



GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING THE TEACHER/DRAMATURG FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

This document is intended for all institutions of higher education with theatre or other faculty who provide dramaturgy or other literary management services for the college or university, for affiliated professional companies, or for other producing venues. In accord with the Boyer model for evaluating scholarship (1990), this document recognizes creative activity as a legitimate and valued form of scholarship. The Dramaturgy Focus Group acknowledges and builds upon the model documents set forth by the Acting and Directing Focus Groups of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. This white paper was commissioned at the Dramaturgy Focus Group business meeting during the Association for Theatre in Higher Education national conference (San Diego 2002), discussed by the University Caucus at the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas national conference (Chicago 2003), and revised/accepted at Dramaturgy Focus Group meetings during the ATHE national conference (New York 2003).

I. Statement of Purpose. This document supplements the “Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Outcomes Assessment Guidelines for Theatre Programs in Higher Education” (1985-1989), “Guidelines for Evaluating Teacher/Artists for Promotion and Tenure” (1989), and “Guidelines for Evaluating the Teacher/Director for Promotion and Tenure” (1992). ATHE endorses the following criteria for the evaluation of teacher/dramaturgs. ATHE recognizes that significant resources are committed by the institution's decision to tenure and promote faculty. ATHE also recognizes that a faculty member's decision to accept a tenurable position and promotion and/or tenure assumes the obligation of continuing productivity and development as a teacher/dramaturg.

ATHE further recognizes that a theatre faculty member who serves as literary manager and/or dramaturg may assume additional responsibilities. These guidelines apply only to the faculty member's literary management and/or dramaturgy for the stage. They do not apply to the important activities of many dramaturgs who are also responsible for promotion and other aspects of administration of stage productions. It is expected that individual institutions and academic departments--as well as promotion and tenure committees where appropriate--will recognize and recompense the wide-ranging contributions that efforts such as managing and promoting make to a specific institution. However, the guidelines below apply only to the faculty member's literary and dramaturgical duties. Those duties require application of specialized means of assessment.

All institutions, departments and faculty members are urged to adopt these guidelines in the service of their specific missions. ATHE recommends that an institution determine and

record--before promotion and tenure consideration, and preferably at hire--what shall constitute qualitative and quantitative achievement as a dramaturg.

This document:

- A. sets forth standards prepared and endorsed by the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, an organization of approximately two thousand professional theatre educators from two-year colleges, liberal arts colleges, masters-only universities, comprehensive universities, and research universities in all states of the union;
 - B. promotes dramaturgy as a process and as an effective means of teaching;
 - C. characterizes the high standards of artistic excellence, collaboration, integrity, and pedagogical effectiveness that are the dramaturg's responsibility in carrying out production assignments;
 - D. promotes artistic freedom;
 - E. endorses the intent and practice and endorses the importance of teaching within the rehearsal process;
 - F. presents criteria to assist faculty promotion and tenure committees and college/university administrators in reaching an informed decision as to what constitutes achievement for promotion and tenure;
 - G. informs the dramaturgy faculty member that, to assist administrative officers in reaching informed decisions, it is the dramaturg's responsibility to document dramaturgical work from research through production.
- II. ATHE recommends that the department determine the mission of its production program both in the department and on the campus. Possibilities for discussion of mission may include but are not limited to the following:
- A. to provide cultural resources to community and university;
 - B. to expose students through the production process to pertinent related areas of knowledge and/or experience;
 - C. to develop new and/or experimental work;
 - D. to allow theatre students to experience all phases of production;
 - E. to train theatre artists;
 - F. to fund production and/or academic programs; and

G. other.

III. ATHE recognizes as qualifications for faculty dramaturgs the appropriate terminal degrees: M.F.A., Ph.D., D.F.A., and/or equivalent dramaturgy experience.

ATHE recommends that, upon hiring a tenure-track dramaturgy faculty member, the department and the college establish and record, in consultation and agreement with the dramaturg, the literary and dramaturgical goals of this person within the production program, the department, on campus and/or off campus.

