SSW Internal Guidelines for Promotion with Tenure

Evaluation for promotion with tenure at Rutgers School of Social Work is based upon a balance between scholarship, teaching, and service. In accord with University policy regarding the promotion to Associate Professor with tenure, scholarship is given the greatest weight in the evaluation, but teaching and service are also considered heavily in the evaluation process. This document does not seek to supplant the criteria described in the University policy, but instead provides guidelines for how the peer review committee interprets those criteria within the context of social work as an applied professional and academic discipline.

With respect to scholarship, it is expected that the candidate first and foremost demonstrate productivity in scholarly output. Assessment of productivity takes into account both quantity and quality, and will vary based on the applicant’s field of study, the selectivity of journals, professional conferences, and book presses; level of collaboration vs. solo authorship; and type of research being pursued. Candidates should anticipate, however, that the productivity expectations will be comparable to those of peer schools of social work in RU/VH Research Universities. With respect to quality of scholarship, the peer review committee will take into account factors such as journal quality (using metrics such as the impact factor as well as reputation), level of rigor of methods, and indicators of scholarly recognition (awards for best book or article, lead article placement, etc.). Work conducted collaboratively or as part of a research team is valued, but the portfolio and the research statement should detail the candidate’s original contributions and leadership to such collaborations. Pursuit of internal and external funding, as both principal investigator and co-investigator, is considered as part of the assessment of scholarship. Through the research statement, the candidate is provided the opportunity to place his or her scholarly work into the context of the relevant field of study and discuss how the scholarship follows a coherent trajectory. Finally, the assessment of referees informs the committee’s assessment of the originality, quality, and impact of the candidate’s work on his or her field.

Given the School’s mission to educate the future social work workforce of New Jersey and beyond, teaching is also a highly important area of evaluation. Student evaluations of teaching quality are taken into account, but in recognition that student evaluations suffer many sources of bias, the peer review committee also takes into account factors such as efforts taken to improve teaching (e.g. asking others to observe and critique; using teaching resources on campus). The peer review committee recognizes that each faculty member brings unique strengths to the role of teaching, and that therefore contributions to teaching endeavors can take different forms. In this regard the committee considers in its assessment work undertaken to enhance the School’s teaching mission, such as serving as lead teacher, contributions to curriculum development, performing independent study courses, and teaching a variety of courses in areas of need. Student-related mentoring activities such as advising PhD students, supervising research internships and assistantships, mentoring students in the development of co-authored publications and presentations, and chairing and serving on dissertation committees are also considered in the evaluation of teaching.

Finally, service activities are essential to the School’s mission. While the School seeks to avoid assigning excessive service loads to untenured faculty members, helping to carry out essential functions of the school and university is an important aspect of citizenship, through activities such as: committee membership in the School and University (such as serving on University Senate and faculty councils in
New Brunswick, Newark, or Camden); leadership in program development; and serving as advisor to student organizations. In addition, service to the profession (e.g., reviewing journal manuscripts and conference abstracts; research consultation; serving on committees of professional organizations) and community (e.g., serving on the boards of community service associations; giving trainings and workshops) are also considered to be important components of service. Hence, the review committee evaluates whether the candidate has participated meaningfully to service, but also that the candidate has been judicious in selecting service responsibilities that are contributory yet do not interfere unduly with research productivity and teaching quality.

Approved by SSW Tenured Faculty
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