

## Changes to Binghamton University Procedures for Personnel Cases regarding digital media

In November of 2012, an ad hoc committee on Scholarly Best Practices created “Guidelines for Evaluating Scholarship and Creative Activity for Tenure and Promotion”. After discussion at the April 2013 Faculty Senate meeting, these guidelines were sent to Provost Donald Nieman with a request that this change be included in the Provost’s Guidelines. Shown below in **bold** is the additional wording incorporated into the Provost’s Guidelines. Below that are the guidelines as presented to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate.

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Excerpt from BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES FOR PERSONNEL CASES, Office of the Provost, dated August 2013

- 3c. Scholarly ability – as demonstrated by such things as success in developing and carrying out significant research work in the subject matter field, contribution to the arts, publications and reputation among colleagues. Scholarship or other creative contributions are essential for promotion, especially to a position with tenure. For most fields, publication of refereed papers in professional journals of high repute is a clear sign of scholarly activity. Scholarly books released through recognized publishers, either academic or commercial, are another sign, as are artistic presentations such as juried shows and critically reviewed performances. **The growth of digital media has greatly expanded and diversified the ways that university faculty conduct and disseminate scholarly research and creative activities. Academic units should demonstrate openness to scholarship and creative activities produced in new media. The tenure and promotion process should encourage innovative and ambitious work and not discriminate against work simply because it is presented in new media. The long-established criteria of excellence, impact, originality, and publication venue apply to both print and digital scholarship and creative activities.**

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Binghamton University  
Guidelines for Evaluating Scholarship and Creative Activity for Tenure and Promotion  
Reported to Binghamton University Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
November 13, 2012  
Reported to Binghamton University Faculty Senate  
April 23, 2013

At Binghamton University, scholarship and other creative contributions are essential for promotion, especially to a position with tenure. The Policies of the Board of Trustees for the State University of New York (XII title A 4.c and title B 2.c) specify that scholarly ability “as demonstrated by such things as success in developing and carrying out significant research work in the subject matter field, contribution to the arts, publications and reputation among colleagues” must be considered in faculty evaluations and used as criteria for promotion and tenure. Traditionally, this evaluation has been based scholarly or creative work published in articles and books in peer reviewed journals and presses that maintain editorial control over the process and the published content. However, the growth of digital media has greatly

expanded and diversified the ways that university faculty conduct and disseminate scholarly research and creative activities. To guarantee rigorous and fair assessment of research and creative activities in this shifting terrain of scholarship, university units must go beyond traditional considerations, and evaluate faculty using criteria that include the presence of such new media.

The ways in which scholars and artists conduct and communicate their work will continue to multiply and a plurality of forms already exists. These include traditional journal and book publication, and digital media such as websites, databases, and blogs. This list does not contain all of the currently existing forms and it is impossible to predict what new forms will become available in the future. Traditional journal and book publication is rapidly shifting from print format to digital formats. In these cases, university units must recognize the validity of both print and digital formats, and traditional criteria for the evaluation of the quality of scholarly work must apply equally in both formats.

New scholarship and creative activities in digital media entail issues that traditional criteria do not adequately evaluate.

Academic units should demonstrate openness to scholarship and creative activities produced in new media. Each unit should create tenure and promotion procedures for evaluating these forms of scholarship. The tenure and promotion process should encourage innovative and ambitious work and not discriminate against work simply because it is presented in new media. The long-established criteria of excellence, impact, originality, and publication venue apply to both print and digital scholarship and creative activities.

#### **Guidelines for Chairs and Initiating Personnel Committees**

1. Chairs and directors should meet with new faculty at the outset of their employment to communicate to them the academic unit's expectations for the quality, quantity of published research, and the appropriate formats for their scholarship and creative work. When candidates for promotion and tenure wish to have scholarly and creative work in non-traditional forms considered an integral part of their positions, they should inform their chair/director in a timely way so that the unit's expectations and responsibilities connected with such work, and the consideration that will be given to it, is delineated and communicated to the candidates. Candidates should have a clear understanding of how their work will be evaluated.
2. Traditional forms of scholarship whether published or distributed in print and/or digital form should be evaluated by customary criteria. For most fields, publication of refereed papers in professional journals of high repute is a clear sign of scholarly activity. Scholarly books released through recognized publishers, either academic or commercial, are another sign, as are artistic presentations such as juried shows and critically reviewed performances.
3. Academic units should recognize that evaluation of new forms of scholarship often will come after publication. New media or format of scholarship such as , such as web sites, databases and blogs, is not always peer-reviewed prior to publication and dissemination. However, IPCs may seek peer review of these materials as part of their evaluation. Faculty members who work with digital media should have their work evaluated by persons knowledgeable about the use of these media in the candidate's field.
4. Since scholarly work is sometimes designed for presentation in a specific medium, evaluative bodies should, whenever possible, review faculty members' work in the medium in which it was produced. For example, web-based projects should be viewed online, not in printed, form.
5. Digital work commonly involves collaboration, often across disciplines and audiences. Academic units, especially in those disciplines where collaboration is not common, should recognize the validity of collaborative efforts. All evaluative bodies should seek interdisciplinary advice on works that collaborate across disciplines.

6. Evaluative bodies should attempt to assess, where appropriate, the impact of work and consider feedback from users, students, and other audiences..

#### **Guidelines for Candidates and Faculty Members**

1. Faculty should ask how credit for work in creative activities and new forms of scholarship in teaching, research, and service will be considered in the reappointment, tenure, and promotion processes before substantial time and effort is devoted to such work.
2. Faculty should make explicit the results, theoretical underpinnings, and intellectual rigor of their work. They should be prepared to show the relevance of their work in terms of the traditional areas of teaching, research, and service.
3. Faculty choosing to work in these formats must demonstrate how this work advances creative, rigorous and significant intellectual goals of their creative activities and new forms of scholarship.
4. Faculty should describe all collaborative aspects of their work including identifying their collaborators, and documenting the nature and degree of their contribution to the collaboration.