

This does not constitute an employment contract.

Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure
School of Education
American University

Tenure-Line Faculty

*Original version effective: June 2021 (updated Feb 2022, Aug. 2022, and Feb 2023, the latter based on Dean of Faculty and Committee on Faculty Actions recommendations)
Approved March 2023 by Office of the Provost*

The School of Education is a vibrant learning community where faculty regularly engage in active learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, rigorous scientific discovery, and passionate advocacy and community-based engagement. Whether online or in-person, SOE faculty work every day to achieve the vision of an antiracist and equity-driven community. As such, the SOE faculty candidates for promotion and tenure are expected to be excellent scholars and teachers, and exemplars of meritorious service who address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their scholarship, teaching and service consistent with AU's plan for inclusive excellence. In addition to adhering to a transparent set of standards, SOE community members dedicate themselves to ensuring that all appointment, tenure, promotion, and reappointment cases will be treated in a manner consistent with our commitment to equity and civil discourse.

The SOE is directed by the standards, timetables, and procedures for reappointment, promotion, and tenure as stipulated in the [Faculty Manual](#), supplemented by instructions from the Dean of Faculty, the Faculty Senate Committee on Faculty Actions, and the Dean of SOE. The guidelines that follow are intended to direct faculty as they reflect on their development as scholars and teachers relative to reappointment, promotion, and tenure. They are used by the SOE's Rank and Tenure Committee (R&T) and Dean in fulfilling their responsibilities. The SOE has a separate set of guidelines for the promotion of term faculty.

Education, as a general discipline, embraces subfields that draw from a myriad academic disciplines and professional studies. Thus, faculty research agendas and products are associated with different epistemological and methodological conventions and different authorship regimens. Assessments of candidates' attainments will expect evidence of commitment to and mastery of one or more of these different conventions and regimens. Candidates for promotion at any rank should frame their research relative to standards and practices in their field(s) of study and issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in their scholarship, teaching, and service.

Promotion to the rank of Professor is primarily the result of the faculty member's level of cumulative scholarly achievement, high-quality teaching, and exemplary service. Length of time in rank or at AU is not a factor in promotion to Professor, nor is the number of years taken to warrant consideration for the same. Additional elements vital to a candidate's application for promotion to full professor are specified in the respective scholarship, teaching and service sections of this

document. Faculty members considering promotion to Professor are strongly advised to review the policies and procedures for promotion and to seek the advice and counsel of the R&T Chair and Dean before submitting a file for action for promotion.

A candidate unable to document impactful and sustained scholarship during pre-tenure years will not be recommended for promotion to Associate Professor or tenure, even if their teaching record is excellent. Conversely, an excellent scholar evinced as an ineffective teacher, or a candidate with limited service will not be recommended for promotion or tenure.

The following three sections delineate criteria to define and describe excellence in scholarship, teaching and service, related to promotion to Associate Professor and then promotion to Professor.

Scholarship

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

In a professional unit such as the SOE, scholarship refers principally to the creation and dissemination of new knowledge to audiences of scholars, education-related professionals, and interested parties among the general public. The criterion of excellence in scholarship is connotatively broad and cannot be measured by a fixed number of publications. Thus, “excellence” is measured by work that is significant (1) in advancing a field of inquiry or discipline and (2) in improving educational institutions and benefiting students, teachers, other educational professionals, or the community.

SOE faculty scholarship is grounded in a variety of social science disciplines. Therefore, it is the responsibility of faculty members to articulate the scholarly publication norms in their respective disciplines or educational subfields. SOE faculty undertake research that includes diverse perspectives and voices, and expands understanding of issues of power, privilege, inclusion, and exclusion. It is the responsibility of faculty members to articulate how their scholarship addresses issues of antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion, for example, through their choice of research topics, their research methodology, the community impact of their scholarship, and their publications and presentations.

Expectations for tenure can be met in several ways. A record of impactful publications in refereed, scholarly journals or the publication of peer-reviewed book(s) is most common. In addition to peer reviewed journals and books, peer reviewed book chapters provide evidence for promotion and tenure. Due to the heterogeneity of disciplines represented by SOE faculty, it is the responsibility of faculty members to articulate the scholarly publication norms in their respective disciplines or educational subfields.

