

## DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN CULTURAL STUDIES

### Annual & Tenure Review Guidelines

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#### **Preface**

To guide junior faculty members with a tenure-track appointment, the Department of African Cultural Studies offers the following information. The review procedures outlined below are in line with the University of Wisconsin-Madison general guidelines. Tenure criteria are distributed to all junior faculty members soon after they arrive on campus and join the Department. A copy of the most recent Arts & Humanities Divisional Committee guidelines is available on the committee's website. Junior faculty members are informed of any important changes in the guidelines.

#### **1. Calendar for Annual Oversight Committee (OC) Review**

***This is a model schedule, adjustable in a particular year as needed. Assistant professors will be appropriately informed of any changes.***

*15 September:* Department Chair informs Oversight Committees and assistant professors of their responsibilities and deadlines for the annual review.

*First Monday in February:* Deadline for assistant professors in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> probationary years to submit or update their Review Files.

*Second Monday in March:* Deadline for the Oversight Committee (OC) reports to be submitted to the Department Chair for distribution to the Executive Committee (EC).

*March ending:* EC meets to discuss and vote on renewal.

*15 April:* OC writes the final report and submits to the Department Chair. The report is used as the basis for the Chair's recommendation to the Dean regarding reappointment.

#### **Note:**

*April-May 15:* An assistant professor in the 5<sup>th</sup> year who is recommended for renewal will meet with the Department Chair and/or OC to develop a list of outside tenure reviewers.

*1 May:* An assistant professor in the 5<sup>th</sup> year who is recommended for renewal submits tenure review folder—in most cases, this will be what was submitted for the 5<sup>th</sup> year probationary review.

## **2. Years and Types of Review**

**2.1. 1<sup>st</sup> Year.** There is no formal review. Emphasis is on orientation of the assistant professor, appointment of a departmental mentor and a separate Oversight Committee, and establishment of the Review File. In the first semester, there will be an informal class visitation (advice given, no written report); in the second semester, there will be a formal class visitation (advice and evaluation, with written report). The assistant professor submits to the Oversight Committee chair (a) a fully updated cv, and (b) a one-page research report. The Oversight Committee chair submits these to the Department Chair for filing.

**2.2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Year.** The Oversight Committee's recommendation for renewal, promotion, or nonretention is based on the assistant professor's (a) publications during the review period; (b) brief description of major research in progress—including how much written thus, its projected shape over the next three years; and publication plans of part/s or the whole; (c) the teaching record (peer and student evaluations, syllabi, etc.); and (d) the service record.

**2.3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Year.** Review of research and publication trajectory. This includes an examination of all publications and drafts, proposals of future projects, teaching, and service. The Oversight Committee looks carefully at the relationship between the dissertation and other publications or work in progress to detect excessive overlap or repetition, and to alert the junior faculty member accordingly.

**2.4. 4<sup>th</sup> Year.** The Oversight Committee Chair's recommendation for renewal, promotion, or nonretention is based on the assistant professor's (a) publications; (b) brief description of major research in progress—including how much written thus, its projected shape over the next three years; and publication plans of part/s or the whole; (c) the teaching record (peer and student evaluations, syllabi, etc.); and (d) the service record

**2.5. 5<sup>th</sup> Year.** The Oversight Committee's recommendation for renewal, promotion, or non-retention is based on review and evaluation of new research (in print, in press, or accepted) since the last review; all work in progress expected to be part of the promotion file in the 6<sup>th</sup> year; book prospectuses, grant proposals, etc.; the teaching record (peer and student evaluations, syllabi, etc.); and service record.

**2.6. 6<sup>th</sup> Year.** Tenure review. The Oversight Committee's recommendation for promotion or non-retention is based on consideration of letters from outside referees; the candidate's statement on future research, teaching, and service plans; the evaluation of all research relevant to promotion, according to the Arts and Humanities Divisional Committee Guidelines (including work published during the six tenure-clock years); the teaching record (peer and student evaluations, syllabi, etc.); and service record. A positive vote from at least two-thirds of the faculty members attending the Executive Committee meeting at the time of the vote is required for recommendation for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

2.7. *7<sup>th</sup> Year*. Buffer year. This is the year when the contract runs out in case of non-retention. See Faculty Policies & Procedures for 7.08-7.10 for available reconsideration and appeal processes in the event of nonrenewal.

