




College	The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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Document	PROMOTION CRITERIA

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Principles

Criteria for Evaluating Scholarship

A central measure of success for SOLS faculty members is excellence in scholarship through research, teaching, and/or service/outreach, as appropriate for the individual's annual workload. We define scholarship as knowledge that is advanced through discovery, integration, application, and teaching. This range is fully manifest in SOLS, where a broad range of systems and processes are explored from the molecular to the global change level, and from scientific, historical, philosophical, ethical, and social perspectives. SOLS also creates and extends research-based knowledge that benefits the greater Phoenix area and Arizona, the nation, and the world. Thus, the faculty is actively engaged in the full spectrum of scholarly activities of fundamental, use-inspired, translational and/or clinical research, professional and community-engaged scholarship, leadership, service and outreach, and education. Faculty scholarship reflects a balance consistent with individual appointments and the context of the school's mission and values. Evaluation of scholarship acknowledges this diversity and the range of scholarly activities it includes. The primary expectation is demonstrated excellence, growth in the quality and impact of scholarship over time, and superior intellectual attainment in the context of the individual's appointment responsibilities.

SOLS Values in Support of ASU's Charter

ASU is committed to maintaining and enhancing a collaborative and inclusive community. All faculty members are responsible for helping to ensure that these goals are achieved. Academic contributions of faculty members in research, teaching, and service or outreach that promote the ASU Charter's core commitment to fostering a community that values inclusive excellence is valued in the consideration for promotion and tenure, and should be recognized, evaluated, and credited in the academic personnel process along with other achievements. In support of SOLS's values, candidates for promotion and tenure are encouraged to include a specific discussion of their contributions to and impact on ASU's Charter and ASU's Design Aspirations in their application portfolio.

In evaluating Promotion and Tenure portfolios, SOLS's Personnel Committee members and all faculty members are encouraged to educate themselves about persistent biases that may impact research, teaching, and service/outreach, and should apply a nuanced perspective to evaluating candidates' contributions with an awareness of these biases. As assigned by the Director, a candidate's workload distribution should be aligned with the individual's goals, giving appropriate credit for the work of mentoring students and educating colleagues in relation to ASU's Charter, and allowing the candidate the opportunity to pursue scholarly activities that would meet or exceed the criteria for promotion and tenure.

¹ The 2025 Promotion & Tenure Guidelines revision was developed by the SOLS faculty, with some text adopted from similar criteria developed by the [University of California](#) and [Oregon State University](#).

Teaching

SOLS defines teaching broadly to include a range of instructional modalities both inside and outside of the classroom, as well as formal and informal mentorship of students. Teaching may occur through in person or online courses and includes activities relevant to course improvement, inclusive learning, and mentoring.

Excellence in teaching entails the stimulation of creative and analytical thinking within and between disciplines, among students at all levels, to inspire students to learn in different ways. Demonstrated effectiveness in student-centered pedagogy is a primary consideration of teaching excellence, including advancing equitable access and outcomes for students of all backgrounds. Other aspects of importance include expertise and cogency in content delivery, availability to students, class organization, and curriculum development and improvement. Leadership in the development of educational or mentoring programs, advising, coordination of curriculum, and activities that enhance the learning and career development experiences of our students are additional, important indicators of teaching excellence.

Direct mentoring of students, postdoctoral scholars, faculty members, or other professionals inside or outside ASU is another important component of teaching. Mentoring may occur directly in the laboratory or field, and may also include formal and informal advising, active participation on thesis and dissertation committees, serving on qualifying examination committees, involvement in student seminars, and participation in graduate groups and undergraduate major programs, among other activities. Effective mentoring should emphasize helping students and other members of our community learn and succeed as appropriate to their chosen research and career directions. Mentoring is expected of Tenure Track Faculty members. Mentoring may be included as part of a Career Track Faculty member's workload agreement.

