

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Department of Sociology University of Maine

The Department of Sociology at the University of Maine is composed of individuals sharing a common concern but approaching that concern in different ways. This common concern consists of two dimensions. First, we share a focus of our intellectual activities which can be termed the "sociological perspective," that is, the study of phenomena generated through processes of social interaction. Second, we are committed, on a more general level, to the principle that, in attempting to comprehend these phenomena, the questions raised, as well as any answers proposed, are of central importance. The processes of questioning and seeking answers are basic to the human experience and to our professional life. Thus, the degree to which any faculty member engages in these processes must be fundamental for any evaluation of that person. Faculty are evaluated by the Chair and by a Peer Committee consisting of the tenured members of the Department.

Teaching

The Department of Sociology demands high quality teaching of every Department member in order to further the teaching mission of the Department. The primary teaching mission is to stimulate the development of what C. Wright Mills called the "sociological imagination." This means that we, as teachers, must constantly raise questions and foster a critical outlook about conventional descriptions of society. We want to enable our students to seek beneath the surface of commonly accepted definitions of social reality and to identify the more fundamental social processes that impinge upon the individual. Each evaluation of the faculty member, whether it be the yearly evaluation, or the evaluations for promotion, will be based primarily upon this fundamental criterion. While factors such as meeting classes as scheduled and keeping office hours as scheduled will obviously enter the evaluation procedure, the evaluation of teaching quality must ultimately be an assessment of the individual's ability to stimulate the sociological imagination.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Department of Sociology also demands high quality advising by each of its members. Faculty are expected to maintain adequate office hours to meet with advisees, provide clear and accurate advice about meeting degree requirements of the department, college, and university, and to be available to assist students with academic and career issues.

Research

Every member of the Department is expected to be continuously involved in the research process. While the Department of Sociology recognizes that the ratio of research time to teaching may vary from individual to individual, quality research and quality teaching are inextricably tied together.

1. Yearly evaluation: In each yearly evaluation the faculty member's involvement in ongoing research will be assessed. The Department recognizes that the completion of quality research and the dissemination of its results often require considerable time in our discipline. Thus, we do not specify set levels of yearly output. However, we do require that there be clear evidence of a substantial involvement in research activity of a potentially high quality and of the completion of project goals. Examples of substantial involvement in research activity include, but are not limited to, presentations at professional meetings, publication in refereed journals, and preparation of working papers and manuscripts.

2. Evaluation for promotion from assistant to associate professor with tenure:

In this evaluation process the faculty member must indicate significant progress in research activities. We normally expect that the candidate will have published at least five refereed journal articles or book chapters. A book will normally be considered the equivalent of three articles. In cases of exceptional merit, such as the publication of a highly acclaimed article or the acquisition of a major external grant(s), fewer articles may be considered acceptable. In addition, the candidate will be expected to have made substantial progress on a research project(s) beyond what was accomplished for the dissertation, although the candidate need not yet have published on these projects. These projects may involve collaboration with other scholars, but the candidate must, in the course of this research, show the capacity to develop new projects and not simply execute the projects of others.

3. Promotion from associate professor to full professor: The individual faculty

EVALUATION CRITERIA

member must indicate a significant scholarly contribution to the discipline of Sociology that has been accomplished since achieving the rank of associate professor. It is expected that this contribution will consist of a set of scholarly publications which may include articles, monographs or books and which illuminate major problems within the field. As a significant contribution may be achieved in several ways, we do not attempt to provide a quantified measure of research activity. Rather, we will take as the primary measure of quality the development of a national reputation in his or her field as assessed by departmental and outside evaluation.

4. Tenure without Concurrent Promotion: Faculty members may be brought in at the rank of Associate Professor or Full Professor and subsequently granted tenure at that rank. Persons appointed at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor without tenure will be evaluated for tenure on the basis of the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor respectively.

5. Public Service: Faculty members will also be evaluated in the area of public service. Public service, or citizenship, is manifested at three levels.

a. Departmental: The Department of Sociology is a small unit that is, by design, thoroughly democratic. Every member must play a part in the functioning of the Department if it is to run smoothly. Therefore, all Department members are expected to willingly take part in the everyday activities of the Department and to do so in a collegial manner. This involves advising students, planning curriculum, serving on committees, and engaging in those other activities that are necessary for the successful functioning of the Department.

b. College and university: We all gain, as individuals and as a Department if the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University of Maine run smoothly. Therefore, each member is expected to be willing to represent the Department at the College and University level by serving on committees and participating in other college and university activities.

c. Professional: Each staff member is encouraged to contribute professionally to the general community, whether at the local, state, national or international level. The activities involved here range from giving talks related to the profession to high school or citizen groups, to serving in staff and leadership positions for

EVALUATION CRITERIA

professional organizations. Service at the professional level is not a requisite for favorable evaluation, but will be positively valued when it is present.

Post-Tenure Review

We expect faculty who have achieved tenure to continue to meet our standards for teaching and advising, research and publication, and public service. We outline our criteria for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor in a previous section. We have the following expectations for faculty who have been promoted to these ranks. First, they should continue to demonstrate high quality in teaching and advising, as outlined in the "Teaching" section earlier in this document. Second, they should be active researchers and publishers at a level appropriate to their positions as outlined in the criteria for promotion. Third, they should be good public citizens of the Department, the University, and the larger community. Our post-tenure review of the extent to which these faculty meet these expectations consists of annual evaluations by the Chair and periodic evaluations by the Peer Committee.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Sociology contributes to the liberal arts mission of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University of Maine. We are committed to excellence in teaching, research, and public service. We emphasize critical thinking and analysis in our teaching, and provide our majors intensive training in research methodology. We seek in this manner to prepare our students for the complex intellectual and vocational demands of modern society.

To all our efforts in teaching, research, and service, we seek to bring the unique perspective of our discipline on social structure and social interaction and to put into practice what C. Wright Mills called the "sociological imagination." As our evaluation criteria state, this means that as sociologists we try to "seek beneath the surface of common sense definitions of social reality and identify the more fundamental social processes that impinge upon us." To further this goal, our work in all three areas of our mission emphasizes cultural diversity and pluralism, a focus integral to the sociological tradition. Through our application of the sociological imagination we contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of society and social change.