### **3. Oversight Committee and Mentorship: Tasks & Composition**

3.1. The Department Chair appoints a mentor and a separate Oversight Committee for each assistant professor during the first year of the assistant professor's contract. Replacements may occur if one of the members of the committee is absent or if the junior faculty member makes a request to the Department Chair in writing, indicating the reason for the request. Good communication between assistant professors and their mentor, and with their Oversight Committees is essential. The mentor meets with the Assistant Professor at least twice a year: once in the fall and once after the annual review; they should also be available to meet at the Assistant Professor's request. The chair and/or other members of the Oversight Committee meet with the Assistant Professor after each annual review to give oral feedback. The Oversight Committee will confer with the junior faculty member regarding any changes in the measures of evaluations. Assistant professors are encouraged to seek guidance, feedback on work in progress, and advice about any aspect of research, teaching, and service from the mentor, the members of the oversight committee, and other tenured faculty, including faculty from other departments. The Assistant Professor may elect to respond to the annual review in writing.

3.2. *Functions*: As a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, the Oversight Committee's functions are:

3.2.1. To monitor the progress of the assistant professor with regard to research, teaching, and service;

3.2.2. To evaluate annually the assistant professor's progress toward tenure and to recommend promotion, extension, or nonretention to the Executive Committee. This evaluation takes the form of the annual Review Report that it is submitted to the Executive Committee. This report assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the junior faculty member's research, teaching, and service. The final report is subject to review by the Executive Committee and is filed in the assistant professor's Review File and Personnel File. The review report is used as the basis for the Chair's recommendation to the Dean regarding reappointment.

3.3. *Membership of Oversight Committee*:

The Oversight Committee typically has three members, all derived from the Executive Committee.

3.4. *Responsibilities of the Oversight Committee Chair*

3.4.1. The chair of the Oversight Committee will meet with the assistant professor at least

once before the annual review to provide guidance in preparing review materials, and once after the annual review to discuss the progress toward tenure. While the Oversight Committee chair will discuss with the assistant professor the main issues raised during the Executive Committee's review, he or she should maintain the confidentiality of the Executive Committee's discussions.

**3.4.2.** The chair of the Oversight Committee, along with the mentor, advises the assistant professor on the preparation of the annual Review File and promotion materials.

**3.4.3.** The chair of the Oversight Committee works closely with committee members and the Department Chair in distributing and collating review tasks and summaries and producing the integrated final version of the review.

#### **4. Contents of the Annual Review File**

With guidance from the departmental mentor and the Oversight Committee chair, the assistant professor is responsible for fully submitting or updating his or her Review File by the first Monday of every February. The Oversight Committee chair should immediately check the Annual Review File to see that all necessary information is present; s/he is responsible for requesting any missing material before the Oversight Committee report is written. To be considered complete, a review must contain:

**4.1.** An updated CV. Mentors and Oversight Committee chairs should counsel assistant professors on the format of the CV; Divisional Committee guidelines on CV format should be followed;

**4.2.** An annual memo (1-2 pages) from the assistant professor to his or her Oversight Committee outlining the year's progress and relevant information pertaining to research, teaching, and service.

**4.3.** Prior annual memos from the assistant professor to the Oversight Committee outlining achievements and goals for the year;

**4.4.** Prior Progress or Reappointment Letters and responses (if any) from the assistant professor;

**4.5.** Professional Activities Reports;

**4.6.** Peer evaluations of teaching;

**4.7.** Statistical summary sheets of student evaluations;

**4.8.** Syllabi for all courses;

**4.9.** Publications, in exact pdf replicas from publication source;

4.10. Documentation of the peer-review process for all publications marked as peer-reviewed on the CV.

4.11. Additional materials: Assistant professors have the option of providing any additional material that attests to their progress toward tenure in research, teaching, and service (e.g., letters, grant proposals, book contracts, manuscripts, pedagogical materials, etc.). See below for directions on additional materials needed for specific reviews.

