

University of Houston
Department of Comparative Cultural Studies
Promotion and Tenure Guidelines and Procedures
(revised September 2023)

1. Introduction

The faculty of the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies (CCS) are trained in and work across a broad range of related fields that explore human diversity and experience across time and space. In their interdisciplinary efforts to understand the nature and culture of human diversity, CCS faculty utilize a variety of theoretical approaches, research methodologies and modes of scholarship. For example, Anthropology is a broad discipline that bridges the sciences and humanities, and covers a variety of subjects, including ethnography, human biology, paleontology, history and archaeology. As a result, Anthropology faculty may employ research methods that are quantitative or qualitative; ethnographic, archaeological, or biological; archival or contemporary; historical or literary; laboratory-based or field-based; or any combination thereof. Similarly, scholars in Religious Studies or Liberal Studies may approach their studies through the perspectives and methods of the humanities or the social sciences. CCS Faculty therefore work across a wide range of disciplines, scholarly norms, and standards of distinction.

For heuristic purposes, there are two basic forms of research in CCS: (a) the Social Sciences paradigm and (b) the Humanities paradigm.

- a) In the Social Sciences paradigm, research is disseminated primarily in peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as authored books (single or multiple authors), monographs, reports, book chapters and well-documented datasets. The measure of quality in this paradigm is often the prestige or impact factor of the publication venue, and the rate/number of citations of the articles published. Researchers in the social sciences paradigm sometimes publish co-authored articles, therefore the proportion contributed by each of the co-authors is typically noted. In the social sciences paradigm, a productive researcher would publish at least one single-authored or multiple co-authored article per year.
- b) In the Humanities paradigm, single-authored books are generally considered the highest standard of output, with the prestige of the press and peer reviews subsequent to publication often serving as a measure of quality. The humanities paradigm also values journal articles, book chapters, and other creative works and exhibits. A productive researcher in cultural anthropology averages one (or more) single-authored article(s) per year, with appropriate conversion taken into account for book writing. For those whose work articulates with creative fields, such as visual or museum anthropology, the expected and normal modes of scholarship may include public performances and exhibits.

Because CCS has researchers in both the social sciences and humanities paradigms, no single ranking of publication outlets, forms of productivity, or external funding can adequately or comprehensively assess research productivity across all CCS faculty. The standards of performance in CCS need to be flexible, appropriate to the norms for achievement in their own research areas.

Junior faculty should develop pre-tenure plans relevant to their own scholarly modes of inquiry.

The Department may designate a senior faculty mentor for each new hire during the pre-tenure period, although this is not mandatory (neither for the Department or the newly hired faculty member).

2. Third-Year Faculty Review for Tenure-Track Assistant Professors

The purpose of a third-year review is to advise a tenure-track professor and the Department as to whether the professor under review is making adequate progress toward her/his tenure review. While this review is mandated by University and Departmental Bylaws, it should be considered primarily as a document designed to evaluate the progress of a professor toward tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, and to suggest possible areas of strengths and potential weaknesses that a candidate might wish to address prior to the actual review for promotion and tenure.

A professor undergoing his/her third-year review will submit his/her file of supporting materials to the departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee by a pre-designated date in the Fall semester for review. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will write an overall assessment letter, to be submitted to the CCS Chair. The CCS Chair reads the Promotion and Tenure Committee's assessment and writes her/his own assessment. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will address its review to the CLASS Dean, and the review should recommend, as appropriate, how the tenure-track professor can strengthen his/her case for tenure in the ensuing years leading to the tenure review.

2.1. Third-Year Review Dossier

The Third-Year Review file will be assembled and submitted by the professor under review. The professor under review is permitted and encouraged to request the advice and/ or assistance of any tenured member of the CCS faculty, or any other trusted academic mentor, in compiling this packet. The dossier should include, minimally: a current curriculum vitae; copies of all publications; instructional materials, such as course syllabi and a selection of representative student course evaluations; and a narrative overview elaborating professional academic activities and accomplishments conducted within the period under review, for each of the three areas of evaluation: research, teaching, and service.

