

To the Committee of the Division Chairs

November 12, 2010

ENGLISH SPECIFIC GUIDELINES for candidates for tenure review, and promotion.

We understand that the Personnel Committee will evaluate the scholarly or creative output of each candidate to reappointment, tenure, and promotion on a case-by-case basis. In addition to expecting outstanding records in teaching and in service, we recognize that publication is an essential component of the dynamic that makes for the kind of faculty member we expect from continuing colleagues in the English Department. The shape of every research or creative program will necessarily vary with each candidate; therefore, we assert that there is no singular expectation of any department member. We do, however, expect from all members of the department evidence of ongoing annual engagement in active research and substantial progress toward publication, with the understanding that in a candidate's first year he/she will focus on teaching. In addition, though our expectation for publication is substantial, we do recognize that exceptions exist to any quantifiable rubric.

For tenure consideration, we expect a candidate either to be the sole-author or co-author of a book (in print or under contract) or the author of a substantial number of articles (essays, poems, or stories) in print or under contract, or to have demonstrated substantial sustained (both annual progress and ongoing) engagement in publication in other forms. Journal articles and book chapters within other formats than a single book-length study can demonstrate the scholarly qualifications we expect from a member of our department. There should be some clear, demonstrable evidence of meaningful engagement in the area in which the candidate is teaching. Publication in collections or anthologies should also count. Acceptance of an edited collection of essays also demonstrates engagement in a field. Any quantification in this area should be accompanied by the addendum that there are many ways to demonstrate engagement in a field and that in some cases unpublished (but no less worthy) work accompanied by "arms length" anonymously-reviewed evidence of value should be taken into consideration.

We recognize, for instance, that high-quality efforts and products that lead to enhanced departmental prestige, and that also demonstrate a continued passion for the material of a given member's area of expertise in knowledge of subject-matter, as well as potentially improving classroom performance, should be considered as part of the whole package in a candidate's representation of his or her productivity to the Personnel Committee. It is imperative that the candidate explain in what way the publication serves the aims of subject mastery, representing the Department in the larger scholarly community, contribution to the field, and/or evidence of commitment to an area of expertise; it is similarly important for internal evaluations and external reviews to assess the significance of a candidate's contribution to his or her field. External evaluators should address both the quality of the work itself and the quality of the venue in which scholarship is disseminated. English department colleagues may also be able to comment on the work and the venues of publication, if they have some knowledge of the field. Other evidence of recognition might include positive reviews of their work, other scholars engaging productively with the work in their own scholarship, honors that have derived from their work (e.g. prize nominations or awards, invitations for lectures or to review other books or articles based on their published work, invitations to serve on the board of peer-reviewed journals based on their work). To determine the status of a particular journal, one might consider the status of those on the editorial board (which can often demonstrate that a niche journal is a highly reputable one) or at the rejection rate of

articles as shown on the MLA Bibliography which demonstrates how difficult it is to have an article accepted at a particular journal.

For Promotion to Full Professor we recognize this same ongoing, substantial annual and ongoing commitment to research and effort toward publication, as well as significant demonstrable evidence of successful publication (in the form of books, articles, poems, essays, etc.) in a candidate's field of mastery.

*An important additional consideration about the increasing challenges of publication:*

In the current economy, placing books (sole-authored, co-authored, edited, or other) with good presses is increasingly difficult, as they face declining sales within libraries; as such, they face increasing resistance from publishers. Thus collections/books often have to meet a higher standard with peer-reviewed houses than ever before. Being selected to edit a special issue of journal can reflect prestige and elevated status within a field, though of course the quality of the journal may vary. Books rarely take less than eighteen months to write, and often more than three-to-five years, to reach the print stage. As pressures on the scholarly and creative publishing industry increase, we recognize that not all scholarship will reach print or electronic publication in peer-reviewed venues. In the cases where work is published outside the structure of peer-review, candidates have an elevated burden to demonstrate that the work is of high quality and has also had an impact on the field. In these cases, we recommend that the candidate ask for specific commentary by letter writers to validate the quality of such publications.

*[Though the following contributions would enhance a tenure application they would not be in and of themselves sufficient for tenure or promotion.*

Book reviews of scholarly or creative books published in a reputable scholarly journal. Review articles that grapple with multiple books should be considered as particularly commendable.

Conference papers given at scholarly or creative conferences or invited lectures or readings at other colleges or at workshops.

Successful external grant proposals that bring funds to enhance the scholarly or creative goals of the college.

Editing a peer-reviewed journal (digital or print) in one's field of study.

Pedagogical articles centered on the teaching of literature or creative writing published in peer-reviewed journals or essay collections.

Critical or creative articles outside the specialties of the faculty member's position published in peer-reviewed journals or essay collections.

In any of the above cases, proven Whitman student involvement in the production of the work would be a valued added feature of that work.]

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