

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Religious Studies engages in the analysis and interpretation of those features of the human experience and expressions of human culture commonly referred to as “spiritual,” “sacred” or “religious.” Religion is one of the most significant features of human existence historically, cross-culturally, and—especially today—globally. It thereby is a critical dimension of the liberal arts and sciences at the very center of the university and world citizenship today. The scholarly study of religion draws on multiple disciplinary approaches, especially in the humanities and social sciences, for examining a wide range of phenomena—myth, symbol, and ritual; the genesis, transmission and interpretation of religious texts; the formation, history, sustainability, ecology, and character of religious communities; traditions of religious belief and practice; the role of religion in politics, society, culture including material culture, and global affairs; religious ethics; and religion and the arts. The Department of Religious Studies emphasizes theories and methods for the scholarly study of religion globally. It is committed to engaging locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally in preparing students as citizens of a religiously diverse global society.

The B.A. in Religious Studies develops skills in the scholarly analysis, interpretation, and understanding of religion. Religious Studies prepares students for any career that requires critical thinking, analysis, and interpretation, oral and written communication skills, the ability to reflect on questions of meaning and value, and an enhanced understanding of religion in its human, social, and cultural contexts globally. The religious studies major, as part of a liberal education, prepares students for a wide variety of occupational fields including business and management, health and human services, international and foreign service, journalism and media, education, law and government, and nonprofit organizations. It also provides strong preparation for further training in the academic study of religion as well as law, medical ethics, and other professions.

The M.A. in Religious Studies affords opportunities for students with previous backgrounds in the scholarly study of religion to expand their knowledge of the social, cultural, and historical contexts of religion, deepen their knowledge of particular religious traditions, and acquire proficiency in a wide variety of related methodologies and theoretical perspectives. The M. A. in Religious Studies provides students the opportunity to sharpen their critical thinking and analytical skills in connection with the study of religion and as preparation for further graduate work and a doctoral degree or as supporting background for other professional careers.

This Department is not currently a multi-campus unit. If departmental faculty are hired at branch campuses, we will modify our governance and T&P documents to ensure that those faculty are included in matters of faculty governance and Tenure & Promotion to

ensure they have voice in departmental issues. We recognize the principles of equity of assignment, resources and opportunities of faculty across a multi-campus university.

II. CONDUCTING DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS

A. Departmental Meetings

The department's faculty meets on a monthly basis, subject to deferral or omission if current activities do not warrant a meeting. The department Chair is expected to provide notice of the meeting five days in advance. This may be accomplished by distributing a projected set of meeting dates each semester. Special meetings, as needed, may be called; and if circumstances permit, at least two days' notice will be given. The Chair is responsible for developing and distributing a tentative agenda prior to all meetings. Faculty members may add to the final agenda upon request. The Chair is responsible for conducting departmental meetings; however, if circumstances dictate, the Chair may appoint a delegate to conduct meetings or portions of meetings. Business will be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

B. Minutes of Faculty Meetings

Minutes of all departmental faculty meetings, whether regular or special, shall be recorded. Minutes are distributed to faculty members, preferably within one week following the meeting at which they were recorded. Faculty members may suggest changes to the minutes at the next scheduled meeting. In cases where there is dispute regarding changes to the minutes, proposed changes approved by a majority faculty vote will be incorporated into the final minutes. Copies of the approved minutes, and any materials pertinent to the meeting discussed in the minutes, will be retained and filed in perpetuity.

C. Voting Procedures

1. Eligibility for Voting

The voting membership of the Faculty shall consist of all full-time tenured and tenure-earning faculty, instructors on renewable contracts, and joint faculty with at least 50% of their salary administered by the Department of Religious Studies. Non-voting membership shall be given to adjunct faculty, visiting faculty, emeritus faculty, and faculty on courtesy appointments. Regarding faculty personnel decisions: 1) all voting members may participate (vote) in hiring decisions and instructorships promotions; 2) only tenured faculty vote on decisions to tenure and promote a non-tenured faculty member; and 3) only Full Professors vote on decisions to recommend promotion to Full Professor.