## **5. Peer Observations of Classroom Teaching**

5.1. **Requirements:** The Arts and Humanities Divisional Committee requires that there should be one or two visits for each teaching semester of the candidate's probationary period.

5.2. **Assignment of Observers:** The Oversight Committee Chair will assign faculty peer classroom observers at least once and preferably twice a year. Typically, these class reviewers will initially be members of the Oversight Committee.

5.3. **Scheduling Class Visits:** Faculty peer evaluators should contact assistant professors well in advance to arrange a mutually agreeable class period, preferably no later than the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. For fall observations, every effort should be made to visit the class and submit the written report by the end of October; the end of February for spring observations.

5.4. **Class Visits:** Before the visit, the reviewer should communicate with the assistant professor to discuss the goals of the class meeting and how it fits into the rest of the course in the context of the syllabus. The reviewer should meet with the assistant professor after the class to discuss observed strengths and make constructive suggestions for improvement. This discussion may also include advice on assignments, responses to student writing, exam construction, and other pedagogical matters.

5.5. **Written Reports:** The visitor is responsible for sending a written report on the class to the faculty member and the Department Chair *no later than one week after the visit*. The assistant professor is responsible for ensuring the reports are included in the Review File and Personnel File.

## **6. Calendar for Tenure-Year Review**

***This is a model schedule, adjustable for individual cases as needed.***

*April of 5<sup>th</sup> year:* Oversight Committee consults with the assistant professor on the identification of possible outside reviewers.

*April-May-mid-June:* Chair seeks out external tenure reviewers.

*First week of May:* Assistant professor submits full tenure review folder.

*May-June:* Chair sends materials to external reviewers (the earlier materials are sent out, the better)

*15 September:* Deadline for tenure review letters to come in.

*15 October:* Deadline for the assistant professor to add any new publication PDFs to the tenure review folder.

*30 November:* Deadline for Department Oversight Committee (OC) to submit the report to the EC.

*December – January:* EC meets to decide, over one or more meetings if necessary.

*February:* OC writes final report and submits to Chair. The report is used as the basis for the Chair's recommendation to the Dean regarding tenure.

## **7. Criteria for Tenure**

*See these Arts & Humanities Divisional Committee Tenure documents:*

*<https://secfac.wisc.edu/tenure/arts-humanities-divisional-committee/tenure-documents/>*

**7.1. Introduction.** In order that a candidate be recommended for tenure to the Dean of the College of Letters and Science and the Arts & Humanities Divisional Committee, he or she must receive a positive vote from at least two-thirds of the faculty members attending the Executive Committee meeting at the time of the vote. The Executive Committee recommends tenure and promotion based on an evaluation of the assistant professor's record of research, teaching, and service. Since tenure commits university and state resources indefinitely, the Executive Committee requires proof of excellence in past performance together with a credible forecast that a faculty member's intellectual vitality will continue for years to come. There is no entitlement to tenure based upon a record that is merely competent and satisfactory.

**7.2. Scholarship.** A strong record in research includes a significant body of work that moves beyond the candidate's Ph.D. dissertation. Such work should have been peer-reviewed and should reflect the highest standards of rigor, research, and methods appropriate to the candidate's field. A typical measure of this success includes a book monograph published by a major university press or comparable, and articles in peer-reviewed journals. The Executive Committee looks for evidence of originality, standing in the profession outside the university and the state, and the likelihood of continued outstanding performance and growth. In addition, there should be evidence of a significant future project or projects in at least a preliminary stage of development. In evaluating the record of candidates in various areas of expression, the Executive Committee needs evidence of distinguished performance in terms of originality, scope, richness, and depth.

In all cases, we expect publication in excellent peer-reviewed and respected outlets – academic, university, or commercial presses, and journals. All work presented as peer-reviewed should be accompanied by documentation such as a statement from the publisher

or the editor explaining the review process. In some cases, a textbook may be considered as a book, but it should be clear that the project involves significant scholarship rather than simply pedagogy.

