

*Program in American Studies RTP Document, Revised August 2025*

**California State University Long Beach  
College of Liberal Arts  
AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM  
Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Policy  
Effective Fall 2025**

**Preamble**

California State University Long Beach (CSULB) is a diverse, student-centered, globally-engaged public university committed to providing highly-valued undergraduate and graduate educational opportunities through superior teaching; research, scholarly and creative activities; and service for the people of California and the world. The University and College of Liberal Arts (CLA) Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) policies establish the criteria by which the work of probationary and tenured faculty shall be evaluated within this context. This American Studies Program Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Policy adds relevant conceptual and practical precision to the application of those policies with specific reference to the interdisciplinary field of American Studies.

**Expectations for Tenure and Promotion**

Successful candidates for tenure and/or promotion must meet the expectations for all three of the categories listed below: **Instructional Activities; Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities (RSCA); and Campus, Community, and Professional Service**. According to the University RTP Policy Section 3.1, candidates for RTP “should make every effort to seek advice and guidance from the department chair, and it is highly recommended to consult with mentors, the college dean, and/or the appropriate University resources, particularly regarding the RTP process and procedures and how criteria and standards are applied. Candidates are also encouraged to use additional trainings and resources offered by the college, the University, and the California Faculty Association (CFA). Candidates have the primary responsibility for collecting and presenting the evidence of their accomplishments. The candidate’s documentation must include all required information and supporting materials. The candidate should clearly reference and explain all supporting materials.”

**1. Instruction and Instructionally Related Activities**

Effective instructional activities within the College of Liberal Arts encompass a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. University RTP Policy Section 2.1 defines instruction as “any action designed to engage students, help them to learn, and contribute to their success, regardless of whether it is part of formal coursework.” Within CLA, instructional activities include but are not limited to classroom instruction; chairing thesis committees; supervising individual students in activities like independent study, research, internship, honors, student teaching; instructionally related mentoring and advising students; and curriculum and course development, including designing study-abroad experiences.

Candidates preparing their files should consult the CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.1.1 for required materials and Section 2.1.1.2 for optional materials.

As noted in CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.2, CLA faculty members are expected to demonstrate effective teaching. The candidate’s narrative of instructional philosophy and practice provides the context necessary for understanding and interpreting the candidate’s instructional goals, materials, and accomplishments. The ability to teach, mentor, and serve our diverse students is highly valued by the university, college, and program. Candidates should pay special attention to the relationship between cultural and identity taxation and teaching, applicable. Candidates who experience cultural and identity taxation may choose to describe this in their narratives, detailing how their positionality might impact their teaching assignment,

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methodologies, and student perceptions of instruction. Candidates are encouraged to describe in their narratives how their own unique circumstances intersected with the needs of the campus community during the period under review, clarifying how this may have affected their teaching performance. Committees, chairs, and the Dean shall consider factors contributing to cultural and identity taxation in evaluating candidate files.

The University RTP Policy grounds effective teaching in three principles: 1) **continuous professional learning**; 2) thoughtful **reflection on and subsequent adaptation of instruction**; and 3) the **use of instructional practices that foster student learning and the achievement of course goals**. CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.3 provides elaboration and guidance on how candidates should address these principles in their narrative and document them in their Professional Data Sheet (PDS) and file.

Instruction and instructionally related activities in American Studies are necessarily interdisciplinary. As such, courses are constructed around broad themes and faculty are expected to draw on material across disciplines to address these themes and build student content knowledge and skills. Candidates are expected to demonstrate currency in their fields and familiarity with major issues and arguments in American Studies. Currency should also be reflected in the content of class materials, frequent revision of syllabi, and formal or informal presentations for students and colleagues. Course materials should be appropriate to the design and level of the course and inform students of course requirements and expected learning outcomes.

Candidates must show efforts to improve their teaching. In demonstrating **continuous professional learning** (University RTP Policy Section 2.1.1; CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.3.1), candidates should explain how they have remained up to date with course content, pedagogical methods, and best practices for educating a diverse student population. Their narrative should discuss how they have engaged in professional pedagogical development activities during the period of review to ensure their instructional activities reflect current best practices. They may also discuss the relationship between RSCA and/or service activities to instruction.

