

## DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS

### Statement of Understanding Regarding the Evaluation of Tenure-Line Performing Arts Faculty

*Approved by the voting faculty of the department on April 22, 2020*

*Every faculty action should serve to enhance the quality of the university. Faculty members must demonstrate teaching excellence in fulfilling primary responsibilities, significant scholarship, and evidence of a willingness to provide appropriate levels of service to the university and professional community. There must also be evidence of the ability and commitment to continued advancement in all areas. As members of the learned profession responsible for educating the community, the university expects faculty members to exhibit civility, collegiality, and respect for different points of view in the academic community.*

*To achieve these objectives, constituent faculty in each teaching unit or academic unit must establish guidelines that define the expectations for the overall contributions of faculty members.*

—Faculty Manual, Section 10

The following guidelines seek to clarify the process of merit consideration, reappointment, pre-tenure evaluation, appointment with tenure, and promotion of performing arts faculty in the categories of teaching, scholarship, and service. The initial guidelines were approved by a vote of the faculty in the Department of Performing Arts on February 11, 2011. The guidelines were approved by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences on February 15, 2011 and by the Provost of the University on February 16, 2011. A revision to these guidelines was approved by a vote of faculty on April 8, 2015, and again on November 20, 2019.

#### A. Scholarship/Creative/Professional Work

*Faculty members' thorough understanding of and significant contribution to their field are essential to the mission of the university and to the advancement of knowledge. All teaching units or academic units must have criteria that require creative, scholarly, and professional achievements of the highest quality and with national or international impact. 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. The work should relate directly to the criteria established by the teaching unit or academic unit. An additional required assessment addresses the likelihood of continued successful achievements.*

—Faculty Manual, Section 10. a. iii.

A.1. **The Faculty Manual provides a broad definition of *scholarship* that includes “research, scholarship, creative or professional activity.”** All references to *scholarship*, *scholarly work*, or *scholarly activities* within this document are to be viewed as referencing any or all of these activity areas recognized by the University.

A.2. Faculty members at all levels are expected to demonstrate continued substantive development, growth, and increasing visibility in their scholarly work. The whole of any candidate's portfolio should demonstrate a clear and discernible forward trajectory of ongoing work that speaks to his/her contributions and stature within the discipline. Just as traditional scholarly achievements are supported by substantial peer-reviewed publications and presentations, creative and professional work must be supported by a record of output that can be evaluated based on the criteria outlined below.

A.3. A faculty member's portfolio may be directed towards scholarly publication, professional work, creative work, artistic performance, or a combination of these as long as a clear agenda appropriate to the individual's discipline is articulated and a discernible forward trajectory of ongoing work is maintained.

For some disciplines and individuals, a hybrid combination of scholarly, professional, and creative activities is not only fitting but also encouraged. In making an overall assessment of scholarly activities, it is expected that the Department of Performing Arts and the University will employ a multidimensional process of evaluation as described below.

A.4. The assessment of all scholarly enterprises in the performing arts is often based on an understanding of diverse factors, both separately as well as in combination. **Measures of professional impact and significance of work in the Department of Performing Arts can generally be assessed through an understanding of the following principal indicators:**

- Venue/dissemination of scholarly work
- Nature of project and mode of participation
- Critical evaluation and reception

A.5. The concept of venue is used here in a very broad sense, encompassing physical performance spaces (e.g., concert hall, theater, gallery), printed and digital media (e.g., journal, publisher, record label), presenting bodies (arts or other nonprofit organization, broadcasting agency, foundation), and other forms of publication, distribution, and dissemination. Faculty members must clearly articulate the importance and prestige of venues through which they present their work and provide documentation and supportive materials to help evaluators assess the significance of each venue.

A.6. Because of the variety of publication venues and outlets available to faculty in the Department of Performing Arts and the traditions that exist within each of the disciplines, acceptable venues will vary based on the individual candidate's area of specialization. These venues may include, but are not limited to, peer-reviewed journals and publishers, conference proceedings, book chapters, whitepapers, foundations reports, and/or other forms of publication. The candidate is expected to make a clear and convincing case of their significance by providing benchmarks that assist in evaluating the quality of the outlet(s). Providing, among other kinds of supplemental material, acceptance rates at conferences, biographies of editors, rankings and readership of publication, pertinent statistics, and other data will assist in evaluating the significance of this kind of work. Pre-tenure candidates whose emphasis is publication should target high quality, peer-reviewed journals and/or publishers in their field as the predominant outlet for their scholarly work.

