

# Primary Unit Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

Department of English  
University of Colorado Denver

## General Considerations Regarding Promotion and Tenure

Governing Rules and Policies:

1. Regent Policy 5D: Reappointment (to a tenure-track position), Tenure and Promotion
2. Administrative Policy Statement 1022: Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment (to a tenure-track position), Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review
3. Campus Administrative Policy 1004: Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review

The objective of tenure and promotion in the Department of English at the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) is to develop an outstanding faculty with a demonstrated commitment to academic excellence in scholarly or creative work, teaching, and leadership and service. The English Department's criteria for tenure and promotion are intended to be clear, consistent, and equitable. Each faculty member's contract determines the evaluative percentage in each of the categories to be considered for tenure and promotion.

The English department acknowledges and rewards teaching, scholarly or creative work, and leadership and service in its role and mission as part of a public urban research university. Faculty members are active contributors to scholarly and/or creative work in their particular sub-disciplines and specialties within English Studies. Their scholarship and/or creative work serves the public and informs undergraduate and graduate inquiry inside and outside the classroom. Thus, in addition to conducting scholarly and creative work, the candidate who merits promotion and tenure should demonstrate commitment to teaching relevant to the needs of the Denver Campus' diverse student body and should contribute to ensuring student success.

While affirming the central role of quality scholarship/creative production to the mission of a public urban university, the criteria explained below also recognize the integral relation among scholarly/creative work, teaching, and service and their combined importance to a vibrant departmental, campus, and university community. A successful department depends on the accessibility, accountability, and responsibility of its faculty. The English Department appreciates and encourages citizenship—the willingness to assume responsibility for the whole—and believes that successful faculty members are citizens in a variety of environments.

The same criteria described below shall apply generally to both tenure and promotion. However, tenure decisions shall also take into account the likelihood of professional success.

A tenure review committee, comprised of resident tenured faculty within the Department of English, and occasionally including faculty from other departments as required, will review all cases for tenure and promotion. Tenure-track faculty will participate in the committee's deliberations in accordance with Regent Policy.

The Department of English will adhere strictly to a policy of non-discrimination towards all faculty in tenure and promotion decisions. In accordance with Article 8 of Regent Law (<https://www.cu.edu/regents/law/8>) the English Department “does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities.”

## Departmental Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

### Scholarly and Creative Work

**Evidence:** Publications in media of quality are expected as evidence of scholarly work for all of the various sub-disciplines represented in the Department of English (Literary Studies, Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition, Linguistics, and Film Studies). These media may vary significantly—in terms of professional reputation, percentage of acceptance, and visibility—from journal to journal, press to press, conference to conference. It is the responsibility of candidates to make the case for the quality of the outlets in which they publish, taking into account rates of acceptance and distribution, and it is the responsibility of their review committees and the department to verify that quality. Journals and presses are ranked by tier and are in general expected to be peer-reviewed, while conferences are ranked international, national, regional, and local. Some examples of journals ranked by tier are as follows; this list is **suggestive** rather than inclusive and will inevitably change as the status of some journals shifts:

**Top Tier:** *American Literary History, American Literature, Applied Linguistics, Boston Review, Camera Obscura, CCC, College English, Conduit, Contemporary Literature, Critical Inquiry, ELH, Gettysburg Review, The Iowa Review, Journal of Cinema and Media Studies, Kairos, MELUS, New Media in Society, The New Yorker, Pedagogy, PMLA, Poetry, Representations, Research in the Teaching of English, Rhetoric and Public Affairs, The Rumpus, Screen, Shakespeare Quarterly, Signs, Speculum, Studies in Romanticism, TESOL Quarterly, Victorian Studies, Zoetrope All-Story*

Top-tier journals in creative writing will likely exhibit some combination of a low acceptance rate (usually lower than 2.5 percent to account for submissions by non-professionals); regular representation in "Best of" aggregator publications; nationally known authors appearing regularly in its pages; strong national circulation; and editors who have reasonably strong national reputations (at least within a specific genre).

