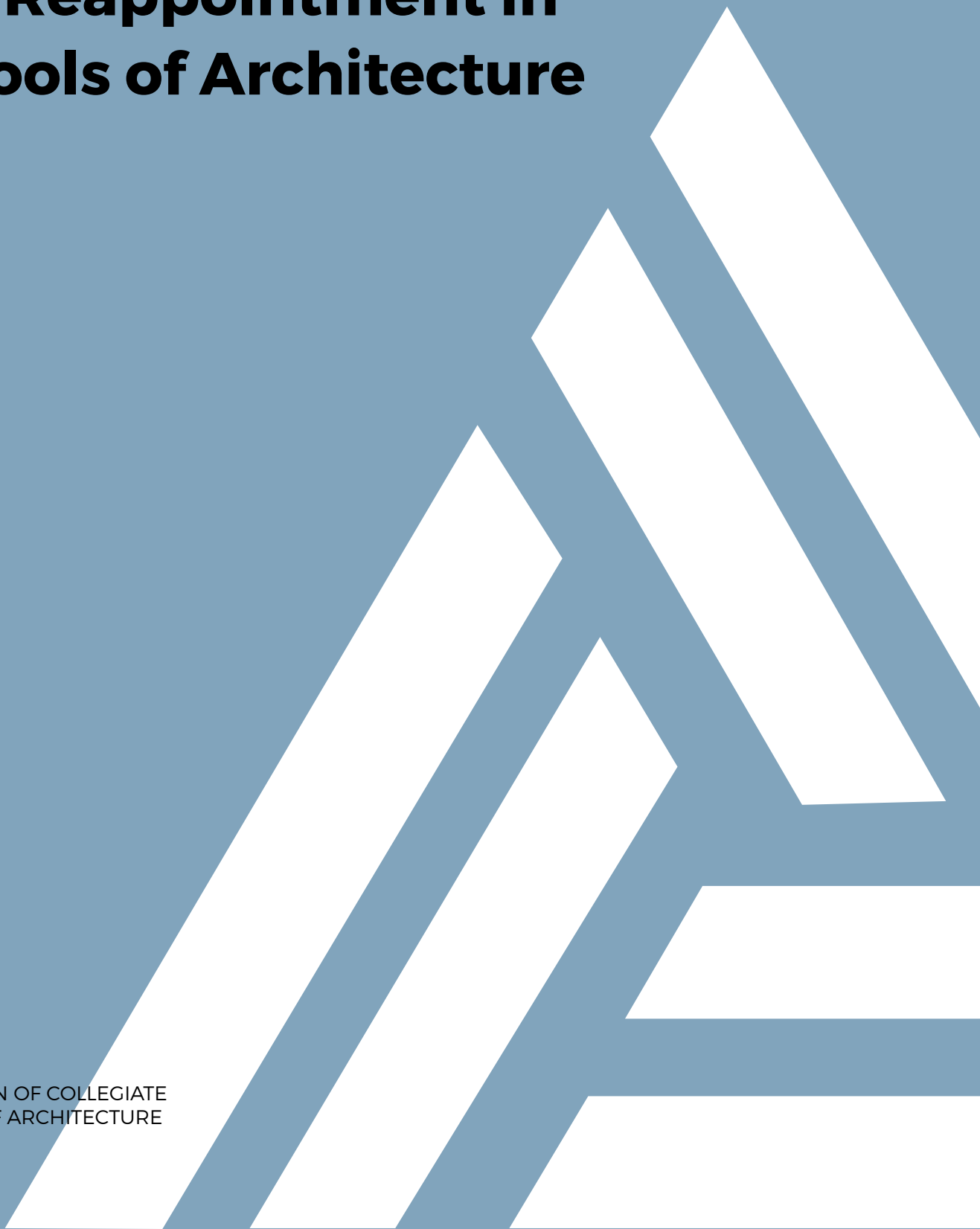
2024 update

Research and Scholarship for Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment in Schools of Architecture



ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE
SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE

2024 update

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP FOR PROMOTION, TENURE, AND REAPPOINTMENT IN SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE

1.