Student evaluations of teaching are assessed relative to other courses within SOLS of similar class modality, size, and technical level. Known limitations to these evaluation methods should be taken into consideration. Evaluations of teaching should use a holistic approach based on comprehensive portfolios documenting and assessing teaching contributions from the perspective of students and peers, and giving appropriate credit for student mentoring (including students from underrepresented or underserved groups) in the classroom, lab, and other contexts.

Quantitative measures of teaching loads follow the SOLS Teaching Guidelines for faculty members, and are evaluated in the context of the candidate's workload commitments in consultation with the SOLS Personnel Committee.

Qualitative and quantitative measures of excellence in teaching, research, and service should be balanced as appropriate to the faculty member's workload. Excellence in one area cannot substitute for poor performance in another, but will be weighted according to the percent effort assigned to each area.

Research

Excellence in research or other creative work and a commitment to a productive program of research are requirements for all faculty members whose workload includes research. Research is evaluated using both qualitative and quantitative standards. Expectations for research are

evaluated in the context of ASU's peer or aspirational peer institutions. Collaborative and multidisciplinary investigation is also an important aspect of research and is encouraged. However, each member of the faculty is expected to provide the intellectual leadership for a program of creative and original research contributions.

Factors that enter into the assessment of the quality of a body of research include intellectual creativity in setting research goals and objectives, application of appropriate research methodologies in conducting investigations that address those goals and objectives, and intellectual rigor in the interpretation and presentation of outcomes from research or other creative work. Research results or original work should be impactful as assessed by peers in the candidate's research community and should appear in peer-reviewed venues respected for rigorous standards in the candidate's research area. In addition to traditional publications, the portfolio may include such results as databases, software and programming contributions used by the field, patents, or other measurable outcomes.

Quality of research contributions should include scholarly work in the candidate's research area, and could also include original contributions to improve access and inclusion in education, professional practice, or society. Examples of valued contributions to inclusive excellence in research may include development and evaluation of inclusive research and training environments in the candidate's field; leading or participating in a research group related to inclusion; promotion of an inclusive research climate within one's own laboratory group or research field; research on inequities in social outcomes of biological phenomena; and other such contributions.

A successful research program normally requires funding beyond the resources that the University can provide. In those cases, research and other original and creative work may be funded with extramural support from sources such as state and federal granting agencies, private companies, and foundations. The level of funding support should fit the needs of the individual's research program; i.e., more financial support does not necessarily mean a better research program. The measure of success is the quality, quantity, and impact of the research and creative work, not the cost. It is expected that faculty members will work to obtain funding sufficient to support a vigorous program of research and other scholarship, including support for graduate students involved in the research.

Quantitative measures of research productivity include regular dissemination of results and other creative work in peer-reviewed outlets, including through publications and presentations, and other modalities and products of value within the research field; such communications are an essential responsibility of academic researchers.

Service

All tenure-track faculty members and teaching professors, regardless of appointment, have responsibilities for service, and other faculty members may have service obligations as well. These responsibilities are met in different ways and take different forms at different career stages. Service to the institution may include active participation in the affairs of SOLS, a center, the College, or the University, although some service to SOLS is expected. Service may also include professional activities such as active participation and leadership in professional

societies, and on committees and initiatives at all levels; reviewing proposals or manuscripts, and other editorial roles; or active participation in student groups. Service responsibilities outside the university may also include service to governmental and community agencies and organizations, outreach to wider public audiences, community engagement around the candidate's academic work, and other activities.

Contributions to furthering the impact of ASU's Charter and the ASU Design Aspirations within ASU and beyond are also important, as measured through participation in such activities as recruitment, retention, and mentoring of underrepresented and underserved scholars and students; activities that benefit underserved communities; efforts to improve inclusion in traditional academic activities (e.g., seminars, publishing); and efforts to promote the ASU Charter in the candidate's institution or professional field, among other activities.

