

Communication Department Benchmarks for Merit and Advancement (9-21-2020)

Overview: This document aims to summarize the standards for scholarly/creative productivity that the Department of Communication applies in evaluating academic personnel actions. In general, the expectations for productivity varies with series (Ladder Rank Research or Teaching [LP/SOE] Professor), rank and type of file (book-centered; article-based; creative media production; or hybrid).

Expectations for Accelerations (all ranks/steps): Generally speaking, in compliance with campuswide standards, the Department of Communication expects excellence in all three areas, with research productivity doubled for that review cycle. However, following PPM 230-220-88-1(b)'s clarification that departments should not use "simple numerical tabulation" as a measure for such reviews — and especially in an interdisciplinary field like ours — we will consider "research output" to include a variety of scholarly/artistic activities (conference talks, successful grants, completed fieldwork, et al.) to indicate when acceleration may be appropriate.

Ladder Rank Research Faculty:

Recent department practice offers the following norms:

With respect to promotion from assistant to associate professor with tenure the department recognizes different ways to demonstrate excellence in research/creative production:

- For a **book-based** trajectory, the tenure case is primarily built on an excellent book published with a high-quality scholarly/academic press with a rigorous peer review process, along with at least two peer-reviewed journal articles or article-equivalents (e.g., in our field, peer reviewed book chapters) to demonstrate promise in post-dissertation research, and evidence of a new project in development;
- For an **article-based** path, the tenure case is built on a portfolio of excellent peer-reviewed articles or book chapters, of which we would typically expect approximately eight, with at least two placed as articles in top journals; exceptions may be made for a slightly smaller number if the work is of truly exceptional distinction or quality. The file should also include evidence of new work in development.
- For a **creative media production-based** file, a set of significant completed and exhibited short works or a major work exhibited in notable festivals or venues and/or under contract for distribution (and ideally reviewed), along with evidence of continued productivity on a substantial new project (this might be in the form of scripts, grants and/or other preproduction work)

Regardless of which way the case is built, the file should show evidence that the candidate for tenure has an independent research agenda and that the candidate has moved beyond dissertation research. Productivity should be distributed across the assistant level steps such that progress toward tenure is evident at each merit review. For tenure readiness review (usually during reappointment and advancement from Assistant Professor, step III to Assistant Professor, step IV), our assessment depends on whether an assistant professor is on track to meet the standards for tenure described above.

A note on unique character of our field that may impact the distribution or flow of a faculty member's completed output throughout their career: There is a type of book or media-production scholar (typical in Communication, Sociology, Ethnic Studies and Anthropology) who uses an inductive methodology where they cannot predict what the final book will be like until they are done. It is also typical that since the conclusion cannot be made until the data collection is complete and the data gathering is extensive for a book-length projects, feature length documentaries, or other major projects, it is hard to publish from the data while it is in process.

For these scholars/creative producers, the Divisional tenure standard is that they have their first book in press by the time of tenure, and that they demonstrate good and evident progress on the second book project such as published papers, manuscripts in progress (appearing in section C), travel to conferences, and other ways of engaging in the research subject at hand. Documenting this type of scholarship is a challenge in our division. In the unstudied or little-studied theoretical areas that attract inductive book scholars, much of the early work involves defining the theoretical frame of the project or what constitutes a legitimate project in the first place. In such a case, we expect to see evidence that there has been development and clarification of the research question and field site.

In the sections below we break down the expectations by individual steps up to tenure, through Associate to Full and Above Scale. The faculty in the Department of Communication regard these standards as norms to guide us rather than rules to bind us; they are approximate, and conditional on judgments of quality. Publications vary widely in terms of the efforts they entail, and their impact or significance for the field.