Introduction and Background

The intention of this report is to articulate the value of research, scholarship, and creative work in the discipline of architecture and its related areas of expertise. This document seeks to create a clear framework for evaluating the multifaceted dimensions of architectural research, scholarship, and creative work.

Architecture faculty produce a wide variety of scholarship, creative work, and research. This is a result of many factors, including the diversity of research paradigms that operate within the field of architecture (e.g., historical, technical, cultural, social, environmental and ecological, health and safety, artistic, and professional) and the diversity of academic institutions where this work occurs. Evaluating the potentially wide range of forms of investigation, modes of dissemination, and peer assessment for even a single individual working in the discipline of architecture is one of the more challenging aspects of tenure and promotion review due to the wide variety of research, scholarship, and creative work.

The variety of work can include: peer-reviewed and solicited publications (written and/or creative work); projects (solo, collaborative, and participatory) at a variety of scales; works of speculative design (competition entries, demonstration community projects, and other); public presentations in a range of forms and formats; archival research leading to exhibitions or publications; architectural installations and exhibitions; among others. Research can be supported through minor or major grants from various government sources (e.g., NSF, NEA, NEH, SSHRC, NSERC, DOE, NIH, HUD), public and private foundations (e.g., Mellon Foundation, Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Getty Foundation, John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, Knight Foundation), among other sources.

This range can often make the evaluation and presentation of a reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion case by peers both inside and outside of the discipline challenging. To evaluate the broader impact of a faculty member's scholarship, it's crucial to assess its influence on multiple communities, including the discipline (academy and profession), and society at large (including through public scholarship that reaches beyond academic boundaries) – all while balancing this assessment with the specific expectations of the host institution.

The intended audience of this report includes tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty, tenured faculty, university administrators, program administrators, external reviewers or evaluators, and promotion- and tenure-evaluation committees. This report offers program administrators evidence with which to advocate for faculty, and guidance to tenure-track faculty to help frame their work. It provides resources to demonstrate the value of architectural research in all its forms at the institutional level. Strategies are offered for tenured and other full-time faculty for continued academic development, as well as tools to help mentor their tenure-track colleagues.

Finally, since it is the responsibility of the candidates under review for promotion and tenure to articulate their own scope of research, this document articulates a range of forms of scholarship, creative work, and research germane to the discipline of architecture and its related fields. The report also proposes typical modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact for such scholarship areas.

Note

Tenure cases are unique to each candidate and policies vary across institutions.

This document provides a tool to facilitate clear and constructive conversations about promotion and tenure.

Tenure and Academic Freedom

While each institution will have guidelines for how tenure is valued, it is useful to begin with context-specific definitions, as well as a broad understanding of the relationship between tenure and academic freedom. These definitions were written by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

What is academic tenure?

"A tenured appointment is an indefinite appointment that can be terminated only for cause or under extraordinary circumstances such as financial exigency and program discontinuation."

"The modern conception of tenure in US higher education originated with the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. Jointly formulated and endorsed by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the 1940 Statement has gained the endorsement of more than 250 scholarly and higher education organizations. It is widely adopted into faculty handbooks and collective bargaining agreements at institutions of higher education throughout the United States."

Why is tenure important and what purpose does it serve?

"The principal purpose of tenure is to safeguard academic freedom, which is necessary for all who teach and conduct research in higher education. When faculty members can lose their positions because of their speech, publications, or research findings, they cannot properly fulfill their core responsibilities to advance and transmit knowledge.

Tenure provides the conditions for faculty to pursue research and innovation and draw evidence-based conclusions free from corporate or political pressure."

How does tenure serve the public interest?

"Education and research benefit society, but society does not benefit when teachers and researchers are controlled by corporations, religious groups, special interest groups, or the government. Free inquiry, free expression, and open dissent are critical for student learning and the advancement of knowledge. Therefore, it is important to have systems in place to protect academic freedom. Tenure serves that purpose."

How does tenure benefit colleges and universities?

"Tenure promotes stability. Faculty members who are committed to the institution can develop ties with the local community, pursue ongoing research projects, and mentor students and beginning scholars over the long term."

