Linguistics Department
School of Social Sciences
University of California, San Diego

Academic Review Standards for Ladder-Rank Faculty

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Overview

The Linguistics Department at UC San Diego is committed to excellence in research, teaching, and service. This document outlines the expectations and standards for merit advancement and promotion of ladder-rank faculty in the Department. These standards are intended to provide transparency and consistency in the academic review process while recognizing the diversity of research methodologies and scholarly contributions within the field of Linguistics.

The standards reflect both disciplinary norms in the field of Linguistics and the expectations of the University of California, particularly the standards set forth in the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) and UC San Diego's Policy and Procedure Manual (PPM).

Research

All faculty in the Linguistics Department are expected to produce one quality Section A research product per year: two per review period for two-year review periods (Assistant Professors and Associate Professors, Steps I-III), three per review period for three-year review periods (Associate Professors, Step IV and above and Full Professors up to Step IX), and so on. Since the first merit review period reflects only one year of service to the university, evidence of substantial progress on a research program is considered sufficient for this review even in the absence of completed products. Below we outline how different types of research outputs that are typical in the field of linguistics should be evaluated toward this standard.

The role of the faculty member in the creation of the research products should also be taken into account. In many subfields of linguistics, co-authored works are common. In general, for a product to count as its full weight, the faculty member should play a “lead” or “equal” role on the majority of the significant elements of the project. Products representing a less significant

contribution will be weighted less heavily, commensurate with the faculty member's contributions.

In general, the quality of the research itself will be considered more heavily than the quality of the venue in which it is published. Publication in an especially high-impact venue may be used as evidence of significant merit of the research, but impact factor will not generally be used as the primary metric for quality. Instead, it is up to the department to evaluate the quality of the research and venue, and these factors will be highlighted in department letters.

The set of forums in which high-quality research is published in Linguistics is diverse. Examples of types of research outputs categorized as appropriate for Section A include:

- **Journal articles.** Journal articles are considered an important method of disseminating research in most subfields of linguistics. It is generally expected that all faculty will publish research in journals prior to their promotion to the next rank, though this does not mean that they are expected to produce a journal article in every review period if they have other quality research products. However, if journal articles are not considered to be the appropriate format for a faculty member's research specialization, this will be contextualized in the department letter. Invited journal articles that receive peer review will be given the same consideration as non-invited articles.
- **Conference proceedings.** Within the general category of conference proceedings, there are two subtypes that warrant separate discussion.
    1. *Peer reviewed proceedings.* For these proceedings papers, the entire paper undergoes peer review. This may happen prior to acceptance to the conference, as is common in subfields such as phonetics and computational linguistics. Alternatively, the presentation may be accepted to the conference on the basis of peer review of an abstract with the full paper undergoing an additional round of external review and revision after the conference. While valuable for many subfields, peer-reviewed proceedings are considered especially important for computational linguistics since the state of the field changes rapidly, making traditional journal publication timelines untenable.
    2. *Proceedings of highly selective conferences with peer-reviewed abstracts.* In most theoretical subfields of Linguistics, it is the norm for abstracts to be peer-reviewed with full papers being written after the conference to take into account audience feedback. While the full paper is not peer-reviewed, we consider such proceedings papers to be weighted as a major product if the acceptance threshold for abstract review was less than 40% of the submissions (though acceptance rates are often much lower). The proceedings of these very selective conferences are often highly influential and are widely cited in the field and are thus considered to be a major research product. It is standard in the field across universities to count such papers toward advancement.
- **Chapters in edited volumes.** Chapters that undergo a peer-review and revision process are important in many subfields of linguistics. These chapters may be invited or non-invited contributions, and both are considered equally.
- **Books.** Books are common in multiple subfields of linguistics, but are not required or expected for any subfield. For documentary linguistics, books may take the form of

descriptive or pedagogical grammars and dictionaries and these should be considered equally with other books that reflect original research. Books are often extensive projects spanning years or even decades of research. Because of this, significant progress toward a book (such as completed chapters in Section C) in a review period is to be considered as a sign of research productivity that can be counted toward the overall expectation of research products for merit advancement even if the full work is not completed and published. A full book should generally be considered equivalent to more than one product, with the weighting dependent on department evaluation of the scope of the work relative to other types of products. If a sub-part of a book was listed in Section C and used as justification for advancement in a previous review cycle, this should be taken into account in evaluating the impact of a completed book on decisions regarding bonus off-scale components and accelerations.

- **Edited volumes.** Editing collected volumes is common in many subfields. As the nature of the editorial work may differ significantly between volumes, the weighting of the product may vary and shall be left to the discretion of the department and discussed in the department letter. In general, serving as the editor of a collected volume will be weighted less than serving as the author of a book.
- **Corpora and Language Databases.** Researchers in various subfields of linguistics produce publicly accessible corpora and language databases as products of research. We define these terms broadly, to include any curated collection or database of linguistic data (generally with metadata) often used in documentary, computational, or sociocultural linguistic analysis, or in quantitative modeling of language more broadly. Within the field of documentary linguistics, this may include archival collections with curated data and metadata. This can also include benchmarks, resources and ontologies which aren't collections of language data per se, but are designed to be used as reference tools in language processing. The weight of a corpus as a research product depends on many factors including the size of the corpus, the amount of effort involved in curation and acquisition of the data, the amount of annotation and 'value' added in metadata, the uniqueness and utility of the corpus relative to existing options, and faculty efforts to encourage and enable broad access to the data for the greater community, as well as other qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice. In addition, we will consider during faculty reviews both any substantial additions to existing corpora during a review period, as well as the ongoing stewardship of existing corpora.
- **Documentary language materials.** The production of various types of documentary language materials for understudied languages is an important component of documentary linguistics. The Linguistic Society of America asserts in their *Statement on Evaluation of Language Documentation for Hiring, Tenure, and Promotion*: "The Linguistic Society of America (LSA) has expressed its support for the recognition of language documentation 'as scholarly contributions to be given weight in the awarding of advanced degrees and in decisions on hiring, tenure, and promotion of faculty' … 'documentation' in this sense is scholarship that includes 'not only grammars, dictionaries, and text collections, but also archives of primary data, electronic databases, corpora, critical editions of legacy materials, pedagogical works designed for the use of speech communities, software, websites, or other

digital media'." The weight of documentary products depends on the scope of the work, which is to be evaluated by the department and discussed in the department letter.