Tenure Track Faculty

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor and Granting of Tenure

Guidelines for promotion to Associate Professor and granting of tenure are as follows:

Teaching

Candidates should show evidence of effective teaching and mentoring of an appropriate mix of undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and others. Evaluations should use a holistic approach based on comprehensive portfolios documenting and assessing teaching and mentoring contributions. Teaching and mentoring activities in support of ASU's Charter are valued. Examples of teaching and mentoring excellence may include:

1. Involvement in course development and improvement;
2. Involvement in mentoring of undergraduates in research experiences;
3. Mentoring of graduate students as primary research mentor and/or as a member of dissertation and/or thesis committees;
4. Inclusive teaching and mentoring that improves the learning experience and academic outcomes for students, including underrepresented or underserved individuals;
5. Successful mentoring of students or postdoctoral researchers to develop as productive and creative professionals towards their career goals, as evidenced by, for example, advancement towards jobs or graduate school; scholarly presentations, publications, or patentable research; and student grants and awards;
6. Awards or other recognition related to teaching and mentoring;
7. Strong student and peer teaching evaluations, taking into consideration course modality, size, and technical level, and improvement over time.

Research

Candidates should demonstrate a substantial record of leadership in productive, original research and related scholarship that is indicative of future performance at a high level. Research and related scholarship in support of the ASU Charter is valued. Examples of research excellence may include:

1. Publishing original research results in reputable, refereed venues;

2. Presenting research results in meetings, conferences, or other scholarly venues;
3. Demonstrating the intellectual leadership for a substantial, sustainable program of creative and original research contributions;
4. Funding at an appropriate level for scholarly success of the candidate and their research group, including support for graduate students;
5. Demonstration of an essential contribution in collaborative research;
6. Invitations to present original contributions at other institutions, agencies, or at professional meetings of peers within the candidate's research community;
7. Developing use-inspired research that fills a societal need or has impacts beyond science;
8. Research that contributes to the public good, including the benefit of underserved communities;
9. Awards or other recognition for excellence in research.

Service

Candidates should present a meaningful record in service to the school or center, university, national or international professional community, and the public, with at least some service at the level of the school, which may include:

1. Contributing to the shared governance and promotion of the activities of the center, school, college, university, and/or professional community;
2. Serving on committees at the center, school, college, university, and national levels;
3. Participating in scholarly activities related to the candidate's area of research, including reviewing research papers and grant proposals; serving in editorial roles; contributions to symposium and workshop organization; and other professional activities;
4. Community engagement;
5. Participating in activities to further the ASU Charter at the university, in the candidate's professional community, or beyond.

Additional Considerations

All tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply for early tenure or tenure clock extensions, and candidates should feel comfortable requesting such modifications. Candidates should refer to the ASU Academic Affairs Manual ([ACD 506-03](#)) for details.

Guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor

Promotion to Full Professor will be based on the maintenance of excellent performance in teaching, research, and service, with an accelerated trajectory since promotion to Associate Professor. Guidelines for promotion to Full Professor are as follows:

Teaching

Candidates should show evidence of maintained excellence in teaching and mentoring of an appropriate mix of undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and others. Evaluations should use a holistic approach based on comprehensive portfolios documenting and assessing teaching and mentoring contributions. Teaching and mentoring activities in support of

the ASU Charter are valued. A portfolio of teaching and mentoring excellence may include, as examples:

1. Involvement and leadership in inclusive teaching and mentoring that improves the learning experience and academic outcomes for students, including underrepresented or underserved individuals;
2. Pedagogical or curricular innovation, such as obtaining educational grants for students, curriculum improvement, or other innovative instructional activities;
3. Involvement and mentoring of undergraduates in research experiences;
4. Successful mentoring of students or postdoctoral researchers to develop as productive and creative professionals towards their career goals, as evidenced by, for example, advancement towards jobs or graduate school; scholarly presentations, publications, or patentable research; and student grants and awards;
5. Awards or other recognition related to teaching and mentoring;
6. Effective, and inspired teaching at all levels, as evidenced by strong student and peer teaching evaluations and other measures, taking into consideration course modality, size, and technical level.