Does tenure only benefit individual professors?

"Although tenure does protect individual faculty members, it actually serves society and the common good by protecting the quality of teaching and research and thus the integrity of institutions of higher education. If faculty members can lose their positions for what they say in the classroom or for what they write in an article, they are unlikely to risk addressing controversial issues. The common good is not served when business, political, or other entities can threaten the livelihood of researchers and instructors, and thereby suppress the results of their work or modify their judgements."

Source: aaup.org/issues/tenure

Tenure and Academic Freedom

At a time when education is a contested cultural and political territory, the ACSA supports research, scholarship, and teaching that follow disciplinary norms and established scholarship traditions, as well as those that challenge institutional norms that have legacies of exclusion and suppression of knowledge traditions.

Audience

This report is intended for the audiences listed below.

The report offers program administrators evidence to advocate (to an academic institution administration) for faculty, and guidance to tenure-track faculty to help frame their work. It provides resources to demonstrate the value of architectural research in all its forms at the institutional level. Strategies are offered for tenured and other full-time faculty for continued academic development, as well as tools to help mentor their tenure-track colleagues. Finally, since it is the responsibility of tenure-track faculty members or candidates under review to articulate their own scope of research, this document articulates a range of forms of scholarship, creative work, and research germane to the discipline of architecture and its related fields.

Tenure-Track Faculty

Recognizing that architecture is a multifaceted academic practice, we encourage tenure-track faculty to clearly identify:

> A primary field of research and area of expertise in which the candidate expects to be evaluated.
> Peers who are operating in this field and who are contributing to its excellence and definition.
> The metrics or modes of evaluation appropriate for one's designated field and areas of expertise.
> The modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact specific to their field of research and area of expertise.
> The modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact assessed and valued by the faculty member's institution.
> Institutional requirements for dossier formatting, scheduling, processing, and beginning documentation immediately upon appointment.
> A list of possible external letter writers which meet the requirements of the institution (for example, a peer-institution or only full professors).

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Non-tenure-track faculty account for about half of all faculty appointments in North American higher education, and approximately 48% of architecture faculty at ACSA member schools. The non-tenure track consists of two major groups: those who teach part-time, and those who teach full-time but do not work in tenure-track positions. The language for describing these positions is institution-specific and includes terms such as clinical faculty, adjunct instructors, lecturers, teaching faculty, amongst others. This document cannot fully capture the nuances of the many non-tenure-track pathways. However, the different modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact described in this document can serve as a guideline, especially when the faculty's home institution does not provide clear documentation of pathways for advancement and promotion.

We encourage non-tenure-track faculty to consult the following additional resources:

> The American Association of University Professors (AAUP)'s Data Snapshot: Tenure and Contingency in US Higher Education Report (2023).
> The National Academies Press's "The Impacts of 2020 on Advancement of Non-Tenure-Track and Adjunct Faculty" (2021).
> The American Association of University Professors (AAUP)'s Resources on Contingent Positions (2023).

Audience

Tenured Faculty

Tenured faculty seeking promotion from Associate to Full Professor are encouraged to establish mentorship within their home institution. Additionally, members of the ACSA Distinguished Professors are well positioned to provide feedback on dossiers for those seeking this promotion.

University Administrators

This report aims to provide evidence of the breadth of scholarship, research, and teaching germane to the discipline of architecture.

Program Administrators

In the tenure mentoring and promotion review process, a faculty member is best served by clear articulation of their primary field of expertise. An early agreement between a faculty member and their mentors and administrator about the structure and direction of the field of expertise is most critical for the individual's case. Tenure-track faculty members are best guided through a tenure review process when administrators have a clear understanding of the candidate's research trajectory and the relationship between the candidate's teaching and particular field of expertise.

Non-tenure-track faculty are best served and supported when clear and updated guidelines about advancement and promotion are made available. These should include expectations for service, teaching, and research throughout their contracts and a clear pathway to promotion within the institution and program. Administrative mentorship is essential to the development of a successful tenure and promotion case.