- 1. Initial Review:** At this early career stage in an interdisciplinary field like Communication, the benchmark for reappointment and merit advancement entails excellence in teaching, conscientious service appropriate to rank, and evidence of significant scholarly engagement and activity.
 - **Service:** Appropriate service at this stage typically involves serving on one or more department committees and participation in departmental meetings. Service to the field might include: serving on a committee of scholarly organization or aiding in the organization of an academic conference, serving as a peer reviewer for a journal, or serving on a community board.
 - **Teaching:** Excellence in teaching is typically assessed in the initial review by examining the range of new courses an individual has developed and their success in implementing these courses. Engagement with campus pedagogical resources and workshops such as those offered by the Teaching and Learning Commons also provides significant evidence of professional educational development. Advising is also a significant measure of excellence in teaching (including serving as a PhD advisor or on a qualifying committee; supervising an independent study or serving as a faculty advisor for an undergraduate honors thesis).
 - **Scholarly/Creative Production:** Evidence of scholarly and/or creative activity includes some combination of the following: the submission or publication of *refereed* work (for example, a book chapter, research article, review essay, or media artifact) and demonstrated progress on a substantial research or media-based project. Professional engagement is also an important marker of progress toward tenure including: research exchange in the form of invited talks and/or conference/workshop participation, editing peer reviewed book volumes or special issues of journals.

Faculty regard progress on a substantial research or media-based project, to be especially important even at this very early career stage given several factors that can impede the development or completion of significant work: these factors include the extended time it frequently takes for scholarly/creative ideas to incubate; the ever-changing conditions of academic publishing; and the often attenuated review or grant-writing process that first time authors or media-makers face when attempting to secure a book contract, distributor, or project funding. Typically, the expectation for a faculty member who is working toward a book-based tenure file is one or more articles in addition to other demonstrated progress on a major project. For an article-based tenure file the expectation is 2 or more peer reviewed publications. For faculty who specialize in media practices, comparable productivity demonstrated by either progress on a major media production or development and exhibition of shorter works is expected. Faculty in the arena of media practices should aim to identify venues for their work that serve as equivalents of academic peer review.

2. Assistant Professor, 4th Year Appraisal: While the benchmark for promotion during a normal review period in a book-oriented field like Communication for faculty at the mid-Assistant rank entails balanced achievement across teaching, research, and service, special emphasis at the time of the 4th Year Appraisal is placed on evidence of significant progress on a major research project.

- **Service:** as noted above.
- **Teaching:** pedagogic engagement that points toward teaching efficacy and excellence at both the graduate and undergraduate level with some expectation that faculty will begin to expand their roles in student advising.
- **Scholarly/Creative Production:** The department regards “evidence of significant research progress” to entail a combination of elements that depend upon the nature of the projected tenure file as follows:

For **book-based** files:

1. peer reviewed publications (at least 2 research articles or book chapters in press or preparation, counting all that have been produced since joining the department—demonstrating expectation to meet the minimum expectations for promotion tenure described below.)
2. research- related talks and field-related professional involvement;
3. a secured or in-negotiation book contract with a a high-quality scholarly/academic press with a rigorous peer review process; and
4. work- in-progress in the form of a drafted or nearly drafted book manuscript, typically in the final stages of preparation for submission to ensure timely publication by the time a tenure review commences.

For **article-based** files:

1. peer reviewed publications (at least 5-6 research articles or book chapters in press)
2. research- related talks and field-related professional involvement;
3. work- in-progress in the form of additional article or chapter manuscripts—noting the minimum expectations for promotion tenure described below—to ensure timely publication by the time a tenure review commences.

For a **creative media production-based** file:

1. Short works completed and exhibited with others in the pipeline or a major work in progress typically in the final stages of production to ensure timely exhibition (and ideally reviewed) by the time a tenure review commences.
2. Screenings or research- related talks and field-related professional involvement;
3. A secured or in-negotiation contract with a distributor or equivalent recognition of peer review of creative media; While there is no simple comparison of media practice to writing/publishing, we expect faculty to exhibit or “publish” media in ways that are vetted in a manner approximating scholarly peer review. This may involve distribution contract, screenings in notable festivals, presentations in other significant venues, reviews, etc.

