

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM REVIEW, PROMOTION AND TENURE PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

I. Program Guidelines

A. Preamble

This policy applies to all represented faculty and is intended to comply with all provisions of Article 20 of the CBA. In the event of any discrepancies or inconsistencies, the CBA language applies for represented faculty. This policy also applies to all unrepresented faculty, unless a university-wide policy exists that contradicts the terms of this policy.

This policy is focused primarily on the criteria by which faculty are evaluated. Detailed descriptions of the processes by which reviews are conducted are presented in Article 20 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and in relevant UO policies for unrepresented faculty. Procedures specific to the Creative Writing Program are presented below. This document will be made available in the department or unit (as well as on the Academic Affairs website).

The Program's recommendation for promotion to a tenured position in the Creative Writing at the University of Oregon depends on excellence in research and publication, national recognition, outstanding teaching (with emphasis on the graduate level), and strong service, some of it administrative, within the program and at the national level. The proportional weights attached to each of these categories are: research (40%), teaching (40%), and service (20%). Excellence in one dimension alone may strengthen a case but by itself will not be sufficient to guarantee tenure and/or promotion. Tenure-track faculty are hired with the confidence that they have the potential to achieve high standards and with the expectation and hope that they will become permanent colleagues. The purpose of the following sections in this document is to make explicit faculty review and promotion and tenure procedures, and the expectations within the Creative Writing Program in the areas of research, teaching, and service.

B. Department-Specific Procedures

i. Annual Reviews

Each tenure-track faculty member who has not received tenure and is not in the process of a tenure review will have an annual review conducted by the department head, usually in mid-April. These annual reviews are written by the Program Head and are forwarded to the College. The review is based on the candidate's annual report, which should include the following: (1) a CV, lists of publications and grants, and lists (by year and term) of their courses and committees to date; (2) a narrative description of the candidate's progress during the past year in research, teaching, and service (a brief paragraph for

each area will suffice); and (3) a brief description of goals and plans for next year and beyond.

ii. Contract Renewal/Third-Year Review

The candidate's report, containing the items described in Article 20 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and in relevant UO policies for unrepresented faculty, will be reviewed by the voting members of the Program. A vote is held on whether or not to recommend renewal of the contract. Afterwards, a report is written by the department head and provided to the candidate. The file, including any responsive material provided by the candidate within ten days of receipt of the report, is then forwarded for review by the Dean and then the Provost or designee. A fully satisfactory review indicating that the faculty member is on track towards promotion and tenure will lead to a contract extension up through the tenure and promotion year. If the contract renewal process determines that the faculty member's record is not satisfactory and that promotion and tenure are not likely, the faculty member will be given a one-year, terminal contract. A faculty member may also be given a renewable contract that does not extend to the promotion and tenure year if there are questions as to whether the faculty member will have a record meriting promotion at the end of the tenure and promotion period. In such cases, the faculty member will be required to go through another contract renewal process prior to the promotion and tenure review in order to determine if the faculty member has been able to remedy the shortcomings in the record identified in the contract renewal process.

iii. Review for Promotion and Tenure

a. External Reviewers

Late in the spring term prior to the year when the tenure case is to be considered, the department head will consult with members of the department and, when appropriate, members of any UO research institute/center with which the faculty member is affiliated, and prepare a list of external referees who will be invited to evaluate the research record of the candidate. Independently, the candidate will be asked to submit a list of potential external referees to the department head. External reviewers should generally be from comparable or more highly regarded institutions. Ideally, they should be full professors who have the appropriate expertise to evaluate the candidate's record. Dissertation advisors, close personal friends, or other individuals who might be viewed as having a conflict of interest, are not asked to be external reviewers.

b. Internal Reviewers

The department may also solicit on-campus letters from those familiar with the candidate's teaching, scholarship or service. In particular, inclusion of an internal review is the norm when a faculty member is a member of a research institute/center. This review is prepared by the director of the institute/center, in consultation with its senior members.