Research

Candidates should demonstrate a record of excellence, leadership, and expansion of a productive and original research program. Research and related scholarship in support of the ASU Charter are valued. A portfolio of research excellence should include:

1. A substantial and coherent body of original research or other scholarship that defines and/or significantly enriches one or more areas of the Life Sciences;
2. A substantial flow of publications and other research products in high-quality, refereed outlets;
3. Strong national and international recognition for excellence in research and related scholarship, including invited lectures, elected office, honors, awards, or other recognition;
4. Demonstrated leadership in collaborative research;
5. Demonstrated funding at an appropriate level for accelerated and sustained scholarly success of the candidate and their research group, including support for graduate students;
6. Leadership and impact in research that contributes to the public good, including the benefit of underserved communities

Service

Candidates should show evidence of leadership in service to the school or center, university, national or international professional community, and the public, with at least some service at the level of the school. A portfolio of leadership in service activities may include, as examples:

1. Contributions and leadership toward the shared governance and promotion of the center, school, college, university, and/or professional community;
2. Substantial impact and outreach to connect research or related scholarship with the broader public, including for the benefit of underserved communities;
3. Actions and leadership to strengthen further the ASU Charter at the university, in the candidate's professional community, and beyond;

4. Service to the candidate's field, including serving as a publication editor, holding a position as officer in professional organization, or service on review panels and boards for international and/or national professional organizations;
5. Leadership roles in international and/or national professional societies, or other professional organizations.

Assistant/Associate Teaching Professors and Clinical Assistant/Associate Professors

Guidelines for Promotion from Assistant to Associate

Teaching and Clinical Professors of all ranks must hold a doctorate or another relevant terminal degree. To be considered for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor or Clinical Associate Professor, candidates must have at least five years of experience as an Assistant Teaching Professor or Clinical Assistant Professor. A candidate should demonstrate excellence/success at ASU and future promise of success in the ASU environment. Guidelines for promotion to Associate Teaching Professor² are as follows:

Teaching

Candidates should provide evidence of effective teaching and, as appropriate, also mentoring of undergraduate and/or graduate students. A holistic evaluation based on a comprehensive portfolio of teaching and mentoring activities will be used, including recognition of contributions that align with ASU's Charter.

Candidates demonstrate teaching excellence (See Section A below), and achieve one or more of the accomplishments listed in Section B. Items in Section B demonstrate a sustained and substantial pattern of engagement with the educational programs in SOLS and increasing knowledge of the craft of teaching. The strongest cases will show a pattern of these activities throughout the period preceding promotion.

A. Teaching Excellence (required)

Evidence of excellence should be demonstrated through breadth and/or depth of achievements in the following areas:

1. Effective use of evidence-based pedagogical techniques
2. Innovation and breadth in course development and teaching formats
3. Teaching that supports ASU's mission as articulated in the ASU Charter
4. Ongoing professional development
5. Strong student and peer teaching evaluations, taking into consideration course modality, size, and technical level, and improvement over time.

B. Additional Teaching-Related Achievements

1. Leadership of, or participation in, extended professional development
2. Contributions to course or curricular development and new pedagogies

² Faculty members with clinical professor titles may have teaching, research, and service in their individual job descriptions and workloads. When research is included in the job description and workload of an assistant clinical professor, the criteria for promotion given for promotion of tenure track professors from assistant to associate are used. Further, expectations are calibrated to the specific percentage of the assistant clinical professor's workload devoted to research.

3. Involvement in mentoring students, including, for example, success in mentoring students toward career goals
4. Significant contributions to the instructional program
5. Leadership or service roles related to the instructional mission
6. Teaching awards or external recognition

Service

Candidates should present a meaningful record in service to the school, a center, the university, national or international professional community, or the public, with at least some service at the level of the school, which may include:

1. Contributing to the shared governance and promotion of the center, school, college, university, or professional community.
2. Serving on committees at the center, school, college, university, or national levels.
3. Engaging in scholarly activities related to the candidate's teaching field, such as reviewing research papers and grant proposals, serving in editorial roles, organizing symposiums and workshops, and other professional activities.
4. Engaging with the community.
5. Participating in initiatives that advance the ASU Charter within the university, the candidate's professional community, or beyond.

