Promotion and Tenure Procedures, Sociology Department

**Purpose:** To articulate the standards and procedures for promotion and/or tenure for the Department of Sociology

**Applies to:** Faculty within the Department of Sociology

**General Provisions**

*Scope and Purpose.* The award of tenure and/or promotion in rank are among the most important and far-reaching decisions made by the Department of Sociology because an excellent faculty is an essential component of any outstanding institution of higher learning. Promotion and tenure decisions also have a profound effect on the lives and careers of faculty. Recommendations concerning promotion and tenure must be made carefully, based upon a thorough examination of the candidate’s record and the impartial application of these criteria and procedures, established in compliance with the *Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (FSRR) Article VI.*

It is the purpose of this document to promote the rigorous and fair evaluation of faculty performance during the promotion and tenure process by (a) establishing criteria that express the Department of Sociology’s expectations for meeting University standards in terms of disciplinary practices; (b) providing procedures for the initial evaluation of teaching, scholarship, and service; (c) preserving and enhancing the participatory rights of candidates, including the basic right to be informed about critical stages of the process and to have an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations; and (d) clarifying the responsibilities, roles, and relationships of the participants in the promotion and tenure review process.

Each level of review, including the initial review, the intermediate review, and the University level review, conducts an independent evaluation of a candidate’s record of performance and makes independent recommendations to the next review level. Later stages of review neither affirm nor reverse earlier recommendations, which remain part of the record for consideration by the Chancellor. It is the responsibility of each person involved in the review process to exercise his/her own judgment to evaluate a faculty member’s teaching, scholarship, and service based upon the entirety of the data and information in the record. No single source of information, such as peer review letters, shall be considered a conclusive indicator of quality.

*Academic Freedom.* All faculty members, regardless of rank, are entitled to academic freedom in relation to teaching and scholarship, and the right as citizens to speak on matters of public concern. Likewise, all faculty members, regardless of rank, bear the obligation to exercise their academic freedom responsibly and in accordance with the accepted standards of their academic disciplines.

*Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest.* Consideration and evaluation of a faculty member’s record is a confidential personnel matter. Only those persons eligible to vote on promotion and tenure may participate in or observe deliberations or have access to the personnel file (except that clerical staff may assist in the preparation of documents under conditions that assure confidentiality).

No person shall participate in any aspect of the promotion and tenure process concerning a candidate when participation would create a clear conflict of interest or compromise the impartiality of an evaluation or recommendation.

If a candidate believes that there is a conflict of interest, the candidate may petition to have that person recuse him/herself. If a committee member does not recuse him/herself, a decision about whether that person has a conflict of interest shall be made by a majority of the other committee members.
Promotion and Tenure Standards

General Principles. The University strives for a consistent standard of quality against which the performance of all faculty members is measured. Nonetheless, the nature of faculty activities varies across the University and a faculty member’s record must be evaluated in light of his/her particular responsibilities and the expectations of the discipline. These criteria state the Department of Sociology’s expectations of performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service necessary to satisfy the University standards for promotion for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor and for promotion to full professor, or equivalent ranks.

Teaching and scholarship should normally be given primary consideration, but the particular weight to be accorded to each component of a faculty member’s activities depends upon the responsibilities of the faculty member. The College has traditionally recognized the 40-40-20 formula for weighting research, teaching, and service, except when weight is differentiated for unclassified academic staff members pursuant to their job description.

Teaching. Teaching is a primary function of the University, which strives to provide an outstanding education for its students. The evaluation of teaching includes consideration of syllabi, course materials, and other information related to a faculty member’s courses; peer and student evaluations; a candidate’s own statement of teaching philosophy and goals; public representations of teaching; and other accepted methods of evaluation, which may include external evaluations.

High quality teaching is serious intellectual work grounded in a deep knowledge and understanding of the field and includes the ability to convey that understanding in clear and engaging ways.

The conduct of classes is the central feature of teaching responsibilities at KU, but teaching also includes supervising student research and clinical activities, mentoring and advising students, and other teaching-related activities outside of the classroom.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor, the record must demonstrate effective teaching, as reflected in such factors as command of the subject matter, the ability to communicate effectively in the classroom, a demonstrated commitment to student learning, and involvement in providing advice and support for students outside the classroom.