2. Quorum

A simple majority of eligible faculty not on leave constitutes a quorum. A quorum is required for a vote to be held on any matter. Throughout the remainder of this document, all proportions required for faculty approval refer to those faculty members present at a meeting, assuming that the necessary numerical quorum has been achieved. Those present include faculty available by means of telecommunication (phone, skype, and so on) as well as those attending, physically, in person.

3. Procedure

Votes on any matter may be conducted by voice, by a show of hands, or by secret ballot. Most votes will be by voice, except for personnel and election decisions, where secret ballots will be utilized. However, pending any vote, faculty members may request an alternative voting procedure, subject to approval by a majority of the faculty. Voting on any matter must be done at a called regular or special faculty meeting. Proxy votes must be submitted in writing to the Chair before the meeting. A proxy vote may take either of two forms: 1) the faculty member designates another faculty member to cast votes on his or her behalf; or 2) the faculty member gives his or her vote on a specific, determinate issue to be decided at the meeting.

III. DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATORS

A. Department Chair

1. Appointment

The Department Chair is appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences upon recommendation of a majority of the Department faculty and consent of the appointee. While it is recognized that the Chair serves at the behest of the Dean, it is recommended that the Chair's initial appointment be for a three-year term and the Chair's service normally be limited to two consecutive terms. The department's recommendation for renewal will be made in the next-to-last year of the chair's appointed term.

2. Duties

The Chair is the chief administrator of the Department, directing the Department's teaching, fiscal, and operational activities; acting as a liaison between the Faculty and the College and University; and representing the Department outside the University. Duties of the Chair include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Recommending salary increases and salaries for newly appointed faculty members.
- b. Preparing assigned teaching duties for all faculty and graduate teaching assistants. Teaching assignments of tenured faculty are to be

made in consultation with them, and the Chair will make every reasonable effort to accommodate their requests. Graduate students are assigned teaching based on the recommendations of the Graduate Committee and in consultation with them.

- c. Preparing other departmental duties assigned to faculty.
- d. Allocating departmental funds for travel, equipment, supplies, and temporary service expenses. Departmental travel funds may be allocated for reading a paper, presiding at a session, functioning as an officer of a scholarly society, and other research and scholarly travel. Other things being equal, preference will be given to untenured tenure-track faculty.
- e. Assigning office space and staff services.
- f. Appointing department committees.
- g. Preparing annual reviews of the office personnel and faculty.
- h. Transmitting to the faculty University and College guidelines, procedures, and policies in a timely manner.
- i. Coordinating external reviews of the Department.
- j. Preparing departmental recommendations on promotion and tenure.
- k. Facilitating resolution of faculty-student disputes and make referrals to the College Grievance Committee when necessary and appropriate.
- l. Representing the Department and faculty to the public; direct the development of public relations materials; and facilitate maintenance of the Department's website.
- m. Making available to the faculty on an annual basis or at appropriate times each year, information regarding the following:
 - n. The departmental budget with an itemized breakdown of department resources allocated to individual faculty for travel and other expenses for the previous year.
 - o. Criteria for distribution of travel funds.
 - p. Planned faculty leaves and their budgetary consequences.
 - q. Other administrative and curricular matters as appropriate.

B. Assistant or Associate Chair

1. Appointment

An Assistant or Associate Chair may be appointed by the Dean upon nomination by the Chair, a majority affirmative vote of approval by the faculty, and consent of the appointee. The Assistant/ Associate Chair's term is fully, or in part, concurrent with that of the Chair, but periods of appointment cannot exceed that of the serving Chair. During a Chair's term of service, different Assistant/Associate Chairs may be appointed through the process described above. Compensation is negotiable with the Dean of the College, subject to approval by the Chair.

2. Charge

The Assistant/Associate Chair assists in the administration of the Department, in implementing University and College policies and procedures, and in initiating and implementing internal policies and procedures. The Assistant/Associate Chair will be responsible for tasks assigned by the Chair, contingent on a majority affirmative vote of approval by the faculty. The Assistant/ Associate Chair will represent the Chair and the Department, faculty, students, and staff at meetings where the Chair is unable to attend.