Top-tier journals in literature, film, and composition and rhetoric will likely exhibit some combination of a low acceptance rate (usually lower than 10 percent); strong national circulation; and a prestigious national and/or international reputation.

**Second Tier:** *CLIO, Eighteenth-Century Studies, Film Criticism, The Laurel Review, Modern Language Journal, Nineteenth-Century Studies, Raleigh Review, Second Language Research, storySouth, Studies in Philology, The Wordsworth Circle*

**Third Tier, Regional, and Local:** *The Amalge Review, RMMLA* and other regional publications, *The Victorians: A Journal of Culture and Literature* and other newsletters, and similar journals of limited circulation

**Quality and Quantity:** The Department of English evaluates both the cumulative quality and the quantity of scholarly and creative publications. While reasonable factors may explain the ebb and flow of productivity, and quality remains more important than quantity, we are aware of the importance of generating scholarship in a timely fashion. External reviewers will be asked to measure both the quality and the quantity of scholarly and creative work in relation to that of scholars at similar institutions and at similar stages of their careers.

Whereas a book of creative work or a peer-reviewed scholarly book placed with a reputable publisher constitutes **excellence** in scholarly and/or creative activities, the department maintains flexibility in evaluating a candidate's record. The fluctuating publishing market compels the department to outline alternate criteria as recommended by the Modern Language Association (see Greenblatt's recommendations, 2001; report on tenure and executive summary, 12/7/2006: <http://www.mla.org>). To meet the standard of excellence, we expect that a candidate will maintain a yearly level of productivity that approaches, on average, one of the following models. These criteria assume work placed in upper-tier venues and page lengths in manuscript pages:

- a 20 to 30-page article or book chapter OR 20-plus pages of a candidate's book manuscript ultimately accepted by, in press, or published with a peer-reviewed academic press or other reputable commercial press; and a 10 to 12-page conference paper
- 1 story or creative non-fiction essay (approx 15 mss pages) in a top tier venue and 1 significant reading/presentation OR 1-2 stories (approx 30 mss pages) in 2<sup>nd</sup> tier venues and 1 significant reading/presentation OR 1 story in a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier venue and two readings/presentations
- 4-5 poems/ flash fiction pieces or 5-10 pp in top tier journals or 8-10 poems/ flash fiction in 2<sup>nd</sup> tier or 4-5 pages or 5-10 in 2<sup>nd</sup> tier + 2 readings

**N.B.** *Other combinations are acceptable* and might also include grants, peer-reviewed textbooks, book reviews, abstracts, short stories, and plays, depending on the specific professional goals of the candidate. In short, the measurement is by design a flexible one. The value of scholarly/creative production should be determined on the basis of its impact on a field of study and on its potential to advance the goals of the University of Colorado Denver.

To meet the standard of **meritorious**, a candidate's overall record should meet an average yearly level of productivity that is quantitatively at least half that for excellence. This expectation also assumes work placed in upper-tier venues. A record that falls below this level will not be

considered meritorious, except in cases where the candidate's record demonstrates truly extraordinary quality, as attested to by external reviewers, and promises strong, sustained future productivity.

Demonstrated professional distinction is recognized as one of the considerations for promotion and tenure in the Department of English, which scrutinizes candidates' records for evidence of achievement, leadership, citizenship, and the development of new ideas. Collaboration in the broadest sense—with colleagues here and at other institutions and with professional and community groups and organizations—is a mark of citizenship. In the case of co-authorship or collaboration on specific scholarly projects, evaluations of such work shall carefully weigh the degree of the candidate's contribution. A record not meeting the standards outlined above is not considered meritorious.

Criteria for Weighting Popular Publications: Publications in popular venues—such as the *New York Times*, *Slate*, the *Denver Post*, *Westword*, etc.—will be measured based on a combination of factors.

