# <u>What Matters in Tenure Decisions</u>:
# Unofficial Advice To Junior Faculty in the College of Education About the Tenure File

**DISCUSSION DRAFT**
**(Autumn, 2001; Updated 2003, 2009, 2013, 2014)**

**Faculty colleagues:**

**A document such as this is one way that we as a College can make explicit to ourselves what we value in tenure decisions. This document tries to capture the actual operative criteria (and range of standards) at the current time and over the last eighteen years, in a form that could usefully inform junior colleagues. The criteria listed, conceptual organization, and comments about standards reflect what I and several others have heard and read in most of the tenure reviews across almost two decades in this building. The document notes central tendencies and areas of continuing debate and disagreement. But it is only our take on what actually matters in the tenure review process. Is it yours?**

**The goal here is to make our/the Academy's hidden rules more transparent, and even come to greater agreement about what matters in tenure decisions. Whether we reach consensus or not, we need to be clear about what we collectively do in this important facet of our academic community.**
**--MK**

Probably you have been wondering: what will actually count in the review of my tenure file and the decision about tenure that will result from this review? What kinds of things should I be doing during the five years before I have to put my file together that would maximize my chances of achieving tenure?

In this guide, we describe the *criteria, indicators, and standards* that are typically applied in decisions about awarding Assistant Professors tenure in the UW College of Education. (For information about *procedures* associated with putting your file forward for promotion/tenure, see the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines on the College website.) In articulating evaluative standards, we note that *there is no single set of criteria that comes into play, nor are there measures or indicators upon which there is complete agreement*. However, there are general tendencies that may not be immediately obvious to you as you struggle to establish yourself in this academic setting. And whether or not there is full agreement, making the operative criteria more explicit will help you plan your way forward. In addition, clarifying and making explicit the actual, operative criteria may encourage greater clarity and consensus among senior faculty about what is arguably the most important internal decision any of us make.

The University of Washington Faculty Code sets forth the basis for tenure as follows: "Appointment to the rank of associate professor requires a record of substantial success in both teaching and research…" (UW Faculty code 24-34A). Appropriately, the University leaves the definition of "substantial" and "success", as well as the balance to be struck between success in teaching and success in research, up to the senior faculty in the University. Ultimately, the decision relies on collective professional judgements made by five sets of people:

- *Senior faculty in the College of Education*. Initially, your sub-committee for promotion review (SPR) advises you as to whether you are ready to go up for promotion and tenure. Your SPR is composed of three faculty members: you choose one member; your Associate Dean chooses one member; the College Faculty Council chooses one member. Drawing on all sources of information in your file, your SPR makes a recommendation to the College's senior Faculty, who review your full file, deliberate your SPR's recommendation, and vote on whether your record of accomplishments warrants promotion and tenure.

- *External reviewers.* Your SPR's recommendation, the faculty vote, and ultimately the Provost, are heavily influenced by letters that are written by three to six prominent individuals in relevant field(s) who are invited by your SPR to assess a judicious selection of your scholarship. (External reviewers also may comment on your teaching and service, but most don't.)

- *The College Advisory Council ("CAC").* After the faculty vote is concluded and before your file goes to the Dean, a Council composed of elected senior faculty members reviews your entire file and makes an independent recommendation re: your promotion and tenure. The CAC's recommendation is forwarded to the Dean. It also goes to the University Provost.

- *College Dean*. The Faculty vote, along with your file and your SPR's recommendation, are technically advice to the Dean, who makes a decision on the merits of your application for promotion and tenure. The Dean forwards his/her decision to a University-level review committee and to the University Provost.

- *University Review Committee and the Provost.* A committee of senior faculty from different departments across the University reviews the Dean's decision and the recommendation from the CAC. Final approval comes from the Provost.

Because many judgments are involved, the outcome is best thought of as the *joint result* of the participants' differing takes on what is of value in academic work (remember that people don't have to agree, to arrive at a collective judgment). Note, as well, that two sets of judgments (by external reviewers and by the UW University-level committee) are made by people *outside* the College who are not subject to its norms (and hence would not have read this Advice document!). The collective judgement of the external reviewers and College senior faculty are probably those that matter most in the ultimate outcome of the tenure review; while the Dean exercises independent judgment here, he or she will listen carefully to what these two sources say.

Judgments about "substantial success," by Code, take into account the full record of your work from the time you received a doctorate to the time of tenure review. In practice, however, many assessors will probably pay more attention to what you have done in the years since you have been at the University of Washington.

## The Overall Balance Among Scholarship, Teaching, and Service

In UW, the tenure file contains information not only about teaching and research but also about your service to the University, the profession, and the community. As hinted at by the Faculty Code, different balances can be struck among these three, allowing for the fact that candidates may demonstrate different degrees of investment and success in the three areas. In recent years in the College of Education, however, there has been the general expectation that candidates will demonstrate at least a "threshold" level of success in all three, and excellence in at least one. In the discussion below, we try to indicate the range of conceptions of the "threshold" in each of the three areas, as well as expectations for "excellence". Outside of the College, assessors are likely to concentrate on scholarship more than the other two facets of your work (and the External Reviewers of your file will mainly be directed to your scholarship).

