

UIC Department of Communication Criteria Statement for Tenure and Promotion

Mission & Goals

Society cannot be sustained without communication. Through the exchange of messages, humans are transformed into socially conscious beings, personal experiences become meaningful, culture is created and transmitted, community is achieved, and social order is legitimated. These and other processes of communication create and maintain relationships between ideas, individuals, groups, and nations. These relationships sustain the character of an ever-changing society.

The Faculty in the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago highlights the role of communication for creating a relationship in human societies. The department strives to meet the goals of a liberal education by promoting self- and other-awareness, the development and expression of criticism, and an understanding of the world within historical and political contexts.

The Department of Communication provides a curriculum that helps a student learn how to learn, rather than what to think. Because communication and technologies continually change, the curriculum pursues modes of inquiry rather than narrowly focused industry skills likely to be outdated within a few years. By studying theory, criticism, and methods for researching communication within particular media (such as face to face, television, or computers) and contexts (such as interpersonal, organizational, cross-cultural and international), students learn to develop and articulate their arguments. Students learn how to research, analyze, diagnose, develop, and convey solutions for communication issues, and how to re-educate themselves as issues change.

The Faculty encourages the scholarly pursuit of intellectually substantive issues and emphasizes epistemologically and methodologically thoughtful work. The study of communication has origins in the humanities as well as in the social sciences, and the discipline has the breadth that the faculty values and students come to know. The department stresses critical analysis and theory, but also encourages students to acquire communication skills. It welcomes quantitative and qualitative approaches to research and values scholarship that examines communication in relation to and within cultural, social, political, economic, and historical contexts.

Criteria for Evaluation

The Department of Communication seeks excellence in teaching, research, and professional service. The pursuit of excellence begins with the recruitment of faculty members. We value the involvement of all faculty, across ranks, with continuing efforts

of scholarship, research, teaching, mentoring, professional development, or service devoted to the institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Criteria for appointment to the rank of assistant professor are as follows:

Possess an earned doctorate in an appropriate area within the general field of communication from a university of recognized standing and the appropriate training for courses assigned.

Show promise as an outstanding teacher, as shown by successful experience or by recommendations from those in a position to assess such potential.

Show promise for significant scholarly or creative achievement on the basis of the dissertation, or on the basis of previous publication, as well as on the basis of recommendations from those able to assess such potential.

Show potential for making a contribution within the framework of the university, college, and department through committee service and such activities as teaching courses in the general curriculum and the like.

Criteria for appointment to the rank of associate professor with tenure are as follows:

Have met, at the University of Illinois at Chicago or elsewhere, all criteria stated in this document for the assistant professorship.

Have demonstrated outstanding teaching ability and effectiveness as assessed through evaluations of course content and materials, student evaluation, and faculty reviews.

Have established and clearly be continuing to extend a record of significant scholarly or creative accomplishment, as indicated by development and completion of such efforts as book-length projects, by publication in scholarly journals (particularly refereed ones), by presentations at national or regional meetings, and the like.

Have established a record of service to the college and the university, as well as to the department, through committee membership and such activities as curriculum development, teaching in the general curriculum, and the like.

Show clear promise for continuing growth in all areas of activity and achievement indicated above in connection with the associate professorship.

Criteria for appointment to the rank of full professor with tenure as follows:

Have met, at the University of Illinois at Chicago or elsewhere, all criteria stated in this document for the associate professorship.

Have established, and clearly be continuing to develop, a widely acknowledged record of distinguished scholarly accomplishment as indicated through development and completion of such efforts as book-length projects, by publication in scholarly journals (particularly refereed ones), by presentations at national or regional meetings, and the like.

Have established, and clearly be continuing to develop, a record of service to the college, university, and department, through committee membership and such activities as curriculum development, teaching in the general curriculum, shaping of program policy, and the like, especially as these activities demonstrate professional leadership.

Descriptions of Excellence

The department recognizes the need for evidence of excellence in the areas of teaching, service, and research, and offers the following descriptions of these areas, shaped to fit this university and our field.

Teaching. Excellent teaching will be evident through departmental evaluation procedures (described below). In addition, receipt or nomination for teaching awards, using innovative teaching techniques and materials, developing new courses, participating in extra-classroom learning experience, receiving course development grants, and taking part (when possible) in the general education curriculum and Honors program courses also indicate dedication to, and effectiveness in, teaching.

