

***Provost's Recommended Criteria for Evaluating Genuine Excellence in Teaching (for tenure-line faculty)***

On the Provost's website at: <https://provost.gmu.edu/faculty-matters/faculty-appointments> under "Faculty Appointments," "Tenure-Track Faculty":

**Office of the Provost Guidance for Genuine Excellence in Teaching  
for Tenure-line Faculty**

*A faculty member's proficiency in the domain of teaching is a critical element for the assessment and evaluation of faculty, including consideration for promotion and tenure. Achieving Genuine Excellence in Teaching requires the demonstration of an intentional commitment to and refinement of teaching practices that lead to student engagement, learning, and success, and that reflect Mason's commitment to inclusive excellence. It also requires deliberate dissemination of information or research about these practices. Genuine Excellence in Teaching goes beyond the criteria for establishing High Competence in Teaching. Evaluation of teaching excellence is informed by faculty peers, student input and feedback, course materials, and faculty members' own reflections as well as other evidence that demonstrates faculty meeting threshold criteria for Genuine Excellence in Teaching. Other evidence can include but is not limited to additional recognition of scholarship to include scholarly awards, national or international recognition of teaching excellence and the winning of competitive grants or funding in the area of teaching and education.*

Faculty seeking promotion and/or tenure are expected to meet the criteria for *High Competence in Teaching*, which are the hallmarks of effective teaching. Evaluation involves an assessment of each of the following factors:

- Pedagogical strategies that equitably support and engage students in learning, typically demonstrated by student evaluations of teaching and peer review;
- Successful student learning, typically demonstrated by course design, teaching materials, and/or broad evidence of student achievement; and
- Faculty growth and continuous course improvement, typically evidenced by course materials, faculty members' self-assessment, attainment of course learning outcomes, and/or involvement in professional development to strengthen teaching and mentoring.

Demonstrating *Genuine Excellence in Teaching* involves further assessment of the following additional factors, which should be considered holistically. Specifically, while each factor should be addressed, it is expected that faculty will differ in the strength of their contributions across these four factors.

- Research-based and effective teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the students and the discipline, typically evidenced in course materials and faculty members' self-assessment;
- Teaching and learning experiences that are designed to reflect Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence, typically evidenced by course

- design, teaching materials that incorporate diversity in the context of the discipline, broad evidence of student achievement, and/or faculty members' self-assessment;
- Work with students beyond the classroom, typically evidenced by examples of student mentoring and advising; and
  - Pedagogical leadership (e.g., for a course and/or curricular initiative) at Mason and/or within a professional community.

These criteria are relevant for and applicable to courses offered in different modalities, whether face-to-face, hybrid, fully online, or field/clinical supervision.

Moreover, to demonstrate *Genuine Excellence in Teaching*, faculty must provide evidence of significant impact of their teaching, mentoring, and other pedagogical practices beyond their own students that are consequential for pedagogic practices more generally, within and most notably beyond Mason. Demonstrating impact beyond our university for tenure-line faculty often takes the form of research and scholarship focused on pedagogy that could include peer-reviewed publications, books, monographs, instructional materials, and other media; invited and peer-reviewed presentations at professional conferences, workshops, or exhibitions; external funding for curricular development or piloting teaching methods; and/or other demonstrable exemplars of relevant research and scholarship.

Evidence for *Genuine Excellence in Teaching* must be derived from multiple sources that provide a demonstrated pattern consistent with the concept of *Genuine Excellence in Teaching* over time, noting that all faculty experience occasional challenges in the face of designing and implementing new and creative teaching approaches. External referee letters must be based on a holistic consideration of these criteria with an emphasis on impact both beyond the classroom and beyond our university.

For more information about the recommended criteria and possible evidence that can be used to demonstrate meeting these criteria, see the Summary Tables for Documenting and Assessing High Competence and Genuine Excellence in Teaching on the [Supporting Efforts to Document and Assess Teaching and Learning](#) page of the Office of the Provost website.

Tenure-line faculty who wish to earn tenure and/or promotion under the *Genuine Excellence in Teaching* must maintain a record of *High Competence* for their research, scholarship, and/or creative work.

Office of the Provost  
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