AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES

A liberal society is made up of individuals who are diverse in interests and capabilities. Such differences should be recognized and respected. What is true of society is certainly true of the numerous departments, disciplines and programs within a college or university. Since faculty vary in the kinds of contributions they can make both to their departments and to the institution, criteria for the evaluation of faculty should allow for these differences. Africana Studies faculty members often undertake mentoring of students that fall outside the advising structure of the College. Students of color often have needs that are not addressed through formal advising channels. The tenure and promotion policy that follows attempts to provide recognition for such mentoring so that it becomes an aid in acquiring tenure and promotion instead of a hindrance as it is currently perceived.

Teaching, scholarship and service are the broad rubrics currently in use at Hamilton College for the evaluation of candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor as well as promotion to Professor. Therefore all promotions are based upon evident distinction of performance in these three areas that are regarded as complementary and cumulative. High priority is given to those behaviors that contribute to the Department and College goals of excellence in written and oral communication.

Guidelines for Tenure

Teaching: We expect candidates for tenure and promotion to demonstrate excellence in teaching both in the routinely expected teaching responsibilities associated with the classroom and in mentoring that extends beyond the classroom. Assessment of teaching will be evaluated by the following indicators of exemplary teaching, not in order of importance:

- College sponsored teaching evaluations.
- Observation by voting members of the department, followed by brief written commentaries on the visitation. Senior faculty members assume responsibility for arranging visits in concert with the candidate.
- Narrative evaluations from students who have taken a class with the candidate solicited from the Dean of Faculty office.
- Evaluation of syllabi and course materials and creativity in course design, presentation, the inclusion of recent and new scholarship, and rigorous intellectual engagement.
- Teaching introductory courses and other courses required for the concentration.
- Evidence of mentoring that goes beyond the usual academic advising that would be considered as service to the institution. For example, some students of color will seek out members of our department since its members are largely persons of color and allies. We recognize that this constitutes an additional “cultural load,” on selected members of the faculty and acknowledge this in our evaluation process.
- Directly addressing contemporary issues/concerns race, gender, and politics related to the field of study.

- Attention to materials that teach tolerance and prejudice reduction.
- Supervision of senior projects, research, and occasional independent studies.
- Contribution to student excellence in written and oral communication.
We also consider engagement in professional development intended to improve or enhance teaching such as the following:

- Participation in curricular development workshops, seminars, and courses designed to improve teaching.
- Attending conferences and seminars in the field or in the candidate’s area of concentration directed to the exploration of innovative pedagogy and resources for classroom use.
- Keeping course content abreast of developments in the field.

Scholarship:

Candidates for the rank of Associate Professor (and tenure) must at the time of review for tenure have a clearly developed program of research that articulates its relationship to the general contours of Africana Studies. Publications should reflect scholarship within the field, and given the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline we value scholarly outlets in other disciplines. An independent profile in research and publication with a significant corpus of high quality, original scholarship and high levels of scholarly activity, participation in national/regional conferences, including participation and publication through media outlets related to the candidate’s area or region of study are the criteria for successful tenure and promotion. Having said that, however, we also place a high value on collaborative work, hence co-authored scholarly work will not be disadvantaged. Cross cutting and intersecting research that blurs disciplinary boundaries is expected. Although other professional work including book reviews, encyclopedia entries, short papers and commentaries are considered important to the professional development of the scholar, they are not in themselves sufficient for tenure and promotion. Successful candidates will ordinarily have had a book (single authored) accepted for publication and several scholarly articles at the time of tenure. Some candidates might publish a greater number of articles in journals and edited volumes while working on a longer book project.

The Department has no single research model for candidates in the tenure and promotion process. However, we expect excellence in all areas of scholarship and creative accomplishment. Judgments regarding the quality or significance of scholarly and creative activities will be on the basis of evaluations by peers inside and outside the College. Professional growth and reputation in the discipline will be evidenced by significant contributions in the following areas. Books and articles in refereed journals will receive the greatest weight, followed in order of importance by articles in edited volumes, articles submitted to journals (and receiving “revise and resubmit”), other kinds of publications such as book review essays and book reviews, newspaper articles, blogs, and conference papers.

Service:

The department also recognizes and values service. Service can take many forms, including departmental service, work with faculty organizations, work with student organizations and external structures (foundations, archives, and public affairs, media), work with professional organizations and agencies that promote the field of Africana Studies, and membership on College committees. Departmental service includes formal and informal mentoring and advising of students, supervising student research/grants or independent projects, fellowships and proposal preparation, and serving on hiring committees. Service to professional or regional organizations in the candidates’ area of concentration is also valued. Service may include, but is not limited to the following areas, not in order of importance: curriculum planning and development, suggesting and promoting events by visiting scholars and lecturers, sponsorship of student organizations and activities, effective representation of
the College in community and regional activities, enhancing the ability of students to assume positions of
leadership and community engagement, engagement with community-based organizations, writing short
commentary and interventions for a public audience, working as a public intellectual for greater social
equity.

Promotion to Full Professor

**Teaching:** A candidate for promotion to Full Professor must sustain the effective pedagogy that
earned the candidate tenure, continuing to demonstrate successful teaching, course development and
revision. The candidate must also teach required courses and participate at various levels of course
teaching. As in consideration for promotion to the associate rank, we place considerable emphasis on
contributing to student excellence in written and oral communication. The candidate must participate in
departmental curricular planning, departmental meetings related to course offerings and student project
supervision, advising and mentoring.

**Scholarship:** Candidates for the rank of professor must continue their scholarly/and or creative
activities while associate professors. For promotion to full professor, a member’s contributions should be
recognized by others of his or her disciplinary cohort and have a scholarly record that includes
publications that further distinguish an independent research agenda and that contributes to the
establishment of a research specialty or series of advanced concerns in the field. This may be
demonstrated by a second single authored book, or a co-authored book or edited volume along with a
series of peer reviewed articles mapping out a scholarly line of inquiry. Although participation in research
grants even as primary author or investigator is of value, it is not in itself sufficient ground for promotion
to professor and must be accompanied by publications and other scholarly work pushing past the
threshold of associate professor.

**Service:** Candidates must demonstrate meritorious service to the Department and College.
Continual commitment to professional growth and development is expected of all candidates. Mentorship
of junior colleagues is especially important at this stage of the professorate.