A.7. If the impact and/or scholarly nature of the publication venue is difficult to assess—including but not limited to publications in dictionaries and the popular press, reviews of books and textbooks, trade magazine articles, online scholarship, commentary, or criticism—it is incumbent on the candidate to make a substantially compelling case for the inclusion and significance of this kind of work.

A.8. While the faculty manual emphasizes *achievements of the highest quality and with national or international impact*, the Department recognizes that some disciplines may place importance on more regional outlets. In these cases, it is the candidate's responsibility to articulate how local, regional, national, and international venues are important to his/her specific work and discipline.

A.9. For collaborative projects, faculty must clearly articulate the nature of their participatory role and identify their contributions and involvement. A description of the collaborators' professional qualifications also should be included when appropriate.

A.10. In most cases, performances considered part of a faculty member's creative work portfolio would be before or alongside professionals. It is important to separate scholarship from teaching-related activities, but in certain cases, outstanding invitations, selective or auditioned appearances with student ensembles or non-professional organizations may be considered part of a faculty member's scholarly

portfolio. Examples include: local, state, regional, or national honors performances; performances with University ensembles or productions at significant venues outside of the University; and performances with student ensembles or productions at appropriate conference sessions, particularly when entrance is either by special invitation, audition, or adjudication.

A.11. Qualified peer and outside reviewer testimonials are critical and required when determining the quality of the faculty member's work. Critical evaluation in the performing arts can occur either before, during, or after the realization of the product. Faculty must provide documentation regarding the process of assessment, rates of acceptance, and qualification of the reviewing body or individuals. Directly requested testimony by colleagues, external evaluators, and invited adjudicators is acceptable as supplemental evaluation, but is not usually considered to be as valuable as independent peer-reviewed evaluation.

A.12. Invitations, commissions, public testimony, and applied research can be indicators of professional stature and recognition, particularly when requested by a prestigious organization through a selective process. Such invited or commissioned activities, as well as invitations to present one's work before scholarly, professional, or creative communities, are considered important forms of peer review. Likewise, the attainment of competitive grants, awards, honors, fellowships, and other forms of recognition are considered an important form of peer review and a valuable component in assessing a faculty member's professional profile. Faculty must provide an explanation and documentation regarding the process of assessment, including the rates of acceptance (when available), and qualifications of the inviting, commissioning, or awarding bodies or individuals.

A.13. For cases in which project preparation involves significant research that is not published in traditional venues, the faculty member must persuasively articulate how this form of scholarship informs the project.

A.14. The repetition and frequency of performances of newly created works, editions, or other creative materials, especially in new venues and by different organizations, can also be indicative of positive reception. As with other forms of scholarly work, the importance of venues and prestige of presenting organizations must be articulated.

A.15. Because the scholarly process in the arts is multi-faceted and nuanced in every discipline, and because seminal scholarly works in the arts often require time to bring them to full fruition, the faculty member must justify his/her overall quantity of output. While the Department can neither develop nor utilize a quota system, the faculty member will be expected to demonstrate and articulate the relationship between quality and quantity and show that the output is consistent with the expectations of their specific discipline.

A.16. For the purposes of tenure and promotion, a publication will be considered evidence of a candidate's scholarly accomplishment if the publisher or editor provides a letter confirming the acceptance of the final work product, including all revisions. Scholarly work in progress (e.g. manuscripts under review, forthcoming performance/production projects, advance books/contracts) is understood to be a sign of continued forward trajectory but is rarely evaluated at par with that of completed work products.

A.17. A File for Action will emphasize the work completed while at American University, but any assessment will be based on the aggregate productivity and impact of the faculty member's work since degree completion, consistent with the Faculty Manual [Section 10 (a) iii] .

A.18. Submission of a File for Action on the date requested by the department will constitute the last date for placement of scholarship materials in the file, with updates allowed for reporting publication

acceptance(s) or other scholarly activities of materials already referenced in the file (following the procedures provided by the Committee on Faculty Action's "Instructions for Submitting Files for Action").

## **B. Teaching**

*Excellent teaching enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and become active participants in the learning process. Faculty are expected to provide timely, fair, and objective evaluations of student performance. Each teaching unit or academic unit establishes guidelines for evaluating teaching by members of that unit. In each case, these evaluation metrics must extend beyond student evaluations of teaching. Faculty may demonstrate teaching excellence through a variety of ways, including course design, development of new curricular initiatives, up-to-date course content, advising of students, student engagement and achievement outside the classroom, and adherence to evaluation procedures that accurately reflect student accomplishments. Teaching units or academic units may also view publication and presentation of teaching materials and methodologies as a contribution to teaching.*

*Additional ways of evaluating teaching may include, but are not limited to, the items made available to faculty by academic units and the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs.*

—*Faculty Manual*, Section 10. a. i.

