

DEPARTMENT OF THEATER
GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING FACULTY
FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

The goals of the ISU Theater Department in establishing the following guidelines and procedures for evaluation are five-fold:

- 1) To establish guidelines and specific benchmarks in teaching, creativity/research, and service for tenure-track faculty so they can know what is expected of them as they proceed through the appointment and tenure process;
- 2) To provide and apply standards which are fair and reasonable while encouraging excellence in each individual faculty member in the areas of teaching, research/creativity, and service;
- 3) To foster a climate where focused collaboration between faculty theater artists and their students is encouraged and given due weight in appointment and tenure review;
- 4) To apply procedures and methods by which this excellence can be demonstrated and documented so that the case for such excellence can be presented clearly and solidly from the Theater Personnel Committee and Theater Chair through to all University-wide faculty committees and administrators involved with the task of evaluating theater faculty; and
- 5) To provide procedures, methods, guidelines, and standards which acknowledge and respect the variety of ways each faculty member—in accordance with external definitions provided by departmental need, input from the Chair and the Personnel Committee, and the original appointment terms by which the faculty member was hired—defines his or her own areas of expertise, focus, and specialization inside the Department's faculty culture as well as in the field of theater in general.

On the Department level, the evaluation of faculty who are being considered for appointment, promotion, or tenure, is the responsibility of two independent bodies:

- 1) The Theater Department Personnel Committee, comprised of all full-time tenure track faculty except the Chair, and
- 2) Theater Department Chair.

It is expected that the two bodies will always maintain open and unimpeded communication on all matters as tenure and promotion decisions are being weighed and finally reached.

Having two separate entities participating in the review process, evaluations and decisions reached on faculty candidates can be appraised by two separate bodies. The advantage of separate appraisals from the two bodies operates as a check-and-balance system to insure fair decisions and to protect the rights of faculty coming up for appointment and tenure.

If any final decision is divided such that the Personnel Committee and Chair do not reach consensus on whether or not a candidate should be recommended for appointment, promotion or tenure, then the two separate opinions, fully argued in the Personnel Committee and Chair's letters as well as in the candidate's response to those letters, would go forward to the Dean, Promotions and Tenure Committee, Provost, and President.

1) TEACHING

While acknowledging the variety of ways in which teachers of theater teach and the variety in methods by which such teaching can be evaluated, it is expected that all ISU Theater Department faculty strive for and achieve some measure of excellence in all the educational settings over which they have authority. It is assumed that each faculty member is able to be successful at providing a sound theater education, in their areas of expertise, to all ISU students in their classes, whether the students are theater majors, minors, or general education students.

Since significant teaching occurs in theater productions as well as in traditional classroom settings, it is expected that faculty will utilize their positions as directors, coaches, designers, production managers, and technical directors during the production process as an opportunity for sound theater instruction, whether the productions are main-stage, studio, faculty-directed, or student-directed.

Advising also constitutes an opportunity for guidance and significant and useful instruction and therefore advising that is documented as exceptional should represent a part of a faculty members' appointment and tenure teaching profile. It follows, then, that poor advising would also be counted against a faculty in his or her teaching file.

Faculty teaching, then, will be evaluated by its level of achievement in the vast variety of settings in which theater teaching occurs: lecture halls, seminar rooms, advising offices, studios, rehearsal rooms, and theaters at all stages of the teaching and production processes.

The Theater Department has an unusual advantage in the evaluation of teaching in that faculty are constantly observing the work of their peers in class projects and in production situations. Faculty members see the work of each other's students, whether in scenes from acting and directing classes, projects from design classes, plays from playwriting classes or production work in design, acting, management, technical support and dramaturgy. There is probably no other department in the University wherein peers are so specifically aware of each other's teaching

methods and results. Peer evaluation, therefore, is the dominant means of assessing teaching effectiveness in the Department. In addition to student evaluations, other evidence of excellent teaching might be:

- a) Accomplishments of students beyond the University, either before or after graduation;
- b) Letters from former students;
- c) Course syllabi and other teaching materials;
- d) High quantity and quality of advising, both on the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- e) Independent study projects directed;
- f) Teaching awards;
- g) Participation in conferences, workshops, and guest lectures at theater classes both inside and outside the Department and University (and the positive evaluation of the same through letters collected from faculty attending those classes)

2) CREATIVITY AND RESEARCH

The most accurate, comprehensive and reliable means to assess faculty achievement in creativity (design, directing, acting, playwriting or similar) is attained by peer evaluation from those both inside and outside the creative theater activity. Collaborators who work closely with directors, designers, technicians and actors in production situations contribute an unusually valuable insight in evaluating their work since they are privy to the work at every stage of development. This assessment, however, needs the “checks and balances” of views from peers external to a particular process. These outside viewpoints are best when they come from any combination of three sources: from non-participating faculty within the Theater Department itself, from non-participating faculty in ISU departments related to theater (e.g. English, Art, Music, Communications, and Dance), and from theater academics and professionals from outside the ISU community. It is advisable to solicit feedback from all of these sources whenever possible, and especially when a faculty member is coming up for tenure or promotion.