External Reviewers

External review of tenure cases remain an essential contribution to the architectural community. It is extremely important that even seasoned reviewers read the provided mechanisms of evaluation specific to the candidate's home instution. These can vary widely between institution and should not be conflated with the expectations of the external reviewers' home institution.

Those new to the tenure and promotion review process are encouraged to reach out to others who have written letters and reviewed tenure cases before starting their own reviews. This will help to understand the format, language, and the detail required to write a letter, which will provide meaningful documentation to the reviewing committee.

Promotion and Tenure Evaluation Committees

Promotion and tenure evaluation committees have the responsibility to oversee promotion and tenure cases within their departments, schools and/or colleges. Committee members are encouraged to review this document and consider a faculty member's excellence through their impact on their field, either through traditional peer review metrics, and/or through emerging, novel, or other measures of impact and dissemination that may be appropriate given new technologies, arenas of engagement, or areas of research and creative practice.

Adherence to process and to the guidelines for tenure and promotion within the candidate's home institution are fundamental. Additionally, committee members are encouraged to reach out to their institutions and ensure that university-level requisites for tenure and promotion cases are in line with their own requisites and expectations, and that they match the information that the candidate for tenure and promotion receives.

Audience

It is strongly recommended that all faculty seek mentorship in the development of their tenure and/or promotion case.

Mentorship can come from within a faculty's home institution or beyond it, from external members of the ACSA community or from other communities or organizations that are strongly aligned with the faculty member's research interests or expertise. The most effective mentors will have extensive experience developing and reviewing tenure and promotion cases.

Program administrators should ensure a proper and supportive mentorship experience for their tenure-track and promotion-seeking faculty, even if it requires finding assistance outside of their own institutions. The support network of mentorship is crucial to a faculty's candidacy for tenure and/or promotion.

Defining Dossier and Scholarly Profile

The primary mechanism for documenting a tenure and/or promotion case is referred to as a "dossier," which is a document that defines the candidate's scholarly and faculty profile and encompasses service, teaching, and research (sometimes referred to as creative work and/or scholarship) activities. Each academic institution has a distinct language and model for relative expectations for a dossier. In some cases, faculty may negotiate responsibilities. These responsibilities are interrelated but are often evaluated separately and weighted differently (e.g., 20% service, 40% teaching, and 40% research is a common model for tenure-track faculty). The type and range of service and teaching required by the department or school, and the type and amount of research work required by their field, department/school, and academic institution may vary. Additionally, each university evaluates faculty differently. The terms can differ greatly across institutions. For example, a Carnegie Classification Research 1 (R1) institution may place a stronger emphasis on research outputs than it does on teaching performance.

As a candidate assembles their dossier, it is their responsibility to establish an individual academic profile that addresses the established criteria, metrics, and benchmarks for tenure at the given institution. Tenure evaluations must consistently adhere to the agreed-upon workloads of individual faculty members. The format, process, and timeline by which a tenure or promotion dossier is reviewed is unique to each institution. This process should be clearly documented by administrators and shared with a candidate upon beginning a tenure-track position. Faculty members are encouraged to use this document for help with:

- **Identifying areas of focus in research and scholarship.**
- **Identifying modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact.**

IDENTIFY AREAS OF FOCUS IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

All faculty in schools of architecture are responsible for identifying their field of research and scholarship.

This will define the academic scope of one's practices, activities, and benchmarks for measuring excellence through tenure and post-tenure reviews. Architecture research and scholarship can be grounded in diverse epistemological traditions and can intersect across the arts, humanities, social sciences, technology, and engineering. This inclusive or multi-faceted approach requires the candidate to identify the research/scholarship fields in which their work operates for a bracketed moment of time (i.e., the years under contract leading to the tenure and/or promotion evaluation).

IDENTIFY MODES OF DISSEMINATION, EVALUATION, AND IMPACT

To be considered in support of a tenure and promotion package, all research, scholarship, and creative work must be reviewed and/or evaluated by an external reviewer and/or review panel.

