

# UCI School of Social Sciences

## Professor of Teaching Merit and Promotion Guidelines

### Document history:

- Last updated: November 6, 2022
- Approved for submission by Dean Bill Maurer, November 7, 2022
- Prepared by Angela Jenks, Vice Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Diversity, in consultation with Anita Casavantes Bradford, Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Diversity
- Revision of 2020 guidelines prepared by Jeanett Castellanos, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and Evan Schofer, Chair of the Executive Committee

The evaluation and promotion of faculty in the Professor of Teaching series (also known in the UC system as the Lecturer with Security of Employment or LSOE series) are governed by [APM-285 \(Lecturer with Security of Employment Series\)](#). Additional [guidance for faculty on preparing files](#) is available from the UCI Office of Academic Personnel. This document provides supplementary clarification regarding how APM and UCI policies may best be applied in the School of Social Sciences. Departments may have more specific guidance that applies to their faculty members, but additional guidance must align with the School policies outlined below.

### Overview

The vision of the Professor of Teaching outlined in APM-285 is a multifaceted pedagogue and scholar *“whose primary responsibility is teaching and teaching-related tasks and secondary responsibility is professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, including creative activity, especially as they relate to instruction and pedagogy. The faculty in this series also have responsibility for University and public service.”*

The criteria for merit, promotion, and security of employment (equivalent to tenure) for Professors of Teaching at UCI are broadly analogous to the familiar criteria for faculty in the Professor series. The pillars – teaching, research/creative activity, and service – are the same, and expectations in terms of accomplishment and excellence are similar for faculty in the Professor of Teaching and Professor series. However, for Professors of Teaching, teaching accomplishments and excellence are the central focus of evaluation and carry the greatest weight. The boundaries between teaching, research/creative activity, and service may also be more fluid for Professors of Teaching. For example, whereas faculty in the Professor series are expected to contribute to scholarship/research in the social sciences (appropriate to their particular position and/or department), Professors of Teaching may in addition or instead make scholarly contributions to the fields of teaching and pedagogy.

The expected distribution of effort for Professors of Teaching in the School of Social Sciences is:

- Teaching (60-70%)
- Research/Creative Activity (15-20%)
- Service (15-20%)

The maximum classroom teaching load assigned to Professors of Teaching is 7 standard 4-unit courses per academic year.

Per APM-285, Professors of Teaching can be assigned to teach courses at any level, including graduate courses. Adjustments to the classroom teaching load may be made at the discretion of the Department Chair or Dean if justified by other responsibilities contributing to the educational mission of the university.

## Teaching

Teaching excellence is a key expectation for Professors of Teaching. Professors of Teaching across the School of Social Sciences may teach a wide variety of courses in different modalities (e.g., lower- and upper-division, graduate, writing intensive, online, etc.), and they therefore employ diverse disciplinary approaches and pedagogical methods, practices, or innovations.

Teaching excellence may be demonstrated through a variety of activities, including the development and implementation of evidence-based pedagogical strategies; the cultivation of stimulating, inclusive learning environments that facilitate learning for all students, including those in underrepresented or historically marginalized groups; active involvement in and effective mentoring of students, teaching assistants, and/or peer faculty; contributions to curricular development that are informed by current pedagogical knowledge; serving as leaders or resources for teaching in the School; and/or a commitment to continuous growth.

Currently, faculty are required to submit student evaluations of teaching with their merit and promotion files (with exceptions for certain designated quarters taught during the COVID-19 pandemic), along with a second piece of evidence of teaching effectiveness. Additional evidence may also be submitted. The School of Social Sciences especially encourages the following approaches to documenting teaching excellence:

- Self-evaluation in the form of [reflective teaching statements](#): These statements might include evidence of effective teaching practices, innovative techniques, assessment of prior teaching outcomes and efforts to address recurring challenges, reflection on student experiences, and iterative growth toward improved teaching practices.
- Peer review assessment: Peer review assessments are recommended for all faculty as an effective way to document teaching excellence, to identify goals and potential areas of growth, and to establish a trajectory for promotion and tenure. UCI's Office of Academic Personnel offers [guidance on peer evaluation of teaching](#), and UCI's Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation offers [additional resources](#).
- Evidence of advising and mentorship with a demonstrated impact: Contributions to mentorship and advising include (but are not limited to) supervising undergraduate honors theses; supervising masters or doctoral students (e.g., as candidacy or dissertation committee chair or member); or advising student research via programs like the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), or Competitive Edge Summer Research Program. Faculty are encouraged to keep track of their mentees' progress, their trajectories in higher education, and other professional development and accolades.
- "Other evidence" consisting of individual items and/or an organized teaching portfolio: Additional materials may support the reflective teaching statement or showcase

undertakings and practices that support excellence in teaching. For example, these materials might include course syllabi; examples of assignments or teaching tools; documentation of new courses taught, previously-taught courses that have been substantially revised, or the development of new and effective instructional techniques; certificates or evidence of participation in pedagogical development workshops and programs; written testimony from former students, mentees, and/or teaching assistants on the impact and effectiveness of the faculty member's teaching and mentorship; evidence of student learning gains; awards or other recognition of teaching excellence; and the like.