Given the fact that off-campus professional productions are so difficult for theater faculty to arrange and execute while fulfilling all of their on-campus duties, evaluations of on-campus departmental work by off-campus professionals and academics may substitute, in part, for off-campus professional work.

Work for Crossroads Repertory Theatre is deemed professional-level work and is considered as professional-level achievement; however, evaluation letters by outside peer professionals who view performances and/or materials in preparation for performance are necessary to verify the exact level of professional accomplishment.

The Department Chair will solicit ahead of time for evaluations from recognized professionals, scholars, and/or academics in the area in which the faculty member is doing his or her research or creative work and invite the evaluators to attend productions, read plays, books, articles, or conference papers on which tenure or promotion decision is being considered. To assist in the

evaluation of creative work (of any nature) by the Department, the Department Chair and the Chair of the Personnel Committee may ask for outside evaluations of a faculty member's work to be written and added to the faculty member's file/database. Once submitted to the faculty member's file/database, the Department of Theater deems it important that the evaluated faculty member have access to these peer reviews, redacted of the reviewer's name and position, so that the faculty member may learn and grow from the feedback offered by the evaluator, and in rare cases, defend themselves against subjective or spurious elements within these evaluations. This gives the faculty member the opportunity to react, in writing, to the evaluation should s/he choose to do so. The response would also be appended to the original review in the faculty member's file/database by the Department Chair.

Evaluators should be fully recognized theater professionals and/or theater academics in a similar or the same area of theater as that of the candidate and have the expertise to provide an objective, detailed evaluation of the quality of the performance that was viewed or the article, book, or play that was read.

In addition to creative and production activity, some faculty members may pursue a more "traditional" scholarly and research agenda. In this case, peer-reviewed publication, presentation, or other intellectual contributions may be submitted as evidence of the faculty member's work.

Other means by which a theater artist may present evidence of quality work to his/her peers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Submit work for evaluation by outside evaluators such as visiting or invited professionals;
- b) Submit reviews in the media by competent critics;
- c) Submit images of productions, working drawings, renderings, photographs, light plots, models, other relevant supporting material;
- d) Submit testimonial letters from qualified respondents;
- e) Submit listings of awards, grants and other honors.

Theater artists, scholars, and technicians in the Department should submit complete documentation in appropriate form, of titles, times and places of workshops and papers presented, articles and books published, exhibitions participated in, including, as possible, photographs, video, recordings, or other appropriate digital representations of the work.

It is expected that all members of the faculty will demonstrate a consistent and sustained engagement with their research/creativity, documenting at least one major project or publication per year. A major project might include, but is not limited to, a regionally significant professional production, a peer reviewed published article, a peer-evaluated exhibition, an external grant, or a national or international conference presentation.

4) SERVICE

Service in the ISU Theater Department will be required of each faculty member.

It is required that each Theater Department faculty member fulfill some degree of annual significant service both to the Department and the University in general in whichever ways accord with their own personal interests as well as the interests and needs of the Department and the University. It is expected that faculty members, in their first two years of tenure-track appointment, will devote most of their service time to the Department but, by the third year, he or she would be expected to begin serving the University as a whole either as a member of a committee or participant in organizing or contribute to the running of a University-wide event or activity.

Honoring the University's focus on Community Engagement and Service Learning, it is also highly encouraged that faculty also find time to serve, and encourage students to serve, the greater Terre Haute community, either through providing their theater expertise or advice to benefit other not-for-profit theater or arts organizations in the Wabash Valley and/or contribute time to worthy charitable activities and/or civic institutions.

Administration is an important aspect of creativity in a collaborative art. Service is the dominant activity of a Technical Director's, a Production Manager's, an Artistic Director's or a Managing Director's responsibility in seeing that the organization runs smoothly. Theater art cannot be produced properly unless the management works at a high level of efficiency and with a supple ability to prevent and react to crises. Again, peer evaluation must be the primary means of evaluating such service. Other evidence of service contributions are as follows:

- a) Service on Departmental, College and or University committees;
- b) Activities in national, regional, state and local professional associations;
- c) Discipline-related consultations and community activities;
- d) Workshops, master classes, guest lectures;
- e) Responses for ACTF or other organizations;
- f) Recruiting initiatives and efforts;
- g) Professional service awards; and
- h) Conducting student field trips.

PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR FROM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Under University standards for promotion to the rank of full professor, the candidate's record must demonstrate a *sustained* and ongoing pattern of *excellence* in teaching, creativity and research, and service reflecting *substantial* contributions to the discipline or profession, University (including the College and Department), and/or to local, state, national, or international communities.