- **Tools, Methods and Models.** In some subfields, the development of novel computational tools, architectures, models, and methodological approaches is considered an important component of scholarly output. Although such innovations are often described in journal articles or conference proceedings, in some cases, particularly when these tools are particularly impactful or their creation represents effort and achievement beyond the publication(s) or presentation(s) in which they are described, these efforts may be considered significant components of a file.
- **Other products.** This list of research products is non-exhaustive and other types of output may be considered significant products. The weight of types of products not discussed here, including other types of products that do not undergo typical peer-review processes, are to be determined at the discretion of the department and discussed in the department letter.

Teaching

All faculty are expected to teach four courses per year. This course load may be reduced for individuals involved in applicable extensive service. Additionally, Assistant Professors are typically given one course release in their first year and may be awarded additional occasional course releases as they work toward promotion to Associate Professor.

All faculty are expected to demonstrate excellent teaching and mentoring, as evaluated via a holistic range of factors included in a holistic teaching portfolio. Exceptional mentorship, implementation of innovative pedagogy or classroom technology, development of new courses and new curriculum and any teaching awards and other forms of recognition will be considered as possible support for acceleration and bonus off-scale components.

University and Public Service

All faculty are expected to be engaged in departmental, university and public service, commensurate with rank. We expect Assistant Professors' service to be primarily focused in the department, but to expand to the campus once they are promoted with tenure. Associate and Full Professors are expected to provide department service, campus service, and professional service to the field at the national or international level (e.g. reviewing, editorial boards, directing or serving on the board of national or international organizations, organizing conferences). As faculty advance in rank, the expectations for service increase, with Full Professors expected to take leadership roles in department or university service.

For advancement to Step VI and above, candidates should demonstrate highly meritorious service, including lead service roles in the department and service on campus-wide committees. At the Above Scale level, candidates are expected to have made substantial contributions to the university's service mission and to have demonstrated leadership in their service roles.

Contributions to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

All faculty may contribute to equity, diversity, and inclusion in their research, teaching, and service. While we do not expect every faculty member to contribute in the same ways, we note that mentoring/advising underrepresented students is one crucial aspect of demonstrating commitment to diversity, as is departmental committee service, campus-wide committee service, professional association service, and public service related to diversity. We will make note of these contributions in all files.

Acceleration and Bonus Off-Scale Components

From PPM 230-28.VII.B.4 "Evidence that a candidate's productivity is double that which is expected for normal advancement in the review period is typically sufficient to demonstrate a candidate's performance is exceptional for purposes of a one-step acceleration. In cases in which research productivity is greater than that required for normal advancement, but falls short of twice the expected rate, extraordinary achievements in additional performance criteria are necessary to justify accelerated advancement."

Given the Linguistics Department's general expectation of one quality Section A research product per year, we consider four quality Section A research products in a two-year review period, or six in a three-year review period, coupled with teaching and service that meets departmental standards to warrant consideration for a one-step acceleration. More than the general expectation but fewer than double this amount coupled with exceptional teaching, service, and/or contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion may still be justification for an acceleration. A bonus off-scale component may be considered when performance in research, teaching, service, and/or contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion exceeds the typical standards for advancement but does not warrant an acceleration.

Promotion to Associate Professor

Promotion to Associate Professor and granting of tenure follows this same set of guidelines, with candidates being required to demonstrate expected contributions in areas of research, teaching and service. Contributions that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within these categories are encouraged and will be evaluated on a par with other faculty achievements. In addition, as stated in PPM 230-28.V.A.1, "Assistant-level faculty must demonstrate independence from early-career mentors or advisors in order to advance to the Associate level."

Promotion to Full Professor

For promotion to Full Professor, candidates should demonstrate a record of sustained scholarly achievement with evidence of national or international recognition in their field. The candidate's research should show evidence of significant impact in their area of specialization and demonstrate a trajectory of continued scholarly productivity.

The teaching record should show consistent excellence at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, with evidence of effective mentorship. Service contributions should demonstrate leadership at both the departmental and university levels, as well as engagement with professional organizations in the field. Contributions that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within research, teaching, and service are encouraged and will be evaluated on a par with other faculty achievements.

Advancement to Step VI

Advancement to Step VI is a milestone at UC awarded to recognize a career of sustained and impactful research as well as teaching and service excellence. Candidates who achieve this milestone are internationally recognized as notable experts within their discipline, with a sustained record of publishing in top journals and other respected publications. Their stature in the field is evident by international speaking invitations and their work is frequently cited. Teaching should be strong and successful mentoring is required. The candidate should hold lead service roles in the department and serve on campus-wide committees. Contributions that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within research, teaching, and service are encouraged and will be evaluated on a par with other faculty achievements.

Advancement to Above Scale

For advancement to Above Scale (Distinguished Professor), candidates must demonstrate exceptional distinction beyond that required for Step IX. This includes evidence of international leadership in the field, with scholarly work that has had transformative impact. Teaching and service should likewise be exemplary, with the candidate having made significant contributions to the university's teaching and service missions. Contributions that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within research, teaching, and service are encouraged and will be evaluated on a par with other faculty achievements.