While student evaluations of teaching are required, the School of Social Sciences notes that current Student Feedback Forms are flawed tools and do not effectively assess student learning, teaching effectiveness, or contributions to the educational mission of the university. Research demonstrates that these evaluations can be discriminatory and are impacted by biases around race, gender, age, class, and other dimensions of social status. Certain teaching conditions, modalities, or practices may also yield lower evaluation ratings or negative student comments. While student views of their own learning experiences offer an important perspective on teaching, numeric summaries from student feedback forms should not be the primary means of assessing teaching excellence. Within the limitations of the current forms, written comments are more likely to yield feedback that can inform reflection and be discussed in a reflective teaching statement.

### **Research/Creative Activity**

While Professors of Teaching are evaluated most heavily on teaching excellence, these faculty are also evaluated on research/creative activity. These activities may be related to a substantive area in the social sciences (as would be expected of faculty in the Professor series) or to the field of pedagogy and teaching. A Professor of Teaching in sociology, for instance, might pursue research/creative work in sociology, the teaching of sociology, and/or the scholarly fields of teaching and pedagogy.

[Guidance from the UCI Office of Academic Personnel](#) identifies criteria for research/creative activity that apply to faculty in both the Professor and Professor of Teaching series. This guidance states that “*A broad range of activities that meet all of the following criteria for a, b, and c below can be credited as research/creative activity:*

- a. Represent new knowledge, innovation, and/or analysis in the discipline/pedagogy, as judged by peer or other external review;*
- b. Publication/dissemination and public accessibility of the work beyond the university;*
- c. Impact on the field, the academy, communities outside the academy and/or the wider community.”*

Research and creative activities that may meet all three criteria include (but are not limited to) externally reviewed scholarly publications in the discipline or on pedagogy (e.g., books, articles, essays, chapters, conference proceedings, textbooks, etc.); academic reports in the discipline; creative writing, film, and media production; and/or curating art or media exhibits.

Excellence in research/creative activity may be demonstrated by externally reviewed publications or creative works in relevant venues; public presentations at professional societies or educational institutions; grants to support relevant activities; awards or prizes; visibility as an expert/leader in research or pedagogy; and/or evidence of external impact (involvement in

external research endeavors or multi-investigator activities, adoption of research findings or evidence-based pedagogical practices/products by other institutions, etc.).

### **University and Professional Service**

Service expectations are comparable between faculty in the Professor of Teaching and Professor series at a given rank. These expectations include effective participation in and contributions to the department, school, campus, university, professional field, and/or public community. For both Professors and Professors of Teaching, expectations for service breadth and leadership at the school and especially campus levels typically increase with rank.

All forms of service to the university and profession count toward advancement, but Professors of Teaching frequently specialize in service roles related to teaching and pedagogy, such as committees related to undergraduate or graduate education. It is advisable for Department Chairs to identify service roles that leverage the expertise of Professors of Teaching in order to improve curriculum and instruction.

Common forms of service contributions include but are not limited to:

- Participation in department, school, or university committees pertaining to curriculum development, undergraduate education, or graduate education;
- Participation in committees or initiatives addressing the educational needs of underserved or disadvantaged groups;
- Department, school, or university administrative and leadership positions (Undergraduate Program Director, Associate Dean, elected Academic Senate positions, etc.)
- Developing and conducting workshops or trainings related to teaching, pedagogy, teaching innovation, instructional technology;
- Service to scholarly, research, and professional organizations; for example, review of scholarly work (article or book manuscripts) for journals and presses, review of grants for funding agencies, review of scholarships or sitting on award committees, participation in organizational or leadership roles within professional organizations.

Some elements of service work – for example, developing new curricular or instructional materials for a school district or creating training programs or workshops on innovative teaching methods or issues in pedagogy – may overlap with other evaluation categories. In these cases, the separate, specific contributions to each category should be made clear.

### **Contributions to Inclusive Excellence**

All contributions to inclusive excellence count toward advancement, but again Professors of Teaching often create synergies by focusing on contributions relating to education and pedagogy. The Office of Academic personnel encourages all faculty to describe their contributions in an [Inclusive Excellence Activities Statement](#). Such statements provide an opportunity for faculty to demonstrate a sustained effort to incorporate inclusive practices throughout their academic portfolios.

Common forms of contributions to inclusive excellence include but are not limited to:

- Participation in department, school, university, or external trainings, workshops, and initiatives addressing the educational experiences (e.g., access, outreach, persistence, mentorship, success) of students from diverse backgrounds, such as first-generation

college students, underrepresented minorities, and students from other marginalized or historically excluded groups;

- Research/creative activity on education and pedagogy that addresses the experiences of individuals or groups from diverse backgrounds;
- The development of and engagement with diversity and equal opportunity programs and practices that enhance faculty understanding of underrepresented and underserved student experiences and educational needs;
- The development of inclusive teaching practices and guidelines that enhance underrepresented and underserved students' educational experiences and learning.