In some cases, additional reviews may be conducted or assessed by independent stakeholders. Examples of external and independent reviewers can span a range of individuals: from anonymized peer-reviewers for academic papers, to board members of a stakeholder organization in community-centered projects, curators of an exhibition, or editors of a book. Given the range of modes of production and evaluations, it is not possible to offer a uniform hierarchy, ranking system, or impact factor for all cases. Value, however, can be determined by the scale of audience to which the work is disseminated and the evaluation methods of the candidate's instution.

Defining Dossier and Scholarly Profile

This report aims to not replicate existing resources. Please, take a moment to review the extensive resources already available to all ACSA member faculty:

> **ACSA: Reports**
> **ACSA: Research**
> **ACSA: Teaching Resources**
> **ACSA: Equity and Justice**
> **Joint Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Of particular relevance to Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment cases:

> **2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM**
> **2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship**

2.

Areas of Focus in Research and Scholarship

Architectural work is informed by and contributes to many forms of knowledge. The following list of subject areas can be used to define a faculty member's work and expands on the ACSA Index of Scholarship database. These areas are intended to create broad categories rather than an exhaustive list.

It should be noted that while these areas are listed as separate categories, research and creative practices often span across various areas of expertise. Intersectional areas of focus are particularly impactful in advancing the discipline's capacity to address broader 'grand challenges.' For example, ACSA's current strategic plan supports and highlights disciplinary knowledge related to climate action and social justice, or "climate justice," which intersects across forms of knowledge and connects several areas of focus, such as: Architectural Design (2.1); Building Sciences and Technology (2.2); Community Engagement (2.3); and Ecology, Sustainability, and Climate (2.4).

2.1 **Architectural Design**

Architectural design-based research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Analog and digital representation, visualization, and/or artificial intelligence.
> Design and design processes.
> Design-build, construction, installation, and/or exhibition design.
> Fabrication, prototyping, and/or technological explorations that inform design processes.
> General investigations of design, creative, and/or professional practices whereby individuals maintain an active presence in designing, representing, visualizing, or engaging the built environment.

2.2 **Building Sciences and Technology**

Building sciences and technology-based research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Building construction and performance that affects resource consumption in the built environment (e.g., energy, water, materials).
> Building construction and performance that affects pollution from buildings impacting environmental and health systems (e.g., Nitrogen oxides – NOx, Carbon oxides – COx, Sulfur oxides – SOx, waste).
> Structural systems, construction technologies, and/or material investigations.
> Building information systems.
> Prefabrication and modular construction, and/or construction and project delivery systems.

2.3 **Community Engagement**

Initiated in 2005, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's Community Engagement Classification has become one of the most accepted definitions of community engagement within the context of higher education. It describes "collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Classification). This is part of what the Engagement Scholarship Consortium describes as "the continuing dialogue on the nature of knowledge and the role of academic institutions in society" that has emerged over the past twenty years (Engagement Scholarship Consortium).

In Ernest L. Boyer's seminal 1990 work, Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate, he

states, "The scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the University to our most pressing social, civic and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers and to our cities." (Source: 2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship)

Community engaged research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Applied and community-based practices.
> Public interest design, public scholarship, and/or pro-bono design initiatives.
> Community-based participatory or action-based research.
> Transdisciplinary scholarship, community-university partnerships, and/or organizational development.

Community engaged research and scholarship can also showcase work with demonstrable impact at various levels, depending on the breadth and scope of such work. Long-term sustained community relationships should be documented to establish impact. There are different ways to document and establish the impact of long-term sustained community relationships. One suggested way would be to demonstrate how the intervention/project has transformed the community, or how it has changed the community's perception of such an intervention/project.

2.4 Ecology, Climate, and Sustainability

Ecology, sustainability, and climate-based research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> How the built environment interacts with biodiversity, the local ecology/environment/ landscape, or how it impacts humans and other species (including the opportunity for interspecies collaboration), and/or non-human habitats.
> Adaptation, brownfield remediation, and/or strategies and processes of climate responsiveness including green and blue infrastructure and resilience.
> Ecological planning, development, land use, land rights, and other environmentally or socially responsible practices that intersect with ecology.
> Other topics addressing ecological knowledge, awareness, and practice.