IV. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

A. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

The department's standing committees include the Faculty Advisory Committee, Graduate Committee, and Undergraduate Committee. Members of the standing committees are appointed by the Chair, with their consent. Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Chair as needed.

B. Faculty Advisory Committee

1. Purpose

The Faculty Advisory Committee (a) serves as a council of advice for the Chair, (b) acts as a mechanism for student, faculty, and staff expression of their views on issues important to departmental functioning, (c) carries out specific tasks the department may at times be required to complete, (d) addresses student and staff grievances when asked to serve in this manner, (e) convenes in matters of academic dishonesty when requested by the Chair in conformance with departmental policies and procedures, and (f) advises the Chair on the composition of faculty search committees.

The Faculty Advisory Committee meets early in the spring of each year to prepare evaluations of the performance of the Chairperson and Associate Chairperson as well as each faculty member in the previous calendar year. The Faculty Advisory Committee will submit to the Chair any relevant USF forms and a narrative evaluation for each faculty member being evaluated; enter this information into any relevant USF data system; and it will complete these tasks at least two weeks in advance of the deadline set by the College of Arts and Sciences. If the members of the Faculty Advisory Committee cannot agree in their assessment of any faculty member, they shall prepare separate signed reports for that faculty member.

2. Membership

The Faculty Advisory Committee is composed of three faculty members, including at least two tenured faculty members when practicable. Instructors and assistant professors may serve on this committee as needed; although it normally is not advisable for assistant professors to serve except as need and circumstances dictate otherwise; and the rules for voting on tenure and promotion (as specified herein) still apply.

C. Graduate Committee

1. Purpose. The Graduate Committee is responsible for:
 - a. reviewing and making recommendations concerning new graduate courses and proposed changes in graduate curriculum offerings;
 - b. reviewing applications to the graduate program and making decisions about graduate admissions;
 - c. reviewing applications for and recommending appointments to graduate assistantships;
 - d. recommending the assignments of graduate assistants in accordance with an equitable policy;
 - e. over see the review and evaluations of graduate assistant performance in collaboration with the faculty to whom they are assigned;
 - f. reviewing any other policies relevant to the graduate program, and making recommendations to the faculty concerning those policies; and
 - g. recommending to the Chair course sequences for the graduate program for two years in advance.
2. Membership: The committee will consist of three members of the faculty. The Director of Graduate Studies will be Chair of this committee.

D. Undergraduate Committee

1. Purpose. The Undergraduate Committee is responsible for:
 - a. reviewing and making recommendations concerning new undergraduate courses;
 - b. proposing changes in undergraduate curriculum offerings;
 - c. undergraduate student advising; and
 - d. evaluating majors annually and recommending to the Chair those meriting honors and awards.

2. Membership: The committee will consist of three members of the faculty. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will be Chair of this committee.

V. SUMMER APPOINTMENT POLICIES

- A. Every effort will be made to ensure that every faculty member who so desires has the opportunity to teach at least one summer course. Preference will be given to regular, full-time faculty over adjunct faculty in the summer. **Full-time faculty who have not taught summer courses recently will be given preference over those who have had recent summer teaching.** Should more full-time faculty desire summer teaching than the courses available, a rotational list ranking faculty (organized alphabetically from least to most summer teaching opportunities) will be developed and employed for making these decisions.
- B. Faculty assignments must take into account departmental needs in course scheduling. While faculty preference will be taken into account, faculty must ultimately select from courses that best fit the needs of the department.
- C. Revenue, as determined on the basis of Student Credit Hours (SCH), will be a consideration in determining assignments.