B.1. While Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) are the most obvious and available evaluative tool for assessing teaching, they provide imperfect and often misleading evidence. Therefore, the Department of Performing Arts uses a multidimensional "portfolio" approach to teaching evaluation during the reappointment, tenure, or promotion process. Components of the teaching portfolio should include:

- **Teaching Statement:** This written statement should describe teaching philosophy, address achievements, chart improvement, and establish areas of growth. The Department of Performing Arts values active engagement among faculty and students, which includes teaching efforts beyond the classroom. Examples of teaching beyond the classroom include teaching independent studies and independent reading courses, supervising internships and cooperative experiences, advising and mentoring, supervising theses and capstones, teaching applied music lessons, coaching students for auditions, sponsoring students in the Mathias Student Research Conference or in presenting their work in other venues, and undertaking other scholarly projects with students outside of the classroom.
- **Self-Assessment of Pedagogical Activities:** Self-assessments can include an *annotated syllabus* describing the course design, innovation, or revisions; a *written self-evaluation of a video of a class* where the video need not be submitted; or a *written self-evaluation of teaching outside the classroom*.
- **Peer Assessment of Teaching:** This will include at least one written assessment by a faculty member from inside or outside the teaching unit, selected by the Chair in consultation with the faculty member. Assessments will ideally be *classroom observations* but can also be *observations of classroom video* (video need not be submitted) and/or a *critical review of course material*.
- **Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs):** Numeric results from SETs will also be considered in any evaluation, but only in the larger context provided by the multiple measures recommended above. Faculty may also submit the *narrative portions of their SETs* as evidence of student feedback, as long as all narratives from any submitted course are included and not only a selected few.

B.2. Because productions and performances that involve students require a good deal of teaching both inside and outside of the rehearsal hall, faculty members should include descriptions of how the

production or performance interfaced with teaching activities. This kind of experiential teaching should be well documented and the faculty member should be specific in articulating the nature of the work, the time commitment, and the outcomes.

B.3. Community based teaching activities that engage faculty as artists, practitioners, managers, and educators with an emphasis on educational impact within the greater DC community or beyond are encouraged to be submitted as part of a teaching portfolio. These kinds of activities may include, but are not limited to, faculty-led workshops, master classes, training sessions, or other educational activities at venues or institutions beyond the University. Faculty members should provide evidence of the nature of the engagement sufficient to help evaluators assess the significance of the teaching activity, including any supplemental relevant information on the host venue.

## **C. Service**

### Service to the University

*Engagement at American University is an essential component of faculty responsibility. Faculty members must demonstrate engagement in the university community, including a meaningful level of teaching unit, academic unit, or university service, including advising of students, as well as participation in major campus-wide events, such as commencement. Each teaching unit or academic unit must establish guidelines for evaluating service that include evidence of a willingness to carry an appropriate share of teaching unit or academic unit collegiate service obligations.*

—*Faculty Manual*, Section 10. a. iv.

C.1. In addition to the expectations in the *Faculty Manual* regarding service, the Department of Performing Arts considers internal service to be an important component of a faculty member's work. Evaluation of service in the Performing Arts is made by examining contributions within the University at the varied levels listed below, as well as by considering the important contributions to external organizations within a candidate's field.

### Service Within the University

*Service to the student:* faculty are expected to post and hold office hours, write letters of recommendation, provide mentoring, and make themselves accessible to students.

*Service to the Program:* faculty members are expected to attend Program meetings, and to participate in auditions, juries, recruitment, and various other projects.

*Service to the Department:* faculty members are expected to attend and participate in faculty meetings, serve on committees, and respond to communications in a timely manner.

*Service to the College:* faculty members are encouraged to serve on College-wide committees and/or to work with College-specific initiatives, although this level of service for pre-tenure faculty needs to be carefully balanced against their necessary focus on scholarship and teaching.

*Service to the University:* Senior faculty members are encouraged to run for Faculty Senate positions and/or to serve on University-wide committees and initiatives.

C.2. The public nature of the performing arts means that faculty members are often asked to present or perform for other constituents in the University. This is considered an important and valued component of university service. The effort required in mounting a public performance or production-related events such as outreach, receptions, panels, etc. is evaluated as service.