Additional Considerations

To demonstrate accomplishments above and beyond promotion requirements, candidates may include optional supplemental materials that highlight excellence in teaching, research, or service, especially if their workload does not cover all three areas. These activities cannot substitute for performance in required aspects of their assigned roles. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

1. Additional letters of support from stakeholders (not student comments)
2. Examples of research excellence (See Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor.)
3. Documentation on the status of publications and/or grants

Guidelines for Promotion from Associate to Full

To be promoted to Full Teaching or Clinical Professor, candidates need at least seven years of college-level teaching experience or equivalent qualifications. Promotion requires continued excellence in teaching and service, with clear progress since the last promotion.

Teaching

Candidates must demonstrate sustained teaching excellence (as outlined in Section A, above) and a strong record of achievement in two or more areas from Section B, above.

Service

Similar to the promotion to Associate Teaching Professor or Clinical Associate Professor, candidates show a strong record of service, with at least some service at the level of the school. In addition, candidates for Full Teaching or Clinical Professor should show evidence of leadership in these areas. Examples of leadership in service activities may include:

1. Contributions and leadership in shared governance and promoting the center, school, college, university, or professional community.

2. Leadership roles in national or international professional societies or other professional organizations.
3. Service to the candidate's field, such as being a publication editor, holding an officer position in a professional organization, or serving on review panels and boards for national or international organizations.
4. Significant outreach that connects research or scholarship with the broader public, especially benefiting underserved communities.
5. Leadership and initiatives that strengthen ASU's Charter within the university, the candidate's professional community, and beyond.

Additional Considerations

Additional considerations similar to those for promotion to the associate level may be included.

Career Track Faculty: Instructors

Guidelines for Promotion from Instructor to Senior Instructor

Instructors and Senior Instructors must at minimum hold a Master's Degree or equivalent. A Senior Instructor generally has a minimum of five years of college-level teaching experience or equivalent qualifications and experience. A Principal Instructor has a minimum of seven years of college-level teaching experience or equivalent qualifications and experience. Instructor appointments focus on teaching and mentoring assignments, with no specified research or service.

Teaching

To be considered for promotion to Senior Instructor, candidates demonstrate teaching excellence (See Section A, above). Candidates should provide evidence of effective teaching and mentoring (if given mentoring opportunities), including undergraduate and/or graduate students. A holistic evaluation based on a comprehensive portfolio of teaching and mentoring activities will be used, including recognition of contributions that align with ASU's Charter.

Additional Considerations

Additional considerations similar to those for promotion to Associate Teaching or Clinical Professor may be included.

Guidelines for Promotion from Senior Instructor to Principal Instructor

To be promoted to Principal Instructor, candidates must have a terminal degree and typically need at least three years at rank. Promotion requires continued excellence in teaching and service, with clear progress since the last promotion.

Teaching

Candidates must demonstrate sustained teaching excellence (as outlined in Section A, above). Candidates also demonstrate a sustained and substantial pattern of engagement with the educational programs in SOLS and increasing knowledge of the craft of teaching (Section B, above). The strongest cases will show a pattern of these activities throughout the period preceding promotion.

Additional Considerations

Additional considerations similar to those for promotion to Associate Teaching or Clinical Professor may be included.

