

Department of Philosophy
University of Puget Sound
Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion
April, 2024

The criteria set out in this document are intended to guide the evaluation process for tenure, promotion, and review of Philosophy Department faculty members. This document should be consulted in conjunction with the *Faculty Code* and the *Evaluation User Guide* (formerly known as the “Buff Document.”)

The five general areas of evaluation, as established by the *Faculty Code*, are:

1. Teaching
2. Professional Growth
3. Academic and Career Advising
4. University Service
5. Community Service

For tenure decisions, the criteria singled out by the *Faculty Code* (Chapter III, Section 3, Paragraph d) concern areas 1, 2, and 4, together with the needs of the department, school, or program and the university.

1. Teaching

The department recognizes that teaching is of paramount importance in all evaluations.

1a. Criteria of Evaluation: Teaching will be evaluated with regard to overall effectiveness. Factors that will be considered include organization, presentation, the appropriateness of selected content, the design of assignments, the fair and thorough evaluation of student work, the use of inclusive teaching practices, and the general ability to help students engage with philosophy. When applicable, effectiveness in supervision of independent research projects whether during the summer or the academic year will be taken into account. Informal factors will also be considered, such as philosophical and pedagogical discussion with both students and colleagues.

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 constitute and motivate philosophical thinking, and helping them to strive for an honest understanding of the issues at hand, to gauge where they stand with respect to these issues, and to contribute to a constructive resolution or deeper understanding of them. These, perhaps more than anything else, are the measure of philosophical teaching excellence.

Some of the teaching duties of the department include classes outside of the philosophy department. For the purposes of evaluation, evaluatees' performance in these classes will be given no less weight than their performance in philosophy classes. Because we are philosophers, the expectation is that evaluatees' performance in these classes will reflect many of the same values as those mentioned above, although at the same time it is understood that classes outside of philosophy can emphasize these values in different ways and to different degrees.

1b. Methods for Evaluation: The methods for judging teaching effectiveness include in order of importance the review of course materials (including syllabi and assignments), the testimony of colleagues visiting classes, and student feedback forms. It is expected that, normally during the year prior to the period of evaluation, each tenure-line department member who is participating in the evaluation will attend meetings of at least three distinct courses being taught by the evaluatee, although when this is impossible visiting two distinct courses is acceptable. Which courses will be left to the choice of the visiting colleague in consultation with the evaluatee, and a list of which classes are chosen will be passed along to the FAC.

2. Professional Growth

Professional growth weighs heavily in evaluation decisions, both for its intrinsic value to the intellectual life of the department and the university, and also for its impact on teaching. Continued intellectual vitality and creativity promoted through philosophical engagement within the department and with the profession as a whole are essential to the life of the department. Accordingly, we construe professional growth in the discipline as a 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, although it may include preparation and development of new courses, especially where this extends one's philosophical interests in ways that may go public.

2a. Criteria of Evaluation: There is no one set path that professional growth must take. The following list describes ways in which professional growth might be evidenced, but the list is not meant to fix necessary or sufficient conditions for growth.

- (i) The publication of a peer-reviewed article, either in a journal or as a book chapter.
- (ii) The publication of a book.
- (iii) The publication of a book review.
- (iv) The publication of non-peer-reviewed work, including work intended for a popular audience.
- (v) The presentation of a paper at a conference or workshop or departmental colloquium.
- (vi) The production of a manuscript that is yet to be published (this might include a manuscript under review but not yet accepted for publication, work in progress that is not yet ready for submission, and more).
- (vii) Active participation in professional conferences and meetings, including formal commentary on the work of others, panel presentations, or sustained seminar participation.

2b. Methods for Evaluation: Members of the department participating in an evaluation will examine the work provided as evidence of professional growth and judge whether it has made a contribution to the field or has the potential to make such a contribution. The work provided should be done during the period of evaluation, rather than earlier work fully covered in a previous evaluation.

While there are other ways of satisfying the requirement, one refereed article in a reputable journal or a book published by a reputable press is sufficient to satisfy the requirement, if members of the department judge the work as being of high enough quality. Members of the department will also judge whether, in view of

the quality, the quantity of the work is sufficient. There is no set formula to follow, but the department recognizes that it can take longer to produce higher quality work, and so there are sometimes tradeoffs between quality and quantity.

In the case of tenure review, the department encourages but does not require letters submitted by outside evaluators, experts in their field who can testify to the quality of the written work of the faculty member or otherwise speak to professional growth.

3. Academic and Career Advising

The department recognizes 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 semester in consultation with students, which is not directly tied to classroom issues. Some of this time is devoted to routine matters of advising such as guiding course selection and satisfying graduation requirements. However, members of the department have also 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 evaluatee for tenure and promotion.

4. University Service

The department recognizes and values the importance of service to the university. Such service can take different forms, including but not limited to,

- (i) University committee work and other participation in faculty governance
- (ii) Administrative work within the department (such as chairing the philosophy department, serving as a head officer, etc.)
- (iii) Administrative work elsewhere in the university
- (iv) Aid to student organizations and/or student events, especially in connection with extra-curricular or co-curricular activities that enhance the intellectual climate of the department or university.
- (v) Contributions to public occasions at the university.

5. Community Service

Service to the community in an area related to one's field of expertise outside the university will be considered favorably in the evaluatee's total evaluation.

6. Further Evaluation Procedures

The evaluatee's review file, including all letters from outside the department, all student feedback forms, and all other relevant materials will be made available to department members in accordance with the deadlines specified with the *Evaluation User Guide*. Department members participating in the review are required to give careful attention to this material.

The department, excluding the evaluatee, 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 evaluatee and recommendations to the Committee. During this meeting evaluation materials will be discussed and the views of every member expressed and addressed. In cases of tenure and promotion the department will attempt to arrive at a consensus evaluation of the evaluatee 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 designated department member will then draft a departmental letter of recommendation to the Advancement Committee expressing this departmental evaluation and recommendation. The letter will be signed by all department members participating in the review. If a consensus cannot be reached, the letter will represent the opinions of those in the majority and dissents will be recorded. If the head officer disagrees with the majority opinion, they will submit a minority recommendation.

Philosophy faculty members involved in writing these revised guidelines: Sam Liao, Sara Protasi, Justin Tiehen, and Ariela Tubert.