### Service Beyond the University

*Faculty often provide service to local, national, and/or international communities and governments as well as hold leadership positions in scholarly associations. Such activities demonstrate an individual's acceptance of the responsibilities that come with being a member of the faculty in a university deeply committed to service to a wider community. Such service must be clearly related to the teaching and scholarly interests of the faculty member and/or advances the academic stature of the academic unit or university.... Service beyond the university cannot substitute for a service contribution to the university but may count toward faculty members' fulfilling their workload obligation. Each teaching unit or academic unit must establish guidelines for evaluating service beyond the university.*

—*Faculty Manual*, Section 10. a. iv.

C.3. The Department of Performing Arts considers external service to be an important component of a faculty member's work. In evaluating service, the Department of Performing Arts will consider the faculty member's commitment and standing with professional organizations beyond the University. Faculty must articulate the importance of the work and how it benefits both the faculty member's and the University's stature.

### **D. Promotion to Professor**

*In addition to meeting the criteria for the rank of associate professor/librarian, the faculty member demonstrates continuing excellent scholarship and/or prominent accomplishments in the field, high-quality teaching/ performance of primary responsibilities, continuing active engagement with students in and outside the classroom (for teaching faculty), continuing relevant and effective internal and external service, and evidence of the potential to sustain excellence in all of these areas.*

—*Faculty Manual*, Section 8. a. iv.

D.1 The assessment guidelines for promotion to Professor follow the same general criteria for scholarship, teaching and service as outlined above, but must also show the following:

#### Scholarship

D.2 Candidates for the rank of Professor are expected to show continued excellence in scholarship and prominent accomplishments in the field. As with promotion to Associate Professor, the portfolio should demonstrate a clear and discernible forward trajectory of ongoing work that speaks to his/her contributions and stature within the discipline, as well as evidence of sustained excellence.

#### Teaching

D.3. Candidates for the rank of Professor are expected to show continued quality teaching and, where appropriate, the development of new courses for their Program or Department, assistance in curricular redesign for their Program or Department, and mentoring of individual students as the need shall arise.

#### Service

D.4. Candidates for the rank of Professor are expected to show a wide range of significant service contributions to the Department, the College, and to the University. This may include service to thesis committees, service as Department Chair, and service to College-wide or University-wide committees (standing and ad hoc) and task forces. A strong record of mentoring junior faculty in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service is essential for promotion to Professor.

D.5. A significant record of external service to professional organizations or other institutions is also expected. External service commitments should be indicative of the strong professional standing of the faculty member. Obligations should include commitments such as: principal roles within professional artistic organizations; working as a member of an editorial board; serving on active committees for the

drafting of guidelines or procedures; serving as members or leaders of conference or symposium planning committees; holding state, regional, or national offices within professional organizations; serving as an external tenure reviewer for another institution; serving as a pre-press reviewer for an important publisher; or other service work that can be shown to make a significant contribution to the welfare of one's discipline and its related community of professionals.

### **E. Activities Applicable to More than One Area of Review**

E.1. In some cases, a performing arts faculty member will have to determine where best to place in his/her file or vitae a project that may fit more than one of the three categories of teaching, scholarship, and service. Activities should not be included in more than one area. The candidate may, however, choose to direct readers to other sections of the file containing additional pertinent or related activities that further inform another category.

### **F. Work Samples in the Performing Arts**

F.1. Faculty members who are submitting files for promotion and/or tenure will be asked to provide materials for both internal evaluation and external referees. Guidelines provided by the Committee on Faculty Actions (CFA) should be adhered to regarding the selection and presentation of these materials. Given the variety of disciplines within the Department, however, it will be the faculty member's responsibility to provide applicable off-prints, media (audio, video or other forms), or materials considered appropriate and acceptable to those within their specific field. If the faculty member has any questions regarding the kinds of materials that should be provided, he/she must consult with the Department Chair prior to compiling the portfolio for external evaluation. In some cases, external readers may request additional materials during their evaluation process. The Department Chair, in consultation with the Dean, will determine if the requests are reasonable, and if so, the candidate will be responsible for providing any additional materials to the degree to which they are available.

F.2. In addition, all work samples of performance/production, other creative, scholarly, or professional work, regardless of the media, must be appropriately labeled or accompanied by an additional record with the details for each element provided, including:

- date of publication/performance/production/presentation;
- candidate's role in the work product;
- title or brief description of the work (this can be presented in the candidate's narrative);
- if appropriate, title and type of ensemble/company (i.e. professional, student, honors, or other);
- if appropriate, whether the performance/production was live or studio produced, or if there was any editing of the media.

F.3. When preparing samples of performance work for external referees, faculty members are asked to provide an assortment of samples that address the various areas in which the faculty member has produced work.