This may include architectural scholars engaging in climate justice and environmental justice in relation to architectural and spatial practices.

2.5 History, Theory, Cultural Studies, and other Humanities

History, theory, cultural studies, and other humanities-based research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Research involving historical subjects and/or theoretical discourses.
> Ethnic/indigenous/cultural and/or studies of the humanities and social sciences.
> Curation and/or exhibition planning.
> Aesthetics, ethics, social equity, and/or spatial justice.
> Architectural education, pedagogy, and/or practice.

This may include architectural scholars engaging with challenging and contested contemporary or historical topics in relation to architectural and spatial practices such as governance structures, power structures, political ideologies, territorial conflicts, and settler colonialism.

2.6 **Social Sciences**

Social sciences-based research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Studies of social problems.
> Studies of inequality.
> Studies of collective behavior.

Social science-based architectural research uses quantitative and qualitative methods typically developed in sociology, anthropology, geography, economy, education, gender and women's studies, forensics, and human rights, race, and ethnic studies disciplines. While social science research may overlap considerably with humanities-centered research in History, Theory, and Cultural Studies, it can be distinguished through focus on data collection, analysis, repeatability, testing, and method.

2.7 **Urban Design and the Built Environment**

Urban design and the built environment encompasses a wide range of studies of the practices, processes, and effects of planning, designing, adapting, and maintaining cities and towns, and their relationship to the people that inhabit them.

Urban design addresses design issues in suburban, exurban, and rural environments. This type of research and scholarship includes, but is not limited to, activities focused on:

> Histories of legislation.
> Models of financing.
> Models of mobility.
> Models of housing.
> Models of zoning.
> Models of utilities and/or energy.
> Models of accessibility and/or access to care.
> Different forms of labor in cities and their relationship to racial, ethnic, gender, disability, social class, and ecological factors.

The built environment also refers to the critical studies of the design disciplines and the histories of participation, legislation, and implementation of urban policy, the people, institutions, agencies, organizations, and practices involved in designing and decision making, the peoples included and excluded from these processes, and the peoples directly or indirectly affected by them.

2.8 **Allied Design Fields**

The areas of expertise listed below are not an exhaustive list, nor should they be considered the only possible ways to frame a scholarly/faculty profile or a tenure and promotion case. Additional allied design fields engage a range of disciplines involving the built and natural environment; these fields may include, but not be limited to:

> Health, Wellness, and Aging.
> Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse.
> Housing Studies.
> Industrial Design and/or Product Design.
> Interior Design and/or Interior Architecture.
> Landscape Studies and/or Landscape Architecture.
> Public Health.
> Real Estate and/or Urban Development.
> Universal Design and Accessibility Studies.
> Urbanism and/or Urban Planning.

3.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Peer Review

Peer review is the independent assessment of research, scholarship, and/or creative practice by experts in the field. The purpose of peer review is to evaluate the quality of work, including its suitability for publication. Peer review functions as a form of self-regulation by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field or discipline. Peer review methods are used to maintain quality standards, improve performance, and provide credibility. Because architecture faculty can engage in many forms of research, creative activity, scholarship and dissemination, peer recognition can be demonstrated in many forms, some of which may not be well represented within academia. At many institutions peer review remains the primary method for validating work presented for tenure or promotion. Architectural scholars relying upon alternative forms of recognition and impact should be clear about these practices and define their work using the terms of their evaluating institution.

Impact

Design and research outcomes disseminated through peer-reviewed venues validating the results are generally valued over non-peer-reviewed venues. Impact of the work can be further assessed through the selectiveness and the prestige of the venue itself. More credit accrues to the faculty for self-authored outcomes than those authored by others about them, such as mentions or press coverage of creative practice. These conventions generally work well, particularly for research and scholarship-based outcomes. For design outcomes, a positive review by a respected critic in a widely-read non-peer-reviewed magazine may have a greater impact than a self-authored paper in a peer-reviewed conference proceeding. Faculty must make their case, and the institution should review each case individually.