## **Other Policies**

### *Teaching Workload Management*

Departments are encouraged to evaluate the teaching workload of PoTs and adjust course assignment and scheduling procedures as appropriate to ensure Professors of Teaching are in a position to successfully execute their work in not only teaching, but research/creative activity and service as well. For example, adjustments may include increasing stability in course assignments from year to year; providing opportunities to teach multiple sections of the same course each quarter or year; providing opportunities to stack classes to have a teaching-free quarter periodically; assigning courses related to a Professor of Teaching's research or area of disciplinary expertise; and involving Professors of Teaching in course assignment and scheduling decisions.

### *Course Releases*

Course releases may be granted at the discretion of the Department Chair or Dean for administrative, department, university, or professional service. Course release policies related to service should be the same for faculty in the Professor of Teaching and Professor series; that is, if a faculty member in the Professor series would receive a course release for a given service responsibility, a faculty member in the Professor of Teaching series should receive the same release. Similarly, course buyout policies (that is, reductions in course assignments linked to extramural funding) should be the same for faculty in the Professor of Teaching and Professor series.

### *Sabbatical and Other Leaves*

Professors of Teaching accrue sabbatical credits at the same rate as faculty in the Professor series. Procedures for requesting these leaves and submitting sabbatical reports are the same for faculty in the Professor of Teaching and Professor series. One quarter of leave equals a three course reduction, and two quarters of leave equal a six course reduction. The expectation is that Professors of Teaching who have regularly taught specific courses will retain those courses following sabbatical or other leaves.

### *Support for Research/Creative Activity*

When departments provide research support for faculty in the Professor series, they should provide proportionate support for research and creative activity undertaken by Professors of Teaching. Professors of Teaching should also be supported in applying for internal or external funding to support their research and creative activities.

### *Voting Rights*

Professors of Teaching are members of the Academic Senate and have the same Department, School, and University voting rights as faculty in the Professor series.

### **APPENDIX: Managing Merit and Promotion Cases and Supporting Professional Advancement for Professors of Teaching**

Professors of Teaching are not common in the School of Social Sciences. Most departments do not have extensive experience evaluating Professors of Teaching, and there are few examples of successful (or unsuccessful) advancement cases to use as reference points. As a consequence, faculty may not be familiar with the general criteria of evaluation or the department-specific expectations that are the fundamental basis for merit and promotion decisions. Moreover, a junior Professor of Teaching may have no other faculty in this series in their department to serve as mentors or advise on professional development.

It is recommended that Chairs allocate extra time for faculty discussion of Professor of Teaching merit and promotion cases, particularly early merits and the mid-career evaluation. Such discussions provide an opportunity for faculty to familiarize themselves with the criteria for evaluating Professors of Teaching and to deliberate on appropriate expectations regarding teaching, research/creative activity, and service, which are necessarily department-specific. This may improve the quality of feedback Professors of Teaching receive regarding their progress toward advancement and promotion.

It is recommended that Chairs and Department Managers meet regularly with Professors of Teaching (annually in the case of non-tenured faculty) to discuss expectations and to coordinate the assembly of merit and promotion files. The involvement of Department Managers can be beneficial because they often have extensive experience (whereas Chairs may rotate frequently), and because they are directly involved in preparing merit/promotion materials. In particular, peer review assessments take time to arrange and must be done in advance of merit/promotion reviews.

It is also recommended that Chairs seek out expertise from senior Professors of Teaching (including those in other departments) as needed to identify mentors to advise junior faculty and to assist in evaluation. Although faculty in the Professor series frequently teach, not all possess specialized expertise in teaching and pedagogy, which is helpful when evaluating teaching excellence as well as research/creative activity in areas of teaching and pedagogy. Chairs may find it useful to draw on the expertise of Professors of Teaching, for instance by seeking out Professors of Teaching to conduct peer review assessments, including Professors of Teaching on merit and promotion committees, and seeking external promotion letters from Professors of Teaching at other institutions.

As Chairs consider the professional development of Professors of Teaching, it is important to note the three levels outlined in the APM: (1) the initial appointment, (2) appointment or promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching, (3) and appointment and promotion of Full Professor of Teaching. Upon appointment, the faculty must demonstrate evidence of and/or potential for teaching excellence and the promise of productive contributions to research/creative activity. Appointment or promotion to Associate Professor of Teaching requires evidence of consistent and sustained excellence in effective teaching, sustained research/creative activity, and activity on committees within the professional field, department, school, campus, or university; or service to the public in areas directly related to the candidate's professional expertise and achievement. Appointment or promotion to Full Professor of

Teaching requires consistent and sustained research/creative achievement and a profile of excellence in teaching that establishes the candidate as a leader in the professional field and/or in education, along with active participation on committees within the professional field, department, school, campus, or university; or of service to the public or profession in areas directly related to the candidate's professional expertise and achievement.