3. Assistant Professor, Promotion to Tenure: In addition to sustained excellence in teaching and conscientious service appropriate to rank as described above, the department looks for evidence of significant scholarly engagement and activity when considering files for advancement and promotion to tenure. Evidence of scholarly activity typically includes some combination of the following: the submission or publication of a body of refereed work (book chapters, research articles, review essays, conference proceedings or media artifacts), the completion and publication of a book or media-based project (with early reviews when possible in both cases), and evidence of future scholarly endeavors beyond the published (or in press) monograph, portfolio of articles or media artifact. Scholarly engagement includes, but is not limited to research exchange, manuscript review, and professional activity in the form of invited

talks and/or conference/workshop participation, and editing of scholarly volumes or special issues of journals. Evidence of the reception and recognition of one's work in the field signals excellence in scholarly engagement. Beyond routine conference participation, invitation-based talks or presentations signal a higher level of engagement. They are important initial steps in developing the prominence in the field that is a component of the benchmarks for promotion at higher levels, especially Full Professor.

Expectations for *book-based* files:

1. Peer reviewed publications (at least 2 research articles or book chapters in press)
2. Research- related talks and field-related professional involvement;
3. A complete manuscript in press with high quality peer reviewed academic/scholarly press; and
4. Indications of initial work toward the next major project.

Expectations for *article-based* files:

1. A minimum of 8 peer-reviewed essays in press. This may be a combination of journal articles and book chapters; however, the emphasis is on works published in well recognized venues for the field with a demonstrated standard of peer review.
2. Research- related talks and field-related professional involvement;
3. Evidence of new work in the form of additional articles under review or in preparation.

Expectations for a *creative media production-based* file:

1. A set of significant completed and exhibited short works or a major work exhibited in notable festivals or venues and/or under contract for distribution (and ideally reviewed).
2. Screenings or research- related talks and field-related professional involvement.
3. Evidence of initial work on a new major project or set of smaller works.

Note: evidence of future scholarly endeavors might include a new book or media project proposal; published articles; a script or preproduction material for a media project; grant applications for seed funding of a new project; a series of invited talks and/or candidate initiated/led workshops that together point the way toward or establish the groundwork for an exploration of issues and/or themes that may be related to questions animating the candidate's first monograph, but clearly moves beyond them. Other critical factors considered at the time of tenure include assessments provided by (at least five (5) and no more than seven (7)) outside Referees.

- 4. Early Associate (Steps 1-3):** The early Associate years can prove to be especially challenging for faculty. Service loads tend to become heavier as individuals are expected to assume greater leadership roles within the department (chairing major committees) and may also be tapped to serve on university committees outside the department as well as on the editorial boards of prominent journals and governing bodies within the field at large.

Teaching responsibilities also expand, especially with respect to graduate education: faculty are expected to assume a more prominent, supervisory role on oral and dissertation committees and to be mentoring a greater share of the program's graduate students.

Finally, in assessing files for merit advancement at the early Associate stage, the department looks for demonstrated progress on a new, post-tenure research and/or creative media endeavor. Progress on this front might include chapter drafts—typically included in the “work-in-progress” section of the Biobib—publication of refereed work (book chapters, research articles, review essays); preproduction materials for a major media project; and professional activity and research exchange in the form of invited (national and international) talks and keynote addresses as well as conference/workshop participation.

5. Mid-to-Late Associate (Steps 4-6)

The benchmark for the merit advancement of faculty at the mid-Associate rank entails substantial evidence of progress on a major research project. The department defines “substantial evidence of progress” as a combination of: (1) publications (2-3); (2) research-related talks and professional activities (both nationally and internationally); (3) work-in-progress in the form of drafted manuscript-related chapters and journal articles (rather than short abstracts); and ideally, (4) a book-contract. Also required at the mid-to-late Associate rank for advancement is evidence of department and campus leadership as measured by major committee and research-related service; consistent excellence in teaching; and sustained mentorship at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