A publication that meets all three of the following criteria will be counted the same as a top-tier publication in a peer-reviewed academic or creative journal

- the venue has a national or international reputation with high visibility/circulation;
  - e.g., over 250,000 circulation rate for newspapers; over 25,000 for magazines; venues with an established national reputation based on awards and acclaim
- publishing in the venue is highly competitive, or the piece was solicited based on the faculty member's expertise;
  - e.g., under 3% acceptance rate; routinely high caliber of contributing writers
- the piece published required substantial time and effort to produce (extended reflection, reading, research, and/or redrafting).
  - e.g., around 3,000 words or longer; resonates with one's scholarly/creative agenda.

A publication that meets two of the above criteria will be counted the same as a second-tier publication in a peer-reviewed academic or creative journal.

A publication that required minimum time and effort and/or appeared in a venue that only has a local or regional circulation will be counted the same as a publication in a third-tier peer-reviewed academic or creative journal.

When reporting a publication in a popular venue, it is the faculty member's responsibility to outline in detail the ways their publication meets the above criteria.

## Teaching

Scope of Duties: Teaching embraces both classroom instruction and a variety of faculty-student interactions, including but not limited to independent studies, internships, thesis and project

advising, general academic advising, and course and program development. Excellent teachers are well aware of the variety of teaching duties and, however proficient they may be in any one area, seek to maximize their effectiveness across the board. The English Department also believes that excellent teachers—in addition to having an extensive knowledge of their subject and field—have an ongoing concern that students enjoy an optimum teaching experience. As a result, the department values courtesy, clarity, responsibility, fairness, and professionalism as well as knowledge of the material.

Evidence: The Department of English considers the following evidence when evaluating a candidate's teaching record in compliance with the APS on "Multiple Means of Teaching Evaluation":

- 1) pedagogy as represented in syllabi, exams, teaching materials, innovative exercises, etc.
- 2) student evaluations (both departmental narrative evaluations and University FCQs)
- 3) class observation
- 4) contributions to an expanded curriculum (i.e., course and program development)
- 5) variety of courses taught
- 6) variety of course levels taught (i.e., 1000, 2000, 3000, etc.)
- 7) number of students taught
- 8) flexibility in accommodating the department's teaching schedule and needs
- 9) participation in cooperative education, special examination committees, and thesis and project direction
- 10) opinions of graduating seniors expressed in exit interviews
- 12) availability to students (days on campus, number of office hours, etc.);
- 13) academic advising
- 14) academic mentoring
- 15) guest seminars
- 16) professional development

Quality:

The English Department requires that all tenured, tenure-track and clinical track faculty maintain an ongoing awareness of developments in their fields. Excellent teachers refresh their teaching by incorporating the latest advances in their fields of study and materials from current scholarship. Excellent teachers also refresh their teaching by experimenting with and being aware of innovative pedagogies. The department values teachers who explore how different methods and technologies may improve the experience of their students. Teachers who have experimented with online education provide one example of such innovation. Teachers who have made use of active learning techniques may provide another. Excellent teachers also make class objectives and deadlines clear; they set high standards for performance and hold students to those standards; they provide high quality feedback about students' work; and they are available to address the work presented and/or problems that arise from its presentation. In all interactions with students, excellent teachers are courteous, open-minded, and professional.

The English Department awards the designation of **excellence to** teachers who excel at most if not all of the teaching duties outlined above. In addition, and in accordance with Regent Law and Policy, “a recommendation of tenure based on excellent in teaching work shall include multiple measures of teaching evaluation and demonstrated achievement at the campus, local, national, and/or international level which furthers the practice and/or scholarship of teaching and learning beyond one's immediate instructional setting.”

To be excellent in teaching for tenure/promotion, a candidate needs to demonstrate significant academic or pedagogical impact. The **excellence** distinction will be given to those candidates who demonstrate truly superior commitment to and success in teaching. Such candidates are thought of as outstanding teachers who are recognized by both students and faculty as having a significant impact on teaching at CU Denver and beyond.

