DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION OF TENURE-TRACK FACULTY TO THE RANKS OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND PROFESSOR

As approved by faculty vote
on December 4, 2025

This document describes factors considered in decisions about promotion in the Department of Psychological Sciences. The official University policies, procedures, and criteria for promotion and tenure are stated in several documents available through links at https://hhs.purdue.edu/faculty-staff/promotion-and-tenure/. The criteria listed below are intended as useful information both for faculty seeking promotion and for members of the Department's Primary Committee and of the HHS Area Committee who are responsible for evaluating candidates' credentials. The criteria are not intended as a checklist for promotion. Instead, each criterion will be evaluated in the context provided by the full record.

As stated in the "West Lafayette Campus Promotion and Tenure Policy" (known informally as the "Provost's memo") dated April 29, 2022, "As an institution of higher education with a commitment to excellence and a diversity of missions, Purdue University values creative endeavor and scholarly activity in many forms. These include research and discovery; teaching and learning in its many forms; and engagement in its many forms, including extension and outreach. To be considered for promotion, a faculty member should have demonstrated excellence and scholarly productivity in at least one of these areas: discovery, learning, and/or engagement. Ordinarily, strength should be manifest in more than one of these areas."

For most candidates, the primary basis for promotion will be consistent with the basis on which the candidates were originally hired, which is excellence in discovery in most but not all cases. If consultations between the department head and other faculty suggest that a faculty member's responsibilities at the time of consideration for promotion justify placing primary emphasis on another mission area, that other area could be the primary basis for promotion. Discussions about changing a candidate's basis for promotion should include the candidate.

In addition, all promotion candidates should provide evidence of their commitment to active and responsive mentorship in their promotion documentation. Activities to be documented include mentoring, advising, and supporting the academic success of undergraduates, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists.

Discovery

When evaluating the research accomplishments of promotion candidates, multiple criteria must be considered. The first and foremost criterion is the *quality* of a faculty member's research program. In addition, promotion candidates are expected to have a research record that demonstrates their *intellectual independence* as researchers. Also important are the candidates' *productivity*, the *impact* of their discoveries on the research of others in the field, and their record of *research funding.* Finally, because the education and training of future researchers is a crucial part of the mission of Purdue University, promotion candidates are expected to provide active and effective research *mentoring* of the undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists involved in their research programs.

When tenured or tenure-track faculty are nominated for promotion primarily on the basis of their excellence in discovery, their record of research accomplishments is evaluated with respect to all of the criteria listed in the previous paragraph and described in more detail in the following paragraphs. When tenured or tenure-track faculty are nominated for promotion primarily on the basis of their excellence in learning or engagement, they are still expected to document their record of research accomplishments. However, greatest emphasis will be placed on the quality

and impact of the promotion candidates' research portfolio and on the evidence of their intellectual independence. Less emphasis will be placed on the candidates' publication numbers and the record of research funding.

Quality. The quality of a candidate's research is indicated by the significance of its contributions to the field, the use of rigorous and/or innovative methodology, the novelty and relevance of the findings, and the potential to generate new directions for future research. Research that advances theory, integrates key ideas, and/or addresses issues of significance to a field will be judged as being more relevant to the department's discovery mission than research that is atheoretical, makes relatively minor contributions to existing knowledge, or is focused on relatively specialized issues. A strong research record may include programmatic research that substantially advances knowledge on a problem or issue, and/or individual publications that address an issue of great significance.

The quality of a candidate's research can also be judged, indirectly, from the quality of the journals or other publication outlets in which it is reported. A journal's quality is typically judged based on various indicators, none of which should be considered in isolation, such as a journal's impact factor, rejection rate, and ranking or reputation within the candidate's area of research. Journals that have only moderate rankings or rejection rates nonetheless may be judged as desirable outlets if they are the most appropriate journals for the candidate's research topic.

As detailed in Appendix B of the department's bylaws, Primary Committee members will judge the quality of research and publication outlets by relying on several sources, including knowledge and expertise that they possess, the opinions of Primary Committee members who are or have become knowledgeable about the candidate's topic(s) of research, and the evaluations of outside reviewers who have been selected, in part, because of their potential to provide an expert and unbiased evaluation of a candidate's record.

Intellectual Independence. All candidates for promotion should be able to demonstrate their intellectual independence in their program of research. Intellectual independence can be demonstrated in several ways, including serving as the Principal Investigator on externally-funded research projects, being the sole author or primary author of publications, and publishing research reports with co-authors who are undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists whom the candidate has mentored or co-mentored. When a candidate's record includes many publications co-authored with former mentors, the description in the promotion document of the candidate's research interests should clarify the candidate's significant and distinctive contributions to the research already completed and the research underway. A strong promotion candidate will be identified by a distinct body of research unique to that individual's research program. The demonstration of intellectual independence is especially important in consideration of candidates seeking promotion from associate to full professor.

