

STATEMENT ON SCHOLARSHIP ENGLISH DEPARTMENT LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ~ April 22, 2025~

Quality is the most significant factor for scholarship in reviews for tenure and promotion. We recognize that the English Department houses faculty working in both academic and creative fields, and as such there are differing kinds of high-quality scholarship. In general, “high-quality” denotes original work, either academic or creative in nature, published after peer review or professional vetting with an academic or trade press, journal, or other venue appropriate to the piece. The English Department assesses quality through a combination of the evaluative reports of outside experts at tenure or promotion time, the candidates’ elaboration of their scholarship program in their Self-Evaluation, and direct appraisals of the material included by the candidate in the scholarship portfolio. By the time of tenure review, the candidate must have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to scholarship at a high level and the likelihood of sustained commitment and development in the future.

Production of Scholarship

In keeping with the College’s position that candidates for tenure and promotion are “expected to demonstrate scholarly development, accomplishment, and promise,” the English Department expects its faculty to produce high-quality scholarship on an on-going basis. Faculty in the English Department recognize that there may be different paths to demonstrating “scholarly development, accomplishment, and promise.” A successful candidate for tenure will have completed a major project or program while at Lafayette College—e.g., a scholarly monograph with an academic press, or a full-length work of creative writing with a trade or independent press. While the major project or program might precede the candidate’s arrival at Lafayette, it should be clear that the majority of work was done while at Lafayette. A major project or program may also be constituted by producing a series of shorter peer-reviewed articles or creative pieces published in venues such as academic journals and trade magazines. If a candidate chooses the route of publishing shorter pieces, typically 5-6 distinct pieces would be published, although we recognize that exact numbers may vary from candidate to candidate, and that work in top-tier academic journals and nationally-recognized magazines may be given added weight. This includes collaborative work and co-authored pieces and makes allowances for the additional labor that working on community-based projects with non-specialists can entail. As quality is more important than quantity, any review of scholarly work will consider the significance of the contributions made by the work and not simply the number of items published. Additionally, in order to demonstrate scholarly promise, some portion of a candidate’s scholarship completed at Lafayette should be distinct from work done prior to arrival at Lafayette.

In recognition of the changing landscape of publishing, candidates are expected in their self-evaluation to explain the particular balance of long and short form scholarship in their portfolio, and to characterize the media in which their work appears in terms of significance within the field. In all cases, the work comprising the candidate’s major project or program should be peer-

reviewed. We understand peer-review as a vetting process in which those with expertise in the relevant field or fields, whose identity is normally hidden from the author, offer an evaluation of the merits of a scholarly or creative work and also might play a role in the publication decision. We also recognize that the norms of peer-review and/or vetting can vary across the sub-fields in which English faculty work—e.g., in literary studies, creative writing, rhetoric and composition, and the scholarship of community engagement—and so in their self-evaluation candidates should explain the peer-review and/or vetting processes particular to their own circumstances.

In all cases, for co-authored or co-produced work (e.g. a co-edited book collection), candidates should make their own contributions explicit in their self-evaluation.

In general, the following are examples of scholarship in English:

- authorship of a book of scholarship published or accepted for publication by a university press, trade press, or independent press;
- editing or co-editing of a book of scholarship published or accepted for publication by a university press, trade press, or independent press, or editing or co-editing a special issue of an academic journal;
- authorship of peer-reviewed articles published or accepted for publication in journals or edited collections;
- authorship of a book of creative work published or accepted for publication by a university press, trade press, or independent press. In the case of writing for the screen, optioned scripts and/or those selected for production often undergo multiple rewrites and extensive revision but do not always yield a film or comparable publication, nor do timelines for commercial productions always align with the academic schedule. Often scripts are re-written by someone other than the original writer. Because of these factors, peer evaluation (vetting) by editors, agents, and others involved in the revision and production process will be taken into consideration;
- authorship of short stories, screenplays, plays, works of creative nonfiction and journalism poems published or accepted for publication in journals, magazines, anthologies or edited collections, as well as on digital platforms.

The English Department acknowledges the importance and frequency of forms of emerging digital humanities and digital scholarship. Such digital scholarship, like all scholarly work, should be based on original research and, where possible, be peer-evaluated. The English Department adheres to the Modern Language Association's "Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media," which notes that, during evaluation for tenure and promotion, "Faculty members who work in digital media or digital humanities should be prepared to make explicit the results, theoretical underpinnings, and intellectual rigor of their work."

Candidates' files may also show evidence of continuing and engaged scholarship through a record of conference presentations, public readings of creative work, book reviews, encyclopedia entries, grant and fellowship applications, and contributions to online scholarly communities and blog sites. Such contributions are valuable but normally are not sufficient in themselves to support a successful application for tenure or promotion.

The statements above apply to all scholarship by members of the English Department, including the scholarship of community engagement, which can take many forms, shaped by local resources and needs, and yield a variety of outcomes, including interactions, events, or artifacts of public and intellectual value. We further recognize that scholarship of community engagement is often produced collaboratively, and so it is appropriate for candidates working in that field to have a balance of single-authored and co-authored pieces, which should be explained and contextualized in their self-evaluation. In the context of the scholarship of community engagement, new knowledge production can take a number of forms, including published artifacts, performance events, media for community organizations, scholarship on new teaching curricula, or new opportunities for community-university dialogue.

Promotion to Full Professor

Lafayette College's standard for promotion to the rank of Full Professor is that candidates demonstrate a "continuing record of high achievement in teaching, scholarship, and service." In keeping with this standard, in order to demonstrate a "continuing record" of high scholarly achievement, the English Department expects a successful candidate for Full Professor to have produced a second major project or program, in addition to and not including the major project or program produced for tenure. The same guidelines and standards outlined in the "Production of Scholarship" section apply as well to candidates for Full Professor: a successful candidate for promotion to Full Professor will have completed a major project or program after earning tenure—e.g., a scholarly monograph with an academic press, or a full-length work of creative writing with a trade or independent press. A major project or program may also be constituted by producing a series of shorter peer-reviewed articles or creative pieces published in venues such as academic journals and trade magazines. If a candidate chooses the route of publishing shorter pieces, typically an additional 5-6 distinct pieces would be published beyond what was submitted. Candidates for Full Professor may have a more eclectic file than candidates for tenure, so their program might include, for example, a combination of shorter pieces and larger projects, such as editing a book collection or special journal issue. As with candidates for tenure, work in top-tier academic presses and journals and nationally-recognized magazines may be given added weight. This holds true as well for collaborative work and co-authored pieces and makes allowances for the additional labor that working on community-based projects with non-specialists can entail. We further recognize that the constitution of candidate's scholarship portfolio for Full Professor may differ from the portfolio for tenure insofar as it may contain, as a consequence of the candidate's growing reputation, more collaborative and co-authored work, or may include more publications in venues that are not strictly blind peer-reviewed, such as chapters in edited book collections. Whatever the specific shape and scope

of the portfolio, in their self-evaluation, candidates are welcome to contextualize their scholarship portfolio, and articulate how their work post-tenure constitutes and demonstrates a “continuing record of high achievement” as a scholar.

COVID-19 Statement

The English Department recognizes that the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have significantly impacted scholarly activities and productivity. Following the guidance in Section 4.2 and Appendix X of the Faculty Handbook, the department will consider these impacts during its reviews of scholarship records and encourages faculty members to explain impacts that are particular to their individual situations and scholarly activities.