Excellence in scholarship requires a record of impactful, scholarly publications based on original research that contribute to the respective field, including theory building, systematic reviews, and the interpretation of data that advance understandings in the field and/or public knowledge and, as noted in the *Faculty Manual*, evidence of “the likelihood of continued successful achievements.”

Indicators of a sustainable research trajectory include articles under review in refereed journals, contracted book manuscripts, submitted external grant proposals, works-in-progress,

and upcoming peer-reviewed presentations. Publication contracts do not count toward published work, rather as indicators of one's scholarly trajectory. Published scholarly works consist of scholarship that has been submitted and accepted for publication. Work under review, even if revised and resubmitted, does not constitute publication.

The SOE expects faculty working on projects that require external funding to work toward securing grants and awards to support their research agenda.

In the interest of clarity, the following comments are offered for guidance:

- Publishing in refereed, scholarly journals and the publication of refereed books is considered relative to quantitative or qualitative metrics that establish the reach and impact of the work. Criteria such as the number of papers, quality of the journals, and reputation of the publisher, contributions to the advancement of equity, and the representation of diverse voices, will be considered during the review.
- Online and print publications are considered to have equal weight.
- Faculty are expected to have external sponsorship of their research in the majority of sub-fields represented in the SOE.
- Refereed articles and book chapters are weighted more than non-refereed articles and book chapters. Non-refereed articles and edited collections are valued but the weighted less than refereed publications. The former may attest to the stature of a scholar and will be considered in the context of the invitation.
- A peer-reviewed collection of original scholarship could represent an expansion of established knowledge and would be valued as such, whereas a collection of previously published peer-reviewed scholarship or conference proceedings would carry a lesser weight except in cases where such a publication attests to the stature of a scholar.
- Other types of publications, such as substantive encyclopedia entries and research reports, are valued but generally weighted less than refereed journal articles, refereed book chapters, and books.
- Abstracts on their own are not counted as scholarly publications.
- Professional honors and awards for scholarship may serve as evidence of faculty achievement as do keynote presentations at scholarly venues and events. The SOE will also weigh the importance of presenting original scholarship at academic conferences and colloquia as a net positive but as not sufficient in and of itself. Further, faculty may also demonstrate research impact via invited talks, media appearances, social media, or other evidence of service to education stakeholders and communities.
- The SOE values both the roles of PI and co-PI on grant proposals. When evaluating external funding initiatives, the SOE will consider the value of proposals, *per se*, since they are time-consuming and reflect commitment to meritorious scholarly research. Nonetheless, the SOE expects faculty to demonstrate both effort and success. Proposals *per se* are not substitutes for awarded grants or published research. Proposal referee reports may provide evidence of quality of grant submissions, candidates for promotion and tenure are encouraged to include reviewer comments in their dossiers.

Disciplinary Authorship Conventions

Styles of authorship vary across the many specialized subfields within education. The range of standard usage requires candidates to detail the nature of applicable protocols relative to their contributions. In some subfields, single-authored publications carry the most weight; whereas co-

authorship may be the norm in other areas of specialization. For example, in some co-authored papers, author order is expressly noted as alphabetical, random, or reverse alphabetical order to emphasize the equal contributions of all authors. In another practice, authors are listed in order of their contributions to the paper, from most to least or least to most, for example. Further, in other fields it is customary to list the PI or senior author on the research project that gave rise to the publication as the last author. It is the responsibility of faculty members to provide information about the authorship conventions in their subfield.

The *Faculty Manual* stipulates that “The University shall base its assessment of a faculty member’s achievements on the aggregate productivity and impact of the work since degree completion, including evidence that the faculty member is productive at AU.” Accordingly, when a faculty member is evaluated for reappointment, promotion, and tenure, in addition to evaluation of scholarly productivity while at AU, their publication record prior to joining the SOE faculty will be considered. Emphasis is given in reviewing a file for action to work completed at American University. For candidates bringing to American University substantial credit towards tenure, the balance may be adjusted accordingly.

