

**USF School of Social Work Tenure and Promotion Criteria  
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences**

**Philosophy and Principles**

In developing appropriate criteria for promotion and tenure decisions, the School has considered the goals we desire to attain in building our School as well as college and university guidelines, policies, and strategic priorities.

1. Our goal is to create a community of scholars whose members are, and are recognized to be, among the leaders in their chosen areas of research. We expect our colleagues to make cutting-edge scholarly contributions that transform and shape the areas of scholarship in which they work.
2. We desire a School with a reputation for excellent and stimulating teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Social Work is a professional degree-granting program and as such places significant emphasis on instruction.
3. Our School should offer a stimulating environment for staff and faculty and the physical and psychological environment necessary for professional growth.
4. Our School should help to serve professional, university, and community needs that social workers are uniquely trained to meet. Social Work is a professional discipline that places importance on public/community service. Thus, most Social Work faculty should be engaged in the community.

**Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor\***

The granting of tenure is a judgment based on past performance and potential for future contributions. Tenure will be recommended by the School if, and only if, in the judgment of the School, the candidate has demonstrated a sustained record of productivity along with evidence that he or she will continue to be an excellent scholar in Social Work, a first-rate teacher, and a good colleague and citizen of the School, college and university.

Candidates are evaluated entirely on their own personal merit, and tenure is awarded whenever we are confident that we can predict that an individual's career in future decades will be consistent with our School's goals and with those of our College and University.

In addition to meeting the standards in the criterion areas (scholarship, teaching, and service) discussed below, a candidate must be adjudged to be contributing to the mission and goals of the School and to be able and willing to work cooperatively with colleagues in our unit.

**Criterion Areas**

When a faculty member is considered for tenure and promotion in this department, we review his or her contributions in three major areas:

- a. Scholarship in the candidate's areas of specialization,
- b. Teaching,
- c. Service to the University (including the School), the profession, and the community.

Excellence requires strong evidence of contributions, impact, and recognition in each of these areas. The faculty member's record represents a pattern indicative of a lifetime of continued accomplishment and productivity with potential for high impact on the field or society. The School highly values and will include in the consideration of tenure the candidate's ability and willingness to work cooperatively within the department. Faculty members' contributions in scholarship, teaching and service should be aligned with the mission of the School of Social Work and USF's prevailing strategic priorities of the university.

### **Scholarship**

For a person to be promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor in the School of Social Work, it is expected that the published work will provide evidence that he or she is already becoming an excellent scholar in the area of specialization, with the expectation that he or she will indeed become an excellent scholar in the field in future years.

Excellence in research is manifested by the quality and coherence of the research program, its scientific meaningfulness, its creativity, and the impact of the work on the field. The faculty member's published work represents the first order of evidence about scholarly contributions. Quantity must be interpreted in the context of the area and scope of the work.

We consider a number of sources of information regarding the quality and impact of the candidate's scholarly work. Chief among these are quality of peer-reviewed publications (i.e., mainstream social work and interdisciplinary journals) and letters from external scholars regarding the applicant's impact and recognition in the field.

Other sources may include evidence of research grants awarded and/or grant applications that received high ratings, involvement as keynote speakers or conference presentations at prestigious meetings, invited presentations, appointments to national task forces and/or review panels, election to offices in professional organizations related to research, others' reviews of the candidate's work, scholarly awards and honors, citations in major reviews and books, scholarly books. Evidence might also include citation counts or other journal metrics, although we recognize that even when publishing in high impact journals in social work, the citation count may not be as high as other disciplines given that our highest ranked professional journals having lower impact factors than many other fields. We also recognize that citations may depend, in part, on the length of time since publication. Sources of global or international work may include publishing in international journals or with international colleagues, invited presentations, presenting at international conferences, collaborative grant or research project with international colleagues, appointments to international research related tasks forces and/or review panels.

We recognize that some areas of scholarship, publications or other products may appear only after lengthy or extensive effort and may appear in a wider range of venues, both of which can be particularly true of community-engaged and/or interdisciplinary work at the local, national and/or international levels. Community-engaged scholarship and interdisciplinary work may be demonstrated by high-profile products such as reports to local, national, or international agencies and formal presentations.

### **Teaching**

The second area of contribution which is to be assessed is teaching. Excellence in teaching is manifested by the quality and impact of teaching, both graduate and undergraduate, both in and outside of the classroom. In evaluating a candidate's teaching, we consider evidence regarding the quality of classroom teaching (including syllabi, student ratings, and other evidence such as peer evaluations/classroom observations), contributions to the educational programs of the School (e.g., new or revised courses or course materials), efforts to improve teaching, teaching supervision, teaching-related publications, teaching workshops given, awards and honors and instructional/training grants. Of note, peer review of teaching by faculty may be conducted by those from a tenured faculty within the School of Social Work or by faculty outside of the department or USF educational expert. Advising and mentoring are also important aspects of teaching/instruction.

We are also concerned with the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated a sustained commitment to teaching and the degree to which he or she fulfills teaching obligations cooperatively and collegially.

It is to be noted that students within the School of Social Work do not complete theses, therefore participation on thesis committees is not expected. Opportunities to serve as a dissertation Chair/ co-Chair or dissertation committee member within the School depends on the status of the School of Social Work doctoral program.

Therefore, while faculty are encouraged to serve on dissertation committees, the evidence for these activities will take into account the related opportunities at the time.

### **Service**

The third area of contribution which is to be assessed is service. Excellence in service is manifested by substantive contributions in one or more of the following areas: service to the University (department, college, and university service), the social work profession, and engagement with the community. We expect consistent participation in service that is necessary for the smooth operation of the School. In evaluating service, we consider, for example, participation in school, college, and university committees; editorships of various sorts, reviewing abstracts for conferences and manuscripts for publications and granting agencies, office in professional organizations, and activities related to social work in the community such as consulting with community agencies, service on community task forces, and public lectures relevant to the discipline. Evidence of service impact includes involvement in important policy decisions, administrative responsibility, and particularly effective outcomes. (Service as such is differentiated from engagement with communities and external organizations that is undertaken in support of teaching or of research/creative/scholarly work, the latter generally termed community-engaged scholarship.)

### **Criteria for Promotion from Associate to Full Professor\***

To be promoted from Associate Professor to Full Professor in the School of Social Work, it is expected that a faculty member is already a leading scholar in their area(s) of specialization at the national or international level, that he or she has established a record of excellence in both teaching and scholarly research, and that he or she has a record of substantial contributions in service to the profession, university, and community, where appropriate. The indicators of excellence used to assess the viability of tenure applications are used for promotion to Full Professor, as well as the indication of sustained high quality work.

### **Procedures**

Faculty should refer to the USF and CBCS Tenure & Promotion Guidelines for information about promotion, timing, reviews (including review of progress toward tenure and promotion), tenure and promotion committee membership and other information about tenure and promotion at USF. The School of Social Work Governance document contains information on the constitution of the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

External reviewers' appraisal of the credentials of all candidates for tenure or promotion is required. Consistent with CBCS policies, the candidate and the Director will both generate suggestions for external reviewers; a minimum of three letters (but not to exceed six) will be included in the packet. The Director and the candidate will jointly select the reviewers; in the event of a disagreement, each party will select one-half the number of the qualified reviewers to be utilized (e.g., 2 of 4, 3 of 6). All solicited letters that are received from external reviewers should be in the candidate's file prior to the final recommendation by the School's Tenure and Promotion Committee.

### **Approval History**

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