prior to the evaluation deadline. At this meeting department members will submit to the Head Officer a letter addressed to the Faculty Advancement Committee expressing their personal evaluation of the candidate and recommendations to the Committee. During this meeting all evaluation materials will be discussed and the views of every member expressed and addressed. In cases of tenure and promotion he Department will attempt to arrive at a consensus evaluation of the candidate and will attempt to formulate a unanimous recommendation (positive or negative) to the Advancement Committee. If such a consensus can be reached, the chairperson or a designated department member will then draft a departmental letter of recommendation to the Advancement Committee expressing this departmental evaluation and recommendation. This letter will be signed by all department members participating in the review. If a consensus cannot be reached, the letter will represent the opinion of those in the majority and dissents will be recorded.

4. Subsequent to the meeting, but prior to the submission of the candidate's file to the Committee, Department members are free to submit to the Head Officer addenda to their personal letters for inclusion in the file.