In addition to the examples spelled out in the CLA policy, American Studies recognizes that continuous professional learning might also include but is not limited to development of new courses, substantial revisions to existing standard course outlines, and/or participating in teaching and learning approaches that take students outside the classroom such as service learning, experiential learning, and developing study-abroad courses. These activities to develop the American Studies Program exceed expectations for tenure and promotion.

The Program RTP committee and the Chair, when applicable, shall consider evidence demonstrating application of professional development activities and the implementation of pedagogical training into course materials during the period under review.

Candidates must show **reflection on and adaptation of instruction**. In demonstrating reflection on and adaptation of instruction (University RTP Policy Section 2.1.2; CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.3.2), candidates should discuss modifications to their teaching during the period under review. Their narrative should explain how they have examined their instructional practices and made deliberate efforts to improve student learning. This might include specifying one or more instructional goals or practices the candidate decided to change, followed by a discussion of the evidence that indicated the need for a change, and concluding with an explanation of the effort undertaken to make the change.

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In addition to the examples spelled out in the CLA RTP Policy, American Studies-specific evidence regarding reflection on and adaptation of instruction might also include but is not limited to evidence that instructors have employed pedagogical techniques and assessments that emphasize critical thinking, research, writing, and oral presentations.

The Program RTP committee and the Chair, when applicable, shall consider evidence regarding changes to course syllabi, instructional goals or practices, assignments, or other materials that show modifications to instruction over time based on reflection.

Candidates must show that they **foster student learning and achieve course goals**. In demonstrating instructional practices that foster student learning (University RTP Policy Section 2.1.3; CLA RTP Policy Section 2.1.3.3), candidates must show how they have engaged and helped students learn and achieve course outcomes and accommodate student differences. Their narratives should discuss their philosophy and how it aligns to their instructional strategies. Their narratives should also address, as appropriate, student course evaluations that are below program and/or college norms, relative to level as well as grade distributions that differ from program norms, relative to level.

In addition to the examples spelled out in the CLA RTP Policy, American Studies-specific evidence regarding fostering student learning and achieving course goals might also include but is not limited to student work samples (including multiple iterations of the same assignment with instructor feedback); directing internships and/or facilitators or graduate tutors; mentoring undergraduate or graduate students in independent studies, program honors or capstone projects, university or external fellowship opportunities, and/or graduate school applications; or formative or summative assessments (e.g., discussion assignments, quizzes, papers or project assignments, or comprehensive final assignments or exams, instructions or rubrics for program portfolios). The candidate should detail in their narrative whether their work in this area meets or exceeds program standards.

Candidates are encouraged to document their work with students as well as any other significant time commitment.

In line with the University RTP Policy, the CLA RTP Policy requires RTP committees to consider multiple modes of evidence when assessing teaching effectiveness as it relates to fostering student learning, achieving course goals, and accommodating student differences. In considering course syllabi, the Program RTP committee and Chair, when applicable, shall additionally consider evidence such as syllabi content relative to course level and catalog description as well as currency in the discipline and consistency with current Academic Senate syllabus policies.

Course evaluation summaries provide one among several ways to measure instructional effectiveness and should be supplemented with other instructional materials. Although course evaluation summaries must be included for each section of a course for which student course evaluations are required during the period of review, the Program RTP committee and Chair, when applicable, shall evaluate quantitative student perceptions of teaching (i.e., SPOT forms) relative to context, including:

- a. Class characteristics
  1. Course level
  2. Course type and mode (e.g., required, elective, writing intensive, online synchronous/asynchronous/hybrid/face-to-face, for majors only or GE, etc.)
  3. Number of enrolled students (vs. number of SPOT responses)
  4. Whether this was a new course preparation

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5. Course meeting time
- b. Candidate's teaching assignment
  1. Number of new course preparations during the semester of evaluation
  2. Total number of different course preparations during the period of review
  3. Alignment of Standard Course Outline (SCO) with the candidate's area of expertise/training
- c. Candidate's experimentation with methodologies in attempting to improve teaching effectiveness
- d. Trends over time, keeping in mind that it is impossible to remove or account for all bias in student evaluations

Grade distributions must be included, as they provide a measure for contextualizing assessment of student learning and student course evaluations. As grade distributions necessarily differ from one group of students to another, the Program RTP committee and Chair, when applicable, will consider overall trends in grade distributions relative to the contextual factors listed for course evaluations.