ATHE further recommends that this assignment be reviewed annually and revised, in consultation and agreement with the faculty member, as necessary.

IV. ATHE recommends that the application for promotion and tenure address the following items.

A. The promotion and tenure dossier may:

1. demonstrate that the applicant has been carrying out a developmental agenda as previously identified and agreed upon; demonstrate the applicant's growth of artistry in productions previously identified and agreed upon; in general, we recommend as a starting point that production-based dramaturgical work might well be credited for tenure, promotion, and review in a manner that is roughly parallel to that used for directors and designers, a perspective that recognizes artistic creation as a vital form of research; at the same time, the focus group suggests that chairs establish with faculty in dramaturgy rough equivalencies between various dramaturgical projects (e.g., translation, adaptation, production dramaturgy for a classic, production dramaturgy for a new play, etc.) and widely recognized accomplishments in other areas of the humanities (e.g., publication of a peer reviewed article in a journal, publication of a chapter in a book, single or joint authorship of a book;
2. include the interim evaluations of the applicant (annual reviews, third-year reviews, etc.); and
3. other evidence of creative work and scholarship.

B. The evidence of a consistently high quality body of work may include:

1. A portfolio containing for each or for selected productions in the probationary period:
 - a. self-evaluation of dramaturgical process and achievements;
 - b. student evaluations of dramaturgical process and achievements;
 - c. production team evaluations of dramaturgical process and achievements;

- d. dramaturgy faculty or other peer evaluation of dramaturgical achievements;
- e. evaluation of dramaturgical process and achievements by a chair in the theatre discipline; and
- f. outside peer evaluations of dramaturgical process and achievements especially in programs where there is no other or only one other faculty dramaturg.

2. For at least selected productions in the probationary period, the applicant should present appropriate production documentation.

C. The promotion and tenure dossier shows evidence that all or selected productions of the applicant indicate growth in production and production process standards. What follows is not exclusive but affirms the conviction that theatre as art is developmental and that new and challenging approaches, which are constantly evolving, merit respectful consideration.

Measures used to document the applicant's growth may include the following. The candidate's dramaturgy:

- 1. illuminates; tests; creates boundaries of language, form and style in the unique circumstances of a production;
- 2. manifests the uniqueness of a dramaturg's voice;
- 3. demonstrates collaboration with the production team and appropriate leadership within the collaboration;
- 4. evidences theatrical implementation of scholarly preparation;
- 5. provides an enriched experience for the intended audience;
- 6. demonstrates command of dramaturgical technique;
- 7. facilitates the work of the director and/or designers;
- 8. facilitates the work and playing of the actor;
- 9. demonstrates a keen understanding of the play; and
- 10. other.

D. Participation and membership in professional affiliations and/or unions represent significant opportunities for professional growth and contribution to the field.

V. Supplements:

- A. "ATHE Outcomes Assessment Guidelines for Theatre Programs in Higher Education" (1990)

B. "Guidelines for Evaluating Teacher/Artists for Promotion and Tenure" (1985-1989)

The working document for this publication was initiated by the Dramaturgy Focus Group of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education in collaboration with Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, an ATHE affiliate organization. It was prepared by Cynthia M. SoRelle and Klaus Van den Berg (co-chairs) with Geoff Proehl, Cynthia Brizzell, John Lutterbie, Michele Volansky, Mark Bly, and Paul Walsh.

These "Guidelines for Evaluating the Teacher Dramaturg for Promotion and Tenure" were created to assist academic candidates and were approved by the ATHE Board of Governors for national circulation and use. The Dramaturgy Focus Group encourages the use of the guidelines in promotion and tenure decisions. It is hoped that this document will be applied to a candidate's case to the degree that the candidate functions as a dramaturg in her/his local institution and that other aspects of the work of the candidate will be considered based on other standards of effective teaching, scholarship and service.

The Dramaturgy Focus Group would like continuing feedback on the application of this document. Please send information or direct any questions regarding use of these guidelines to:

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