The SOE values work that seeks to enhance policy and practice in schools and related educational organizations, including governmental and non-governmental organizations that influence educational access and delivery. The weight given to community-based research varies and depends on the amount and quality of the research, the extent of peer review before or after it reaches intended audiences, and formal assessments of the impact of the research on the intended audience and organizations.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to frame the relative impact of their work on the field of study. Assessment of the impact of a faculty member’s scholarship through diverse summary measures, such as impact factors, including an “h-index,” the direct citation of articles, citation counts, or download of articles will inform the evaluation of the candidate’s scholarship. Other methods of demonstrating impact may include direct citation, acceptance rates, views of online publications, documentation of a peer adopting an innovation or practice, invitations to speak or engage in further scholarly activity because of previous publications or activities and mentions in public and social media. The SOE faculty value the impact of research on practice and look for faculty who work to bring their work into clinical practice. The SOE also relies on and values external assessments by established senior scholars who do not have personal or professional relations with the candidates under review. External evaluators should have attained the aspired rank of candidate. Such evaluations are required during review for tenure and promotion as determined by the *Faculty Manual*, the Dean of Faculty, the Committee on Faculty Actions, and the Dean of SOE. Faculty members are responsible for following the procedures provided by the Faculty Senate’s Committee on Faculty Actions regarding the solicitation of external letters.

Guidelines for Promotion to Professor

To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must demonstrate a record of excellence and distinction in their field. Faculty seeking promotion to full Professor should have maintained a record of high-quality scholarship and be nationally and/or internationally known for

their scholarly accomplishments—they should be well recognized for shaping a part of a field. This significant recognition typically includes an impactful body of high-quality articles in refereed, scholarly journals important to the candidate’s field, the publication of a peer-reviewed book, or another set of publications, such as multiple refereed works that involve substantial contributions to the field of inquiry, such as books and peer reviewed book chapters. The expectation is that faculty seeking promotion to full Professor in funded fields will continue to secure external awards to support their research.

Other activity appropriate to a senior scholar may include but is not limited to invited articles and chapters, scholarly non-refereed presentations, sponsored research, training grants and contracts, or equivalents; however, these activities alone are considered insufficient. A significantly impactful record of peer-reviewed scholarship, community-based research, and external funding, appropriate to their field that has achieved national and/or international recognition for advancing knowledge in their field is the expectation of scholarship for promotion to full Professor.

Teaching

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

The University’s commitment to the scholar-teacher ideal requires evidence that excellence is achieved in both teaching and research. Teaching encompasses a variety of instructional activities. In SOE faculty are expected to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in their teaching, for example, through their course content, through their instructional practice and pedagogy, and through the materials they choose to include in their syllabi.

Instructional activities include teaching and learning opportunities, developing course content, engaging individual learners using diverse methods of instruction and assessment, working to reach audiences in formal and informal settings, and providing opportunities for our students to advocate and instigate change that increases educational equity and opportunity.

Because of the enduring commitment to prepare many of its students for professional practice as educators, the SOE places particular emphasis on high quality teaching that affirms issues of diversity and inclusion.

SOE places particular emphasis on high-quality teaching. Maintaining an excellent level of achievement in teaching and, more broadly, in a wide spectrum of instructional activities, is a prerequisite for reappointment, promotion, and tenure in the SOE. The evaluation of teaching must reflect assessment of a portfolio of teaching and instruction-related activities and accomplishments. Such a portfolio will include a combination of the following in order to demonstrate both **excellence and currency** in teaching. Faculty should make use of the guidance from the including the SOE teaching portfolio guidelines and the SOE Peer Observation Process in developing this section of their dossier. Additionally, the portfolio should demonstrate evidence of **equitable support of learning across all students**. This could include, for example, antiracist or decolonizing approaches, culturally relevant teaching, critical literacies, universal design for learning, among other equity-oriented teaching techniques.

The components of the teaching portfolio should follow the guidelines provided by the University’s [Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty \(DOF\) website](#) in the section under “Teaching Portfolios.”