c. Promotion and Tenure Committee/Report

During the spring term of the year prior to the tenure-decision year (usually the 5th year of the probationary period), the Program Head will appoint a promotion and tenure committee of tenured faculty to review the candidate. This committee will include members from the Department faculty and, when appropriate and with guidance from the Dean and Divisional Dean, tenured faculty members may also be selected from relevant units outside of the Department. This committee will be charged with submitting a written report to the Department evaluating the candidate's case for promotion. In particular, the committee report will include an internal assessment of the candidate's work, a summary and evaluation of the external and internal referees' assessment of the candidate's work, an evaluation of teaching that includes a discussion of the numerical student evaluation scores, written comments, and peer reviews, and an assessment of department, university, professional, and community service. The committee report must conclude with a recommendation to the Department regarding promotion and tenure. The committee report is generally made available to all tenured faculty of appropriate rank for review prior to the Department meeting. Both Associate and Full Professors vote in promotion and tenure cases, but only Full Professors vote for promotion from Associate to Full Professor.

d. Department Meeting and Vote

The department will typically hold a meeting in mid to late-October to decide the promotion and tenure recommendation for the candidate. Voting members meet and discuss the case and following these discussions, members vote by signed, secret ballot on whether to recommend tenure and promotion (or just promotion in the case of a promotion to full professor). When all votes have been registered, the votes are tallied, usually by the Program Head, and the department is informed of the final vote tally. The anonymity of the individual votes will be maintained, although the signed ballots will be kept in a signed and sealed envelope by the department head in case they are requested by the Dean or the Provost.

e. Program Head's Review

After the department vote, the department head writes a separate review providing a description of the process, including any unique characteristics of the profession (e.g., books versus articles; extent of co-authorship; significance of order of names on publications, etc.), as well as summarizing the department meeting in which the vote was taken. The report also includes a department head's statement offering an opinion regarding the case for promotion and tenure that may or may not agree with the department vote.

II. Guidelines

A. Preamble

These guidelines outline the criteria for promotion and tenure in the Creative Writing Program. They provide a specific departmental context within the general university framework for promotion and tenure of faculty. The following criteria are based on faculty performance in research, teaching and service, which are allotted proportional weights of 40 : 40 : 20, respectively.

B. Creative Work and Research (40%)

The most important evidence to support the case for achievement in creative work and research is either (a) a book or books published since hire with a nationally recognized press or presses, including fine small presses or (b) a series of coherent and/or related quality publications since hire in nationally recognized literary or commercial magazines judged to be significant by peers at the University and experts at other institutions. A secondary criterion is evidence of a continuing commitment to creative work and research as evidenced by a body of work that is in progress and significant work being planned.

Although publications may be in different genres, there must be a coherent plan of creative work and research and a focused plan of publication. It is the responsibility of the candidate to demonstrate this coherence and focus. Quality counts more than quantity here: publications should be on a developing arc, moving from regionally significant periodicals to nationally known ones. Additionally, the record and the candidate's own statement should indicate a program, schedule, and objectives of future work.

Except in highly exceptional circumstances, the Program expects the candidate to have a book published by, or accepted and "in production" at a nationally recognized press during the period since they were hired. A manuscript must be complete, accepted by a publisher, and "in production" in order to count towards promotion and tenure. This condition is essential with book manuscripts. "In production" indicates the completion of all work on the manuscript by the author, including all revisions, with the exception of editing associated with production (such as copyediting, page proofs, and indexing). Similarly, poems, stories, essays, articles, and book chapters must either be "in print" or "forthcoming" in order to be counted as publications. "Forthcoming" means that an article or book chapter has been accepted for publication and requires no further authorial revisions or editing, with the exception of editing associated with production (such as copyediting and page proofs). A letter to this effect from a journal editor or editor of a volume of essays for each "forthcoming" publication is required. Generally, it is expected that the book should be "in production" and that each listed article or book chapter should be "forthcoming" by the time the candidate meets with the Dean.