6. Promotion to Full Professor

Department benchmarks for candidates seeking consideration for promotion to Full Professor entail:

- a. Substantial committee and research-related service (at the levels of department, campus, and professional field);
- b. A strong teaching and mentorship record at both graduate and undergraduate level.
- c. Publication of a second major research project or creative media project. As with promotion to Associate, this can be based on a book-centered file (with some article/chapter publication in peer-reviewed venues); an article-based file; or a creative media-based file.
- d. Prominence in the field(s) of expertise. “Prominence in the field(s) of expertise” can be assessed in a variety of ways but the department typically looks at four elements in a file: (1) the quality and variety of journal publications (rather than their quantity); (2) the frequency and venue of invited lectures; (3) professional standing in field-related organizations; and (4) appraisals made by outside referees regarding the impact of a candidate’s scholarly oeuvre on their discipline or research field(s) along with the acclaim their work may be garnering. Special significance is attached to the appraisals of outside referees for obvious reasons: they are able to provide, ideally, a broader and more critical perspective on where a candidate stands relative to others on a disciplinary map and to more finely assess the significance of such standing especially with respect to the quality of the research.

7. Full Professor, regular merits: Merit advancement within the Full Professor series requires continued scholarly/creative contributions evidenced by continued publication of research and/or screening and distribution on media projects comprising a combination of: (1) two - three publications; (2) research-related talks and professional activities (both nationally and internationally); (3) work-in-progress in the form of drafted manuscript-related chapters and/or journal articles. Expectations also include substantial department and university as well research-related service; continued prominence in the field(s) of expertise (partially assessed by the impact of previous published and creative work); and a strong teaching and mentorship record at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

8. Promotion to Full Professor, Step VI: Promotion at this barrier step requires publication of a third major research project; substantial department and university as well research-related service; continued prominence in the field(s) of expertise (partially assessed by the impact of previous published and creative work); and a strong teaching and mentorship record at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

Expectations for Teaching Professor [L(P)SOE] Series

University and Campus Policy:

- APM 285: https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-285.pdf (effective 10/01/18)
 - Teaching excellence: The demonstration and maintenance of teaching excellence is the primary criterion for the series.
 - Professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, including creative activity.
 - University and public service
- APM 210-3: https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-210.pdf
 - This policy defines how to evaluate and document the revised criteria that are reviewed for this series.

Department Standards

Within the L(P)SOE series, Candidates evaluation is strongly centered on contributions in Teaching Excellence and Innovation, and considers scholarly and creative production as they serve to support this. Service in the department, at the university level, and beyond are also important factors and are particularly relevant as they relate to educational practices. (note: UCSD's office of Academic Affairs provides this [FAQ](#) with general information on the LPSOE series.)

Prior to Achieving Security of Employment (LPSOE)

Teaching Excellence

- Communication's teaching load for teaching faculty is 6 courses (at least 5 being undergraduate courses).
- The Department endorses the adoption of a holistic teaching portfolio and accompanying instructor self-reflection as the primary means of evaluating teaching in academic files as recommended by the Senate-Administration Workgroup on Holistic Teaching Evaluation –[Final Report](#) August 28, 2019 (<https://senate.ucsd.edu/media/387335/holistic-teaching-evaluation-workgroup-report-8-28-19.pdf>). We understand that CAPEs and survey-based course evaluations are limited and often flawed indicators of quality of actual teaching practice and have been shown to promote significant gender, ethnic/cultural and age bias in judgements of teaching. Candidates may choose to include and thoughtfully frame elements of departmental evaluations and CAPEs, but this needn't be the basis of the file's review of teaching. We encourage faculty to consult with the Teaching and Learning Commons in developing assessment and evaluation tools and strategies.

Contributions to teaching include classroom practice, development of original course syllabi, and/or innovation in assessment and revision of the department-wide curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Strength in Undergraduate teaching is critical, however, Graduate teaching as well as advising and mentorship beyond the classroom are also significant considerations for evaluation. Candidates should document their non-classroom teaching including advising and thesis committee membership beyond the department.