VI. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND BEHAVIORAL MISCONDUCT BY STUDENTS

A. Academic Dishonesty

When an instructor has reason to believe a student has cheated on an in-class evaluation or plagiarized on an assigned paper, he or she should follow the procedures outlined in the University's *Undergraduate Catalog* under "Academic Dishonesty and Disruption of Academic Process." If the student is a graduate student, procedures outlined in the University's *Graduate Catalog* under "Academic Conduct Policies" should be consulted. Instructors may inform the Chair (as well as the Graduate Director or Undergraduate Director, as appropriate) of the alleged incident, and may seek guidance on a course of action. If a departmental employee other than an instructor has reason to believe that academic dishonesty has taken place, he or she should inform the instructor of the relevant course.

B. Behavioral Misconduct

When an instructor or other departmental employee (such as an undergraduate advisor or departmental support staff) encounters instances of student behavioral misconduct that justify an official response, that person should first discuss the issue with the Chair or the Undergraduate or Graduate Director (as appropriate). Considerable discretion should be used in determining the severity of the misconduct in each case and the responses that are appropriate to it. If the infraction is deemed to be minor, but in the opinion of the Chair or Graduate Director rises to a level of unacceptability that justifies an official response, the Department will send a letter to the student that expresses concern about the incident. If

the student is a Religious Studies major, a copy of the letter will be placed in the student's file so as to be available for future reference.

If the student's misconduct is considered to merit a higher level of sanction, procedures specified in the appropriate codes of student conduct will be consulted.

C. Disenrollment from the Religious Studies Major as a Sanction

The Department of Religious Studies has a vested interest in graduating majors who possess high standards of ethical and behavioral conduct in their employment settings. Therefore, as Departmental policy, disenrollment from the major should be considered as a sanction included in any negotiated settlement regarding instances of academic cheating and/or behavioral misconduct. If the case proceeds to the College/University level, disenrollment from the major may be among the sanctions requested. The decision to pursue disenrollment must be made in consultation with the Chair or other appropriate departmental representatives.

VII. FACULTY EVALUATION PROCEDURES

A. Guidelines for Annual Evaluation (revised 22 October 2022, approved by Provost's office 3 January 2023)

1. Teaching: All faculty are expected to make substantial high-quality contributions to the Department's teaching mission. Assessments of teaching rests on the expertise of the faculty grounded in disciplinary training and the highest standards of scholarly and pedagogical rigor. Those professional judgments are largely qualitative and they necessarily must consider and balance as a whole a wide variety of indicators (as outlined below).

The primary basis for demonstrating teaching excellence are course syllabi and related materials—such as study guides, bibliographies, and handouts—deriving from classroom instruction appropriate to the content and level of the course. These materials should exhibit the best disciplinary and instructional practices appropriate for the content and level of the course, including whenever possible active learning, critical thinking, as well as oral and written expression. Additional evidence of teaching excellence may include: course and curricular development (new course design as well as redesign and development of courses and curriculum); teaching innovations; direction of independent student projects; service on student examination and project committees; participation in theses and dissertations; publications on teaching; professional development related to instruction; teaching awards; student evaluation of instruction; and any other indication of high quality, effective university teaching.

Student evaluations may be used interpretatively in relationship to course syllabi and other indicators of teaching effectiveness (as listed above). Student comments often are helpful in assessing classroom performance. The quantitative ratings of students may be

used as one indication of teaching effectiveness. Courses in which a majority of the students do not complete the evaluation should be interpreted with tremendous caution as providing an incomplete and potentially biased viewpoint.

Candidates for tenure and promotion will identify one class meeting to be evaluated every three years by the chairperson or another designated full-time member of the Religious Studies faculty; and they may request one additional peer evaluation of classroom performance annually. Any other faculty member also may request one peer observation and evaluation of a course annually. Peer evaluations of teaching are to focus on how well the candidate accomplishes the objectives of the syllabus viewed from the standpoint of the best instructional practices of the discipline and reported in a one page narrative summary.

All faculty are expected to make substantial contributions to the teaching mission of the Department. This includes considerations involving the level of instruction, number and nature of course preparations, as well as class size and diversity (majors/nonmajors), with larger numbers (fifty or more) of students, courses in the core USF curriculum, and writing intensive courses being considered, on balance, as more demanding. Ideally, every faculty member should offer one large enrollment course or a writing intensive course with twenty or more students or a course serving the core university curriculum or some combination of such courses on a regular (typically an annual basis) unless exempted by a unique assignment of duties (such as a sabbatical, a course release for another specific purposes, or graduate instruction).

