

Policy on Retention, Tenure, and Promotion

Department of Religious Studies California State University, Long Beach

I. Preamble

The mission and goal of the Department of Religious Studies is to promote the study of religion in all its historical variety and implications and to support the dissemination of the results of such humanistic and social-scientific scholarship at the University in the classroom and in other service to the University, profession, and community.

This document determines and articulates the criteria and standards the Department wishes to have applied in the evaluation of candidates. It intends to advise and support candidates in their efforts to develop as teachers, scholars, and members of the University community.

II. Responsibilities and Procedures

The Candidate is responsible for the collection and presentation of evidence relative to the criteria and standards.

The Department articulates the application of the criteria and standards. The Departmental RTP committee shall consist of three tenured full-time Departmental members of higher rank than the Candidate.

The Departmental RTP committee shall perform peer evaluation of teaching on the basis of material in the RTP file. Classroom visitation is voluntary, and, if elected by the Candidate, shall adhere to the following procedure: During the term in which the Candidate is being reviewed for retention, tenure, and/or promotion, the Candidate may ask at least one member of the Candidate's RTP committee to visit at least one class for one or more sessions. A record of the visitation, which addresses issues specified in the College RTP document (IV.A.1.a.3), shall be written and placed in the Candidate's file during the open period.

III. Criteria and Evaluation

The Department follows University policy in distinguishing between Essential Criteria and Enhancing Criteria. Essential Criteria describe the nature and level of performance required of all faculty. Enhancing Criteria establish standards by which the Candidate may qualify and be evaluated in aspects that exceed the Essential Criteria.

1. Instruction and Instructionally Related Activities

a. Essential Criteria

(1) Pedagogical Approach. Course materials should be appropriate and complete. They should describe the purpose of the course and how it fits meaningfully into the curriculum. Course requirements should be stated, including semester schedule, assignments, and grading policies. Average grades should not generally be much higher than average grades of the Department and the College at comparable course levels. Course materials and overall pedagogy should show evidence of scholarly impartiality and sensitivity to religious diversity.

(2) Student Evaluations. The essential level of performance is met when numbers from student evaluations (all questions) fall no lower than one standard deviation below the mean of the Department and one standard deviation below the mean of the College, because only numbers outside the standard deviation are statistically significant.

(3) Ongoing Professional Development as a Teacher. The Candidate shall provide a narrative documenting such.

(4) Ongoing Professional Development in the Discipline. The Candidate shall provide a narrative documenting such.

b. Enhancing Criteria

(1) Pedagogical Approach. Evidence of tolerance and objectivity in the study of religion is an enhancing element.

(2) Student Evaluations. Meritorious performance is achieved when the means for the Department and the School have been attained. The Department encourages attention to higher numbers especially in questions 1 (information on the course), 2 (consistent grading), 3 (useful assignments), and 7 (office hours). Evidence of classroom evaluation beyond the required student evaluations is also an enhancing element.

(3) Ongoing Professional Development as a Teacher. The narrative may be enhanced with documents and examples.

(4) Ongoing Professional Development in the Discipline. The narrative may be enhanced with documents and examples.

2. Scholarly and Creative Activities

a. Essential Criteria: The narrative describes an ongoing program of scholarship at academic levels that are the standards of professional peers. It presents evidence of ongoing scholarly and

creative activities with credible peer confirmation of quality.

Faculty must demonstrate continuing regular scholarly activities with peer-reviewed scholarly publications.

b. Enhancing Criteria:

The record may be enhanced through a substantial amount of high-quality peer-reviewed publications, particularly a book, or through editorial assignments in recognized professional venues. Unsolicited favorable reviews and citations in academic works may be submitted. Publications which fall outside the professional standards of the discipline of religious studies by being too partisan or narrowly focused are not recognized as scholarly publications by the department.

3. Professional Service

a. Essential Criteria: Members are expected to participate in faculty governance and to serve on committees.

b. Enhancing Criteria: Members may enhance their record through active service on committees at the levels of College and/or University and through the execution of special offices and tasks for the Department. Organizational roles in professional academic organizations are also enhancing. Service to religious organizations must clearly be on the academic/informational end of the spectrum rather than on the partisan or devotional side, and it should be directly predicated upon professional qualifications and specialization. Personal religious affiliation and regular outside employment, particularly in a religious organization, are not considered professional service.

IV. Retention, Tenure, and Levels of Appointment and Promotion

The Department defers to the University policy.