## **2. Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities (RSCA)**

The Program in American Studies has no single research model for candidates in the RTP process. Pursuant to University RTP Policy Section 2.2 and CLA RTP Policy Section 2.2, RSCA should be read broadly to include not only scholarship of discovery, such as the peer-reviewed monograph or scholarly articles, but also peer-reviewed scholarship of integration, application, engagement, and pedagogy. Scholarly contributions to any one or more of these areas are valued equally by the CLA.

American Studies RTP committees should pay careful attention to the particular value of an individual candidate's work. The evaluation of research, scholarly and creative activities of an American Studies faculty member must account for the (inter)disciplinary training of the faculty member and seek to balance evaluation of manuscript publication, peer-reviewed journal publication, policy work, and field ("real world") application. RSCA products should demonstrate interdisciplinary scholarly work and the propensity of the RSCA effort is expected to be interdisciplinary in nature.

The American Studies Program requires multiple RSCA products for tenure and/or promotion because of the varied nature of research in this interdisciplinary field. Typical RSCA products include but are not limited to peer-reviewed journal articles; chapters in university and/or quality press edited collections; editing a university press or quality press book; editing a special issue of an academic journal; publishing a scholarly monograph. For the American Studies Program, the scholarly monograph is a significant achievement, one that exceeds RSCA standards for promotion.

The American Studies Program recognizes that there are numerous additional RSCA products that make meaningful contributions and therefore count towards whether a candidate's output meets or exceeds standards for promotion:

- Evidence of a serious commitment to scholarly activities that advance the state of knowledge in the candidate's field(s). This may be demonstrated, among other things, through presentations of papers at professional meetings; participation in professional associations; and publication of book reviews. Grants, fellowships, and awards for research and writing in the discipline, including the noteworthy role of principal investigator, are also recognized as important indicators of a candidate's scholarly commitment.

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- Evidence of the scholarship of engagement that advances the state of knowledge in the candidate's fields and informs a broader public of the relevance of this research. This may be demonstrated through authorship or significant contribution to opinion and editorial pieces in major national publications or blog posts attached to them or to professional and academic organizations; entries in academic reference works, such as the *Encyclopedia of American Studies* or *Keywords in American Studies*; public policy briefs and reports; conducting, transcribing, and archiving oral and public history interviews; creative intellectual works in American Studies, such as digital humanities scholarship, documentary films, photography exhibitions, creative writing, podcasts, websites with archival material, etc.
- Evidence of the scholarship of teaching and learning that advances the state of knowledge in the candidate's field regarding pedagogical tools. This may be demonstrated, for example, through contributions to curriculum and/or companion teaching guides to other RSCA products.

The program recognizes that a candidate may advance the state of knowledge in interdisciplinary American Studies through the following activities and achievements that they may include on their PDS:

- Peer-review of journal articles and/or monographs.
- Participation in the grant process as an evaluator or consultant for major grant-giving agencies.
- Receiving and accepting invitations to publish essays in scholarly venues.
- Maintenance of scholarly websites, bibliographies, and/or online databases.
- Participation on any level in the editing and publication of professional or academic journals and documents in the field.
- Professional recognition for excellence in research or research-related activities in a candidate's field(s).
- Additional applicable activities.

According to CLA RTP Policy Section 2.2.3: "Peer review may be defined as 1. a process by which qualified experts in the discipline evaluate the merit, importance, and originality of research, scholarly, and creative activities; 2. a mutually constitutive process established in the reciprocal relationship between a researcher and the communities with which they are engaged (e.g. organizations, governmental agencies, schools, business/industry, etc.). It is the responsibility of the candidate to document the process of peer review." For illustrative examples, candidates and RTP Committees should see CLA RTP Policy Section 2.2.3.1.

It is the responsibility of the Program RTP Committee to evaluate the quality of the RSCA products and forms in which they are published and/or disseminated. It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide the RTP Committee with a narrative or measure of quality as well (i.e., it is the responsibility of the candidate to provide a rationale as to why certain RSCA venues have been chosen).

Regarding the exclusion of RSCA products claimed in previous RTP actions (per CLA RTP Policy Section 2.2.1.1), the American Studies Program stipulates that the College policy refers to work that is already published, in press, or in galley at the time of the previous action. In this case, this scholarship may not be claimed for a future action. Scholarship that is still undergoing significant revision, however, may be claimed in a future action. Candidates are advised to adhere carefully to CLA RTP Policy Section 2.2.1.1 regarding the definitions of publication status when listing incomplete scholarly work on their PDS.