Activities which demonstrate academic and pedagogical impact beyond one’s immediate instructional setting may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Public lectures and workshops
- Book club talks
- Class visits and workshops with students at other universities and secondary schools
- Service-learning projects
- Supervising student internships
- Publications and presentations on pedagogy, including textbooks
- Organizing experiential learning opportunities for students (i.e., taking students to conferences or to lectures/readings off campus; taking a class to a museum, play, etc.)
- Organizing on-campus interactions between students and guest speakers from beyond the CU Denver campus (i.e., class visits, Skype interviews, symposiums, readings, etc.)
- Mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in the service of their future professional and/or teaching careers
- Teaching outside of one’s immediate classroom (i.e., guest lecturing in another class, holding pedagogy workshops for faculty, etc.)

The department recognizes as well that occasionally individual faculty may find their teaching duties restricted by the department’s own needs in certain areas. In those cases, candidates should not be penalized for teaching in those required areas. The department considers FCQ data carefully but does not base its evaluation of the teaching record exclusively—even primarily—upon the FCQs. Although student satisfaction is extremely important to the department, the candidate’s teaching record is broadly conceived but no less carefully considered. The department believes that excellent teachers consider themselves as citizens in a teaching community that extends well beyond the walls of the classroom.

The designation of **meritorious** is awarded to teachers whose record indicates quality in many of the categories above but falls below excellence either in quality or quantity of activities. A teacher who warrants the designation of meritorious will meet the fundamental responsibilities of competent classroom teaching (clear syllabi, regular attendance in class/online meetings, successful learning as indicated by student evaluations, availability to students) without

exceeding those responsibilities and demonstrating impact beyond the classroom. A record that falls below the standards of competent classroom teaching is not considered meritorious.

### Leadership and Service

Scope: Service is an important but often undervalued part of the faculty workload. The English Department considers service at six traditional levels of activity: 1) departmental; 2) college; 3) university (i.e., campus); 4) system; 5) profession; and 6) community. The English Department recognizes that Service is an important part of a faculty member's larger professional profile, and that it contributes to understanding the university and forging relationships outside of one's home department. At the same time, the English Department advises that junior faculty should be mindful of overextending their service duties at the expense of scholarly/creative work and teaching.

Evidence: Reappointment committees will consider the following as evidence of service accomplishments:

- 1) number of committees served
- 2) level of the committees
- 3) workload of the committees
- 4) degree of participation of the candidate
- 5) flexibility of the candidate in collaborating with others
- 6) effectiveness of the candidate
- 7) number of students advised
- 8) professional duties (reviewing essays, organizing conferences, editorial boards, etc.)
- 9) community service related to professional expertise

Quality: The English Department insists that all faculty members participate in the routine activities of the department (faculty meetings, yearly retreats, salary increment, program development, hiring, reappointment, etc.). For these activities, attendance is mandatory, participation is expected, and leadership is appreciated. **Meritorious** service may be earned by active membership on two or three departmental committees. **Excellence** in service is usually reserved for those candidates who provide valuable leadership to the department and may represent the department on college and university committees. Examples include chairing an important committee, serving as the ongoing spokesperson for a departmental interest group (e.g., film or creative writing), or volunteering expertise for other kinds of departmental initiatives (web page design, visiting speakers, computer classrooms, etc.).

The English Department recognizes how difficult it is to build a community on a commuter campus and deeply appreciates efforts by its faculty to serve student and faculty needs and to involve the Denver community. The department values professional and community service because they promote the department's profile but not in exclusion of service at some of the other four institutional levels (departmental, college, university, system). A service record with little or no participation at any of the six levels of service activity falls below meritorious.

## Tenure and Promotion Procedures

Comprehensive Review: Candidates for tenure must undergo a comprehensive review prior to review for tenure. Just as that for tenure, comprehensive review involves a detailed departmental examination of a candidate's scholarly/creative, teaching, leadership/service. Comprehensive review also requires that a candidate's scholarly / creative record be evaluated by three outside evaluators and that the candidate's dossier pass through six tiers of approval: 1) departmental; 2) Dean's Advisory Committee; 3) Dean; 4) VCAC; 5) Provost; and, 6) Chancellor.