Professional and/or Scholarly Achievement and Activity, Including Creative Activity (effective 10/1/18)

- Our department expectation is for teaching faculty to remain current in their profession and pedagogy.
- Recognized achievement includes published research and/or exhibited creative productions, publications on educational techniques, or conference abstracts. Inclusion of indicators of

measures of impact are important for assessing achievements (e.g. caliber of exhibition/screening venues; significance of publishing venue, peer review or equivalents, etc.)

- Professional service activities include review for journals/grants, advisory boards, study sections; consulting, participating in professional meetings, playing a role in developing and implementing community-based learning and research initiatives.

University and Public Service

- Service can be at the department, campus, professional/discipline level. Limited service (but at least some) is required for LPSOE (assistant) teaching professors in general (unless they request to serve on a committee). Faculty at all ranks are expected to engage in service to their discipline (e.g., reviewing, organizing events, etc.), with level of contribution increasing with seniority.

Contributions to Diversity

- Department evaluation of candidates takes into consideration their key contributions to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion on campus and in the profession. This can include research/creative practice, university service, teaching/pedagogy, mentorship, or contributions to the field.

After Achieving Security of Employment (LSOE)

Teaching Excellence

- Communication's teaching load for teaching faculty is 6 courses (at least 5 being undergraduate courses).
- The Department endorses the adoption of a holistic teaching portfolio and accompanying instructor self-reflection as the primary means of evaluating teaching in academic files as recommended by the Senate-Administration Workgroup on Holistic Teaching Evaluation –[Final Report](https://senate.ucsd.edu/media/387335/holistic-teaching-evaluation-workgroup-report-8-28-19.pdf) August 28, 2019 (<https://senate.ucsd.edu/media/387335/holistic-teaching-evaluation-workgroup-report-8-28-19.pdf>). We understand that CAPEs and survey-based course evaluations are limited and often flawed indicators of quality of actual teaching practice and have been shown to promote significant gender, ethnic/cultural and age bias in judgements of teaching. Candidates may choose to include and thoughtfully frame elements of departmental evaluations and CAPEs, but this needn't be the basis of the file's review of teaching. We encourage faculty to consult with the Teaching and Learning Commons in developing assessment and evaluation tools and strategies.

Contributions to teaching include classroom practice, development of original course syllabi, and/or leadership in assessment and revision of the department-wide curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Strength in Undergraduate teaching is critical, however, Graduate teaching as well as advising and mentorship beyond the classroom are also significant considerations for evaluation. Candidates should document their non-classroom teaching including advising and thesis committee membership beyond the department.

Professional and/or Scholarly Achievement and Activity, Including Creative Activity (effective 10/1/18)

- Our department expectation is for teaching faculty to remain current in their profession and pedagogy.
- Recognized achievement includes published research and/or exhibited creative productions, publications on educational techniques, or conference abstracts. Inclusion of indicators of

measures of impact are important for assessing achievements (e.g. caliber of exhibition/screening venues; significance of publishing venue, peer review or equivalents, etc).

- Professional service activities include review for journals/grants, advisory boards, study sections; consulting, participating in professional meetings, playing a role in developing and implementing community-based learning and research initiatives.

University and Public Service

- Service can be at the department, campus, professional/discipline level. As teaching professors are promoted, service expectations rise. LSOE (associate) teaching professors are expected to engage in significant department service. Senior LSOE (full) teaching professors are expected to additionally engage in campus service, and Distinguished LSOE teaching professors are expected to engage in significant campus, public, and systemwide service. Faculty at all ranks are expected to engage in service to their discipline (e.g., reviewing, organizing events, etc.), with level of contribution increasing with seniority.

Contributions to Diversity

- Department evaluation of candidates takes into consideration their key contributions to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion on campus and in the profession. This can include research/creative practice, university service, teaching/pedagogy, mentorship, or contributions to the field.