Regarding co-authored work, candidates shall clarify in their narrative the nature and extent of their contribution to the project. They must elaborate upon the work undertaken separately from their co-author(s), documenting this work whenever possible. They must also elaborate upon the nature of the

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work undertaken jointly, explaining in simplest terms the division of labor that characterized the co-authorship. While the American Studies Program RTP Committee will evaluate the contribution of the candidate in a co-authored work on a case-by-case basis, where the candidate serves as lead author it will count in the same manner as a work of single authorship. In cases where the candidate is not the lead, the program RTP committee will assess the candidate's statements on their contributions to the RSCA products.

### **3. University, Professional, and Community Service**

According to University RTP Policy Section 2.3, “Academic service is vital to universities as centers for public good. Faculty service benefits students, the university, the wider community, and the academic profession and strengthens shared governance processes. Universities cannot and should not function without faculty service contributions. Therefore, service contributions should not be minimized or considered less important than instruction or RSCA by candidates or evaluators. It is the responsibility of every tenure-track and tenured faculty member to engage in service, and to do so in a way that potentially leads to equitable contributions that minimize cultural and identity taxation.”

Because the work of American Studies takes place on our campus and in our communities, the Program in American Studies considers service to the program, college, and university, as well as service to the profession and engagement with the community, to each be a significant contribution to its mission. While the manner and levels of engagement by an individual faculty member will vary, balance is prized.

Expectations for degree and quality of service vary by rank of the faculty member. Please see CLA RTP Policy Section 2.3.2.1 for further information. The program expects the service record of candidates to meet the general requirement of active participation in the governing and administration of the program, college, and university. The program recognizes that some service may be particularly demanding and invites candidates to elaborate upon these commitments in their narrative. CLA RTP Policy Section 2.3.2 provides illustrative examples for service to campus, profession, and community.

Specific examples of service contributions for the American Studies Program may include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Service on assigned and elected program committees.
- Service to the profession including but not limited to review of personnel cases and academic programs at other universities; service as referee for academic publications; serving as a discussant of presented conference papers; organizing sessions at conferences and serving on boards and committees.
- Mentoring of faculty members and staff.
- Participation in program, college, or university mentoring initiatives.
- Mentoring, advising, and outreach activities, including those caused by cultural and identity taxation, which are particularly important for supporting underserved, first-generation, international, and/or underrepresented students.
- Service to the community that aligns with the university’s mission, such as involvement with local community groups, work with K-12 or other educational institutions, mentoring youth, or paid or unpaid consulting.
- Authorship, or shared authorship, of major program, college, or university documents.
- Organizing outreach on behalf of the program, college, or university.
- Advising student groups in curricular or extra-curricular settings.
- Service to academic organizations.

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- Service in an advisory capacity and/or presentations to non-academic organizations.
- Media interviews.
- Guest lecturing and campus presentations.

**4. Appointment/Promotion to Professor**

University RTP Policy Section 5.4 states that standards for promotion to Full Professor shall be higher than standards for promotion to Associate Professor. In the American Studies Program, a candidate for appointment/advancement to Professor must demonstrate a higher standard of excellence in all three areas of evaluation than those for promotion to Associate Professor. Sections 1 through 3 above outline the expectations for tenure and promotion. Candidates should consult CLA RTP Policy Section 5.4 for additional details.

**5. Approval of and Changes to this RTP Policy**

- Ratification

This RTP policy is subject to ratification by a majority of voting tenured and probationary faculty members in the American Studies Program and to approval by the CLA Faculty Council, the Dean, and the Provost. Any amendment ratified becomes adopted in the following academic year.

- Amendments

Any member of the American Studies faculty can propose an amendment to this RTP document. Proposed policies must be discussed at a program meeting. Any proposed amendment shall be submitted to the voting faculty in writing at least one week prior to a scheduled program faculty meeting and shall be placed on the agenda for discussion. Amendments should comply with the policy as identified in the Academic Senate and the CBA. Following discussion at a faculty meeting, tenured and probationary faculty members in American Studies should have at least one week to vote anonymously and electronically. To become effective, all proposed amendments shall require a majority of the ballots cast in favor by tenured and probationary faculty members and the approval of the CLA Faculty Council, the Dean, and the Provost.

- Voting Rights

All tenured and probationary faculty members, including those on leave, sabbatical, and FERP, are eligible to vote.