

Promotion Statement  
Department of Philosophy  
University of Nebraska—Lincoln

1. **General Observations**

Recommendations concerning advancement in rank are the responsibility of the full-time faculty at or above that rank. Each decision on whether to recommend for or against promotion is effected by a vote of the relevant faculty the numerical outcome of which is communicated to the college executive committee together with other materials required by or in accord with college and university policy.

Though promotion requires satisfactory performance in the areas of teaching and service, and for the case of advancement to associate professor satisfactory performance in teaching and service as specified in the statement on tenure, the determining factors in the decision whether to recommend promotion are (i) scholarly accomplishments while in the current rank, including scholarly accomplishments while in that rank as a member of this faculty, and (ii) the likelihood of continued scholarly accomplishments if promotion is awarded.

Evidence of scholarly accomplishment characteristically and primarily consists of the number and quality of disciplinary articles or books either published or accepted for publication, and the rate of their publication. Other forms of publication e.g., invited works, book reviews, papers printed in conference proceedings, and book chapters are also considered and may enhance the scholarly record. Evidence of the likelihood of continued scholarly accomplishments characteristically consists of work in progress.

Each faculty person has the right to request consideration for promotion and may exercise that right once each academic year. The faculty senior in rank to that person must act on each such request. At the time of the tenure decision for assistant professors the college requires the faculty of associate and full professors to submit a recommendation on promotion in addition to a recommendation on tenure determined by the tenured faculty.

It is important to stress that though a recommendation of promotion has quantitative aspects, the single most important consideration is always the quality of the work which is published or underway. In particular, publication of work of low quality will weaken the case for promotion, and no number of publications of merely acceptable quality will be sufficient for promotion. Quantity cannot compensate for quality. On the other hand, publications of sufficiently high quality, together with high quality work in progress, can warrant a recommendation of promotion even when the quantity of work published falls short of the standards noted below.

2. **Terminology**

A “full-scale paper” is a disciplinary essay of the average length of a full journal article typical of the field to which it belongs and dealing with some substantial philosophical issue or topic. (In many instances this length will fall between twelve and twenty-five standard journal pages.) Full-scale papers contrast with e.g., critical notes and discussion papers.

A “quality journal” is a journal of the quality currently possessed by those philosophy journals with acceptance rates of between 5 and 20 percent as listed in the most recent APA report on journals available at the time of the finalization of this document, 1992.

A “quality press” is a nationally recognized press which publishes a significant number of philosophical research books (typically between 150 and 300 pages in length), as exemplified by a number of the major university presses.

A “published” book or paper is a book or paper either published or accepted for publication.

A work of philosophical research is of a “quality positive for promotion”, whether to associate professor or to full professor, only if it is equal in quality to the better research papers published in quality refereed philosophy journals or to the better research books published by quality philosophy presses. Kindred standards apply to other forms of publication.

### 3. **Assessments of Quality**

Publication in quality journals or by quality presses is *prima facie* evidence that the research thus published is of a quality positive for promotion.

Outside reviewer reports solicited at the time of the promotion review are a second source of *prima facie* evidence bearing on the quality of research.

Other sources of evidence may be available in special cases e.g., the reprinting of papers in research collections, unsolicited invitations for conference participation.

It is, however, the faculty constituting the promotion committee which must finally decide on the quality of research, based on its reading and discussion of the research product of each candidate for promotion, including work in progress. It is their responsibility to arrive at the final assessment reflecting their own considered judgments of quality, giving due weight to other sources of evidence including those indicated above.

### 4. **Promotion to Associate Professor**

The normal publication expectation for promotion to associate professor is a group of publications equivalent to four full-scale papers of a quality positive for promotion and including work while in rank as a member of this faculty. Normally, if the research product does not include a book at least two publications should be full-scale papers. A group of publications sufficient to satisfy the publication condition on promotion to associate professor is one equivalent to five full-scale papers of a quality positive for promotion, with at least three of those publications being full-scale papers. (In general, a pair of co-authored works are taken as equal to one similar work by a single author.)

A published full-scale book of philosophical research or scholarship of a quality positive for promotion is also sufficient to satisfy the publication condition on promotion to associate professor.

A recommendation of promotion to associate professor also requires evidence of future scholarly productivity. Thus, the candidate’s work in progress is also relevant to the recommendation decision

and should be of a quantity and quality which makes it probable that the candidate will develop a record of research and publication of a kind which will in time justify promotion to full professor.

#### 5. **Promotion to Full Professor**

Since promotion to associate professor is typically decided (along with tenure) in the fall semester of the candidate's sixth year of employment, the sufficient publication condition for tenure noted above effectively equals publication at the rate of one full-scale paper of a quality positive for promotion per year, or one research book of a similar quality every five years.

Publication at a rate moderately increased over the one just noted, yielding the equivalent of six to eight full-scale papers of a quality positive for promotion within some continuous eight year or less period in rank as an associate professor, and including work while in rank as a member of this faculty, is normally necessary for a positive recommendation of advancement to full professor. In the typical case that period of substantial publication will occur within the eight years immediately subsequent to promotion to associate professor, but it is not a requirement for promotion that it then occur.

Since it can be expected that the college normally will act favorably on a recommendation of advancement to full professor only given a publication record the equivalent of at least fifteen full-scale papers, or of two books and several full-scale papers, or of one book and seven or eight full-scale papers, a career publication record approximating to this norm is also normally necessary for promotion to full professor.

A recommendation of promotion to full professor requires evidence of future scholarly productivity. Thus, the candidate's work in progress is also relevant to the recommendation decision, and should be of a quantity and quality which makes it probable that the candidate will remain productive in research and publication.

#### 6. **Outside Reviewing**

The college currently requires outside review of research for promotion either to associate or to full professor. Six such reviews will normally be obtained. The list of potential reviewers will be subject to negotiation with the candidate, in accord with college rules. Candidates will be free to waive, in part or in whole, or to otherwise accept conditions on, their rights of access to the outside reviews. The candidates will in all cases have access to the letters soliciting outside reviews and control over whether work as yet unpublished will be furnished the reviewers.

Normally, the faculty responsible for recommending promotion will provide the college executive committee with remarks on the outside review letters. This will be part of the promotion file accessible to the candidate.

#### 7. **The Promotion File**

The preparation of the promotion file is to be carried out in accord with applicable college and university rules, and with the cooperation of the department chairperson. Its contents are also to conform to applicable college and university rules and should include all information relevant to the faculty recommendation.