

Departmental Policies for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure

Department of Ethnic Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

University of Colorado Boulder

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The Department of Ethnic Studies (DES) explains by means of this policy statement the procedures and criteria that it will use in evaluating tenure-track personnel for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. The statement complies with policies of the Board of Regents as described in [APS 1022](#), Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review of tenured faculty members.

1. ***Rules of the Regents:*** As articulated in [APS 1022](#), Rules of the Regents define the basic requirements for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. These basic requirements cannot be overridden or superseded by departmental rules or interpretations. The University requires comprehensive review at the end of the last appointment prior to a mandatory tenure decision. According to the APS 1022 “For cases involving reappointment at comprehensive review, faculty and review committees at each level of review vote on whether the candidate is either: (1) on

track for tenure; (2) not yet on track for tenure but could meet standards for tenure with appropriate corrections; or (3) not on track for tenure. According to APS 1022, the award of tenure, which is typically concurrent with promotion to associate professor, requires that a faculty member has demonstrated a minimum of “meritorious” performance in the three areas of research and creative work, teaching, and service, and has demonstrated “excellence” in either research and creative work or teaching. Promotion to the rank of full professor requires, according to APS 1022, that a candidate demonstrate “a record that, taken as a whole, may be judged to be excellent.” The purpose of the departmental evaluation is to apply the general standards of performance in teaching, research, and service to the various disciplines that are represented within the Department of Ethnic Studies.

2. ***Allocation of Effort:*** Each faculty member has a specific allocation of effort to teaching, research, and service. The standard allocation for the Department is 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service. This allocation will be assumed to apply unless specific, formal agreements are made to the contrary; any such agreements must be reported to the Dean and must be in accord with the Department’s Differentiated Workload Policy Statement (available upon request to the Department Program Manager). The allocation of effort will be considered to apply as an average over the months of any given academic year.

3. ***Criteria for the Evaluation of Teaching:*** In the first year after being appointed to a tenure-track position, faculty should create a teaching portfolio that will contain all written records pertaining to teaching. The portfolio will be used as evidence in the evaluation of

Teaching. The Department may obtain evidence from other sources to the extent that the information contained in the portfolio is incomplete with respect to any of the criteria identified below.

a. Undergraduate Teaching: Undergraduate instruction is important in the evaluation of teaching credentials. However, no single measure of effectiveness in undergraduate teaching will be the sole basis of judgment by the Department. Materials to be used in the evaluation of achievement in undergraduate teaching include: (1) statements of teaching philosophy or self-evaluation of teaching; (2) Faculty Course Questionnaire (FCQ) scores from all classes with a focus on both the scores and the comments; (3) peer evaluation by class visitation or other mechanisms that includes interviews with the students to get their feedback on the strengths and areas for growth in the classroom; (4) examples of course outline, syllabi, examinations, and other items that indicate the nature of the curriculum, instruction, and pedagogy; (5) descriptions of the development or improvement of coursework; (6) written statements that may have come from the Chair or others concerning willingness to teach, rapport with students, important contributions to curriculum development, or other related matters; and (7) another valuable input on teaching can come from solicited letters from former students.

b. Graduate Teaching and Mentoring: Graduate instruction is an important component of teaching evaluation. The Department of Ethnic Studies has its own graduate program, which offers both a graduate certificate and a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies. Core faculty members are expected to advise, mentor, and teach graduate students.

Additionally, core faculty members are also expected to: (1) serve on committees of students being advised and mentored by other faculty members; (2) be actively involved in the graduate admissions process; (3) develop graduate level courses; and (4) regularly teach graduate level seminars. Faculty members should maintain, as part of the teaching portfolio, records on their graduate teaching and advising activities, including courses taught, dates of admission for individual students, dates of completion and placement of individual students, and other contributions to the growth and development of the graduate program. These records are considered integral parts of the evidence pertaining to demonstrable achievement in teaching.

