

March 25, 2016

TO: All Faculty, Nazareth College

FROM: Sara Varhus, Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Criteria for Evaluating Faculty

**Introduction:**

This memorandum, which has been reviewed by the Rank and Tenure Committee, is intended to clarify the criteria for evaluating faculty at Nazareth College by articulating performance expectations and the ways in which faculty can document their performance over time. It is consistent with the policy statements in the Nazareth College Faculty Manual relating to Faculty Responsibilities (Section II.F.1.) and Faculty Status (Section III, A.-C.). It also incorporates “Guidelines and Operating Procedures of the Rank and Tenure Committee, as it implements the legislation of the Faculty Manual” (2000-2001), “Rank and Tenure Committee’s Explication of the Faculty Manual Regarding Promotion of Faculty” (1996; rev.2013), “Charge from Committee on Rank and Tenure to Task Force on Scholarship” (2003) and “Rank and Tenure Committee Statement on Scholarship” (2006).

This memorandum may be used as a guideline in annual and fourth-year reviews for untenured faculty and for tenure and promotion decisions, as well as for the regular evaluation of Clinical Faculty, Faculty in Professional Practice, and Associate and Full Professors, as stipulated in the Faculty Manual. It suggests ways in which faculty can document their accomplishments for evaluation and recommendation by Chairs, Deans, the Rank and Tenure Committee, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The means of documentation suggested here can also serve as a model for all faculty members’ ongoing formative self-evaluation.

Teaching, scholarly and/or creative activity and service can be seen as a professional continuum. College faculty are obliged and privileged to question and revise understanding and knowledge, and this scholarly or creative perspective animates the best of our teaching and service to the college and community. It is also the privilege and obligation of faculty to participate in a peer review process with this same scholarly attitude. (See Faculty Manual II. F.1.) Objectivity, the use of documentation, and a deep appreciation of the mission and aims of the college and the standards of our disciplines are key to a peer evaluation process that supports the success of the faculty and by extension our students and the college.

***Evaluative criteria and college mission:*** The evaluative criteria described below reflect the teaching-centered mission of Nazareth College and at the same time incorporate standards of the wider academic (scholarly, artistic, and professional) community. They are also consistent with the character of Nazareth as a college that aims to be transformational for its students and its community. While it is expected that the definition of responsibilities

and performance expectations for faculty will change only gradually over time, it is important to recognize that the nature of faculty work and the ways in which it can be evaluated have evolved as Nazareth College and its mission have evolved. Evaluative criteria must be consistent with the values and directions of the college and the current work circumstances of the faculty: “The commitment to ensuring that faculty can do their work and succeed in their professional aspirations recognizes that all roads to achieving complex and evolving university missions go through faculty work and faculty success.” Peer Review, Fall 2007, p. 14.

***Variety in faculty profiles:*** The principle underlying the evaluation of faculty at Nazareth is that, while evaluation will address all of the areas of faculty responsibilities as they are enumerated in the Faculty Manual II.F.1.: (“instruction, college service, scholarship, and community service as it relates to their field of expertise and role as a member of the College”), the balance among these will differ for individuals. Individual faculty will present unique profiles reflecting their own strengths and commitments, and departmental and institutional needs. The nature of faculty accomplishments as teachers and in the areas of scholarship and service will vary according to a number of factors: differences in disciplines and departmental responsibilities, the pattern of workload reassignments, and the strengths of individual faculty and their evolving academic interests. Each faculty member will present a unique “mix” of accomplishments, and the accomplishments in any one area of responsibility will be judged in the context of the individual’s overall achievement. Nevertheless, effective teaching in and out of the classroom is the first and most important responsibility of all faculty: it is essential that candidates for tenure and promotion document effectiveness in teaching, and an ongoing commitment to student learning through advisement, participation in the intellectual and cultural life of the campus, and other out of class activities involving students.

Seniority is a significant variable in faculty profiles. Whatever the rank, candidates should provide evidence of continuing growth in all areas of responsibility, demonstrated by incremental and increasing levels of accomplishment over time.

(1) Faculty in the first seven years are expected to focus primarily on teaching excellence, and establish patterns of participation in the campus learning community. Secondly, they should demonstrate an emerging professional agenda through scholarly or creative accomplishments. They should also begin to take on limited service commitments (See discussion of service in section 4. below.): committee service is only one of many ways of serving the college, and there is no absolute requirement for elected committee service. For those at the point of the tenure decision, we look for an established record of teaching effectiveness and commitment to students, and demonstrated potential for leadership in scholarly or creative work and professional service on or off campus.

(2) Faculty in the rank of Associate Professor should continue to demonstrate mastery and growth as teachers. They should also demonstrate growth and professional recognition of their scholarly or creative endeavors, and provide leadership for on and off campus initiatives, within their departments and campus wide.

(3) We look to faculty in the Professor rank to demonstrate accomplishment and continuing growth in all areas of responsibility. At this rank we look for substantial peer affirmation of scholarship (broadly construed). It is also appropriate for Professors to mentor junior faculty in teaching, scholarship, and service, and to participate in the shaping of policy in matters of curriculum and governance.

