Religious Studies

This document is intended to assist junior faculty in tenure track positions and tenured faculty seeking promotion to full professor to anticipate how the Department of Religious Studies will approach evaluating their work in terms of teaching, scholarship, and service. It should be understood as only a guideline and as a supplement to promotion related information in the *Faculty Handbook*. It is understood that these guidelines will be elaborated upon and clarified in discussions among chair, candidate, and other department members before and during the periodic review process.

Guidelines for Tenure

Introduction

Religious Studies at Hamilton College is a multidisciplinary field with a global scope dedicated to the study of the world's diverse religions and traditions. The Department understands multidisciplinary studies to indicate that candidates for tenure may be specialists in one of many disciplines within the broader study of religion. The Department also understands its dedication to the study of diverse expressions of religion to indicate a commitment to gender, race, ethnic, class, and other equity issues as topics of academic study. As a consequence, the Department will make scholarly and other performance evaluations of candidates for tenure in the light of the particular demands of specialized fields and studies, as they contribute to the broader field of Religious Studies.

Teaching

The Department views demonstrated distinction in teaching to be essential to a successful candidacy.

In keeping with the multidisciplinary nature of Religious Studies and its commitment to diversity, it is understood that distinction in teaching can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. Student class evaluations are standard criteria, but more substantive evidence is often found in the evaluations submitted by students during the periodic review process that provide evidence of a candidate's impact on a student's intellectual growth. The Department recognizes that teaching includes, but is not restricted to, classroom instruction, curricular innovation, the fostering of diversity, engagement with concentrators and the academic mentoring of individual students.

As noted in the *Faculty Handbook*, another means of evaluating teaching will be in-class observation of a candidate by all voting members of the department, who each will write a report to be shared with the candidate. It is expected that a candidate will make a case for the quality of her or his teaching in written documents submitted during periodic reviews.

Scholarship

The Department also views distinction in scholarship to be essential to a successful candidacy, demonstrated most typically through publication of scholarly work in reputable academic venues.

The Department recognizes that the nature and number of published materials considered acceptable may vary considerably in different scholarly contexts and will take this into account in

making its evaluation. Peer reviewed books, articles, chapters in edited volumes, critical reviews, and on-line publications understood to be authoritative are normative. Requirements of subdisciplines and multi-disciplinary collaborations may, however, favor video productions, exhibition catalogues, policy statements and position papers, and other material suitable to different scholarly activities.

In order for the Department to assess material accurately and fairly, candidates will make the case for the importance of their scholarly work to their particular professional aspiration and academic context in written documents submitted during periodic reviews.

Service

A record of service both to the Hamilton community and to the academic profession is assumed by the Department and is considered significant in the overall process of evaluation of candidates.

Service can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. These may include service to Hamilton in the form of committee work, engagement with student activities, special consultation and advising with minority students, and the development of initiatives and programs that benefit the community-at-large. It is also assumed that candidates will demonstrate service to their discipline. This may be demonstrated in various ways such as working within professional associations or media consultations and social activism that bring academic scholarship into the public square.

Guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor

Introduction

As stated in the *Faculty Handbook*, the Department recognizes that candidates for promotion to Professor shall have distinguished themselves as teacher-scholars. Such distinction includes but is not restricted to teaching that reflects the growth in maturity and scholarly ability necessary to challenge all types of students. It includes, but is not restricted to sound scholarship, sustained learning, and creative professional growth demonstrated through forms of public scholarship such as publication, critical investigation, invention, and the presentation of papers, exhibitions or performances. It includes but is not restricted to continued service to the immediate Hamilton community as well as to the field of Religious Studies and the public square. Frequently such distinction occurs as teacher-scholars redirect their energy as they mature, thus candidates may have chosen to develop new emphases in teaching, research, and service. The Department values creative intellectual risks taken in the course of the post-tenure career. In every case, given the diversity of our field, we will seek out and where necessary construct evaluative procedures appropriate to the teaching, scholarly or service activity.

Teaching

The Department views the kind of distinction demonstrated in teaching evidenced at the time of promotion to be essential. New emphases in teaching and experimentation in the classroom are valued. We understand that students benefit from professors exploring new material in the classroom and that professors benefit from developing new strategies to engage students. In any case, evidence of continued engagement with students both within and outside the class is expected of candidates for promotion to full professor.

Scholarship

As at the time of the tenure review, scholarly distinction may take many forms from normative academic publishing to scholarly experimentation with new media and creative expressions of the intellectual life. The Department also values candidates having been recognized for contribution to public intellectual discourse in national and global venues.

Service

A continuing record of service both to the Hamilton community and to the academic profession is valued by the Department and is considered significant in the overall evaluation of a candidate for promotion.

As in the case of promotion to Associate Professor, candidates are expected to make a case for their teaching, scholarly, and service contributions in written documents submitted during periodic reviews.