The Department understands that it is required by the Rules of the Regents to provide a section on student evaluations of teaching for all University of Colorado Boulder tenure and promotion cases. However, DES would like to strongly stress the biased nature of student evaluations of teaching, which have been well documented. There are many studies on the flawed nature of student evaluations that collectively reveal how these evaluations negatively and disproportionately impact women, BIPOC faculty, LGBTQIA+ faculty, immigrant faculty, faculty with accents, faculty with disabilities, et cetera.¹ We register that we are being required, as an ethnic studies department, to include a metric that has contributed to systemic intersectional oppression. We encourage PUEC committees to include this statement in their report on teaching to alert the College of Arts and Sciences and the VCAC committees who will be reading the PUEC report on the bias of teaching evaluations—one that has been studied and documented by scholars extensively for well over a decade, such as the [February 2020 Inside Higher Ed article](#) that not only discusses the aforementioned bias in student evaluations but the

deeply flawed nature of student evaluations correlated to teaching competence.

Beyond formal classroom instruction, the following criteria will be included by the Department in its evaluation of Teaching: advising students, independent study or independent research projects involving students, directing and/or serving on honors thesis committees, serving on and directing doctoral committees, and research activities promoting faculty-student interaction. The question to be considered by the Department in its evaluation of teaching is whether or not the faculty member's demonstrated performance in teaching is consistent with the general standards for reappointment, promotion, and tenure, as described by Regent Laws, Regent Policies, and Administrative Policy Statements.

Regent Policy 5.D states that a faculty member who is rated as excellent in Teaching would be able to achieve promotion and tenure. "Excellence" means having a national and international reputation in which one is so strong in the field of Teaching that one can achieve tenure based on the strength of external letters that laud the faculty member for having a national and/or international reputation for teaching. In the history of Ethnic Studies, no faculty has sought to achieve promotion and tenure based on excellence in Teaching. Currently, we do not believe that it is realistic for any faculty to try to achieve excellence in Teaching as a path to tenure and promotion. Therefore, anyone who achieves less than "Excellence" in Research will be unlikely to receive tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

4. ***Criteria for the Evaluation of Research:*** Achievement in Research is an important component of the Department's evaluation of faculty members who are under review for reappointment, promotion, or tenure. As a means of facilitating the evaluation, faculty members

should maintain a record of their research activity. The Department of Ethnic Studies is committed to helping all pre-tenure colleagues build a record that will lead to successful comprehensive review (reappointment) and promotion to associate professor with continuous tenure. Toward that end, each pre-tenured faculty will be asked by the Chair to identify a senior member of the faculty to serve as a mentor. The Chair will maintain a record of the mentors selected by pre-tenure colleagues. The Chair will offer advice about potential mentors and encourage pre-tenure colleagues and mentors to meet regularly with one another. Mentors will offer advice and assist in identifying additional resources that may be helpful in the career management of pre-tenure colleagues. Ultimately, however, career management is the responsibility of each faculty member, regardless of rank. The Chair will hold discussion at least once a year with each assistant professor.

Traditionally and historically, peer reviewed publication is a critical and important criterion for departmental evaluation of Research. As an interdisciplinary department, we recognize two primary paths toward achieving an assessment of excellent in Research through academic publications. The first is to publish a sole-authored, peer reviewed monograph with a reputable press, along with additional publications such as journal articles and book chapters and show evidence of a research agenda that demonstrates growth beyond the dissertation and first book. The second is to publish a significant number of sole-authored and first-authored peer reviewed articles in scholarly journals, along with additional publications such as book chapters, and show evidence of a second research project.

Criteria to be evaluated when weighing all publications include: prestige of publication venue, peer reviewed versus non-peer reviewed, the nominations and/or awards and prizes from external scholarly and creative organizations. The community ethos of ethnic studies values co-

authored peer reviewed publications, especially those published with students in our Ph.D. program. Co-authored works that produce significant and new knowledge or that advance the scholarship in ethnic studies and its core sub-fields will be recognized as scholarly contributions. In terms of edited volumes, if a faculty member can show that editing or co-editing a volume has produced significant new knowledge or advanced the scholarship in ethnic studies and its related sub-fields, then the Department will also recognize this as a scholarly contribution. Effort in this area prior to tenure should not come at the expense of the production of original single author scholarly work. Chapters written as part of an edited volume are considered scholarship. In keeping with the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) guidelines on research productivity, books and articles are generally considered finished when they are in print or in the proof / galley stage (out of the author's hands).