**Goal-setting and evaluation:** Crucial to this flexible yet comprehensive approach to the application of evaluative criteria is an ongoing and intentional process of goal setting, self evaluation, and reflection by individual faculty. Annual goal setting in consultation with department chairs ensures that faculty articulate and undertake an appropriate range of responsibilities and projects. (Departments may also choose to establish expectations in teaching, scholarship, and service, consistent with the Faculty Manual.) Untenured faculty, clinical faculty, faculty in professional practice, and faculty who will be seeking promotion should meet each year with their department chairs to discuss their activities relative to expectations in teaching, scholarship, and service. The goals and accomplishments identified in the annual evaluation process are the basis for the cumulative personal narratives submitted for review for tenure and promotion. Annual evaluations and the personal narrative should reference workload reassignments and describe their impact on the range of the candidate's accomplishments.

## **Criteria and Documentation**

**1. Credentials:** In the tenure track at Nazareth College, initial appointment as Assistant Professor ordinarily requires possession of a terminal degree appropriate to the field. The terminal degree also is normally required for tenure and is required for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. (See Faculty Manual III.A.1.a and III.A.4.a.) Additional degrees, licenses, honors, and awards may be presented as evidence of further mastery of field.

**For appointment in clinical or professor in practice ranks, minimum expectations for degrees, licenses, and experience are spelled out in the Faculty Manual.**

**2. Teaching:** Consistent with the mission of Nazareth College to educate undergraduate and graduate students, the Faculty Manual ( II.F.1.) states clearly that “the primary, but not exclusive, duty of faculty is excellence in teaching.” Excellence in teaching can be present in diverse pedagogies and teaching formats, in the classroom or in other settings. Whatever the pedagogy, the learning and achievement of students are the strongest indicators of teaching excellence.

Other characteristics of teaching effectiveness include:

- An emphasis on student learning and assessment in the structure of courses, course materials, and out-of-class activities
- Adapting teaching to the needs of diverse students, both undergraduate and graduate.
- Maintaining currency in subject matter and approaches to teaching
- Availability to and interaction with students outside the classroom
- A record of versatility within the program or major and, where appropriate, in the undergraduate core curriculum, and ongoing development of new courses and course materials such as syllabi and assignments

- Making appropriate use of current technology
- Contributions to the scholarship of pedagogy
- Incorporating mission-specific approaches to teaching (e.g., service learning and other forms of experiential learning, student research, engaging students in global perspectives, connecting liberal learning with professional study, new approaches to professional study)
- Conducting collaborative research with students

Like any complex subject, teaching should be described and evaluated with insight and subtlety. **Teaching excellence is best demonstrated through a coherent statement of teaching goals and a scholarly reflection on the evidence that points to the extent to which those goals have been achieved.** In other words, faculty who are preparing for evaluation for tenure or promotion should present a well documented analysis of teaching effectiveness, referencing multiple means of documentation gathered over time. It is expected that candidates for tenure and promotion will include in their personal narratives a reflection on data from the administration of IDEAs and departmental course evaluations. Data from student evaluations should be supplemented with such information as the assessment of student learning, peer evaluations of teaching, and sample course materials that showcase preparation and innovation: for example, syllabi, sample assessments, writing assignments, and sample student work (with instructor feedback).

Excellence in teaching is sustained throughout a career by ongoing innovation and improvement. Participation in faculty development activities relating to teaching and professional conferences relating to pedagogy, as well as inviting peers into classes for feedback, indicate such sustained engagement. Demonstrating initiative and leadership in curriculum development, public lectures, presentations at faculty seminars, team-teaching courses, or offering guest lectures in another teacher's class are also evidence of teaching ability. Faculty seeking senior ranks should model this ongoing development and sustained accomplishment as teachers.

**Advisement as a dimension of teaching:** To provide a transformational experience for each of our undergraduate and graduate students, advisement--both informal and formal--is an essential dimension of the teaching responsibility at Nazareth College. **Excellent advisement enables students to understand the wider context of their work and encourages them to take responsibility for their education. It assists them in seeing connections within their course work, and in making transitions and changing direction.**

Effectiveness in advising should be regularly documented in annual self evaluations and addressed in the presentation of cases for tenure and promotion. Documentation might include noting the number of advisees and the faculty member's availability to her or his advisees and other students, analyzing the results of surveys of advisees, reflecting on approaches to advising, and evidence of innovation and growth as an advisor.