In the Department of Sociology, the following teaching expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor:

- Demonstrate effectiveness of teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels in four courses during the academic year (with the exception of approved leaves or reduced teaching responsibilities);
- Engage in undergraduate advising and mentoring including counseling students enrolled in courses taught by the faculty member, students who are making enrollment decisions, and students majoring in Sociology;
- Supervise students enrolled in internships and/or students who are working on research projects and honors theses;
- Serve on Master’s and Ph.D. level committees and Ph.D. dissertation committees, and to engage regularly in mentoring and graduate advising;
- Offer independent studies/readings courses when appropriate; and
- Contribute to teaching required classes for majors and in support of College-wide programs that require teaching commitments on the part of the Department.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate continued effectiveness and growth as a teacher, as reflected in such factors as mastery of the subject matter, strong
classroom teaching skills, an ongoing commitment to student learning, and active involvement in providing advice and support for students outside the classroom.

In the Department of Sociology, the following teaching expectations to meet University standards apply for the promotion to the rank of professor:

- Demonstrate superior teaching skills at the undergraduate and graduate levels of four courses during the academic year (with the exception of approved leaves or reduced teaching responsibilities);
- Demonstrate innovative teaching;
- Engage in undergraduate advising and mentoring including counseling students enrolled in courses taught by the faculty member, students who are making enrollment decisions, and students majoring in Sociology;
- Supervise students enrolled in internships and/or students who are working on research projects and honors theses;
- Serve as Chair of Master’s and Ph.D. level committees and Ph.D. dissertation committees, and to engage regularly in mentoring and graduate advising;
- Offer independent studies/readings courses when appropriate; and
- Contribute to teaching required classes for majors and in support of College-wide programs that require teaching commitments on the part of the Department.

**Scholarship.** The concept of “scholarship” encompasses not only traditional academic research and publication, but also the creation of artistic works or performances and any other products or activities accepted by the academic discipline as reflecting scholarly effort and achievement for purposes of promotion and tenure. While the nature of scholarship varies among disciplines, the University adheres to a consistently high standard of quality in its scholarly activities to which all faculty members, regardless of discipline, are held. In the Department of Sociology, scholarship is defined as the publication of journal articles, books, book chapters, book reviews, reports, and encyclopedia entries; the securing of internal and external grants and fellowships; and scholarly presentations at professional conferences, research symposia, and workshops.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor, the record must demonstrate a successfully developing scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as the quality and quantity of publications or creative activities, external reviews of the candidate’s work by respected scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate’s regional, national, or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly agenda.

In the Department of Sociology, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor:

- Publication of “major works” of research including peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and authored and edited books;
- Publication of minor works of research and research-related materials including publications such as review essays, book reviews, reports, encyclopedia entries;
- Submission and awarding of internal and external grant and fellowship proposals;
- Presentation and dissemination of research findings at disciplinary and interdisciplinary regional and national professional conferences, research symposia, and conferences; and
- Participation in professional development activities including attendance at research or technical workshops and skills maintenance and training seminars.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate an established scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as a substantial and ongoing pattern of publication or creative activity, external reviews of the candidate’s work by eminent scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate’s national or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly career.
In the Department of Sociology, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of professor:

- Extensive record of publication of “major works” of research including peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and authored and edited books published in refereed outlets and/or by university presses;
- Substantial body of minor works of research and research-related materials including publications such as review essays, book reviews, reports, encyclopedia entries;
- Submission and awarding of internal and external grant and fellowship proposals;
- Recognition of scholarly contribution as reflected in data from citation indices and in the form of awards, honors, and invited lectures;
- Presentation and the invitation to disseminate research findings at disciplinary and interdisciplinary regional, national, and international professional conferences, research symposia, and conferences; and
- Participation in professional development activities including the leading of research symposia, technical workshops and skills maintenance and training seminars.

**Service.** Service is an important responsibility of all faculty members that contributes to the University’s performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a candidate’s particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being a good citizen of the University. The Department of Sociology accepts and values scholarly service to the discipline or profession, service within the University, and public service at the local, state, national, or international level.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor, the record must demonstrate a pattern of service to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the Department of Sociology, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor:

- Membership on standing departmental committees, such as the Graduate Studies Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee, and Colloquium and Communications Committee;
- Membership on committees at the College and University levels;
- Membership on professional committees, reviewing professional manuscripts or grant applications, serving on editorial boards, organizing sessions for professional meetings, serving on committees; and
- Professional presentations, unpaid consultant activities, or other professional activity related to local or state service.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate an ongoing pattern of service reflecting substantial contributions to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the Department of Sociology, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of professor:

- Chairing of standing departmental committees, such as the Graduate Studies Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee, and Colloquium and Communications Committee;
- Membership on and the Chairing of committees at the College and University levels;
- Membership on and the Chairing of professional committees, reviewing professional manuscripts or grant applications, serving as editors or on editorial boards, organizing sessions for professional meetings, serving on committees or holding office in professional associations; and
• Professional presentations, unpaid consultant activities, or other professional activity related to local or state service.