In thinking about the balance among the three areas of your work, it is well to note that the distinctions among them are not always sharply drawn. As noted below, some forms of scholarship can also be thought of as "service"; in addition, teaching and advising may well be closely integrated with one's research, and even be the focus of some of your research and writing. Furthermore, a number of assessors are likely to look favorably on files that can demonstrate close connections among the three.

What follows is a close examination of criteria related to scholarship, teaching, and service, starting with your scholarship, and especially written scholarly work. By tradition—and it is still largely the case—*substantial success in scholarship is a sine qua non for achieving tenure in an R-1 University like UW.*

## What Matters in Scholarship

In assessing whether you have achieved substantial success in research, assessors pay attention to three interrelated, but distinguishable facets of your research accomplishments:

(1) ***Quality:*** The quality of contribution to scholarly literature and discourse.

(2) ***Impact:*** The impact on educational practice, policy, or public understanding and discourse.

(3) ***Productivity**:* The pattern of scholarly production to date and prospects for its continuation over time.

*Assessors differ on what constitutes "scholarship" and the relative weight to give to quality, impact, and productivity*. In the College, at least, if not beyond, all three dimensions are important and historically have figured in the decisions that senior faculty have made about tenure files. Outside the College, and even for some assessors within the College, the second of the three is less likely to be given great weight, though that may be changing as the pressure grows for the University to serve the community effectively. Underlying this all is the fundamental fact that *trade-offs are inevitable: it is difficult, if not impossible, to meet all three dimensions equally well, and you will have to ask yourself what kind of balance you wish to strike among them.* Within the College, many assessors are supportive of a "balanced" portfolio of research accomplishments, and more than one type of balance has been favorably supported in recent years. The detailed comments about each dimension below may help you decide how you want to balance your work.

The focus of tenure review here is largely on *written* scholarly products that have been published and formally disseminated to external audiences in some way. The nature of the products, outlets, and production pattern necessary to meet each of the three standards differs.

### (1) <u>The Quality Standard</u>: Quality of contribution to scholarly literature and discourse

The *quality* of a candidate's contribution to the literature and discourse within a scholarly community is best known by members of that community. Discourse communities are defined by and within broad disciplinary traditions (e.g., within educational psychology, sociology of education, educational philosophy) and by specific cumulating lines of research in topical areas (e.g., early childhood special education, school finance, science education, measurement and statistical research design).

When considering the quality of your scholarship in context of one or more national (and even international) “discourse communities,” assessors will consider at least these four aspects of your work:

- The *importance* of what you study. Does your work address issues, topics, and questions that matter to the members of the discourse community?

- The *theoretical and technical sophistication* of the research. Is your work conceptually strong, rooted in productive theories? How well does your work conform to canons of technical quality in research design, methods of data collection. standards of evidence and inference, etc., in the discourse community?

- The *generativity* of the research. What is the capacity of your work to advance scholarly understanding and stimulate further theoretical or empirical work? How original, bold, and innovative is it? How well does it build on and extend existing literatures?

- The *coherence* of your research program. Do you have a well defined agenda of research and do the different elements of it inform each other? does the coherent program extend well beyond your dissertation?

Other dimensions of quality may also come into play, among them such matters as the *intellectual independence* of your work. Scholarship that is largely derivative of others' better known writings, or that appears to "ride on the coattails" of a collaborator (e.g., your former advisor, or a luminary with whom you are working) will be unlikely to get high marks on the quality standard.

Here, the audience is the community of practicing scholars. Within it, the most widely recognized test of quality is concurrence by independent referees—members of the discourse community—that your work merits inclusion in the cumulative body of knowledge of the field. This principle means that, *to establish the scholarly quality of your work, what is submitted to peer review and accepted for publication in refereed or juried outlets matters most.* In short, from this perspective, unless your work can be rejected as not up to the standard of the discourse community, it has not stood this basic test of "quality". Most refereed outlets are journals, though there are other outlets that make extensive use of referees. In addition, in some discourse communities other kinds of products are given the greatest weight (e.g., books count a great deal among historians and philosophers of education).

The scholarly quality of your work is further established by the relative standing of the outlets you publish in. Within each discourse community, there are refereed outlets that have greater prestige because they set a higher standard or are otherwise thought to publish the "best" work in the field. There are also "leading" journals that present work from various discourse communities (e.g., *American Educational Research Journal*, *Harvard Education Review, Teachers College Record*), and some assessors will assume that work appearing in these widely known and widely read outlets matters most of all.

Non-refereed published work may also be viewed as making contributions to scholarly literature and discourse. However, there is not a single, agreed upon hierarchy among them, and the burden of argument is on you (or other assessors) to demonstrate what the work contributes to scholarly discourse (note, however, the exception that in certain fields like history and philosophy there is clear agreement that books demonstrate quality of scholarship). *Book reviews, invited features or other non-refereed items in refereed outlet*s indicate some contribution to scholarly discourse, but clearly less substantial kind than refereed work. *Books, book chapters*, and *monographs* are often targeted to scholarly audiences and read by them (and the fact that a publisher or book editor wants your work suggests that there is an intellectual market for the work.). Books aimed at other audiences (textbooks, popular work) would count little here—that is, they demonstrate little about the <u>quality</u> of one's work within a scholarly discourse community, though they may have considerable <u>impact</u> on various audiences (see below). *Technical reports, evaluation studies*, and *other scholarly work done for a client* (e.g., a government agency, a research institute, a professional association) may also be seen as contributing to scholarly understanding, especially where these products go through stringent peer or technical review (e.g., reports issued by leading research centers or analytical institutes). With all of these categories of work, the basic presumption of most assessors is that non-refereed work matters less than refereed work—for the purpose of demonstrating the *quality* of your scholarship—and the level of contribution to scholarly literature and discourse must be argued.