In reference to the University Handbook and the CAS Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, the Department of Theater must define the terms *excellence*, *substantial*, and *sustained* in regards to

the minimum standards for promotion to Full Professor. The minimum standards for the University are defined as follows:

- 305.12.4.5.1 Documented evidence of substantial and effective teaching or librarianship; of a record of substantial accomplishment in research, scholarship, or creativity which has led to professional recognition at the national level; and of active, substantive service to some combination of the University, the community and the profession; or
- 305.12.4.5.2 Documented evidence of excellence in one domain of faculty work, while also demonstrating substantial and/or sustained performance in the other domains.

The Department of Theater defines these terms as follows:

1. *Excellence*

- a. Teaching—a faculty member’s teaching would be considered *excellent* through high scores on official course evaluations; testimonials from current students and/or recent alumni, and feedback from peers who evaluated their syllabi and in-class performance; and teaching awards and/or honors received. In the Department of Theater, this will also include the positive evaluation of the faculty member’s work in production environments (from ISU colleagues as well as outside evaluators). This production work is often mandatory but not always credit-bearing for the faculty member. Additionally, teaching excellence is further defined by creating new opportunities for students, which may include career development, significant experiential learning, interdisciplinary and/or international opportunities.
- b. Research/Scholarship or Creative Works—the *excellence* of a faculty member’s creative or scholarly work (which are evaluated as equivalent by this Department) is dependent upon the regional, national or international significance of the company, position, contract, or publisher/journal where the works appear. The determination of the excellence of a specific work or publication will be ascertained by the Department of Theater Personnel Committee, and by outside evaluators of the works.
- c. Service—Service to Department, College, University, discipline, or community can all be designated as *excellent*, especially through the holding of leadership positions and significant contributions within these various levels.

2. *Substantial*

- a. Teaching—a faculty member’s teaching would be considered *substantial* through the execution of a well-reviewed assigned teaching load, potentially including the significant amount of work associated with production within the Department, teaching overloads, the development of new courses or curriculum-based programs, at least meeting expectations for teaching in biennial reviews (including successful completion of improvement plans), and/or the delivery of large-section courses.
- b. Research/Scholarship or Creative Works—for a faculty member’s creative or scholarly work to be considered *substantial*, they must produce a number of

significant works at the regional, national or international level. Significance may be determined by the company, position, contract, or publisher/journal where the works appear. The determination of the substantiality of a body of work or publications will be ascertained by the Department of Theater Personnel Committee, and by outside evaluators.

- c. Service—for service to Department, College, University, discipline, or community to be designated as *substantial*, the faculty member must be engaged in multiple areas of service.

3. *Sustained*

- a. Teaching—a faculty member’s teaching would be considered *sustained* through successful fulfillment of the faculty member’s assigned teaching deployment/courseload from semester to semester throughout their post-tenure period. This would also include maintenance in quality of instruction over time, to be ascertained through course evaluations, letters from alumni and peers, and/or teaching awards or honors received.
- b. Research/Scholarship or Creative Works—a faculty member’s research, scholarship, or creative agenda would be considered *sustained* through the consistent participation, submission, and execution of scholarly or creative works with reputable journals, publishers, or production companies.
- c. Service—a faculty member’s service would be considered sustained through regular and consistent participation with service to the following entities: Department, College, University, community, and discipline. While a diverse dedication to service would be preferred, prolonged and dedicated service within a single area would be considered “sustained.”

COMPOSITION OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION

PROMOTION, TENURE AND PRE-TENURE

The Theater Department Personnel Committee consists of all full-time faculty in the Department with the exception of the Department Chair and any faculty serving on a personnel committee on a College or University level. In case of action on promotion and/or tenure matters, the Committee shall consist of the Personnel Committee minus any non-tenure-track faculty. The Committee shall elect its own Chair. The Committee Chair shall be responsible for writing a summary of the Committee’s decisions and transmitting that – plus the Committee vote -- to the Department Chair.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee shall review candidates according to University regulations as specified in the Indiana State University Handbook. All Indiana State University Handbook procedures, policies, and time lines shall be observed. In case of any contradiction between this document and the University Handbook and the College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Document, the college-wide documents will take precedence.

FACULTY/STAFF AND STUDENT/FACULTY/STAFF EVALUATION SESSIONS

During the week following each University theater production the faculty and artistic staff of that production shall meet for a critique session in which the strengths and weaknesses of the production and the process of preparing the production shall be assessed. Also during that week faculty, artistic staff, students and others shall meet at a Theater at Four session to evaluate the process and production. These forms of internal evaluation are instituted to encourage and maintain high quality standards in all faculty-directed and major student-directed productions.

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Approved by Department of Theater Faculty 6-0-0