In addition to more traditional scholarship, the Department recognizes the validity and value of artistic / creative practices and community-based / publicly engaged scholarship. Faculty whose research involves advocacy for and with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities, whose artistic practices result in art gallery shows, performances, musical compositions, films, or other innovative forms of creative media, or scholars who engage in multiple forms of artistic, creative, and measurable community-based practices alongside traditional peer reviewed publications, are valued as demonstrating forms of scholarship that speak to the roots of ethnic studies as a community-based discipline that has also used creative expression as a form of scholarly inquiry and representation. As such, the Department acknowledges these forms of engaged scholarship as producing knowledge alongside more traditional research, as is in keeping with the foundations of our field.

In order to be judged excellent in community-based work, the faculty must show a

sustained commitment to a public facing project and show evidence of the impact of this project. Examples of evidence could include press releases and other measures of how a faculty driven project makes a lasting impact in the community. Another type of “peer review” can come from surveys or town hall meetings from the participants of community-based projects, where they evaluate the process and impact of the work. Examples of engaged community-based scholarship could include: faculty authored museum exhibits and programming related to the exhibit on the faculty area of expertise with evidence of community involvement and impact; working reciprocally and in sustained engagement with tribal nations or communities; working reciprocally and in sustained engagement with BIPOC youth; working with historical societies to produce oral histories and contribute to archives in the core areas of ethnic studies; and the use of digital technologies to promote scholarly and creative knowledge for the academy and beyond.

To be judged excellent in Research (including, as described above, traditional scholarship, creative work, and/or community-based work), faculty must have established a strong record of accomplishment as judged against the criteria of the primary unit and College. A record of research excellence must demonstrate accomplishments that can be considered equivalent to that of other faculty in the discipline at a similar stage of career either in ethnic studies at CU Boulder or in comparable departments or programs at other research-oriented institutions. This includes regular research activity, sustained productivity in a line or lines of research going beyond the dissertation, intellectual originality and independence, high quality (as indicated by publication in refereed and reputable presses), recognized refereed journals or similarly prestigious ethnic studies venues, and impact on relevant fields of scholarship, as well as sustained scholarly, creative, and/or community engagement with evidence of impact.

Additional indicators of research excellence may include invitations to publish or present,

scholarly awards or prizes, and extramural funding or grants for research activities. Although no set quantity of extramural research funding is required for reappointment, promotion, or tenure, extramural support is taken as an important external validation of research.

When present, community engagement should be recognized as a significant component of a faculty member's professional achievements in Research, Teaching, and Service.

Engagement may play a more prominent role at different phases of a faculty member's career, and it should be supported at any phase if it is consistent within ethnic studies practices and priorities. However, faculty whose work does not include engaged activities should not be penalized or denied tenure or promotion on those grounds. Finally, the Department recognizes that open-source journals are important to scholarly work on issues of race, gender, sexuality, and migration among other foci central to our scholarly mission, and considers per reviewed open-source publications as evidence of scholarly excellence.

The report of the Department primary unit evaluation committee (PUEC) and external review letters play an important role in the judgment of Research. The candidate's national and international scholarly reputation provides evidence for the impact of their scholarship. The Department will gather evidence of reputation from authoritative reviewers external to the University. The PUEC chair, in conjunction with the Department Chair, will obtain at least 6 external review letters. These will include individuals from a list provided by the candidate for evaluation and individuals who are selected independently by the PUEC.

Anything short of the above guidelines on pathways and outcomes to achieving "excellence" in Research will be considered by the Department to be "meritorious" or "not meritorious." The standard path towards promotion and tenure in the Department is by achieving

“excellence” in Research, and “meritorious” in Teaching and Service.