The department considers 'outstanding' teaching (5 on the 5-point scale) to consist of highly effective classroom teaching combined with at least one of the following additional teaching activities: teaching enhancement and innovation, curriculum and program development, effective mentoring, contributing to departmental teaching needs. Highly effective classroom teaching consists of teaching that effectively guides students in the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge, fosters students' critical analysis and creative thinking skills, and helps students to develop proficiency in oral and written communication. Highly effective teaching is characterized by the following: effective course design, appropriate readings and assignments, and fair and helpful evaluation of student work. 'Strong' (4) teaching involves highly effective teaching, or reasonably effective teaching combined with one additional teaching activity. 'Satisfactory' (3) teaching involves reasonably effective classroom teaching with no additional activities. 'Weak' (2) teaching is assigned to teaching that does not meet the criteria for satisfactory teaching. 'Unacceptable' (1) teaching involves failure to meet criteria for satisfactory plus student evaluations or other evidence pointing to problematic teaching. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide evidence regarding the quality of teaching and any additional teaching activities.

2. Scholarship (research, creative activities, and publication) is a significant part of the Department's mission and critical for effective, high-quality teaching. The (tenure track) faculty anticipate being involved continuously in scholarly activities and publication.

While it is expected that scholarly activities will result in substantial publications, significant, high-quality publications are ultimately most important.

In general, the Department ranks the significance of publications in the following order: authored books; edited books; refereed journal articles; non-refereed journal articles and book chapters; other published products of a scholarly character (comments, etc.); book reviews; conference papers and presentations. Within each category the faculty may distinguish further in terms of the prestige of products (major original works) and/or forms of publication. Although grants are not a major part of this field, research grants also will be evaluated as part of scholarship. Assuming a 40% assignment, annually the publication of one significant, refereed journal article or equivalent, and several additional products (book reviews, conference papers) will merit an evaluation of “outstanding” (5 on a 5-point scale). Publication of an edited book ordinarily will merit an evaluation of “outstanding” in the year of publication and for 2 years thereafter. Publication of an authored book ordinarily will merit an evaluation of “outstanding” in the year of publication and for 3 years thereafter. A ‘strong’ (4) research record involves the publication of one article or chapter or equivalent. A ‘satisfactory’ (3) research record involves several smaller research activities or publications that are equivalent to less than an article or chapter. A year without any output but in the context of an ongoing research agenda is considered ‘weak’ (2). No evidence of viable current or pending research is considered ‘unacceptable’ (1). It is the faculty member’s responsibility to provide evidence of scholarship.

3. Service: Departmental faculty are expected to contribute regularly in the areas of professional, university, and community service, with the assumption that tenured faculty will devote more effort to service than non-tenured faculty. During any given annual review period, faculty contributions to one or more of these areas may vary considerably; in other words, they may contribute heavily in one area but not in others. In general, service activities are valued in the following order: professional, university, and community.

“Outstanding” (5) service ordinarily would involve a major contribution to the profession (an office in a professional association), a major contribution to the university (chair of a departmental committee), and some contribution to the community; or, some credible mix of significant service activities. “Strong” (4) ordinarily would involve a major contribution in one area (a significant professional activity or major university committee) and some activity in one or both of the other areas.

Ordinarily, “satisfactory” (3) service would entail some activity in all three areas. A record falling short of satisfactory criteria is considered “weak” (2), while absence of a service record is “unacceptable” (1).

B. Tenure and Promotion

The criteria for tenure and promotion are specified by the “Department of Religious Studies Tenure and Promotion Guidelines” (approved 9 October 2014 and appended

here; revised 2 May 2020).