**3. Scholarship: Given the range of disciplines and programs represented by the faculty at Nazareth College, we take "scholarship" to include research and scholarly**

**and creative activities. Scholarly and/or creative activity should be ongoing, with periodic affirmation of the rigor and usefulness of the work through a peer or public review process (e.g., acceptance in scholarly journals, invitations for presentations/performances, juried exhibitions, or professional reviews) or the equivalent. Definitions of scholarly and/or creative activity have been developed for the Schools of Education, Health and Human Services, and Management, and for the departments in the Fine and Performing Arts; faculty are encouraged to consult these statements if they are applicable.**

**An individual faculty member's level of accomplishment in scholarship will be evaluated in relation to the extent of her or his achievements in teaching and in service to the college and the community. Faculty seeking promotion to Associate Professor "should have established a plan for scholarly work and be in the early stages of executing this plan." ("Explication" of the Faculty Manual Regarding Promotion," 1996; rev. 2009) Candidates for Professor should demonstrate academic leadership "through publication or equivalent contributions to one's field of study." (Faculty Manual, III.A.1.a.)**

Scholarly and creative activity is an expectation at Nazareth College because we recognize its contributions to and interplay with teaching and the curriculum. The college Mission and Vision offer additional rationale for scholarship as a core responsibility of Nazareth faculty. Faculty and student research and scholarly and creative work can benefit the communities of which the college is a part. National accrediting agencies, especially in professional disciplines, present standards for the professional accomplishment of faculty in accredited programs. And, finally, the scholarly and creative achievements of the faculty support our aspiration to be a nationally recognized college.

For these reasons, we accept the inclusive view of scholarship advanced by Ernest Boyer in his influential Scholarship Reconsidered: the scholarship of discovery (original research that advances knowledge), the scholarship of integration (synthesizing and interpreting knowledge), the scholarship of application (both applies knowledge and contributes to understanding), and the scholarship of teaching (examined or reflective practice of teaching). In keeping with the Nazareth College Mission and Vision, scholarship of engagement—where the focus is on collaborating and partnering with individuals or organizations in the community to address community questions, problems or concerns for the public good—is encompassed within this inclusive definition of scholarship.

A broad range of activities is acceptable as scholarship: for example, conducting research, participation in on campus colloquia, presenting or publishing work on innovative pedagogies, conceptualizing and implementing an outreach program in the community, applied research in the community, presenting invited papers at conferences, developing a new curriculum, successful grant writing, publishing an article in a refereed journal, participating in a creative performance, or exhibiting a work in a juried show.

However, while all of these and similar accomplishments are scholarly, not all are equal in originality, significance, and quality. Candidates for tenure and promotion are encouraged to explain, in their personal narratives, the originality, significance, and quality of their scholarly or creative activities. This is of particular importance when a traditional peer review process is not available for accomplishments—for example, in the scholarship of application or, in some cases, in the scholarship of teaching. Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, in Scholarship Assessed, offer guidance in documenting nontraditional forms of scholarship. Because the nature of scholarship varies from discipline to discipline, it is important for departments and college/schools to define standards. It is also important that all stakeholders in the peer review process recognize that interdisciplinary projects that transcend traditional boundaries may challenge traditional evaluative criteria. Individual faculty should also be guided by their School/College definition of scholarly activities.

**4. Service: All faculty are expected to contribute with respect and civility to the work of the department, the college and the community. It is expected that the scope and level of faculty service will increase with seniority. Untenured faculty may be involved in service primarily within the department and in student-oriented activities outside the classroom. Faculty approaching the tenure decision and seeking promotion to the rank of Associate Professor should demonstrate increasing levels of responsibility within the department, and have made some contributions at the college level and in professional service off campus. Faculty seeking the rank of Professor must have demonstrated leadership in a campus wide context or in professional service off campus. Finally, all faculty are expected to participate in general faculty meetings and department faculty meetings.**

Central to the Nazareth Mission and Vision is a commitment to citizenship: we want our students, as a result of their Nazareth experience, to lead meaningful lives with a dedication to service. Similarly, being a citizen—contributing to the life of the whole campus and the communities with which we intersect—is a key faculty role. On campus, curriculum development and approval, program and policy planning, and participating in personnel processes are important service responsibilities of the faculty. In addition, changing institutional needs periodically require intense faculty involvement in service (for example, in the preparation for accreditation reviews); those faculty who commit proportionally greater amounts of time to these efforts should be recognized for their efforts in the evaluative process. College service might also include:

- Program assessment
- Academic initiatives
- Supporting out-of-class programs involving students
- Service on departmental, school, or college task forces or committees as appropriate to rank
- Contributions to strategic initiatives
- Supporting school- or college-wide academic programs
- Supporting laboratories, studios, and equipment
- Participating in professional partnerships with community groups

Service to the profession might include

- Holding office in professional organizations
- Board memberships
- Organizing meetings or conferences for professional organizations

Many Nazareth faculty model a “dedication to service” in their own lives, making significant contributions to organizations and efforts in the local and wider communities. Service in the community (local, global, etc.) is appropriate for consideration in the peer review process when it involves the academic/professional expertise or the on-campus role/position of the faculty member.

In submitting service for consideration, the candidate should not only list service activities, but document specific contributions with letters of support or sample work. Increasingly, faculty are undertaking projects in which the service role intersects with teaching (e.g., in service learning projects) and with scholarship (e.g., the scholarship of application and the scholarship of engagement). In these cases, the faculty member may present documentation that demonstrates the complex outcomes of this work.