Productivity. In assessing productivity, faculty should be aware that primary emphasis will be given to publications in refereed journals. Research productivity is indicated by the total number of articles published and the rate at which articles have been published in appropriate publication outlets (i.e., reputable, peer-reviewed journals). Publications in other outlets (e.g., book chapters, conference proceedings) may also be considered as indicators of productivity if they can be demonstrated to have impact on par with journal articles. It is recognized that the candidate's research methodology may affect the rate of publication. It is further recognized that the vagaries

of the publication process may lead to spurts in publication, although there should not be significant gaps across years.

Impact. Candidates are expected to demonstrate the impact of their research program. Citation analyses, as indicated by total number of citations and other metrics such as h-index or i10-index, may be used as one factor to evaluate candidates' research impact. Citation analyses should be done in the context of the citation expectations for scholars at a comparable career stage in the candidate's area of specialization. When thinking about where to submit research reports for publication, faculty should consider both the quality of the journal and the visibility of the journal. Publications in widely read and respected journals will generally lead to greater impact.

Additional indicators of national and international recognition of a candidate's research program may also be used to evaluate its impact. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Editorial board memberships and editorships
- Memberships on grant panels
- Consultation with government agencies
- Invited lectures and talks in other educational institutions and key-note addresses at academic conferences
- National or international research awards
- Recognition of a candidate's research in the broader scientific community
- Impact on professional practice and, more generally, on society as a whole
- Patents, licenses, prototypes, and entrepreneurship activities that move products from the laboratory to the marketplace

Candidates for promotion to associate professor should show evidence of developing national and international recognition, as indicated by the indicators above. For promotion to full professor, candidates must demonstrate evidence of established national and international recognition for their intellectual leadership and unique contributions to the research field. It is expected that these candidates will have made major theoretical and/or methodological contributions. Those contributions may include publications that, for example, lay the foundation for future research in the field, integrate cumulative progress made in that field, or significantly influence the research programs of other scholars.

As with the evaluation of quality, primary committee members will rely on multiple sources when evaluating the impact of a candidate's research program. In particular, outside reviewers will be asked to evaluate the impact or likely impact of the candidate's research program.

Research Funding. External funding is strongly encouraged; applications for external funding are expected, although it is recognized that areas and programs of research may vary in terms of available funding. In addition to its ability to facilitate the conduct of research, external funding helps to demonstrate quality, impact, and intellectual independence. Consequently, the Primary Committee will look closely at the history of external funding when examining the case for promotion. However, the absence of external funding when coupled with an otherwise excellent scholarly record will not preclude a recommendation for promotion, and the presence of funding when coupled with a weaker record of productivity, quality, etc., will not guarantee it. Competitive internal grants may also be indicative of the quality of the candidate's research.

Mentoring. Candidates for promotion are expected to have demonstrated their excellence in mentoring others in discovery or research activities. Guidance of undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists in research that results in co-authored presentations at regional or national conferences, and co-authored publications in refereed journals and/or other important publication outlets, can serve as one indicator of this form of mentoring. Another indicator of success in mentoring is the receipt of research awards by mentored undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists. Accomplishment in discovery may also extend to guided inclusion of trainees in research activity that results in patents and entrepreneurial activity.

Learning

All tenured or tenure-track faculty who are candidates for promotion must present evidence of strength in teaching that effectively promotes student learning. Strength in teaching and learning will be evaluated on the basis of performance in classroom settings and contexts beyond classroom settings. Excellence in teaching and learning will be evaluated on this basis, as well as on the basis of demonstrated excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning. In addition to the indicators described below, awards, honors, and other forms of recognition for teaching or mentoring can demonstrate a candidate's strength in teaching and learning.

Classroom Teaching and Contributions to Curricula. In Psychological Sciences, successful candidates for promotion are expected to have a strong record of teaching undergraduate courses and graduate courses. There may be cases that justify greater involvement with one group of students relative to the other; such cases should be evaluated in terms of the candidate's contribution to the broader teaching and mentoring mission of the department and university.

Successful candidates for promotion are also expected to make significant contributions to departmental course offerings. These contributions may be demonstrated through a range of indicators, including, but not limited to:

- The number and variety of courses taught
- Peer or expert evaluations of teaching, when available
- Student evaluations, interpreted cautiously because of published evidence of bias in such evaluations
- Contributions in course or curriculum development to address needs or gaps in undergraduate or graduate education
- Preparation of instructional materials

Advising and Mentoring Beyond Classroom Settings. Successful candidates should document their activities that show their commitment to active and responsive advising and mentoring by supporting the academic success of undergraduates, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scientists.