VIII. HIRING PROCEDURES

Maintaining a faculty of active teacher-scholars is essential to enacting the goals of the Department of Religious Studies; and the recruitment of new faculty is a critical feature of its activities. The faculty regularly review and discuss the need to sustain high quality faculty in conjunction with the Department's basic mission and goals. The Chair discusses these matters with the Dean and makes requests for faculty lines. Once faculty recruitment has been authorized, the following steps and procedures define a search for new faculty.

- A. The Chair appoints a Search Committee composed of at least three faculty members from the Department, and a Chair of the Committee.
- B. The Search Committee composes a job description based on the goals of the Department as defined by the faculty for review and vote by the faculty.
- C. The Search Committee is responsible for advertising the position and meeting all University requirements for the search.
- D. The Search Committee develops a short, ranked list (of no more than 10 candidates) and recommends the top three candidates an interview and approval by a majority vote of the faculty.
- E. The Search Committee is responsible for organizing interview schedules and satisfying all related university requirements. Normally each candidate will be scheduled for a public presentation and other opportunities for the faculty to meet the candidates.
- F. The Search Committee will make formal recommendations to the faculty about the acceptability of the candidates interviewed.
- G. The faculty will meet in a departmental meeting to discuss and vote on the acceptability of each candidate. No candidate may move forward without a majority of acceptable votes; and all votes will be by secret, written ballot.
- H. The result of the faculty vote will be presented to the Chair for discussion with the Dean.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THIS GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT

This Governance Document may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members of the faculty at any regular meeting of the department, provided that the specific amendment has been distributed in writing at the previous regular department meeting and is included on the agenda for the meeting at which the vote takes place.

APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES (9.15b)

I. PRELIMINARIES

- A. **Mission:** The Department of Religious Studies engages in the analysis and interpretation of those features of the human experience and expressions of human culture commonly referred to as “sacred” or “religious.” Religion is one of the most significant features of human existence historically, cross-culturally, and—especially today—globally. It thereby is a critical dimension of the liberal arts and sciences at the very center of the university experience. The scholarly study of religion draws on multi-disciplinary approaches, especially in the humanities and social sciences, for examining a wide range of phenomena – myth, symbol, and ritual; the genesis, transmission and interpretation of religious texts; the formation, history, sustainability, ecology, and character of religious communities; traditions of religious belief and practice; the role of religion in politics, society, culture, and global affairs; religious ethics; religion and the arts; as well as the material culture of religion. The Department of Religious Studies emphasizes theories and methods for the scholarly study of religion globally. It is committed to preparing students for a diversity of careers and advanced study as active citizens of a religiously diverse global world.
- B. **General Expectations:** The faculty of Religious Studies is composed of outstanding scholar-teachers. Candidates for tenure and promotion therefore are expected to exhibit excellence in teaching and scholarship as well as engagement in Tampa Bay, the Florida region, the nation, and/or the global world. Tenure and promotion at the University of South Florida are defined by the USF Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion and the USF-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, supplemented by relevant College of Arts and Sciences guidelines, including the Research Expectations for Tenure and Promotion in the Humanities. Candidates for tenure and promotion should become familiar with all of these documents. The following guidelines further define and specify the application of University, College, and School standards for tenure and promotion in the Department of Religious Studies. This Department is not currently a multi-campus unit. If departmental faculty are hired at branch campuses we will modify our governance and T&P documents to ensure that those faculty are included in matters of faculty governance and Tenure & Promotion to ensure they have voice in departmental issues. We recognize the principles of equity of assignment, resources and opportunities of faculty across a multi-campus university.
- C. **Tenure and Promotion Procedures**
1. **The Application:** Candidates for tenure and/or promotion must complete the College application package. They may include additional materials supporting

the application that pertain to specific accomplishments and enhance their application. In completing the application candidates will find the advice and assistance of the Chairperson and other senior faculty as well as the CAS staff helpful. Applications must be complete and available for departmental review at least two weeks ahead of the College deadline.