**7.3. Teaching:** We expect very good to excellent teaching, as reported by senior faculty after class visits and on student evaluations (scores and comments). We expect teaching at a variety of levels. We encourage the development of new courses.

**7.4. Service:** The record in service should show an engagement that the Oversight Committee, Department Chair, and other colleagues have deemed appropriate. Such arenas of service may include departmental, campus, state, academic field/s, national, and international.

**7.5. Executive Committee Vote:** A positive two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee at the tenure consideration meeting is required for recommendation for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

*Appeals Procedure: The procedures for appealing a nonrenewal decision are found in Faculty Policies and Procedures Chapter 7.*

**7.6. Conclusion:** The Department of African Cultural Studies would like to re-emphasize that the foregoing guidelines and criteria are by no means a rigid prescription for the attainment of tenure. There is and must remain room for the Executive Committee to exercise its judgment regarding what constitutes “excellence” in research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

## **8. Preparation for Tenure-Promotion Review**

*(Begins from the year prior to consideration)*

**8.1. Letter Requirements:** The Arts and Humanities Divisional Committee requires 5 letters of evaluation of the candidate’s abilities and accomplishments, from nationally or internationally recognized experts in the candidate’s field outside this institution. The Committee also requires that at least 3 of the letters will be solicited from authorities other than those nominated by the candidate and no more than 2 nominated by the candidate. The Department must note any relationship between the candidate and the letter writers. The standard expectation is that all reviewers be sufficiently “arm’s length” from the candidate, that is, candidate and reviewer have no known relationship that might compromise the assumption that the review is based solely on academic accomplishment measured against the field. For instance, a reviewer known to have reviewed a candidate’s manuscript for a press cannot also be selected as a reviewer for the candidate’s tenure file—it does not matter that reviewer and candidate do not or may not know one another.

**8.2. Selection of Outside Letter Writers:** In March/April of the year prior to promotion, the Oversight Committee will consult with the assistant professor to solicit up to two names of possible outside reviewers and to allow the assistant professor to identify potential reviewers who would not be appropriate. By the middle of April, the Oversight Committee

will provide the Department Chair with a list of 7-10 names and addresses (including email) of recognized experts in the candidate's field. The Department Chair will write to potential reviewers with the goal of identifying at least 5 reviewers (including 2 suggested by the assistant professor) who will agree to evaluate the candidate's dossier. If all on the candidate's list decline, then the Chair may consult the candidate for additional names. The identities and letters of outside reviewers are not made available to the assistant professor.

**8.3. Candidate's Statement:** Along with other review materials, the candidate should provide the Department Chair with the statement required by the Arts and Humanities Divisional Committee: a succinct statement of his or her future research and teaching plans for approximately the next five years. This should not be more than three to four pages.

**8.4. Material Sent to Reviewers:** The Arts and Humanities Divisional Committee requires that outside reviewers receive: the candidate's current curriculum vitae, a substantial and representative sample of the candidate's work, including entire book or book manuscript, if appropriate to the candidate's discipline, and the candidate's statement.

**8.5 Access to Outside Letters:** In the fall, these confidential letters will be made available to the Department Chair and the Oversight Committee, which will incorporate its evaluations into its Report. Other members of the Executive Committee may consult the letters upon request. The candidate does not have access to the outside letters; in the case of dispute, the Department Chair has the option of summarizing the letters in such a way that the identity of the letter writers is not evident.

**8.6 Bios of Outside Reviewers:** For assistant professors who will be recommended to the Dean and Divisional Committee for promotion, the Oversight Committee chair will provide the Department Chair with a brief biography of each reviewer--listing name, affiliation, rank, major field of expertise, major publications, relationship (if any) to the candidate, and other pertinent information (1-2 paragraphs per reviewer).

*NB: The Department of African Cultural Studies Guidelines on the Annual Review Process are consistent with the requirements of Faculty Policy and Procedures. Campus policy on probationary faculty appointments, renewals, promotions, and non-retentions is articulated in Chapter 7 of Faculty Policy and Procedures.*

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Fall 2020