5. ***Evaluation of Service:*** A candidate’s record of support for academic programs in the Department is an important criterion for the evaluation of Service. However, evaluation of Service can also extend well beyond the Department to include the candidate’s work on campus committees, college committees, or professional societies. Service can include participation on editorial panels and/or reviewing for professional journals or professional societies, or professional services to the public and/or state, federal, or tribal governments. Service is evaluated with regard to its importance and its success, as well as the faculty member’s dedication. Also, the Department values the importance of community engagement and recognizes the unique roles that faculty can play in working with communities outside the University. Evidence related to Service will consist of a description of the service and its duration and significance. Candidates for reappointment, promotion, and tenure should compile this information on a continuous basis. At the time of evaluation, evidence of Service may be obtained from the candidate, from the Department, or from external sources.

The question to be considered by the Department in its evaluation of Service is whether the faculty member’s performance in Service is consistent with the general standard for reappointment, promotion, or tenure as described by the Regent Laws, Regent Policies, and Administrative Policy Statements.

6. ***Timetable for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure:*** Individuals who are hired as

beginning assistant professors will have at least one evaluation for reappointment prior to a mandatory tenure decision.² The last reappointment prior to the tenure decision must be based upon comprehensive review. A standard pattern would be for an assistant professor to receive an initial three- or four-year appointment and, upon positive comprehensive review at the end of this first appointment, to receive a second appointment that would extend to the mandatory tenure decision.

Tenure is required by the end of the seventh year. Faculty members are typically evaluated for tenure in the seventh year; the seven-year probationary period will include any years of credit toward tenure that are specified in writing at the time of hiring. Faculty who were hired as advanced assistant professors and have developed a compelling record of research excellence and are meritorious in their teaching can request that their application for promotion and tenure can be before the seventh year, though this request should be made at the time of hire and written into their contract, which means the Department chair should be attentive to these issues. If a faculty member seeks early tenure at the time of their comprehensive review, the PUEC and the tenured faculty will first review the applicant's materials and vote on their reappointment and then review and vote on the bid for promotion and tenure.

Typically, promotion to associate professor is considered simultaneously with the consideration of tenure, although formally the two are separate decisions. Under unusual circumstances, individuals may be hired as associate professors without tenure (mainly because the University is reluctant to hire individuals without a probationary period prior to tenure); in this case the issue of tenure is separated fully from the issue of promotion to associate professor.

There is no mandatory point of decision for promotion to full professor. A customary

waiting interval is approximately equal to the interval between the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor because significant incremental achievement is expected between ranks. In unusual cases, an individual can be considered for promotion to full professor after only a few years in rank as an associate professor. Individuals who have doubts about the timing of promotion should seek advice from the Chair, who may appoint an *ad hoc* personnel committee to evaluate the situation.

Any individual can ask to be considered for promotion or tenure at any time, and the Department will consider the request unless it is contrary to the rules of the University. Individuals who believe that they are promotable or tenurable should not hesitate to ask the Chair for an evaluation, and the Chair will reach out to the tenured faculty of DES for their input.

7. ***Departmental Review Process:*** Departmental judgments that involve the application of standards are based on peer review. The recommendation of the Department is ultimately determined by a vote of the tenured faculty following discussion of the evidence that was collected for the review. The process of personnel review begins for the Department with the Chair's appointment of a primary unit evaluation committee (PUEC), which performs two functions. First, if there is some doubt as to the likelihood of a favorable outcome, the PUEC may advise the candidate to withhold the case until more time has lapsed, except in the case of a mandatory tenure decision or mandatory comprehensive review. The committee may give this advice either initially or after accumulating information indicating that the case needs to be stronger in order to be successful. The candidate is not bound to the advice of the PUEC and can proceed against it.