2. Departmental Review: The application for tenure and/or promotion will be reviewed and evaluated by the Department's (a) Faculty Advisory Committee (ordinarily consisting of three tenured faculty members) and (b) the Chairperson. All eligible tenured members of the faculty also review and vote by secret ballot to approve or disapprove the application. Only full-time tenured members of the departmental faculty participate in tenure and promotion decisions (those with at least a 49% appointment in Religious Studies and faculty on leave that are anticipated to return to at least a 49% appointment in the Department). For promotion to the rank of full professor only full professors are eligible to vote. The Faculty Advisory Committee's vote and supporting narrative as well as the Chairs recommendation and narrative, along with the vote of eligible faculty become a part of the candidate's tenure and/or promotion file.

II. TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

The criteria for USF tenure and promotion in Religious Studies are excellence in teaching and research as well as substantive contributions in service consistent with the mission of the Department. The following specify standards of excellence in each of these areas.

- A. Teaching: All faculty are expected to make substantial high-quality contributions to the Department's teaching mission. Assessing excellence rests on the expertise of the faculty grounded in disciplinary training and the highest standards of scholarly and pedagogical rigor. Those professional judgments are largely qualitative and they necessarily must consider and balance as a whole a wide variety of indicators of excellence as outlined below accumulated on an annual basis during the candidate's tenure earning years.

The primary basis for demonstrating teaching excellence are course syllabi and related materials—such as study guides, bibliographies, and handouts—deriving from classroom instruction appropriate to the content and level of the course. These materials should exhibit the best disciplinary and instructional practices appropriate for the content and level of the course, including whenever possible active learning, critical thinking, as well as oral and written expression. Additional evidence of teaching excellence may include: course and curricular development (new course design as well as redesign and development of courses and curriculum); teaching innovations; direction of independent student projects; service on student examination and project committees; participation in theses and dissertations; publications on teaching; professional development related to instruction; teaching awards; and any other indication of high quality, effective university teaching.

Student evaluations may be used interpretatively in relationship to course syllabi and other indicators of teaching effectiveness (as listed above). Student comments often are helpful in assessing classroom performance. The quantitative ratings of students may be used as one indication of teaching effectiveness. Courses in which a majority of the students do not complete the evaluation should be interpreted with tremendous caution as providing an incomplete and potentially biased viewpoint.

All faculty are expected to make substantial contributions to the teaching mission of the Department. This includes considerations involving the level of instruction, number and nature of course preparations, as well as class size and diversity (majors/nonmajors), with larger numbers (fifty or more) of students, courses in the core USF curriculum, and writing intensive courses being considered, on balance, as more demanding. Ideally, every faculty member should offer one large enrollment course or a writing intensive course with twenty or more students or a course serving the core university curriculum or some combination of such courses on a regular (typically an annual basis) unless exempted by a unique assignment of duties (such as a sabbatical, a course release for another specific purposes, or graduate instruction).

Junior faculty should have some involvement with graduate instruction, including offering independent studies as well as serving on examination and thesis committees.

- B. Research: Candidates for tenure are expected to have records of publication commensurate with USF's standing as a research-intensive university. Tenure-track faculty are expected to publish in leading presses (university or major academic or commercial) known for disseminating reputable scholarly work and in leading journals in specialties or the field as a whole. The quality of the venues in which faculty members publish, as assessed by professional disciplinary standards, is taken both as an indicator of the quality of the work and as evidence of the work's visibility within and impact on the field.

The Department recognizes two broad categories of scholarly work. Category A includes authored or co-authored books; translations with significant interpretive commentary; edited books; refereed journal articles; invited book chapters or articles in peer-reviewed collections; and major digital humanities projects. Category B includes translations without significant interpretive commentary; papers presented at professional meetings; book reviews; reference articles; textbooks embodying original scholarship; and minor digital humanities projects. Faculty are expected to show a sustained program of research and publication primarily in Category A or spread across the two categories with a majority concentration in Category A.

An excellent record in research requires publication of a book and approximately two to four articles or approximately ten articles (with a majority of them in Category A), or of an equivalent quantity of work primarily focused in Category A.

The publications must also be of a quality commensurate with the expectations of a research-intensive university. Judgments of quality will be based on such measures as the venue of publication—as assessed by disciplinary standards, the evaluations of both internal and external reviewers, the receipt of competitive grants for research support, and other evidence of impact on the field.