Except in cases where prior credit towards tenure was granted and where the case for accelerated review took place at the contracted time, publications resulting from work carried out while a member of the University of Oregon faculty will be given significantly more weight in the tenure and/or promotion decision than those resulting from work carried out prior to hire. It is important that there be a perceivable arc of development regarding the relative prestige and national importance of the periodical publications. A candidate for promotion and tenure might begin by publishing in online and/or regional quarterlies, move to university quarterlies and/or online journals of note, then culminate with appearances in elite print periodicals of highest merit. A steady publication record is evidence of research progress.

For promotion from associate to full professor, the program expects the candidate to have accepted for publication another book or the equivalent in periodical publications since they were promoted to the rank of associate professor.

Although the program considers translations, particularly those of book-length, to be important accomplishments, they cannot be used as a substitute for the essential requirement for promotion and tenure within the program: an authored book and a substantial number of related periodical publications. Anthologies and textbooks also matter. However, they fall within the category of national service (as does journal or magazine editing) rather than research and publication. Candidates for promotion and tenure should also be fully aware of the fact that publications within the genre in which a candidate was hired are far more important than publications in other genres or published works of criticism. For example, if a candidate hired initially as a poet wishes to write criticism or non-fiction, they would be wise to wait until after tenure has been conferred to do so. Likewise, with the novelist who wishes to write drama or screenplays. On the other hand, an associate professor seeking promotion to full professor may present a case based upon publications in many genres, including criticism and non-fiction. Quality and coherence are central, whatever the category (or categories) of writing involved.

Honors and awards like fellowships from the Guggenheim, NEA, and Whiting are important indications of accomplishment in the process of tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor and even more so in cases involving promotion to full professor. National prizes are also indications of excellence in this area, as are regional prizes, although the latter carry less weight.

Finally, professional activity for the creative writer also includes participation on literature and writing panels at major national conferences (MLA, AWP, Bread Loaf, Sewanee), lectures and readings at colleges and universities and major cultural centers (e.g., the Library of Congress, Smithsonian, 92nd St. Y), and non-promotional television and radio appearances. All of these count as secondary indications of national standing.

C. Teaching (40%)

The Program in Creative Writing values excellence in teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. However, for the purposes of tenure and promotion, it is graduate teaching that is weighted most heavily since the reputation of the Program rests with its MFA. For graduate teaching, there are several areas of responsibility (listed in order of importance): (1) excellence in the workshop and seminars, (2) effective participation in conferencing and thesis hours, (3) strong performance in creating and evaluating the MFA exams and in advising students preparing for those exams, and (4) integrating the candidate's classroom performance and expectations into the overall curricular scheme of the program. Each of these categories is significant, although they are not equally weighted. Furthermore, effective teaching within the program should involve maintaining high standards of creative excellence (evidenced, for instance, in student publications or writing prizes) and academic knowledge. Workshops and seminars should be informed not only by contemporary practices but also by the candidate's knowledge of canonical and even international literary approaches.

In assessing teaching quality, the Creative Writing Program relies on a variety of sources, including course syllabi, numerical data compiled from student course evaluations, signed comments on student evaluations, letters from successful former students, and regular classroom visits by colleagues before and during the promotion and tenure process.

D. Service (20%)

The Creative Writing Program expects a demonstration of excellence in the area of service at the level of independent MFA programs elsewhere in the country—a commitment we have sometimes referred to as “program development.” Because of the relatively small size of the faculty, it is understood that program development duties and obligations will outweigh college- or university-wide obligations and that each member of our faculty, tenured or untenured, will normally undertake the administration of a significant area of our program: for example, advising undergraduates, serving as Assistant Director, directing the Kidd Tutorials, heading the MFA Fiction or Poetry admissions committee, administering and grading the MFA exam, etc. Each tenure-track faculty shall regularly serve on the MFA admissions and financial aids committee, MFA exam committee, and shall rotate through other administrative assignments (hosting visiting readers, conducting orientation and mentoring of students assigned to the Introduction classes, overseeing awards and commencement, and so on).