In assessing the quality of your scholarship, assessors will pay close attention, of course, to your actual words, evidence, and argument, and based on their reading of your work, will make their own judgments about the importance, generativity, theoretical and technical sophistication, and coherence of your research. But other indicators, one step removed from your actual words, will weigh heavily, especially the following:

- **Publication of peer-reviewed work in refereed outlets**, especially the "leading" outlets within (and across) discourse communities. Here, "leading " is in the eye of the discourse community. Your colleagues in the College and elsewhere are likely to want to see at least some of your work appearing in "top-tier" refereed journals. [Evidence source=Vitae].

- **Solo or lead authorship on refereed publications.** While second- (or third- etc.) authored publications still count, reviewers will give greatest credit for work that is solely yours, or for which you have exercised demonstrable *intellectual leadership*, typically signaled by lead authorship. Authorship may also signal your intellectual *independence* from Significant Others (like your former advisor or luminaries you may be working with, etc.). Exceptions may occur in fields where interdisciplinary, team-based research is the norm, but there will still be questions about how substantial the second or third author's contribution is—the burden of proof is always on this author to demonstrate the degree of intellectual leadership or contribution. [Evidence source=Vitae]

- **Testimony by prominent members of the discourse community outside the University of Washington**—especially those working in peer (R-1) institutions will be listened to. The more established and respected they are (and the more established and respected their home institutions are), the greater weight their testimony will carry. [Evidence source=External reviewers' letters, unsolicited letters, public mention in scholarly forums]

- **Evidence that your work is used by scholars.** [Evidence source=External reviewers letters, citation counts and referencing in others' work, prominent mention of your work by others]

- **Receipt of funding for research through competitive sources, where the proposals are peer reviewed** (e.g., Spencer Foundation and some other foundation grants, federal grant competitions). [Evidence source=Vitae]

- **Awards, and other forms of recognition** by scholarly groups. [Evidence source=Vitae]

Other kinds of evidence in your file will help convey that you are a serious contributor to scholarly discourse—such as refereed presentations at national meetings, invited presentations of various kinds—but these will be given much less weight than any of the product categories noted above (however, note that a regular pattern of presentation at national conferences contributes to your *pattern of productivity*—see below).

**(2) The Impact Standard: Impact on practice, policy, and public discourse**

While the quality of your work, judged by the standards of a scholarly discourse community, indicates impact *on other scholars*, it does not necessarily mean that your work has influence on anyone else. Some of your scholarly products—generally not the same ones that help you reach the Quality standard—may have impact on practice, policy, and public discourse, both locally and nationally. Typically, these kinds of scholarly products constitute what Boyer (1990) refers to as "the scholarship of application" (as contrasted with the "scholarship of discovery" or the "scholarship of integration"). Impacts of this sort are not easy to demonstrate, and there is a wide range of opinion among College faculty and others about how much value to place on them. But, especially in the current climate within the University and state, there is growing interest in the faculty making a contribution to pressing problems in the field (note, for example, the prominent role that the term "Impact" plays in current rhetoric about the College's mission and organizational design). Scholars' writings can be one kind of contribution (teaching and direct service work are another way of achieving such impacts, but they are not currently treated as "scholarship", Boyer notwithstanding, by faculty in this University or elsewhere).

The underlying principle is that *written scholarly work designed to have impacts on non-scholarly audiences which is well crafted, grounded in high-quality research, and disseminated through outlets aimed at these audiences on a wide scale constitutes acceptable evidence of influence on policy, practice, and the public.* In fact, this principle focuses on evidence of potential impact, as actual changes in policy, practice, and public perceptions reflect more than exposure to ideas. That being the case, a second principle applies: *direct evidence of actual use of your ideas by policymakers, practitioners, or the public strengthens the case for meeting the Impact standard.*

To assess your actual (or potential) impact on practice, policy, and public discourse, assessors will probably be paying attention to the following attributes of your writings:

- *Cogency and accessibility* to important practitioner, policy, or public audiences. Does your work present ideas or use evidence in powerful ways and, at the same time, do so in forms and language that speak effectively to non-scholarly audiences?
- *Relevance* to pressing concerns of practitioners, policymakers, and the public. Does your work deal with matters that are of importance to identifiable professionals and public audiences?
- *Grounding in high-quality research*. Is your written work based on, or derived from, scholarship that would meet the Quality standard above?
- *Reach*. How widely is your work circulated among local, regional, or national audiences?
- *Educative potency*. How powerfully does your writing teach, persuade, or otherwise affect the intended audiences? Does your research powerfully engage intended audiences, including in the actual conduct of research itself?