Effective teaching will also be evident from the pursuit of further study by students, awards and other recognition of students, the direction of graduate and honors theses and supervision of independent and directed studies. Effective teachers develop new courses and integrate new materials into existing courses, participate actively in academic advising and in curriculum and academic program development, supervise and train graduate students, and take part in extra-classroom learning experiences of students. The department will undertake peer reviews of teaching, including observations by faculty peers annually, for faculty on a promotional path. Faculty who have achieved the highest level of promotion will be reviewed at least every three years. Reviewers will produce a descriptive evaluation that others can use to gauge teaching excellence and each faculty member can use to improve teaching effectiveness.

There are five components: examining course material, including required readings, handouts, quizzes and exams, and instructions as relevant to the department mission; reading student evaluations, with particular attention to written comments; attending

individual classes; reviewing unsolicited student comments, letters, and notes; and examining the instructor's teaching philosophy, objectives for education, and means of assessing student's performance. This analysis (including detailed descriptions of student evaluations and comments, course material, observation reports, and committee analyses) will become part of the faculty member's file.

Service. Service proceeds at the level of the department, college, university, profession, and community. At the department, college, and university levels, evidence of effective service includes committee participation and particular administrative responsibilities. Other forms of service include advising student groups, participating in recruiting of students and faculty, orientation and retention of students, sponsorship of service events on campus, and other voluntary commitments to enhance our common academic goals. In the profession, evidence of excellence in service can include involvement in professional organizations, preferably as an officer at the national level, but also in program planning and regional conferences, and journal or newsletter editorships. Volunteer service on a major public commission, task force, or board, and consulting activity for outside organizations and certification bodies can provide evidence of excellence in service. At the community level, service can include involvement in public boards or committees, serving as unpaid consultant or advisor to community groups, invited speaking engagements, and volunteer activities using professional expertise.

Research. Scholarship is the area most difficult for those outside a discipline to evaluate. Therefore, tenure and promotion criteria tend to rely heavily on peer evaluation. Patterns of scholarly activity and publication are important: is research activity consistent, cumulative, and of interest to, and respected by, others in the field? The opinions of outside reviewers, solicited during the tenure and promotion process, usually address such concerns.

The most compelling evidence of excellence for scholarly achievement to those outside the field tends to be scholarly books and/or articles in refereed journals. Other forms of scholarship that serve as evidence include book chapters for edited collections, book reviews (weighed according to the length and quality of the review, and the quality of the publication in which it appears, as determined by peers in the discipline), essays, articles in un-refereed journals, conference paper presentations, publication in conference proceedings, grant submission and support, and serving as a tenure, promotion, or grant reviewer for other institutions.

Other evidence of scholarly excellence, and the respect of others in the field includes the receipt of fellowships or research awards, editing a journal, membership on editorial

boards, reviewing book and article manuscripts, invitations to participate in scholarly meetings and/or lecture at other institutions, and citation in works by peers.

The Faculty of the Department of Communication at UIC values faculty members who bridge gaps between academic, intellectual and public discourse. The faculty knows that work of merit can appear in a variety of venues and acknowledges that colleagues seek to publish their work wherever it will have the most influence. The only caveat is that college tenure committees rely heavily on the referee process, and so the faculty suggests the representative work find publication in refereed journals.

It is the desire of this faculty to see that each member's contribution in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service evolve over time and show continuing evolution toward the goals set by the department, college, university, and discipline.

Departmental Review Procedures

As a general departmental policy, faculty members are expected to keep their personnel file up to date. This file should contain documentation of and copies of published professional papers. The file will provide the basis for the departmental review.

The department supports the concept that tenure is acquired only with promotion to the rank of associate professor. Tenure or non-retention must be recommended before the end of the sixth year. For all reviews, an earlier action is not precluded and not prejudicial to the subsequent action.

Mid-Probation Reviews

In accordance with Statutes of the University, upon initial appointment, each tenure-eligible untenured faculty member is assigned a tenure code based on the six years of probationary service. No later than the mid-point of the individual's probation period, the department provides a thorough review of the untenured faculty member in the areas of teaching, research, and services, including classroom visits just as in a promotion and tenure assessment. Faculty members may request the mid-probation review at any time and should do so if the department fails to undertake a timely one. The review document is provided to the faculty member and included in the personnel file and any future tenure review papers. The faculty members have the opportunity to respond; written responses are added to the file, and the department then has discretion to gather outside evaluations. The head decides whether to renew the individual's contract. A favorable review may result in continued employment, with additional reviews as needed.

Tenure and Promotion Review

In accordance with Department of Communication bylaws, a Promotion and Tenure Committee, consisting of tenured faculty members of the department ranking above the candidate, has the responsibility of reviewing the credentials of all faculty members seeking promotion and tenure. If fewer than three eligible members are available within the department, the department head will arrange with the Dean of the College to add members from other UIC units.