Untenured faculty will normally have lighter service responsibilities than tenured faculty. Indeed, although untenured faculty may wish to contribute to University governance and policy-making decisions through service outside the Creative Writing Program, this kind of activity should be deferred until after tenure has been achieved. In cases involving promotion from associate to full professor

service is weighed heavily, and the candidate normally should have made both an important contribution to the program (for example, a successful appointment as Assistant Director, Director of the Kidd Tutorial Program, or Program Director) and have demonstrated service to the profession at the national level (e.g., book reviews, manuscript and prize evaluations, foundation panel reviews, national committee memberships).

Service and activities on behalf of the larger community include academic contributions to community activities and public bodies, as well as to local, national, or international professional organizations. Examples in the local community might include developing writing programs for local school children, activism in local arts organizations that relate to one's professional expertise, or giving readings in local schools or bookstores. Service activities for professional organizations might include presenting papers or serving on panels at national conferences, reviewing manuscripts for journals and presses, editorial responsibilities at a literary journal, evaluating grant and fellowship applications, and adjudicating national prizes. As worthwhile as these activities may be, however, community service serves largely as an embellishment to a candidate's creative and professional activities and accomplishments. Furthermore, they are not an appropriate substitute for direct involvement in program development and administration or an individual candidate's ongoing activities in research and publication.

Untenured faculty should thus be cautious in taking on responsibilities such as membership on editorial boards or grant-review panels. While such activities carry a certain amount of prestige, they do not contribute directly to the case for tenure and promotion and would be best deferred until after tenure. Likewise, although invited lectures and readings at other universities or at national conferences provide substantial evidence of a writer's reputation and are therefore important to a promotion and tenure case, both tenured and untenured faculty should avoid extensive absences from campus and ad hoc interruptions of their normal duties within the program.

As required by the CBA (Section 12, Article 20), personal statements by candidates for promotion and tenure at the associate rank or for promotion from associate to full professor must include a discussion of the candidate's contributions to institutional equity and inclusion.

III. Post-Tenure Review

A. Third-Year Post-Tenure Review

Primary responsibility for the third-year PTR process lies with the department head. The third-year PTR should be commenced by the department head no later than during the Winter term, in order to allow it to be concluded before the end of the candidate's third-year post-tenure. The department head will contact the faculty member and request a CV and personal statement, including a discussion

of contributions to institutional equity and inclusion. The department head will add to the evaluative file copies of the faculty member's teaching evaluations received during the period under review, including quantitative summary sheets and signed written evaluations, as well as any peer evaluations of teaching conducted during the review period. Consistent with department policy and practice, the file will be reviewed first by a committee, which will provide a written report to the department head that may be used as received or placed in additional written context by the department head. For associate professors, the report will specifically present an honest appraisal of progress toward a successful review for promotion to full professor. If the faculty member has undergone an earlier sixth-year PTR that resulted in creation of a development plan due to unsatisfactory performance (see discussion of sixth-year PTR, below), the faculty member's success in addressing concerns will be discussed. The report will be signed and dated by the department head and shared with the faculty member, who will also sign and date the report to signify its receipt. The faculty member may provide a written response if they desire within 10 days of receipt of the PTR report; an extension may be granted by mutual agreement between the faculty member and the department head. The report and, if provided, response from the faculty member, will be placed in the faculty member's personnel file as maintained at the unit level.

B. Sixth-Year Post-Tenure Review

The process of the review is described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 20, or in parallel University policy for unrepresented faculty members. Since the sixth-year PTR is expected to be a deeper review of the faculty member's scholarship, teaching, and service, the Creative Writing Program expects the candidate to provide a portfolio of publications (or documentation of other scholarship activities) and information regarding service contributions, in addition to the materials called for by CBA/UCO policy.

A development plan is required for faculty who are not achieving a satisfactory level of performance. The plan will be developed with appropriate consultation and discussion among the faculty member, the department head, and the Dean. Ideally, there will be consensus regarding the development plan, but if consensus is not possible, a plan receiving the Dean's approval will be forwarded to the Provost or designee for review and approval.

If a sixth-year PTR results in creation of a professional development plan, future PTR for the faculty member will include consideration of the extent to which the terms of the development plan have been met. However, progress toward meeting the goals of such a development plan need not and should not be evaluated solely within the context of the PTR process.