To write in a cogent, accessible, and educative way on topics of high relevance to a wide practitioner, policy, or public audience usually means creating products that differ from those which speak most effectively to other scholars and are most respected by them. Hence, to achieve high impact, you will generally be trying to reach your audiences through different outlets, which apply different criteria. There may be exceptions—e.g., where a refereed journal article gets into wide circulation and is written in a way that resonates with non-scholarly as well as scholarly audiences. More likely, your work for non-scholarly audiences will be constructed as *articles in non-refereed journals*, *commercially published books (or book chapters)*, *monographs or other products of professional associations*, *policy briefs or evaluation reports*, and *items in popular media (e.g., magazine articles, newspaper features, op-ed articles).* Your written work in these outlets may be, in effect, a "translation" of scholarly work into terms that are accessible to nonscholarly audiences, or it may be something wholly different, written for these audiences directly.

As with scholarly outlets, assessors will still strive to distinguish "better" work from that which is less good (i.e., more or less likely to achieve a high impact on practitioner, policy, or public audiences) and will have in mind a hierarchy among these different categories of writings. For example, assessors are likely to give greater weight to an article in a wide-circulation practitioner journal than an op-ed piece in a local newspaper, but there is far from unanimity about how to rank the different kinds of products. Within each category of publication, however, there is likely to be some agreement about more and less respected outlets. For instance, some non-refereed journals serving broad educator audiences (e,g, *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Educational Leadership*, *Change*) are widely viewed as publishing "good" work and they do so for sizable audiences; it is often as difficult to publish in these outlets as in many refereed scholarly journals. Written work in such outlets will generally count a great deal more to tenure file reviewers than pieces in a local PDK chapter newsletter. Similarly, there is a hierarchy among book publishers—some (e.g., Teachers College Press, Jossey-Bass) have high standards and well established reputations for putting out the "best" practice-oriented work. Policy or evaluation studies, too, fall along a spectrum from those done under the auspices of well known and respected organizations such as prominent national research centers (generally with established external review and quality control mechanisms) and others that are less well known and often less careful about the quality of work produced.

Assessors may rank order the different kinds of scholarly products aimed at achieving a high impact on policy, practice, and the public. For example, many will give greater weight to books and book chapters than to policy or evaluation reports issued by a research center, arguing that the latter are more ephemeral than the former; other assessors will do the opposite, pointing to instances where targeted policy reports have demonstrable influence on the thinking and actions of a specific policy community. Most will probably count products appearing in popular media lower than those emanating from publishing houses and research Institutes.

*Note: textbooks, curriculum products, and technological products (e.g. software) are a special case.* Several categories of "scholarly" product that have clear potential for impacting policy, practice, and the public are the subject of considerable debate within the College and elsewhere. By traditional criteria in most R-1 Universities including UW, textbooks, curriculum products for K-12 schools or higher education institutions, and technological products would count little in tenure and promotion reviews, even if these had clear and demonstrated impact on practice or policy. In recent years, however, that view appears to be changing for many assessors, though not all. As a complement to work that meets the standards of scholarly quality above, such products are looked on favorably by a number of College faculty these days; few, however, would give high marks to a tenure file in which these kinds of work represented the predominant form of scholarly contribution.

Even though impact is difficult to demonstrate and there are not as many well established traditions as in assessment of work for scholarly outlets, certain indicators seem to carry greatest weight in ascertaining a scholar's actual or potential impact on practice, policy, or public discourse:

- **Publication in well-known outlets aimed at practitioners, policy, or public audiences**, especially those with wide circulation to these audiences, as in leading non-refereed journals or well known book publishers. [Evidence source=Vitae].

- **Testimony by prominent practitioners, policymakers, and members of the public**. Comparable to the testimony of established scholars concerning the Quality Standard above, well established practitioners, policymakers, and public figures can help to make the case that your ideas are having an important impact in their world.[Evidence source=Solicited or unsolicited letters, commentary about your work in practitioner outlets, newspapers, etc.]

- **Evidence that your work is used by practitioners, policymakers, or the public**. [Evidence source=Solicited or unsolicited letters, mention in media accounts or professional publications]

- **Receipt of funding for scholarly work and various kinds of "applied scholarship" projects through non-refereed sources**. [Evidence source=Vitae]

- **Awards or recognition by professional, governmental, or civic groups**. [Evidence source=Vitae and supporting documents.]

As with the quality of contribution to scholarly discourse, there are other possible indicators, but the above are the ones most likely to be considered by a majority of assessors.

*Notes:*

1. *You may be impacting practice, policy, or public discourse in other ways than your written work.* The discussion above is largely concerned with written or technological scholarly products as potentially impactful elements of your scholarly record. Your presence in the field, service activities, inclusion of practitioners in your research work, building information systems, stimulating and guiding practitioner research, are among other means are likely to be noticed by assessors, and can also figure in the case to be made about the "impact " of your scholarship.

2.. *The blurred line between "Research" and " Service".* In many assessors' minds, the line blurs between "research" and "service" when considering scholarship that is designed to have impact on practitioner, policy, or public audiences. While some reviewers will treat this dimension of your scholarship as "service" pure and simple (and therefore not count such work as part of your "research" profile), many others will think of your work here as potentially both—in other words, they will assume that good, accessible research aimed at practitioner, policy, or public audiences is one important way that a research university can be of service to the field. There are many ways that the *doing* of research can have impact on practitioner, policy, or public audiences (this too may be thought as "service").