Ratings for Performance. Using the criteria described above, the candidate’s performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service will be rated using the terms “excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “marginal,” or “poor,” defined as follows:

(a) “Excellent” means that the candidate substantially exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(b) “Very Good” means the candidate exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(c) “Good” means the candidate meets expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(d) “Marginal” means the candidate falls below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
(e) “Poor” means the candidate falls significantly below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.

Absent exceptional circumstances, no candidate may be recommended for promotion or tenure without meeting standards in all applicable areas of performance.

Promotion and Tenure Procedures

The Department of Sociology conducts the initial review of the candidate pursuant to the procedures and requirements of section 5 of Article VI of the FSRR in connection with the candidate’s responsibility in the Department of Sociology.

Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee is responsible for completing the required assessment information and final assembly of the dossier of the candidate’s teaching, research, and service. The Personnel Committee consists of: 1) the chair of the Department, ex-officio member with vote; 2) the associate chair of the Department, ex-officio member without vote; and 3) three or four members from the faculty of the Department who hold the rank of full professor. A tenured associate professor may serve on the committee as long as the candidate involved is below this rank. Faculty request committee assignments each year and are then invited to serve by the department chair. A proposed slate of candidates for committee assignments shall be voted on by the active members of the department (“active membership” defined as those members of the University faculty with an appointment in Sociology of 50 percent or more of their time and with Sociology designated as their “primary unit”). A majority vote shall approve the slate. The members of the committee shall elect one member to serve as chair. All terms of office except the ex-officio members' are for one year.

No students or untenured faculty members, except unclassified academic staff with the rank equivalent to or higher than associate professor, shall serve on the Personnel Committee or vote on any recommendation concerning promotion and/or tenure.

Initiation of Review. Prior to the beginning of the spring semester, the Provost notifies all faculty whose mandatory review year will be the following academic year, with copies provided to the unit administrators. Upon receipt of this notice or if a faculty member requests it prior to the mandatory review year, the Department of Sociology shall initiate procedures for evaluating the candidate for the award of promotion and/or tenure.

As part of the annual faculty evaluation process, the Personnel Committee of the Department of Sociology shall consider the qualifications of all tenured faculty members below the rank of full professor, with a view toward possible promotion in rank during the following academic year. After considering a faculty member’s qualifications, if the Department of Sociology determines that those qualifications may warrant promotion in rank, it shall initiate procedures for reviewing the faculty member for promotion. After seven years in the rank of associate professor, a faculty member who believes he or she has the qualifications for promotion may
initiate the promotion review process him/herself. In such cases the unit will treat the candidate in the same way that it treats other candidates for promotion to the rank of full professor.

**Preparation of the Promotion and/or Tenure File.** NOTE: Candidates who hold joint appointments prepare only one set of promotion and tenure materials for review by both units in which they hold an appointment. The initial review units (i.e., departments, centers, etc.) shall consult with each other on their evaluations and the evaluation process, but each initial review unit must provide a separate evaluation of the candidate’s performance in the unit. Please refer to the College’s Promotion and Tenure Statement for detailed instructions. It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the appropriate portions of the form and provide necessary documents and information in accordance with the Provost’s guidelines, with assistance from the Department of Sociology.

The Personnel Committee shall receive the form and accompanying materials from the candidate and finish compiling the record of the candidate’s teaching, scholarship, and service in accordance with the Provost’s guidelines. This work will be completed according to a time-table set by the Personnel Committee.

The Department of Sociology’s Personnel Committee shall provide for the solicitation of outside reviewers to assist in the evaluation of a faculty member’s scholarship and in accordance with College procedures. Emphasis shall be placed on selecting independent reviewers in the same or related discipline who hold academic rank or a professional position equal to or greater than the rank for which the candidate is being considered. The committee shall give the candidate the opportunity to suggest individuals to be included or excluded from the list of reviewers. The committee, however, is responsible for using its judgment in the final selection of reviewers.