Research Faculty

The position of Research Professor (assistant, associate, or full) is appropriate for researchers who hold a PhD or MD, or similar terminal degree. These are fixed-term faculty members who are qualified to engage in, be responsible for, or oversee a significant area of research. They can also serve as principal, multiple principal, or co-investigators on grants or contracts administered by the university and/or take on other appropriate responsibilities. Research professors are designated fixed-term to convey that they are in non-tenured and non-tenure track positions whose primary professional activities involve externally funded research and the generation and dissemination of new knowledge. Research faculty are not generally expected to teach or have significant administrative or service responsibilities, although they are not prohibited from doing so; however, the majority of their effort is in research. In addition, fixed-term research professors are expected to have collegial and collaborative relationships within SOLS and to contribute to regional or national professional organizations. The School of Life Sciences' criteria build upon criteria established by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (The College) as articulated in The College Bylaws.

School Criteria for Appointment and Promotion

Appointment

The primary criterion for appointment as an Assistant Research Professor is a record of programmatic research relevant to at least some of the sub-disciplines of SOLS and production of high-quality publications in peer-reviewed outlets appropriate to the field. Typically, candidates will have performed and published significant research at the postdoctoral level. Success in obtaining extramural fellowship or grant funding at any level of participation is desired, but not required for initial appointment.

Promotion from Assistant to Associate Research Professor

Candidates for promotion to Associate Research Professor are expected to have at least five years in rank at ASU and demonstrated excellence in research. Promotion to the Associate Research Professor level requires clear evidence that a candidate has a strong track record of success in a collaborative and/or independent research program. Candidates should demonstrate a record of leadership in productive, original research and related scholarship. Research and related scholarship in support of the ASU Charter is valued. Examples of research excellence include:

1. Publishing original research results in reputable, refereed venues, preferably with some publications as senior author;
2. Presenting research results at meetings, conferences, or other scholarly venues;
3. Funding at an appropriate level for scholarly success of the candidate, either as principal or co-investigator;
4. Demonstration of an essential contribution in collaborative research;

5. Invitations to present original contributions at other institutions, agencies, or at professional meetings of peers within the candidate's research community;
6. Awards or other recognition for excellence in research

Although research faculty members are not usually required to engage in teaching or service, they often make important contributions to the department and university through mentoring of post-doctoral, doctoral, and undergraduate students in areas such as research methods and implementation, statistical methods, and manuscript development. These activities may be considered for promotion, but will not compensate for the lack of a clearly established record of research success as evidenced by external grant funding and scholarly publications as indicated above.

Guidelines for Promotion to Full Research Professor

Candidates for promotion to (full) Research Professor are expected to have demonstrated excellence relative to their job description. Candidates should have demonstrated a capacity to be a principal investigator, multiple principal investigator, or co-investigator on projects and grants as appropriate to support their individual or collaborative research program, a continuous record of scholarly productivity, and further development of research interests over the period in rank. Research and related scholarship in support of the ASU Charter are valued. A portfolio of research excellence may include, as examples:

1. A substantial and coherent body of independent and/or collaborative original research or other scholarship that defines and/or significantly enriches one or more areas of the Life Sciences;
2. A substantial flow of publications and other research products in high-quality, refereed outlets, with at least some as senior author;
3. National and international recognition for excellence in research and related scholarship, including invited lectures, elected office, honors, awards, or other recognition;
4. Demonstrated funding at an appropriate level for excellent and sustained scholarly success of the candidate;
5. Demonstration of acting in a critical or leadership role in collaborative research or scholarship

Associate Research Professors may increasingly engage in mentoring activities of post-doctoral, doctoral, and undergraduate students, including participating in Honors, MS, and PhD committees. These activities may be considered for promotion but will not compensate for lack of a clearly established record of research success as evidenced by external grant funding and scholarly publications as indicated above.

Effort in Teaching or Service

Research faculty members at any rank can have assigned effort in teaching or service, but their appointments should always have at least 50% research effort. Assignment of effort in other

categories requires demonstration of funding to cover any salary associated with that effort and must be reviewed and approved by the SOLS Director with the advice of the Associate Director of Research Initiatives. If such effort is assigned, these activities will be evaluated at the time of consideration for promotion using criteria similar to those for tenure-track faculty members, and weighted according to their assigned effort.