3. *Sharing research on the impacts of policies or practices*. Research that gets high marks on the Quality Standard may be systematically investigating the "impact" of policies or practices on student learning or other valuable targets. Sharing this kind of work in audience-friendly ways can also count high in the Impact Standard.

**(3) <u>The Productivity Standard</u>: The pattern and quantity of scholarly production over time**

Though in some respects related to quality and impact, the *quantity* of your scholarly output and the pattern of production over time can be clearly distinguished from the preceding two. Your productivity also matters in the assessment of your tenure file (here we use the term "productivity" in a strictly quantitative sense, though it is sometimes linked to the *quality* of contribution to scholarly discourse; in some reviewers minds, quantity is taken as a proxy for quality). The underlying principle is that *reviewers are looking for evidence that you are an active scholar, who makes—and will continue to make—regular contributions to scholarly and other discourses.*

In this regard, the following attributes of your scholarly productivity carry weight:

- *Quantity* of scholarly production. How many pieces have you had accepted or published in scholarly journals or other valued outlets?

- *Regularity* of scholarly production. How regularly across time do you get things into print?

- *Support for scholarly work*. Are you able to secure funding to enable you to carry on scholarly work over time?

- *Prospects for continued production* after attaining tenure. Do you show signs of continuing to publish valuable scholarly products after the tenure vote?

These dimensions of the productivity pattern beg a question that often preoccupies both candidates for tenure and those who review their files: *how many of what is enough?* The question is most often asked about refereed journal publications, reflecting the importance that most assessors give to this form of scholarly production. There is no single answer to this question within the College and elsewhere, and the answers depend on traditions within the discourse community, institution-specific traditions, and the personal standards of each assessor. For example, among quantitative social science traditions (e.g., in educational psychology) it is quite usual for assessors to expect a rate of approximately two refereed publications per year, while in humanities-based fields (history of education, philosophy of education), a rate of production half that would be considered good (and as noted above, the discourse community may value other products such as a book far more than any number of refereed articles). *As a practical matter, across the last two decades within the College of Education and the University at large, the minimum acceptable "threshold" for the number of refereed articles has been an average rate of about 1 per year in the years leading up to tenure (though there are some exceptional cases with fewer refereed articles than this, which are generally counterbalanced by* *high-quality and high-impact products of other kinds)*; that said, many reviewers both inside and outside the College will be looking for somewhat higher rates of refereed article production.

There is even less agreement about desired quantity of other kinds of scholarly product, for example, books and book chapters, or products aimed at professional audiences or the public. Given the wide range of opinion about the value of such products, reviewers appear to set their thresholds anywhere from zero to one or more per year. All things considered, more is probably better here, but there are obvious trade-offs in producing work for scholarly or non-scholarly audiences. Many reviewers in the College of Education currently treat some balance of scholarly and non-scholarly work as desirable, but the College has yet to formally declare this as an important criterion, and outside reviewers (University, elsewhere) may not hold this same view.

Reviewers are likely to use the following indicators in assessing your pattern of productivity:

- The **count of refereed journal articles or equivalent refereed products,** especially those in "good" journals [vitae]

- The **count of other kinds of scholarly products,** both those aimed at scholarly audiences and those aimed at non-scholarly audiences. [vitae]

- The **timing of publication**, with greatest weight placed on a regular pattern of publication across time. [vitae]

- The **amount of money secured as a Principal Investigator** (or co-Principal investigator, in instances where you had a substantial role in securing the funding). [Vitae]

- **Work under review in refereed journals and other forms of evidence of work in progress** (e.g., continuing grants, book contracts, ongoing longitudinal investigations). **Note:** listing "manuscripts in progress" is likely to count for little or nothing with many assessors, because it is all too easy to put a title in a vitae, when there is little actual material in place. [vitae.]

## Balancing Quality, Impact, and Productivity in Your Publication Record

As the discussion above clearly implies, there is more than one kind of tenurable publication record. As noted earlier, your publication record is unlikely to maximize all three standards (quality, impact, and productivity), and different mixes of published products are likely to receive approval from reviewers. Unlike some R-1 universities, in which only certain kinds of publications “count” (in one instance, only refereed articles from a short list of high-profile top-tier journals) or a certain number of particular products (e.g., in one or two of our peer institutions, a dozen high-quality refereed articles is considered the minimum publication record for tenure), the College of Education and University of Washington have accepted publication records in which a smaller number of refereed articles are counter-balanced by high-quality books (e.g., published by well known, prestigious presses), policy reports or other products that have had significant influence on the field, and practitioner-oriented publishing that is of demonstrable high quality. That said, the quality and tenure-worthiness of a candidate’s publication record is always a matter of discussion during tenure deliberations, and not all assessors agree on the relative value of the mix of publications.

As far as general advice is concerned, the following may be helpful:

- Maximizing productivity (quantity) *alone* will probably not strengthen one's case for promotion as much as maximizing quality, impact, or both. Large numbers of lower quality products is not very convincing.

- You must keep in mind that well established scholars outside the College of Education will review the publication record, and their standards may not coincide with those of the College. When in doubt, a substantial presence in well regarded refereed journals is the safest (but not the only) way to make an appealing case to the outside world.