2.2. Evaluation of Research

The review dossier should describe the candidate's research, how the candidate has developed a research agenda, the significance of the research, and the plans to further develop his/her scholarship. By the third year at the University of Houston, the faculty member in question should have begun to make a demonstrable contribution to scholarship in her/his specific area of research. This contribution may take the form of peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, or other products (see guidelines in Section 1, above). The professor may also include articles, book chapters, or other forms of scholarship that have been accepted for publication, including evidence of that acceptance, or which are under review.

2.3. Evaluation of Teaching

The professor under review shall identify her/his pedagogical philosophy and the ways s/he has developed her/his instructional abilities, thereby enhancing the teaching and mentoring missions of CCS and CLASS. In addition to describing his/her teaching activities both within and outside of the classroom, the professor may identify future teaching activities that s/he would like to engage in, including new courses or innovative methods of instruction or mentoring. The professor should include summary teaching evaluations of all courses, copies of student comments as appropriate, and evidence of undergraduate and/or graduate student mentoring, as appropriate. If available, a peer-review of teaching in the form of a letter from a colleague at UH can also be included in the packet.

2.4. Evaluation of Service

Service is defined broadly and includes contributions to committees and other administrative duties within the Department, the university, and/or professional academic societies, and/or service to the wider community (public talks, etc.). The professor under review will submit a description of his/her service and an outline of plans for service in the future.

3. Guidelines for Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with Tenure:

The following guidelines for the professional evaluation of tenure-track faculty members of the Department have been prepared as a general statement. As noted in the introduction to this document, these guidelines do not define a uniform set of requirements of each potential candidate for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure in the Department. Rather, the following guidelines suggest a methodology for the evaluation of each candidate's accomplishments in the areas of research, teaching, and service. As a faculty, the members of the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies believe that the central focus of this diverse multi-disciplinary department is professional research and academic scholarship. Such research is an essential and integral part of teaching and interaction with students. Therefore, candidates for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure will be expected to have established and maintained communication with their professional peers and colleagues, kept abreast of the research in their chosen field, and contributed to the knowledge base within their respective disciplines, sub-disciplines, or interdisciplinary fields of study. Candidates for promotion and tenure will have demonstrated advancement in their professional expertise beyond the graduate-level. The Department and the University in general require that tenured members of the faculty demonstrate a high level of accomplishment in communicating and interacting with students, their professional peers and colleagues both at UH and other institutions. All candidates will be evaluated in three categories: research/scholarship, teaching, and service.

3.1. Research/Scholarship

It is expected that the candidate will have established him-/herself as a credible research scholar with an emerging national profile through:

- a) The development of a coherent and sustained research program
- b) Publication in one or more of the following formats:
 - i. peer-reviewed (inter)national journals
 - ii. book publication by a peer-reviewed press relevant to the candidate's area(s) of expertise
 - iii. creative media (e.g., museum exhibits, catalogues, major edited works)

An expected level of productivity could be publication of one or more scholarly items per year (averaged over time in rank). Peer-reviewed articles, peer-reviewed books, edited or co-edited volumes, professionally refereed online publications, and chapters in books are all considered relevant and appropriate scholarly publications. Research products may also include reports for governmental or non-governmental agencies, whether or not these reports are available to the wider public.

CCS values interdisciplinary scholarship, research support, collaboration, and publication. Faculty working on interdisciplinary topics may be more likely than others to acquire research support from internal UH grants (e.g. funding for research travel, research assistants, postdoctoral researchers, or shared equipment), and they may be more likely than others to appear as senior researchers (rather than as PIs or Co-PIs) on external funding proposals. Faculty working on interdisciplinary topics may be more likely to be involved in the collaborative co-authorship of publications and other scholarly work. Some scholarly publications/products may have very broad impacts as indicated by internal and external peer evaluations (such as a significant book published by a prestigious press); the expectation of one or more publications per year may be waived in these cases. Evidence of emerging national recognition for research in the form of reviews, citations, awards, external letters of assessment, and other forms can help to demonstrate the candidate's level of recognition.