Indicators of undergraduate student mentoring and support may include, but are not limited to, leading study abroad and other experiential or service-learning programs; serving as a mentor in campus programs; participating as an advisor to student organizations; supporting students in co-curricular and other activities; or engaging in efforts to improve the persistence and success of diverse populations of students.

Indicators of effective advising, training, and mentoring of graduate students or postdoctoral scientists may include personalized training efforts (e.g., supervising internships), or leading professional workshops on topics that pertain to success in an academic or research career (e.g., obtaining research funding, adopting new analytic techniques, increasing teaching effectiveness).

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. For some tenure-track and tenured faculty, a nomination for promotion based on accomplishments in promoting student learning may be warranted. Successful candidates will be expected to demonstrate excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning in psychological sciences. Standards of such excellence are similar to those used to evaluate the standards of excellence in discovery. Specifically, the candidate will be expected to demonstrate a record of refereed publications on teaching, and/or have developed instructional innovations that have been adopted by other institutions. Examples of such innovations may also include a widely adopted and well-regarded textbook introducing a new framework, publications in pedagogical journals, instructional materials or media with wide adoption, or products that enhance student learning. Successful candidates will be developing (for promotion to associate professor) or have developed (for promotion to full professor) a national or international reputation on teaching or instruction. Indicators of reputation can include keynote addresses at national or international teaching conferences or invitations to deliver special workshops on pedagogy. In all cases, the impact of the individual's work should be well-documented, considering that it will serve as the primary focus of review.

Engagement and Service

Almost all tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Psychological Sciences seek promotion based on discovery. However, faculty may seek promotion based on excellence in engagement following consultations with the department head and other faculty. Excellence in engagement may be demonstrated through developing and implementing practices that improve people's lives, communities, and societies. Indicators of such impact are likely to be derived from contexts beyond academic disciplines.

Given Purdue's land-grant mission, it is expected that tenured/tenure-track faculty candidates will endeavor to disseminate their research findings beyond scholarly publications, for example, by contributing to articles written about their research in national newspapers and magazines, giving talks to community or lay audiences, etc. In addition, all tenured/tenure-track faculty are expected to contribute to service activities that sustain campus units and professional organizations.

With regard to *service*, the Primary Committee expects tenured and tenure-track faculty to share in the support functions that are necessary to sustain academic units, research institutions, professional organizations, and funding agencies. Service to the department involves such activities as participating in the work of departmental committees and providing support for the department's undergraduate and graduate programs. Participation in comparable college- and university-level activities is also expected. Service to professional or governmental organizations can involve holding an official position or acting in other ways as a leader in state, national, or international societies.

Because the department is committed to facilitating the development of faculty, assistant professors are expected to do only a modest amount of service activities, as compared with

associate and full professors. Candidates for full professor should exhibit demonstrable leadership in service to the department, university, or profession.

Because *engagement* has not been a primary responsibility of tenure-track or tenured faculty in the Department of Psychological Sciences, it has very rarely been considered as the basis of a nomination for promotion. But if tenure-track or tenured faculty are considered for promotion based on their excellence in engagement, they must demonstrate a record of highly impactful engagement-related activities in which they played a crucial role. These activities might involve a partnership with a specific community or organization outside the university in which there is a mutually-beneficial exchange of knowledge. For example, these faculty might provide evidence of developing and implementing evidence-based programs, interventions, or techniques that have positively affected the quality of life of people in a community. Alternatively, they might have formed partnerships with community, government, or public sector organizations that resulted in new laws or policies that improved people's lives, or they might have been a leader in organizations that promoted substantial changes in professional practice nationally and/or internationally.

The impact of a candidate's engagement activities should be demonstrated through relevant publications (e.g., technical reports written in collaboration with community or other partners; laws, policies, or standards for licensing). Given the difference between discovery and engagement, these publications would be qualitatively different from the research reports of most other faculty in the Department of Psychological Sciences. Publications that translate research for practitioners, entrepreneurs, business/industry leaders, and/or policy makers are valued in the scholarship of engagement. Connecting research with the appropriate markets (commercialization) may also further engagement with external stakeholders. Engaged scholarship may serve the land grant mission by working with government, schools, non-profits, business, and/or industry. Evidence of impact on policy may include being called to testify in legislative bodies or consulting work. Discussion of research in lay media may also be useful as evidence that research is being spread through indirect conduits that may ultimately influence practice.