- That said, the most valued scholarly products—and therefore the most appropriate mix of scholarly products—depend, in part, on the discourse community to which you belong. Books, for example, are highly prized among historians and philosophers (though keep an eye on the tenure clock here: books can take years to come into print). High-profile, high-quality policy reports are very important to audiences engaged in policy research.

- The same can be said of the relative value of publication outlets.

- In recent years in the College of Education, a balanced publication record demonstrating the ability to speak effectively to scholarly, practitioner, and even public audiences have been well received. We are, after all, a professional school, and our capacity to impact practice and valued outcomes in the field is of great importance to us and to many of our stakeholders.

- There are trade-offs in how one builds a publication record. Engaging in labor intensive qualitative research, or longitudinal studies that take years to cone to conclusion can limit the numbers of pieces that one can get out into circulation within the tenure clock window, as can taking on elaborate book projects.

## What Matters in Teaching and Advising

Good teaching counts for a lot in tenure reviews within the College of Education. By University code, promotion to a tenured position reflects excellence in both scholarship and teaching. Though faculty assessors may balance the two differently (and are likely to give somewhat greater weight to scholarship), most will insist on evidence of high-quality teaching—we are a College of *Education* after all. The quality of advising seems to draw less overt attention during tenure reviews, and there is some ambiguity about whether this should be considered part of "teaching" or "service". Nonetheless, it is likely that a majority of College faculty think of advising as a teaching function, and want to see that the candidate for promotion is fulfilling his or her advising responsibilities.

### Course Teaching

With regard to course teaching, three aspects of a faculty member's teaching performance are likely to be given the greatest weight in tenure reviews: (1) quality of candidate's "intended curriculum"; (2) quality and reach of the candidate's "enacted" curriculum; and (3) contribution to overall College instructional needs. In considering these matters, assessors will rely heavily on syllabi and other material describing courses student participation rates, ratings, and commentary about coursetaking experiences; testimonials by other faculty who observed the candidate's teaching; and the candidate's own reflections on teaching.

**1. The quality of candidate's "intended curriculum" (instructional planning and reflection).** Here, reviewers are looking for evidence that the candidate creates challenging, well conceived courses that serve important goals in the College curriculum, as especially as evident from syllabi. Evidence that the faculty member thinks creatively and deeply about teaching also contributes to an image of the candidate as a strong instructional planner. The following indicators are especially common:

- *The intention to use powerful pedagogies*, as indicated by course descriptions that suggest active learning, multiple modes of instruction.
- *Thoroughness of instructional planning*, as indicated by the presence of fully developed syllabi in the file.
- *Appropriate academic challenge*, as indicated by the nature of course content and project completion requirements.
- *Grounding of courses in up-to-date, appropriate literatures*, as indicated by reading lists in syllabi.
- *Creativity in instructional planning*, as indicated by new and innovative courses that the candidate has put together.
- *Ability to be constructively self-critical about instruction*, as indicated by the candidate's reflective commentary on his or her teaching.

**2. The quality and reach of the candidate's "enacted curriculum" (instruction itself).** Other kinds of evidence capture the way courses are conducted and how students respond to them. Here assessors typically give great weight to student participation data, and student ratings and comments, as corroborated by observers (other faculty). Curiously, direct evidence of student learning is rare in promotion files (it is not easy to generate succinctly, though some candidates find ways to include such measures); instead, the quality of instruction itself is inferred through proxies, i.e., student and faculty judgements about the value of their learning experiences in courses taught by the candidate. These sources are among those that assessors are likely to consider:

- *The quality of student engagement in course content*, as indicated by observers' testimonials and student commentary.
- *The quality of classroom interaction, and the treatment of diversity*, as indicated by observers, supplemented by student commentary.
- *The actual use of powerful pedagogies* (e.g., multiple instructional strategies, active learning, etc. ), as indicated by candidate self-description, and corroborated by faculty testimonials and student open-ended commentary.
- *The use of powerful technologies* (e.g., multi-media, Web-based and other electronic access to powerful information sources) in teaching.
- *The overall quality of the learning experience*, as indicated by student ratings and commentary, corroborated by faculty observers.
- *Demand for the candidate's courses* (where these are elective), as indicated by enrollment numbers. Here, the inference is that students vote with their feet, and are likely to gravitate to courses that are well taught.

Notes about interpretations of student ratings: The standardized UW ratings for student evaluation of courses, taken as basic data about the faculty's teaching by most reviewers, yield average ratings that generally fall between 3.0 and 5.0. (on a 1-5 scale)

-- *Ratings of 4.0 and above* are widely interpreted by faculty assessors as evidence of "good" teaching (even though 4.0 = "very good" on the University scale). Ratings that fall much below that level are likely to draw comment from some reviewers and are often interpreted as a sign of some weakness in teaching ability, especially when the average ratings fall below 3.5.

-- *A pattern of improving ratings over time*, whatever the absolute level, is also taken as a good sign: that the faculty member is learning how to improve instructional practice.