The Review consists of evaluating the impact of the faculty member in three areas of scholarly pursuit: teaching activities, research activities, and professional service. The purpose of the review is to gather and examine all pertinent evidence concerning the candidate's performance related to criteria expressed in this document and elsewhere in university policies and procedures for tenure and promotion. The candidate sees and attests to the accuracy of all factual information gathered in the review.

In accord with the University of Illinois at Chicago policies and procedures, in pursuit of evidence with which to evaluate each candidate, outside opinions are sought to determine the impact of the scholarly and educational endeavors of the candidate. As specified in university guidelines, external reviewers who have not had a close association with the candidate are sought. Requests for letters go out at least three months before the deadlines for submission of promotion papers to the college. The department does not reveal the identity of external reviewers to the candidate. The committee may solicit comments from students, graduate as well as undergraduate. All members of the department are encouraged to examine and evaluate the evidence accumulated, except for items kept confidential according to university policy. The department does not show the candidate any of the evaluations from the review process, including letters, comments, or assessments.

The Committee prepares a final recommendation. Only those members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee who have examined the evidence and are present for the final review committee meeting can vote on the case. Faculty members on leave must notify the Executive Officer at the beginning of the term whether they wish to participate in decisions made by the department, including voting. Those who wish to vote may do so either in person or via telecommunication by prior arrangement. Proxy votes are forbidden by the University.

The Decision Process

The promotion and tenure committee at the department level may recommend: (1) To promote the candidate, (2) not to promote at this time. If, after deliberation, the vote is unanimous the committee need write only one report providing their findings and rationale. If the vote is anything but unanimous the committee will provide a single report containing written rationales for each recommendation, as well as the number of members who voted for each, and abstentions. The report will be sent by the committee chair to the EO for their consideration. Members of the promotion and tenure committee

participate with the understanding that all matters related to their deliberations remain confidential.

At each level of review, the candidate is informed in writing of the vote outcomes and endorsement decision of the executive officer.

Clinical Professors

Clinical Assistant Professors are not subject to the seven-year probationary period applicable to tenure-track faculty, but Clinical Assistant and Clinical Associate Professors are to be reviewed at least every five years for retention in rank and/or for promotion. During the fifth year, the unit administrator must inform the clinical faculty member that he/she has the right to be reviewed for promotion, provided that the appointment is for not less than 0.5 FTE. Appointments of less than 0.5 FTE and short-term appointments are not ordinarily eligible for promotion in rank. Faculty who are eligible to be considered for promotion have the right to request such a review. Normally these reviews take place at the commencement of the sixth year of appointment at the rank of Clinical Assistant (or Associate) Professor, but qualified candidates may be considered for promotion at any time deemed appropriate by the department.

For promotion on the clinical track, a faculty member should show considerable involvement in teaching and practice. Scholarship/research activities and service activities will be more variable. They will be governed by the interests and career directions pursued by the faculty member and the ways in which those activities complement the needs and resources of the department.

Qualifications for Appointment/Promotion to Clinical Associate Professor

Experience at the Clinical Assistant Professor rank or equivalent

- Effective contributions in the area of teaching, the development of courses and curricula, and (if applicable) the oversight of teaching assistants
- Substantive contributions in service, community engagement, and/or scholarly activities

Qualifications for Appointment/Promotion to Clinical (Full) Professor

- Experience at the Clinical Associate Professor rank or equivalent
- Effective contributions in the area of teaching, the development of courses and curricula, and (if applicable) the oversight of teaching assistants
- Externally – recognized contributions in service, community engagement, and/or scholarly activities

Lecturers

Lecturers are not subject to the seven-year probationary period applicable to tenure-track faculty, but Lecturers are eligible to be considered for promotion to Senior Lecturer after 3.5 academic years of 100% appointment as a Lecturer occurring within a five-year span and are to be reviewed at least every five years for retention in rank. Upon becoming eligible, the candidate must be informed by the unit administrator that he/she has the right to be reviewed for promotion, provided that the appointment is for not less than 0.5 FTE at the time of eligibility. (Appointments of less than 0.5 FTE and short-term appointments are not ordinarily eligible for promotion in rank.) Candidates who are eligible to be considered for promotion have the right to request such a review. Normally the promotion review will take place during the spring semester, with promotion, if granted, effective at the beginning of the next fall semester. The department will undertake evaluations, including peer evaluations, of Lecturers at least once a year.

For promotion to the rank of Senior Lecturer candidates must show sustained excellence in teaching. Qualifications for promotion include:

- Experience at the rank of Lecturer for 3.5 academic years, or more, within a five-year period.
- Effective and sustained contributions in the area of teaching, participation in the development of courses and curricula, and (if applicable) the oversight of teaching assistants.