Evidence of instructional activities beyond assigned courses taught is evaluated in assessing a faculty member’s overall teaching effectiveness. Examples of such activities include student

advising, supervising independent studies, systematic initiatives to encourage student research, including awards received by students mentored, student presentations at scholarly conferences, and supporting students to be published authors. Student advising is an essential component of a successful educational experience for all students, and engagement in advising is further evidence of a faculty member's commitment to teaching. Student advising may be included as teaching or service, or both, depending on specific contexts. In general, activities that promote interaction between student life and the academic environment are valued. SOE also considers new curricular initiatives, the introduction of new instructional modalities and the supervision of internships to be evidence of a commitment to excellence in teaching.

Membership on dissertation and thesis committees in SOE and other teaching units at the University and elsewhere is also encouraged and should be noted and explained by the faculty member. Faculty members' efforts to organize and conduct workshops for educational practitioners are another indicator of a commitment to teaching and should be documented by the faculty member.

Guidelines for Promotion to Professor

- To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must exhibit a continued commitment to teaching excellence as described above. Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor must be based on continued growth as a teacher, demonstrated, for example, by the development of new courses and programs, revision of existing courses, and the introduction of new pedagogies and instructional strategies, among other activities. Evaluation of teaching should include the teaching portfolio described above under tenure expectations, and may also include other evidence of effective teaching, such as publications in pedagogical journals or at practitioner-oriented conferences, supervision and mentoring of student research activity, and feedback from stakeholders, including alumni, employers, peers, etc.(described above) or mentoring students to become published authors.

Service

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

Service embraces a broad range of activities that may occur on many levels within and beyond the University. All academic units depend on faculty service. Indeed, rights and privileges associated with faculty membership evoke a responsibility for service. In SOE faculty are expected to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their service (examples are provided below).

The nature and mission of the SOE elicit a broad range of activities in which faculty engage in service to diverse publics and professional organizations. SOE faculty work with schools, school systems and other educational institutions, community organizations, and serve on advisory and editorial boards that serve professional communities. Appointment or election to participate in such activities, and awards received in relation to such activities, is acknowledged as an expression of the regard in which one is held by members of those communities.

The relative weight credited to service depends on the nature, context and function of the service. It is important to note that while American University is committed to service to the community in its broadest sense, the *Faculty Manual* states that “service beyond the university cannot

substitute for a service contribution to the university.” Examples of service to the university may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Evidence of unit-level program service (e.g. participating in program governance, reviewing admissions applications, attending orientations, accreditation support, ensuring that course content address issues of diversity, equity committee service, and inclusion) assisting with antiracist community-building)
- Evidence of University service (e.g. service to a University committee; service to support equity initiatives across the university)
- Evidence of service to the field (e.g. serving on the board of a disciplinary organization, editorial service on a major research journal, leadership in a conference program committee, participating in disciplinary workshops, leading workshops on culturally sustaining teaching.)

The SOE recognizes that expectations associated with research and teaching limit demands for service that should be made on pre-tenure faculty. Accordingly, the SOE expects that tenured faculty provide significantly more service than pre-tenure faculty. Committee assignments and other service-associated activities must typically be adjusted to reasonable amounts commensurate with a faculty member’s years in service and progress toward reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Pre-tenure faculty should consult with their SOE mentor, faculty colleagues, and the chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee and Dean of SOE to ensure that service activity in and beyond the University will not constrain opportunities to satisfy expectations for scholarly research, publication, and teaching. Although some record of service is expected of all, service does not provide sufficient basis for reappointment, tenure, or promotion in the absence of excellent performance in teaching, research, and publication as specified above.

Guidelines for Promotion to Professor

To be considered for promotion to Professor, faculty members are expected to exceed the qualifications expected of those seeking promotion and tenure and must have a record of active and constructive contributions to faculty governance at all levels of the university community, a strong record of mentoring early career faculty, and evidence of outstanding performance in professional service to scholarly and professional communities. Faculty members’ consistent service to professional and scholarly associations is evaluated through a range of indicators. These include: election to office in professional and learned societies, awards received for service in professional and learned societies, holding positions of responsibility (invited or elected) on professional committees; participation on grant review panels; organizing or participating in professional conferences; serving on editorial boards of scholarly journals; refereeing works by scholars submitted for publication; editing scholarly journals; and maintaining active membership in professional and learned societies.