**3. The contribution to the full range of College instructional needs.** Finally, assessors are likely to consider what the candidate is doing to help meet the variety of instructional needs, among them:

- *Balance of introductory and advanced teaching responsibilities*, as indicated by the distribution of courses taught. All other things being equal, it is probably better to have demonstrate proficiency in both advanced and introductory teaching.
- *Balance of professional preparation (often called "service" courses) and scholarly preparation*. Same for teaching in “professional preparation” courses and those that guide students’ learning to become strong scholars and masters of particular bodies of knowledge.
- *Total numbers of students served.* Though courses are likely to draw differently, no matter how well taught, and required courses in larger programs will automatically generate larger numbers of students served, assessors are likely to be impressed by the quantity of students the candidate has taught. And in the Activity-Based Budgeting era we are now in, the *total number of Student Credit hours* (SCH) generated may be just as important, or more.
- *Assumption of a full teaching load in most years*. Many reviewers are also going to check whether the candidate appears to be "pulling his or her weight" in the teaching arena; of course, there is a direct trade-off with successful grantseeking or fellowships that permit the faculty member to buy out of some or all teaching responsibilities in a given year.

**Advising and Mentoring**

Evidence of effective advising (and work on supervisory committees)—which is arguably a central teaching role for College faculty—is a definite plus, though not all assessors seem to attend to it as much as course teaching, perhaps because it is a more private or hidden part of academic, or because there are less accepted ways of accounting for it. At least two aspects of the candidate's advising work are likely to attract attention in the tenure review process: (1) the quality of mentoring, and (2) the proportional contribution to overall College advising needs.

**1. The quality of mentoring.** Although it is hard for assessors to" see into" the advising relationship, certain evidence is generally taken to indicate that a faculty member works effectively with advisees. In particular, reviewers will look favorably on:

- *Advisees' progress towards degrees and successful completion of degree programs*, as indicated primarily by counts of advisees reaching milestones (advancement, general exams, etc.) or graduating. *Note:* assessors are well aware that the five years till mandatory tenure review does not give junior faculty much time to graduate many doctoral students, or even any; when this does happen, it will be noticed.
- *Advisees' socialization into scholarly and professional communities*, as indicated by supporting students' participation in conferences, publishing, and professional venues of various kinds. Here, the mentor is assumed to be helping students “learn the ropes”, as well as facilitating entry into scholarly communities through introductions, networking, etc.
- *Continuing or growing demand for candidate as mentor.* Here the contribution dimension (see below) and the quality of mentoring intersect: the more sought after the advisor, the better it reflects on his or her mentoring capabilities.

**2. Proportional contribution to overall College advising needs.** Here, while acknowledging limits on what can be expected of junior faculty in this regard, assessors notice when junior faculty appear to "pull their weight" in advising and supervisory committee work, across the College. The following dimensions are likely to figure in reviewers' judgements, based largely on the numbers of advisees served in different categories:

- *A "sufficient" or growing number of advisees assigned the candidate.* With due recognition that junior faculty may have few advisees assigned to them when they first arrive (and that programs in the College differ in the absolute numbers in the advisee pool), assessors are likely to note whether the faculty member has attained a reasonable advising load, at least by the end of the five-years of assistant professordom. There is no clear number that constitutes a threshold here; probably the trend line is the most noticed indicator.
- *Advising for both Masters and doctoral students.* Though some reviewers may see doctoral advising as more important and more complex, faculty who advise both are noted, and assessors look with favor on the inclusion of doctoral advisees in the candidate's roster.
- *Regular participation on Supervisory Committees.* Once again, on the principle that students vote with their feet—and seek out the advisors who have the most to offer—the absolute number of Supervisory committees, and the trends in committee engagement over time, are likely to catch reviewers' eyes. When the candidate is on Supervisory committees for students in different programs, this too will be noticed. [*Note:* it is possible to be on too many Committees, and junior faculty should be watchful for the absolute number.]

## What Matters in Service

Service, the third of the three areas considered in tenure reviews, is in some ways the most variable and wide-ranging, and at the same time least consistently valued by assessors. By University code, service can be considered in tenure reviews, but has lesser importance than scholarship or teaching (excellence in service is *not* a basic criterion for promotion, but it is relevant to the tenure decision). That said, service has assumed perhaps a growing importance within the College in recent years, especially as the College tries to increase its outreach to important constituencies and establish better linkages to the rest of the University. Also, there are a number of ways in which "service" is intimately connected to, or overlapping with, faculty scholarly work or teaching. All things considered, it is probably a plus to engage in service that is well connected or connectable with the other two areas.

There are many arenas in which to provide service, and there is no way to develop a strong record of service on all of them. In short, the candidate must develop his or her own priorities among the various arenas of service, with full knowledge that these priorities will not match every senior faculty member's in the college. *Moreover, the candidate must establish his or her own limits on service work, as there is likely to be greater demand for service than one can reasonably meet, and at some point service activity takes away time from scholarship and teaching.* The candidate’s service work is likely to fall in one or more of the five areas:

1. Good citizenship in the College
2. Good citizenship in the University community
3. Good citizenship in the local and state community
4. Contribution to the profession
5. Contribution to the nation

For each of these areas, the ways to be of service are too numerous to mention, but among them, certain kinds of service activity recur in many tenure files. Here, assessors rely heavily on the candidate's vitae, testimonial letters by individuals who represent the different communities served, and the candidate's own description of service activities.