The faculty member's dossier is submitted to the College of Arts and Sciences with all the required materials (described above in Sections 3-5), the PUEC report, the Chair's letter, and vote counts in the fall semester of their seventh year. This is called the "tenure year," or the year in which the faculty member is going up for tenure. It is of the utmost importance that a faculty member seeking promotion and tenure work closely and well in advance with the PUEC chair for feedback on their required statements (research, teaching, and service) and CV, their list of preferred external reviewers, and their submission of additional materials for the comprehensive dossier that is used for PUEC review and the discussion and vote of the tenured faculty in the Department.

To provide sufficient time for the PUEC to secure a list of at least 6 preferred external reviewers, a list of 8-12 potential reviewers should be created no later than February 1 in the spring semester preceding their "tenure year." The faculty member should have their dossier of materials ready to be sent to external reviewers no later than April 1 before the fall semester in which they are going up for tenure.

The second purpose of the PUEC is to solicit external letters of reference and to collect other confidential information that the candidate cannot collect independently. External reviewers will be asked to submit their letters no later than August 1 prior to the beginning of the fall semester of the "tenure year." The PUEC will use the external review letters to compose their report, which they will present to the tenured faculty of the Department for discussion and vote at the earliest possible date and well in advance of the College deadline.

The candidate is responsible for assembling the bulk of the personnel file but can seek the help or advice of the PUEC as appropriate. The Department Program Manager will receive the

file and review it for completeness. The file should meet the requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences and of the Campus as outlined on specification sheets that are available from the Dean's office. It is the responsibility of the PUEC to obtain any additional information that it may require to make a complete presentation to the tenured faculty of the Department.

Following the assembly of all materials, the PUEC will have a final meeting in which it decides its recommendation on the case through a vote. The committee also will assign to its members responsibilities for presentation of the case to the Department. The committee will make the entire file available on a confidential basis to the tenured faculty prior to the Department's discussion of the case.

The Department Chair announces discussion of personnel cases in advance. There will be a separate meeting scheduled by the Chair in consultation with the PUEC chair to discuss the dossier. Only tenured faculty in the Department will be allowed to discuss and vote on the candidate's case for reappointment or tenure. The PUEC will be asked to make a presentation to the tenured faculty and the Chair. This will be followed by detailed discussion of the case by all faculty. When the Chair is satisfied that discussion is complete, there will be a vote by closed or secret ballot in the different categories of evaluation. Cases of comprehensive review and tenure/promotion for assistant professors will be voted on by tenured faculty, regardless of rank. For faculty at the rank of associate professor seeking promotion to full professors, only full professors will vote. If there are not enough full professors rostered in the Department, the Chair will work with the PUEC chair and in consultation with the faculty to request full professor(s) from other units whose research expertise can assist in the assessment of the faculty.

The Department Chair acts as an independent judge of the case. The Chair does not vote

on the personnel decisions except in the case of a tie but does provide a critical evaluation of the case that may or may not support the faculty's vote. In a letter addressed to the Dean, the Chair reports the Department's vote, highlights points from the PUEC report, summarizes the faculty discussion, and gives the Chair's view of the case and whether the chair concurs or differs with the PUEC and tenured faculty vote.

8. ***Review Above the Level of the Department:*** Following the departmental vote, the candidate's file is sent from the Department to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences by the stated deadline. The Dean refers the case to the A&S Personnel Committee, which discusses the case and votes on it. The A&S Personnel Committee writes a letter to the Dean outlining their discussion and vote. The Dean then writes a letter to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. This letter gives the Dean's evaluation of the case and a recommendation for action. The Dean is not bound to agree with the A&S Personnel Committee, with the Department, or with the Chair.

Beyond the Dean's office, the personnel file passes to the office of Faculty Affairs. The Vice Provost/Associate Vice Chancellor's office receives files on all personnel decisions from all colleges on the Campus. The Vice Provost/Associate Vice Chancellor serves as the neutral, non-voting chair of the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC), which considers all cases for comprehensive reappointment, promotion, and tenure. The VCAC discusses each case in detail and votes on the disposition of the case. The vote is considered a recommendation to the Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor, who may or may not accept the recommendation. The Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor's decision is relayed to Chancellor.