### Recommendation for Reappointment Based Upon a Positive Comprehensive Review:

Reappointment subsequent to comprehensive review is based on evidence of progress toward a viable research program that is expected to have an impact on the candidate's area of scholarship. Evidence for this progress will be based on refereed/ reviewed publications, including publications in progress. Special consideration will be given to indicators of progress and of future success: publications in press or under review, grant proposals submitted and/or funded, and evidence of an active and/or ongoing research agenda. The candidate must also demonstrate effective teaching skills and show promise of continuing and/or developing a meritorious-to-excellent teaching record. A candidate's leadership and/or service will be evaluated on the effectiveness of their contributions. The candidate should show promise of continuing and/or developing a meritorious-to-excellent leadership and service record. Although service will be given less emphasis than scholarly/creative work and teaching, candidates should have made positive contributions to the academic community that amount to a meritorious record.

Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor: Tenure and promotion are based upon 1) demonstrated meritorious performance in teaching, scholarly/creative work, and service; and 2) demonstrated excellence in either teaching or scholarly/creative work. Scholarly/creative achievements should be substantiated by refereed publications or substantiated by a notable outlet for creative work. Tenure review requires that a candidate's research record be evaluated by six outside evaluators. Both the six external reviewers and tenured members of the department will evaluate the quality and quantity of the scholarship/creative work. A teaching dossier that includes the types of evidence cited above substantiates the award of either meritorious or excellence in teaching. Leadership and Service records require similar documentation coordinated with the evidence cited above and as appropriate to the respective programs. The service record should be similarly documented. Details of dossier construction are to be found in Strategies for Success.

Post-Tenure Review: The criteria for post-tenure review are based upon the continuation of scholarly and professional achievement in scholarly/creative work, teaching, and leadership and service. The successful candidate maintains the quality of professional endeavors and presents the types of evidence listed above under the appropriate category. Assessment occurs every five years, and it is based on work done since the previous review. The online APS on Post-tenure review outlines the causes and procedures for a 'triggered' review should the post-tenure review be unsuccessful. The English department by-laws describe the process for post-tenure review.



Appeals Process for Post-Tenure Review: As per the CLAS bylaws, the CLAS PTR Committee is the adjudicating body for all PTR cases in the College. If a candidate for post-tenure review feels that his or her review has been unjust, or if that candidate disagrees with the decision of the CLAS PTR Committee after the dossier has been forwarded by the Department, that candidate may appeal the decision to the CLAS Dean, who is the final arbiter within the college.

Promotion to Full Professor: The criteria for promotion to the rank of Full Professor are based on an overall record of excellence. Successful candidates will demonstrate excellence in scholarly/creative work and teaching, and, as per Regent Policy 5.D.3 “a record since receiving tenure and promotion to Associate Professor that indicates substantial, significant, and continued growth, development, and accomplishment” in teaching, scholarly/creative work, and leadership and service. The record of the successful candidate will also show “significant contribution to graduate and or undergraduate education,” and to the pursuit of department, college, and university governance and goals. Six external letters are required for the dossier.

Policy on Newly Introduced Primary Unit Criteria: If new or revised primary unit criteria have been adopted during a faculty member’s tenure probationary period, the faculty member may choose to be evaluated for tenure based on the new criteria or the criteria in place at the time of appointment. If the faculty member makes this choice, it must be indicated in writing and included in the dossier. When a faculty member is evaluated for promotion to full professor, the current primary unit criteria shall apply.

Document revision history

2006	Approved December by department and CLAS Dean
2007	Revised (“Post-Tenure Review” added) September
	Edited additions to full professor criteria, December
2009	Amended as of June 2009 (criteria for Full Professor)
2010	Revised to include Clinical Teaching Track appointments
2012	Revised according to administrative recommendations for compliance
2020	Revised in coordination with CLAS Dean’s Office, in preparation for Accreditation