**1. Good citizenship in the College and in particular programs (or Divisions) within it.** Reviewers are, first of all, looking for evidence that the candidate makes regular contributions to carrying out the business of the college, through activities such as these:

- Standing Committee assignments.
- Participation on other committees, task forces, and other groups.
- Program development.
- Leadership in the College, exercised though formal roles, or less formally through voice in College affairs.
- Visible engagement with important College-wide issues.
- Participation on search committees.
- Assistance with admissions, program planning, and other program or Divisional tasks.

Here, the concern of assessors is to establish that, at a minimum, the candidate carries his or her "fair share" of the work of running a self-governing institution, but beyond that, assessors usually notice when candidates “go the extra mile” to make the College a smoothly functioning and exciting place to be.

**2. Good citizenship in the University community.** Beyond College walls, there is an important need for the College to maintain and increase its visible presence in University affairs, and especially in the many aspects of University activity that concern education. Historically, the College has not enjoyed either high status or wide acclaim in the University community, though recently we have been more positively viewed by University administration and other Departments. While they may have limited opportunities to participate in this kind of service, but can Faculty do so though activities such as these:

- Participation as representatives on University Faculty Senate
- Working as a Graduate Student Representative (GSR) on doctoral committees from other departments
- Participation in cross-departmental task forces, projects, and other activities.
- Engagement with University-wide issues.

- Creation of events that inform the Unviersity community
- Assisting (or creating) with school-university partnerships that involve other departments on campus.

Undergraduate teaching and advising, now fully supported as a Division of the College, may also have some "service" aspects and be so considered by some assessors. Note: Teaching graduate courses that draw students from elsewhere in the University has also been considered an important "service" by some reviewers in past tenure reviews.) To the extent these and other Unviersity-wide activities help to establish the good name and responsiveness of the College to the life of the University as a whole, the candidate's file will be enhanced.

**3. Good citizenship in the local and state community.** Outside the University, faculty are in a position to assist a diverse array of local, regional, and statewide bodies: schools, districts, community-based programs, community colleges and other postsecondary institutions, not to mentor philanthropies, policy groups, state agencies, faith-based groups, the media, and so on. Reviewers are likely to pay attention to activities such as these:

- Technical assistance provided to schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions.
- Technical assistance and other work with state agencies.
- Visible presence in local media (newspapers, radio, and television).
- Leadership on important local, regional, or state-wide issues related to education.
- Advice to policymakers at all levels.
- Fundraising and other contributions to community-based groups.

*A caution*: If you show any capacity to provide good service in such venues, the word will get around, and demand will grow. And important as it is for the College to serve in these ways, junior faculty must keep a wary eye on how much of their time and energy goes to such service, as there are inevitable trade-offs with the teaching and research functions, which will always count for more in tenure decisions. As noted earlier, however, service activities that are simultaneously "research" and/or "teaching" are generally great investments of junior faculty time.

**4. Contributions to the profession.** Here, the candidate's active participation in scholarly organizations helps to establish a record of "service" that relates directly to the faculty member's scholarly record. The following kinds of activities count, and the more central and visible to the professional community, the more they are likely to count:

- Reviewing for peer-refereed journals and book publishers.
- Reviewing and otherwise assisting with conference organizing.
- Taking on committee, leadership, or other roles in professional associations.
- Technical assistance to, or reviewing for, foundations.
- Contributing to association publications (e.g., newsletters) in other ways than would be represented in the candidate's scholarly record.
- Editing or co-editing a professional journal (though perhaps unlikely for junior faculty, this kind of intellectual leadership is likely to count for a lot in reviewers' eyes).
- Participating on review panels considering proposals (e.g., at NSF, USED).

Once again*, the general caution*: While deepening one's connections to the profession is clearly a good thing to do early in an academic career, these kinds of activities can eat up a lot of time and energy—which could be better spent on carrying our and writing up research.

**5. Contribution to the nation.** The larger good of the nation is also relevant to the candidate's service record. Though the ultimate payoff of such service is probably hard to establish—and opportunities may be limited early in a career—the fact that the candidate bothers to do these things is likely to be favorably reviewed:

- Intellectual leadership on national issues (e.g., through visibility in the media).
- Participation on national task forces.
- Technical assistance to federal agencies.

## Putting it All Together

This document has detailed the kinds of considerations that senior faculty and others reviewing a tenure candidate's file are likely to consider, based on actual patterns over time in this College, insofar as faculty have made their thinking and preferences visible. What may not be obvious, considering these matters one at a time, is that the whole is clearly greater than the sum of the parts in tenure reviews. Assessors inside and outside the College will ultimately be paying close attention to how you integrate the various sources of evidence into an argument that makes strong, well supported claims about the viability of your record and your worthiness to be a tenured associate professor. In other words, *a cogent, powerful argument about how and why your records warrants promotion is yours to make*—expressed in your Promotion Statement and choice of writing and other evidence to include in your file. So as you make decision throughout your time as an Assistant professor, and especially towards the end of the five-year window, as you start to put together a promotion file with the help of your mentoring committee and others, you need to be asking yourself: how will this and this and this help me make the case for my promotion? In what ways does X and Y and Z indicate "substantial success in research and teaching"? Let me show my audiences how.

Good luck! You have lots to be proud of.