When soliciting external reviews of a candidate’s scholarship, the Personnel Committee shall inform prospective reviewers of the extent to which the candidate will have access to the review. The College’s confidentiality policy regarding soliciting external reviewers for the promotion and tenure review process is as follows:

"As a part of the promotion and/or tenure review process, we are soliciting assessments of Professor _____’s research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate's promotion and tenure dossier and are treated as confidential by the University to the extent we are permitted to do so by law."

**Recommendations.** Upon completion of the record, the complete dossier shall be left in the department office for at least ten working days before a departmental vote is to take place. Access to the dossier is restricted to only the members of the Committee of the Whole that consists of all faculty holding the appropriate academic rank. The Committee of the Whole reviews the dossier and meets to evaluate the candidate’s record of teaching, scholarship, and service in light of the applicable standards. During this deliberation, the Ratings for Performance (“excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “marginal,” or “poor”) are considered and if there is a clear consensus, then that rating is adopted. If no consensus emerges, a motion is entertained and a secret ballot is taken. A majority vote supports the rating.

In the Department of Sociology, voting procedures on the overall recommendation are as follows:

A recommendation for promotion and/or tenure shall be made by the approval of two thirds of the active members of the Department 1) who are at the rank of or above that being sought by the candidate; 2) who hold tenure at the University, and 3) who are present and voting or have cast an absentee ballot prior to the vote. All discussions and deliberations in the tenure and/or promotion process are strictly confidential. The vote is taken by secret ballot.

The committee shall prepare the evaluation and summary evaluation sections of the promotion and/or tenure forms. The forms and recommendations shall be forwarded to the chair, who shall indicate separately, in
writing, whether he or she concurs or disagrees with the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole. The department chair shall communicate the recommendations of the initial review, and his or her concurrence or disagreement with the recommendation, to the candidate and provide the candidate with a copy of the summary evaluation section of the promotion and tenure form. Negative recommendations shall be communicated in writing and, if the review will not be forwarded automatically, the chair shall inform the candidate that he or she may request that the record be forwarded for further review.

Favorable recommendations, together with the record of the initial review, shall be forwarded to the College Committee on Appointments Promotion, and Tenure conducting the intermediate review. Negative recommendations resulting from an initial review shall go forward for intermediate review only if it is the candidate’s mandatory review year or if the candidate requests it.

**Intermediate Review.**

The candidate may submit a written response to a negative recommendation by the Department of Sociology, or to a final rating of teaching, research, or service below the level of “good” included in the evaluation section of the recommendation. The written response is sent separately by the candidate to CCAPT.

A request for information by CCAPT and/or UCPT shall be sent to the Department of Sociology chair who shall immediately provide a copy to the candidate and inform the Personnel Committee. The chair and committee shall prepare the Department of Sociology’s response in accordance with the initial review procedures.

The candidate shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the Department of Sociology’s response and/or to submit his/her own documentation or comment to the CCAPT and/or UCPT as applicable.

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**Approved by:**
Department of Sociology / Faculty Senate Committee on Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure

**Approved on:**
Wednesday, April 4, 2012

**Effective on:**
Wednesday, April 4, 2012

**Review Cycle:**
Annual (As Needed)

**Related Policies:**
[Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations Article VI: Promotion and Tenure](#)

**Related Procedures:**
[Statement On Promotion and Tenure for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences](#)

**Related Forms:**
[Guidelines and Documents for Promotion and Tenure](#)

**Review, Approval & Change History:**
09/02/2015: Made updates to boiler plate text:
1) Under General Provisions, paragraph three, “Chancellor” has been changed to “next review level;”
2) Under Initiation of Review, the following was added, “NOTE: Candidates who hold joint appointments prepare only one set of promotion and tenure materials for review by both units in which they hold an appointment. The initial review units (i.e., departments, centers, etc.) shall consult with each other on their evaluations and the evaluation process, but each initial review unit must provide a separate evaluation of the candidate’s performance in the unit. Please refer to the College’s Promotion and Tenure Statement for detailed instructions.”

3) The following was added under to paragraph concerning outside reviewers, “The committee shall give the candidate the opportunity to suggest individuals to be included or excluded from the list of reviewers. The committee, however, is responsible for using its judgment in the final selection of reviewers.

04/04/2012: Approved by the Department of Sociology
03/06/2012: Approved by The Faculty Senate Committee on Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure