

Department of Religious Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY REVIEW AND PROMOTION
GUIDELINES

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 Non-tenure track (NTT) faculty housed in the Department of Religious Studies
3 (RELIGIOUS STUDIES) are vital components of our faculty. The policies and procedures
4 related to the review and promotion of faculty in non-tenure track ranks are outlined in
5 this document (Department guidelines), the College of Arts and Sciences Promotion
6 Manual for Non-Tenure Track Faculty (college manual), and the Georgia State University
7 Promotion Manual for Non-Tenure Track Faculty (university manual). Whereas the
8 university and college NTT manuals provide general statements of the expected quality
9 and significance of NTT faculty accomplishments, this document identifies the concrete
10 forms these achievements should take. In particular, this document articulates the
11 Department’s criteria for the various rankings that candidates for promotion might
12 receive in the areas of teaching and service. Candidates should consult the college and
13 university manuals for matters of process and procedure, dossier requirements, and
14 time-in-rank policies that govern eligibility for promotion consideration.

15 The Department of Religious Studies employs regular, full-time NTT faculty in the
16 lecturer track. The ranks within the lecturer track include the following (listed from most
17 junior to most senior): Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Principal Senior Lecturer. The
18 general duties for lecturer track faculty are described in the college manual.

19 **II. DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROCESS FOR PROMOTION TO SENIOR LECTURER AND**
20 **PRINCIPAL SENIOR LECTURER**

21 **A. Process Overview**

22 The primary stages of the Department-level NTT faculty promotion review process are
23 as follows:

- 24 1. Following notification of eligibility from the Dean’s Office, the candidate standing for
25 promotion will submit the required review materials outlined in the college manual
26 to the Department Chair.
- 27 2. The Department Chair forwards the candidate’s materials to the Department NTT
28 Promotion Review Committee.
- 29 3. The Department committee submits its recommendation, including any minority
30 reports, to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will provide a copy of the
31 Department committee’s report, including any minority reports, to the candidate
32 with a notification that the candidate has the option to respond directly to the
33 Department Chair within three business days.
- 34 4. The Department Chair submits her/his independent recommendation and the
35 recommendation of the Department NTT Promotion Review Committee, including
36 any minority reports and any responses from the candidate, to the Dean’s Office.
37 The Department Chair will provide a copy of her/his own report to the candidate
38 with a notification that the candidate has the option to respond to the Dean’s Office
39 within three business days. The Dean’s Office will provide to the Department Chair a

40 copy of any response from the candidate to the Department Chair's report.
41 See sections III and IV in the college manual for information on the evaluation processes
42 at the college and university levels.

43 **B. Composition of Department Non-Tenure Track Promotion Review Committee**

44 The Department NTT Promotion Review Committee consists of all tenured Religious
45 Studies faculty and all NTT faculty of Senior rank and above in the Department (Senior
46 Lecturer, Principal Senior Lecturer), except the Chair of the Department and any
47 members of the Department serving in a position that will review the candidate's
48 promotion application at the college or university levels. According to the college
49 manual, units may operate through a system of subcommittees that initially review and
50 evaluate each candidate's credentials. All final recommendations must be made by the
51 committee of the whole. The committee of the whole must meet to discuss and vote on
52 its final recommendation. The letter from the departmental committee must be signed
53 by the committee chair and all committee members who agree with the
54 recommendation. Committee members who do not sign this recommendation must
55 provide a separate letter (minority report) indicating their recommendation and
56 supporting rationale. In the event of a minority recommendation, individual committee
57 members' recommendations must not be identified to the candidate; therefore, the
58 signatures must appear on a separate page so that they can be removed when the
59 candidate is provided with his or her copy of the committee's reports.
60 Faculty of equal or lower rank to the candidate's current rank may not vote on the final
61 recommendation of the committee of the whole. In consultation with the Department
62 Chair, the dean may augment the Department NTT Promotion Review Committee with
63 NTT members from other units when the Department does not have a sufficient number
64 of faculty to constitute a committee of at least three members.

65 **III. LECTURER REVIEWS**

66 **A. General Considerations**

67 There are five types of structured reviews for faculty on the lecturer track: 1) annual
68 review leading to re-appointment, 2) third-year review, 3) fifth-year review with
69 promotion to senior lecturer, 4) subsequent review with promotion to principal senior
70 lecturer (the timing for which is defined in the college manual), and 5) post-promotion
71 cumulative review (five-year structured review). In these reviews, the primary
72 considerations are contributions in teaching and service, with consideration given to
73 contributions in the area of professional development bearing on the candidate's
74 knowledge as it relates to pedagogical practice. This document defines ratings that are
75 used in all of the reviews listed above; however, the ratings in the body of the document
76 are defined in the context of Department expectations specific to candidates being
77 considered for promotion to senior lecturer or principal senior lecturer.

78 **B. Scope of Evaluations**

79 **1. Evaluation of Teaching**

80 As stated in the college manual, evaluation of teaching effectiveness will use the criteria
81 of the college's policy (http://www2cas.gsu.edu/docs/as/teaching_effectiveness.pdf).
82 Evaluators will assess the teaching effectiveness of lecturers as it relates to their core
83 mission of engaging undergraduate learning in survey classes fulfilling general education
84 requirements. Additionally, if a lecturer has primarily been assigned an alternate set of
85 teaching and administrative duties, then their assessment will reflect criteria suitable to
86 their assigned role in the Department.

87 As a general rule, evaluators will consider in their assessments of teaching effectiveness
88 the following criteria:

89 **a. Quality of course content:** The quality of course content will be evaluated through
90 review of syllabi, exam questions, writing assignments, in-class exercises, readings, and
91 other elements integrated into the learning environment created by the candidate for
92 promotion. Syllabi should be reviewed for conformity with university guidelines. Exam
93 questions should require students to engage material that is appropriate for the course
94 level and catalog description. Writing assignments should develop the students' ability
95 to work with primary and secondary sources in crafting coherent arguments that
96 demonstrate critical thinking. Course materials should also be assessed for their
97 appropriateness in relation to the current state of knowledge in the field. Lecturers may
98 provide additional materials, such as customized texts, handouts, software, and other
99 course elements that reflect the faculty member's efforts to foster student engagement
100 and learning. In particular, credit is given to faculty whose courses are structured in
101 ways that cultivate curiosity, creativity, and critical acumen in their students. Courses
102 that connect students with other university programs and resources and that take
103 advantage of opportunities created by our campus location in Atlanta and the Southeast
104 will also be viewed as evidence of successful teaching. Particularly in lower-level classes,
105 the Department encourages faculty to design courses that enable students to engage
106 course materials and be evaluated in a variety of ways, so as to allow faculty to identify
107 students who are struggling and to provide those students with an opportunity to
108 improve their performance as the semester unfolds. The Department recognizes that
109 teachers might use a variety of methods. Candidates evaluated as meeting or exceeding
110 promotion expectations, however, demonstrate a sustained interest in encouraging
111 student interest in the material and designing assessments that foster the mastery of
112 significant skills and concepts.

113 **b. Development of new courses or development of new teaching resources that**
114 **meaningfully improve existing courses:** Evaluations will consider the effective
115 development and execution of new courses, significant involvement in the development
116 of new teaching programs, and the use of new teaching techniques and practices, if
117 these are part of the responsibilities of the faculty member. The design of courses with a
118 travel component and the subsequent successful recruitment of students to study
119 abroad or domestic field schools is another laudable potential achievement. The

120 Department values efforts to develop new courses and resources, particularly those that
121 positively affect significant numbers of students or sufficiently impact individual
122 students so as to result in significant achievements such as the presentation or
123 publication of undergraduate and/or graduate research.

124 **c. Student evaluations:** The review of candidates' materials will include overall student
125 evaluation scores, which are useful indicators of student perceptions of instruction.
126 Evaluation scores will be considered in the context of the normal range of scores for
127 specific courses and for similar level courses (i.e., 1000, 2000, etc.) within the
128 Department, but the Department will not rely upon these scores exclusively when
129 determining minimum qualifications for ratings. The review will also consider other
130 important variables such as class size, whether the course is required or an elective, the
131 response rate on the evaluations, and number of students enrolled in the course. In
132 addition to average scores, the Department will also be attentive to mean and median
133 scores and to the impact of any outlying scores on averages. Qualitative evidence
134 offered by the students' written comments on the student evaluation forms will receive
135 serious attention from the Department as a meaningful supplement to the quantitative
136 data from the evaluation instruments. In light of these contextual elements, successful
137 candidates for promotion normally earn consistently strong evaluations and high scores,
138 as defined below.

139 **d. Direction of students:** The Department will assess the extent and quality of faculty
140 efforts in the direction of student projects and academic activities at GSU, such as
141 independent studies, honors theses, student research or creative work presented at
142 GSURC, as well as individual student engagement in academic projects or programs
143 hosted by other institutions or communities. Such efforts might also include faculty time
144 spent offering direction as a member of honors or masters thesis committees. Faculty
145 members' willingness to write letters of recommendation for undergraduate and
146 graduate students might also be viewed as evidence of significant effort in this category
147 of teaching effectiveness.

148 **e. Development of new skills:** The Department encourages faculty to continue to
149 develop skills in order to improve teaching. Candidates evaluated as meeting or
150 exceeding expectations for promotion might exhibit an ongoing willingness to adopt
151 new practices in the classroom. Faculty who undergo formal training to gain new
152 certifications and competencies may present such achievements to the Department as
153 evidence of their commitment to stay abreast of current research in religious studies
154 pedagogies. The Department recognizes that new skills need not involve technology; for
155 example, the incorporation of more interactive classroom exercises geared toward
156 fostering critical conversation and writing might contribute to a faculty member's
157 assessment as *excellent* in teaching.

158 **2. Evaluation of Service**

159 As stated in the college manual, contributions in the area of service include high-quality
160 instructional service; contributions to the Department, college, or university;
161 professional service; and community and public service. Service for lecturers varies
162 depending on the individual's core mission as defined by the Department, but it is
163 generally at the Department or college level. Contributions to service in the Department
164 for Religious Studies typically fall into the following categories: assigned service roles,
165 such as administrative roles or other service duties that are ongoing assignments;
166 instructional service, such as developing teaching materials and curricula, organizing or
167 presenting seminars on teaching methodology, or supervising or mentoring faculty and
168 graduate teaching assistants; assistance to colleagues, such as guest-lecturing,
169 consulting about educational and teaching issues, and providing advice about or reviews
170 of manuscripts or grant applications; contributions to the Department, college, and
171 university, such as student advisement and mentoring, advising of student groups,
172 memberships on Department/college/university committees, and development of
173 teaching and service programs; professional service (if appropriate), such as
174 memberships on professional societies and advisory boards; community and public
175 service (if appropriate), such as giving lectures, speeches, presentations, performances,
176 short courses, and assistance to government agencies.

177 The Department's review of candidates' records in service will consider the wide variety
178 of tasks that the Department Chair might assign to particular faculty members.
179 Candidates should document any arrangements made upon or after their initial
180 appointment for them to take on special administrative duties or unusually heavy
181 service loads. The degree to which assigned service responsibilities are made available
182 to the candidate will also be part of the consideration of their service record.

183

184 **3. Additional Considerations**

185 Other factors and contributions that may be considered as part of the lecturer review
186 include the following:

187 **Professional Development Contributions:**

188 It is expected that lecturers will manifest in their classes a rich intellectual background
189 and a familiarity with current trends and methods in the discipline. Though not required
190 for promotion, one way of achieving such proficiency is through a program of scholarly
191 or creative activities. Other ways include attending or participating in panels at
192 professional conferences, and remaining current on scholarship and readings in the
193 field.

194 Since a lecturer's professional development is evaluated as a secondary element to the
195 overall record in instruction, the scholarly or creative work included in candidates'
196 dossiers should be clearly related to their fields of instruction. The specific forms of
197 professional development that a lecturer may produce are identical to those described
198 in the Department promotion and tenure guidelines for tenure track faculty:

199 publications, editorial work, book reviews, digital media, lectures, involvement with
200 academic conferences, awards and grants, and so forth. Scholarship focused on
201 pedagogy and curriculum should be included in the Instruction section of the dossier
202 rather than under a Professional Development section.

203 **Role within the Department:**

204 Since needs of the Department often change, the role of the lecturers also may change.
205 For example, if student enrollments shift, the college or Department may need to offer
206 more sections of a course, or fewer. The review will include the role of the lecturer
207 within the context of the mission of the Department and the ability of the lecturer to
208 fulfill the changing needs of the Department.

209 **C. Criteria for Promotion**

210 As stated in the college manual, candidates will be evaluated based on the evidence
211 submitted as having met or not met the standards for promotion in teaching and service
212 relative to the evaluative terms *outstanding*, *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, *fair*, and *poor*.
213 The single measure for achieving the standard for promotion in each category for each
214 rank is defined in this section. The complete scale of evaluative terms that may be
215 referenced in evaluations is included as an appendix to this document.

216 **1. Promotion from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer**

217 For promotion to the rank of senior lecturer, candidates must demonstrate a level of
218 competence and effectiveness in teaching that is evaluated as at least *excellent*,
219 according to the college manual. Additionally, candidates must provide a level of
220 assigned service to the Department, college, university, and/or to the professional and
221 practice community that is evaluated as at least *very good*, which meets the university
222 standard for promotion to senior lecturer.

223 **a. Teaching**

224 To meet the standard in teaching for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer with a
225 rating of *excellent*, candidates' records show consistently high levels of achievement in
226 the five categories for assessing teaching detailed in Section III.B.1 above. Their course
227 materials illustrate a trajectory of accomplished teaching and demonstrate creative and
228 reflective pedagogy. Normally, they earn scores on student evaluations that fall in the
229 mid- 4-out-of-5 range or higher, or in the 4-out-of-5 range as appropriate to the course
230 size and level. Additionally, they demonstrate a track record of developing new courses
231 or protocols for existing courses and successfully mentoring undergraduate or graduate
232 students.

233

234 **b. Service**

235 To meet the standard in service for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer with a
236 rating of *very good*, successful candidates diligently and effectively fulfill their assigned

237 roles. Rather than merely attending committee meetings or holding the requisite
238 advisement sessions, they actively participate and contribute concretely to the work of
239 the committees and to the overall goals and mission of the Department.

240 **2. Promotion from Senior Lecturer to Principal Senior Lecturer**

241 Promotion from Senior Lecturer to Principal Senior Lecturer is only awarded to a small
242 percentage of candidates, and the standards for promotion are high. For promotion to
243 the rank of principal senior lecturer, candidates must demonstrate a sustained level of
244 competence and effectiveness in teaching that is evaluated as *excellent*, according to
245 the college manual. Additionally, candidates must provide a level of assigned service to
246 the Department, college, university, and/or to the professional and practice community
247 that is evaluated as *excellent*, which meets the university standard for promotion to
248 principal senior lecturer. Successful candidates for promotion to principal senior lecturer
249 will demonstrate continued growth in both teaching and service during the time period
250 since the last promotion.

251 **a. Teaching**

252 To meet the standard in teaching for promotion to principal senior lecturer with a rating
253 of *excellent*, candidates show consistently high levels of achievement in the five
254 categories for assessing teaching detailed in Section III.B.1 above. Their course materials
255 illustrate a long-term trajectory of accomplished teaching that demonstrates a creative
256 and reflective pedagogy. Their student evaluations are consistently strong, normally
257 earning scores that fall in the mid- to upper 4-out-of-5 range. They demonstrate a
258 sustained track record of successfully mentoring undergraduate and/or graduate
259 students, as well as developing new courses or protocols for existing courses. In addition
260 to continued growth in the areas of teaching described above, the candidate's growth as
261 a teacher should also extend into areas beyond those normally associated with one's
262 teaching responsibilities at GSU. Successful candidates will tend to have contributed at
263 the national level or have made a demonstrated impact on community based programs.
264

265 **b. Service**

266 Candidates will be judged as meeting the standard in service for promotion to principal
267 senior lecturer with a rating of *excellent* if they have diligently and highly effectively
268 carried out assigned responsibilities and contributed significantly to the mission of the
269 Department over a sustained period. The *excellent* candidate at this level normally
270 exhibits a track record of providing assistance to Department advising efforts or to
271 graduate teaching assistants and/or other non-tenure track instructors. In addition to
272 continued growth in the areas of service described above, the candidate's growth in
273 service should take one or more of the following forms: highly effective service as a
274 Department program Chair or in a role with a similar level of responsibility; recognition
275 as a campus leader; significant service to the profession or community.

276 **D. Other Lecturer Reviews**

277 The annual, third-year, promotion, and post-promotion cumulative reviews are all
278 distinct from one another. Because these different evaluations cover different time
279 periods and may involve different evaluating bodies, the results of these reviews may
280 diverge. Therefore, a reliable inference cannot necessarily be made from the
281 conclusions of one of the reviews to those of the others.

282

283 **1. Annual Review of Lecturers**

284 Along with tenure track and other non-tenure track faculty, all lecturer track faculty are
285 evaluated on an annual basis. The evaluation will be based on the materials supplied by
286 the faculty member, including her/his updated CV, annual report covering the prior
287 calendar year, teaching portfolio, and any other appropriate materials. In consultation
288 with the Department executive committee, the Department Chair will evaluate the
289 lecturer track faculty member's service and teaching and service using the criteria
290 described in the Appendix.

291 **2. Third-Year Review of Lecturers**

292 The third-year review for lecturers is designed to assess the faculty member's
293 effectiveness and progress toward promotion to senior lecturer. The Department NTT
294 Promotion Review Committee (composed of all the tenured faculty) will be joined by
295 any principal senior lecturers or senior lecturers. Together they will prepare an
296 evaluation of the lecturer's record. The Department Chair will provide an independent
297 assessment before forwarding both evaluations to the Dean's Office for further
298 evaluation of the record. The third-year review will employ the terms of the six-point
299 scale used for promotion reviews. However, the spirit of the third-year review is
300 different from that of the fifth-year review; it is meant to review the lecturer's
301 achievements to date and provide mentoring regarding possible deficiencies that should
302 be addressed before the fifth-year review.

303

304 **3. Post-Promotion Review of Senior Lecturers and Principal Senior Lecturers**

305 The post-promotion five-year cumulative review is designed to ensure that senior
306 lecturers and principal senior lecturers remain effective and current in their pedagogy
307 and accomplished in their service profiles. The review will cover the faculty member's
308 teaching and service records over the last five years and will be based on the criteria
309 listed in the Appendix. Faculty under review will present their dossiers (as described in
310 the college manual) for evaluation by the department P&T committee, as well as any
311 lecturers at the rank of principal senior. The department chair will provide an
312 independent assessment and will then pass on both evaluations to the Dean's Office for
313 response.

314 **APPENDIX: Complete Ratings Scale for Evaluations of Lecturer-Track Faculty to be used**
315 **in Annual, Third-Year, Promotion, and Post-Promotion Cumulative Reviews**

316

317 **A. Teaching**

318

319 **Poor:** Candidates judged to be poor in instruction display an unacceptable record of
320 teaching as evidenced through student evaluations, ineffective course materials, and
321 little to no student mentoring.

322

323 **Fair:** Candidates judged to be fair in instruction display a minimally acceptable record of
324 teaching as evidenced through student evaluations, ineffective pedagogical techniques,
325 and only occasional student mentoring.

326

327 **Good:** Candidates judged to be good in instruction manifest a teaching performance
328 that barely exceeds adequate, as evidenced through student evaluations, course
329 materials that fail to demonstrate competent pedagogical skill, and generally
330 satisfactory but limited effort as a mentor of students.

331

332 **Very Good:** Candidates judged to be very good in instruction are competent teachers
333 whose supporting material includes evidence not only of diligent preparation and
334 instruction but also of some mentoring of students, thoughtful and reflective pedagogy,
335 and a commitment to the instructional mission of the Department. Class assignments
336 are creative and methodologically varied and pedagogically appropriate, resulting in
337 proficient student learning. While these candidates are effective teachers, their teaching
338 records may lack the level and extent of involvement in the supervision of individual
339 student work that is typically expected for a rating of *excellent*, as described below,
340 and/or the candidate's student evaluations show inconsistencies or regularly fall short
341 of Department expectations.

342

343 **Excellent (Promotion to Senior Lecturer):** Candidates judged to be *excellent* teachers
344 show consistently high levels of achievement in the five areas identified for assessing
345 teaching detailed in Section III.B.1. These candidates' course materials illustrate a
346 trajectory of accomplished teaching that demonstrates a creative and reflective
347 pedagogy that may include a substantial variety of activities related to instruction.
348 Normally, these candidates' student evaluation scores fall in the mid- 4-out-of-5 range
349 or higher. Additionally, they demonstrate a track record of developing new courses or
350 protocols for existing courses and successfully mentoring undergraduate or graduate
351 students.

352

353 **Excellent (Promotion to Principal Senior Lecturer):** In addition to the stated expectations
354 for a rating of *excellent* in teaching above, successful candidates for promotion to the
355 rank of principal senior lecturer will demonstrate growth as a teacher that also extends

356 into areas beyond those normally associated with one's teaching responsibilities at GSU.
357 For example, candidates might engage in the following activities: production of a
358 publication suitable for use in the kinds of classes that the faculty member teaches;
359 production of an article or other publication on pedagogy; successful pursuit of internal
360 and/or external funding for pedagogical initiatives; teaching awards/recognitions;
361 student awards or other accomplishments of mentored students.

362 **Outstanding (Promotion to Senior Lecturer):** Candidates judged to be outstanding in
363 instruction manifest an impact on students that is of the highest level. In excess of the
364 expectations for a rating of *excellent* in teaching appropriate to their rank, as described
365 above, *outstanding* teachers command a mastery of instruction in their area as
366 evidenced by the following: successful pursuit of external funding for pedagogical
367 initiatives; teaching awards/recognitions; student awards or other accomplishments of
368 mentored students.

369 **Outstanding (Promotion to Principal Senior Lecturer):** In addition to the stated
370 expectations for a rating of *outstanding* in teaching above, candidates for promotion to
371 the rank of principal senior lecturer will be evaluated as *outstanding* if they have
372 achieved more than one of the following: production of a publication suitable for use in
373 the kinds of classes that the faculty member teaches; production of an article or other
374 publication on pedagogy; successful pursuit of internal and/or external funding for
375 pedagogical initiatives; teaching awards/recognitions; student awards or other
376 accomplishments of mentored students.

377 **B. Service**

378
379 **Poor:** Candidates judged to be *poor* in service do not fulfill assigned service obligations
380 and are not responsible citizens of the Department.

381
382 **Fair:** Candidates judged to be *fair* in service ineffectively fulfill assigned service
383 obligations or are not responsible citizens of the Department.

384
385 **Good:** Candidates judged to be *good* in service do not always effectively fulfill assigned
386 service obligations or are not consistently responsible citizens of the Department.

387
388 **Very Good:** Candidates will be judged to be *very good* in service if they conscientiously
389 and effectively fulfill their assigned roles. Rather than merely attending committee
390 meetings or holding the requisite advisement sessions, such faculty actively participate
391 in a way that contributes concretely and constructively to the goals and mission of the
392 Department, particularly in terms of the goal to achieve positive results for
393 undergraduate and graduate students.

394
395 **Excellent:** Candidates will be judged to be *excellent* in service if they have been diligent

396 and highly effective as they carried out assigned responsibilities and contributed
397 significantly to the goals and mission of the Department over a sustained period. The
398 *excellent* candidate at this level normally exhibits a track record of providing assistance
399 to Department advising efforts or to graduate teaching assistants and/or other non-
400 tenure track instructors. In addition to continued growth in the areas of service
401 described above, the candidate's growth in service should also take one or more of the
402 following forms: highly effective service as a Department program Chair or in a role with
403 a similar level of responsibility; recognition as a campus leader; significant service to the
404 profession or community.

405

406 **Outstanding:** In excess of the stated expectations to achieve a rating of *excellent* in
407 service, candidates will be judged to be *outstanding* in service if they have not only
408 fulfilled their assigned responsibilities but also taken considerable personal initiative to
409 contribute concretely and constructively to the goals and mission of the Department.
410 Faculty members judged to be *outstanding* in service will have been recognized by their
411 peers, students, or university administrators as having established a long track record of
412 success in improving campus life in measurable or noticeable ways. Highly effective
413 service as a Department program Chair or in a role with a similar level of responsibility,
414 as well as extraordinary service to the profession or community, are also indications of
415 outstanding service.