3.2. Teaching

It is also expected that the candidate be a competent instructor, as evidenced by:

- a) adequate scores on teaching evaluations
- b) submitted instructional materials (e.g., syllabi, assignments, online course materials)
- c) participation in departmental curriculum and program development, as appropriate
- d) evaluation of teaching by a peer faculty member, if available
- e) any other relevant criteria, such as teaching awards.

On the basis of student evaluations, peer reviews, awards, and participation in university activities related to teaching, the candidate must show clear effectiveness as a teacher in the classroom, in student advising, in limited mentoring of undergraduate or graduate students' work, as appropriate, and supervision of independent studies or internships, as appropriate, and in other forms of instruction. Candidates whose record reflects difficulty in teaching must also be able to document steps they have taken to correct these problems, and the record must demonstrate, in the form of student evaluations and peer evaluations, that significant improvement has occurred.

3.3. Service

Junior faculty are not expected to devote substantial time and energy to service activities, but are expected to provide limited service to the Department, College, or University. Service to the wider academic profession or the wider public are also recognized. Service is primarily interpreted to include activities that contribute to the life of the Department and the academic community, defined broadly. Participation or leadership in professional organizations meets these criteria. Service may also be reflected in reports developed in formal association with

governmental agencies or non-governmental organizations, in the case of research reports. At least one form of professional service beyond reviews of manuscripts or grant proposals is expected by the time that a candidate is considered for promotion and tenure review.

4. Guidelines for Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor

A positive recommendation for promotion to Professor requires the candidate to demonstrate a continued advancement of her/his research agenda and development of her/his knowledge of the field, and significant recognition of the merit of her/his research/scholarship, teaching, and service beyond the level required for the granting of tenure.

4.1. Research/Scholarship

The research record must demonstrate a consistent progress in publications and scholarly recognition within their chosen sub-discipline. There is no set number and/or type of publication or professional output that will guarantee promotion to Full Professor. The departmental ad-hoc Promotion Committee and other Full Professors within the Department will consider both the quality and quantity of a candidate's published research and/or professional output. The candidate should have produced scholarship at a quality and quantity exceeding that of his/her previous promotion to Associate Professor with tenure. Each candidate is expected to have successfully completed an original research project (or projects) demonstrating that the candidate has moved beyond her/his earlier scholarship. The development of a second major research project may also include evidence of the pursuit of research funding, as appropriate. Publication of this research is ordinarily expected to include an original second book-length study. Alternately, in the case of disciplines or sub-disciplines for which greater emphasis is placed on publication in the form of peer-reviewed articles, research monographs, or other formats, the candidate must exhibit success in these outlets.

Beyond mere output, it is expected that the quality of scholarly publications will have increased so that the candidate can demonstrate an established national and potentially international recognition and esteem for her/his contribution to a specific field of knowledge.

Some indicators showing a candidate's recognition and prestige might include:

- a) Favorable assessment of published work by external evaluators reviewing the candidate's materials for promotion;
- b) The publication of the candidate's book(s) by prestigious presses and/or publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals;
- c) Citations of the candidate's research and publications within the critical literature of his/her discipline, sub-discipline, or interdisciplinary field of study;
- d) Favorable book reviews in distinguished professional journals;
- e) Invitations to participate in national and international symposiums and/or contribute to professionally distinguished edited volumes;
- f) Invitations to review manuscripts and grant applications in the candidate's research area;
- g) Appointments to the editorial or advisory boards of professional journals or book publication series;
- h) Successful application(s) for significant external research grants from reputable

funding sources;

i) Invitations from funding agencies to serve on expert review panels for evaluating research grant applications;

j) Invitations to serve as an external reviewer for an academic program, department, or other academic unit.

4.2. Teaching

A candidate for promotion to Full Professor must have demonstrated a commitment to teaching and the attainment of a high level of competence in classroom instruction. It is expected that each candidate will also have demonstrated ability to work with students on an individual basis, including the mentoring of students in research.