C. Service: Candidates for tenure and promotion are expected to have participated actively in one or more of the following service areas.

1. Department, College, and University: Serving on departmental committees, attendance at student recruitment and other departmental events, and other involvement with departmental governance; serving on committees in other departments; service on committees and participation in the governance of the School of Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences, and University, including commencement and other similar events.
2. Profession: Holding office in a professional society, editing a professional journal or serving on its editorial board, organizing and/or chairing sessions at professional meetings, refereeing research papers or book manuscripts submitted for publication, among other activities related to professional organizations as well as consulting or evaluating for another institution.
3. Public Service: The sharing or disseminating of scholarly expertise and knowledge outside the University, including participating in community outreach and participation in local, regional, or national government or civic organizations.

Service activities should reflect the commitment to the institutional and social role of faculty in a public university and they should involve approximately six major activities (such as service on a departmental, college or university committee, substantial professional involvement, and/or substantial participation in local, regional, or national organizations). The service activities of tenure earning faculty normally will not be extensive (entail more than six major activities, such as service on a committee or participation with a community organization, during the tenure earning years) and they usually will be concentrated in the Department.

III. PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR

Promotion to Professor in Religious Studies at USF requires excellence in teaching and research beyond tenure and promotion and substantial contributions in service, especially professional service activities. Successful candidates must meet and then exceed the requirements for tenure and promotion during the five years preceding the application for promotion to full professor. This requirement is to be supported by conclusive evidence of a reputation beyond the University, among peers on a national or international level, for excellence in research and teaching and at least a substantial record of service (beyond the expectations for promotion to associate professor). Excellences in teaching

and research as well as significant contributions in service are indicated by the following standards.

- A. Teaching: The senior faculty, like all faculty, are expected to make substantial high-quality contributions to the Department's teaching mission, including undergraduate instruction. Excellence in teaching is assessed by the same standards as specified above for tenure and promotion.

Senior faculty are expected to contribute to the undergraduate teaching mission with a repertoire of offerings that includes at least three different courses in support of the Department's programs and University's core curriculum. Teaching excellence includes considerations involving the level of instruction, number and nature of course preparations, as well as class size and diversity (majors/nonmajors), with larger numbers (fifty or more) of students, courses in the core USF curriculum, and writing intensive courses being considered, on balance, as more demanding. Ideally, every faculty member should offer one large enrollment course or a writing intensive course with twenty or more students or a course serving the core university curriculum or some combination of such courses on a regular (typically an annual basis) unless exempted by a unique assignment of duties (such as a sabbatical, a course release for another specific purposes, or graduate instruction).

An important part of the teaching of senior faculty is a continuous and substantial record of successful involvement with graduate students on theses and dissertation committees as well as the direction of theses and dissertations.

- B. Research: Candidates for promotion to Professor are expected to have records of publication commensurate with senior faculty status and USF's standing as a research-intensive university. A record of excellence in research requires publication, over a five-year period since the attainment of tenure, of a book and approximately two to four articles, or approximately 12 articles, or of an equivalent quantity of work a majority of which is in Category A (as defined above). The publications must also be of a quality commensurate with the expectations for senior faculty at a research-intensive university. Evaluations of quality will be based on such measures as the venue of publication, the judgments of both internal and external reviewers, the receipt of competitive grants for research support, and other evidence of impact on the field.
- C. Service: Tenured faculty are expected to contribute more extensively than tenure-earning faculty to professional, university, and public service as defined above, consistent with a primary focus on teaching and research.

Faculty may satisfy these expectations for a substantial record by effective service as chair of a departmental committee as well as service on college and university committees in conjunction with some involvement in professional and community service. Professional service, specifically, provides a strong indication of visibility

and reputation at the national and international levels.

This document may be amended by a majority vote of the tenured faculty (in accordance with the Department's Governance Document).

Approved by faculty vote, September 28, 2015

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Approved by Dean's Office, 27 March 2024

Approved by Provost Office, 27 March 2024