Beyond the Vice Chancellor's level, review occurs by the Provost, the Chancellor, the President, and the Regents. A negative decision by any level of review can be overruled by a positive decision at a higher level. For example, a negative decision by the Department could be overruled by the Dean or by the Vice Chancellor. Similarly, a positive decision at any level can be overruled by a negative decision at a higher level.

When any decision is overruled, the case is sent back to the lower level with advice from the upper level and a request for clarification, reconsideration, or additional information. The case is then reconsidered by the lower level and forwarded again to the upper level for final review. The rights of appeal for rejected candidates are outlined in APS 1022

Return of cases from an upper level to a lower level is not necessarily a sign of weakness in the case. Sometimes review committees find critical pieces of information missing from the file and ask for additional information, even though they fully expect to approve the case. Individuals under review should not be unduly concerned by a request for additional information. The candidate is directly advised through the Chair by the Dean's office of all review committee decisions. In addition, the candidate will receive a copy of the letters at each stage of review.

Personnel cases must be processed at the unit level the fall semester of the year before they take effect. The order of preparation is typically by increasing rank: comprehensive review, promotion to associate professor with tenure, promotion to full professor. Under the current scheduling system, the comprehensive review / reappointment cases will leave the Department in October, cases for tenure and promotion arrive at the Dean's office no later than November 1, and the full professor cases may leave the Department as late as January in the year of the proposed personnel action.

¹ See, for example, first and foremost, University of Colorado Boulder Faculty Assembly, “BFA Resolution on Removing Biased FCQ Measures for Evaluation of Teaching in Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment, and Merit Evaluation,” BFA-M-1-040518, carried on May 5, 2018, as well as Mara S. Aruguete, Joshua Slater, and Sekela R. Mwaikinda, “The Effects of Professors’ Race and Clothing Style on Student Evaluations,” *Journal of Negro Education* 86, no. 4 (2017): 494-502; Susan Basow, Stephanie Codos, and Julie Martin, “The Effects of Professors’ Race and Gender on Student Evaluations and Performance,” *College Student Journal* 47, no. 2 (2013): 352-363; Anne Boring, “Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teaching,” *Journal of Public Economics* 145 (2017): 27-41; John A. Centra and Noreen B. Gaubatz, “Is There Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching?,” *Journal of Higher Education* 71, no. 1 (2000): 17-33; Kerry Chávez and Kristina M.W. Mitchell, “Exploring Bias in Student Evaluations: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 53, no. 2 (2020): 270–74; Yanan Fan, Laura J. Shepherd, Eve Slavich, David Waters, M. Stone, Rachel Abel, and Emma L. Johnston, “Gender and Cultural Bias in Student Evaluations: Why Representation Matters,” *PloS One* 14, no. 2 (2019): e0209749; Colleen Flaherty, “The Skinny on Teaching Evals and Bias,” *Inside Higher Ed*, February 17, 2021; Carolyn Chisadza, Nicky Nicholls, and Eleni Yitbarek, “Race and Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teachers,” *Economics Letters* 179 (2019): 66-71; Todd Jennings, “Teaching ‘Out’ in the University: An Investigation into the Effects of Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Faculty Self-Disclosure Upon Student Evaluations of Faculty Teaching Effectiveness in the USA,” *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 14, no. 4 (2010): 325-339; Travis Russ, Cheri Simonds, and Stephen Hunt, “Coming Out in the Classroom... An Occupational Hazard?: The Influence of Sexual Orientation on Teacher Credibility and Perceived Student Learning,” *Communication Education* 51, no. 3 (2002): 311-324; Bettye P. Smith and Billy Hawkins, “Examining Student Evaluations of Black College Faculty: Does Race Matter?,” *Journal of Negro Education* 80, no. 2 (2011): 149-162; and, finally, Colleen Flaherty, “Even ‘Valid’ Student Evaluations are ‘Unfair’” *Inside Higher Ed* Feb. 27, 2020 (<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/02/27/study-student-evaluations-teaching-are-deeply-flawed>).

² Information in this section is common to all departments and is not subject to departmental modification.