Some indicators of a candidate's competence in the area of teaching and mentoring students might include:

a) Designing courses that enhance the departmental curriculum;

b) Various forms of positive student evaluations;

c) Being asked to serve (either as thesis advisor, external examiner, committee chair, or committee member) of original student research projects, including: undergraduate Senior Honors Thesis, Master's Thesis, and/or Ph.D. Dissertation, within CCS and/or for other departments at this or other institutions;

d) Awards or other accolades for student theses that have been supervised by the candidate;

e) Receiving College, University, or other prestigious awards for teaching and/or mentoring.

4.3. Service

Consideration for promotion to Professor will include an evaluation of each candidate's participation in the Department's obligations in the area of shared university governance. This involves appointment to and participation on committees at the Department, College, and/or University levels, service as Chair of the Department, and/or service as an advisor, coordinator, or director for any departmental component program. Candidates for Full Professor are also strongly encouraged to demonstrate willingness to serve on local, regional, national, and/or international learned or cultural associations connected to their specific area of research. Possible candidates for Full Professor may also have a demonstrated willingness to utilize their professional training and abilities within the local, regional, national, and/or international levels through participation and outreach to community boards, organizations, and societies, as appropriate.

5. Guidelines for Review and Promotion of Promotion-Eligible Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty

The following guidelines for the professional evaluation of non-tenure-track (NTT) instructional faculty members of the Department suggest a methodology for the evaluation of each candidate's accomplishments in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

Review and promotion of promotion-eligible NTT instructional faculty members will follow established procedures of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and the

5.1 Review Criteria

As instructional faculty, NTT faculty members of the Department have teaching as their central focus, with research and service evaluated as secondary considerations. In all NTT instructional faculty reviews, the evaluation of teaching takes precedence over research or service. However, this prioritization of teaching means that an NTT instructional faculty member who also demonstrates substantial achievement in either research or service, or both, will be evaluated in a manner that affords extraordinary credit for those contributions.

5.2 Pre-Promotion Review

Promotion-eligible NTT instructional faculty members at the Assistant Professor rank are required to undergo a thorough pre-promotion review, normally conducted during the third year of the probationary period. Assembling the pre-promotion review packet is the responsibility of the candidate under review. The format of the pre-promotion review packet should follow that of a tenure-track Third Year review packet (see Section 2, above), except that there is no requirement for reviewer letters to be included.

The timeline for conducting the pre-promotion review, normally during the third year of the probationary period, will be determined by the department Chairperson or the review committee, but must be completed before March 1 of the same academic year.

5.3 Review Committee Composition

In accord with University regulations, the ad-hoc departmental review committee for promotion-eligible NTT candidates must include at least one member who is a promotion-eligible NTT faculty member in the same career track as the candidate (i.e. instructional, clinical, or research), but of higher rank. To ensure NTT faculty representation on the departmental review committee, if the Department does not have another NTT faculty member of a higher rank to serve on the review committee, the department Chairperson may request for the Dean of the College to appoint an appropriate faculty member from another department within the College to serve.

5.4 Mandatory NTT Promotion Review

Promotion-eligible NTT instructional faculty members are required to undergo a mandatory review prior to the end of their probationary period. In the case of a promotion eligible NTT faculty member appointed at the Instructional Assistant Professor rank, a mandatory review will normally be held during the final year of a six-year probationary period.

The timeline for conducting the mandatory promotion review, normally during the sixth year of the probationary period, will be determined by the department Chairperson or the review committee, but must be completed before March 1 of the same academic year.

Promotion to the rank of NTT Associate Professor requires a minimum of three reviewer letters. At least one reviewer letter must be from a qualified individual outside the Department. The remaining review letters can be obtained from qualified individuals within the Department. Letters from reviewers outside the university (external “arms-length” reviewers) may be used but are not required in the case of promotion from NTT Assistant to NTT Associate Professor.