The impact of a faculty member's work might also be assessed through their engagement with public scholarship. This includes dissemination of their scholarship and research through public-facing media venues, such as newspapers and news channels of local, regional, national, and global scales, and/or through alternative sources such as social media. In these cases, it is suggested that faculty consult guidelines for tenure and promotion from fields that value altmetrics (non-traditional citation metrics, such as the number of views an article/video/other has, the amount of times it has been shared, the attendance and audience for a public function, etc.) and other modes of dissemination, evaluation, and impact, clarifying and citing this information in their dossier.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important part of the production of architectural knowledge. Architectural projects typically require the knowledge and labor of multiple people, and there are many successful examples of co-authorship in architectural creative practices as well as in scholarly activities (i.e., research).

Collaborations can increase productivity, inspire new ideas, stimulate creativity, support risk-taking, and allow faculty to pursue a more complex agenda than they could pursue as individuals. Collaborating faculty should clearly outline their roles, activities, contributions to, and overall impact on shared scholarship. This helps provide evaluators with the context necessary to assess individual faculty contributions. Expectations for documenting collaborative authorship vary across institutions. However, faculty should clearly document their intellectual contributions in a format acceptable to their university. Possible formats include a narrative or table that describe the faculty member's individual contribution to the cited publication, scholarly, or creative project.

3.1

Publication

An important factor in the development of impactful architectural scholarship takes place across different forms of dissemination, including books, journals, and academic, professional, and artistic design magazines, independent publications, design webpages, podcasts, and exhibition catalogs, to name a few.

The range and relative merit of publication in architecture generally follow the criteria of the humanities and social sciences: a sole-authored book published at an academic press, anonymized peer-reviewed articles in high-impact journals, and anonymized peer-reviewed conference proceedings typically rank highest. Contemporary architectural scholarship employs various methods to assess publication impact. In technical areas like building science, refereed journal articles and citations are often valued more highly than books, similar to engineering disciplines. Conversely, design-focused architectural scholars often prioritize high-impact journals and other forms (such as creative publishing practices, journals, magazines, and digital zines) that, although not anonymized peer-reviewed, are under strict editorial control. These journals produce well-informed and influential design research, investigations, and opinions, maintaining a quality comparable to traditional peer-reviewed journals. While these journals may not generate the same citation counts as those in the humanities, social sciences, and engineering, this does not indicate lower-quality work.

Professional, curatorial assessments and opinion pieces carry importance in a field like architecture, as in the fine arts. It is important that each candidate to establish the measure of impact of their work, as it rests on each tenure and promotion committee to evaluate the importance and innovative substance of such public expression of opinions and trends. Architecture also has a considerable number of impactful professional journals publicizing current building production nationally and internationally. Writing building reviews in such journals, usually remunerated, is often characterized as 'journalism' rather than traditional scholarly publication.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Publication may include (listed alphabetically):

- Book
- Book chapter
- Book foreword
- Book review
- Blog post
- Building review in the professional press
- Edited book
- Edited journal
- Editorial or call for papers
- Exhibition Catalog
- Journal article, peer-reviewed
- Journal article, solicited or invited
- Monograph
- Op-eds
- Podcast
- Refereed paper published in conference proceedings
- Refereed project published in conference proceedings
- Refereed abstract published in conference proceedings
- Research report
- Technical report

For additional guidance see:

2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM

3.2

Practice Recognition

Much like creative work in the fine arts, built, unbuilt and conceptual work can be valid elements of a tenure and promotion dossier in architecture. Individuals working in this area should explain how their creative works (built, unbuilt and conceptual work) are evaluated or assessed by peers, jurors, etc. To evaluate this, two factors must be considered: the faculty member's role in the work and the impact of the work itself.

In many academic disciplines, consultancy work, where a professor offers their expertise for payment, is recognized as valuable for keeping the professor connected to the professional world. However, in many cases, this work is not eligible to be included as part of the candidate's research dossier. In the field of architecture, a professor might have received payment for work that they still consider a valuable part of their research dossier. In such instances, it's crucial to differentiate between consultancy as a professional service, which doesn't significantly impact disciplinary knowledge, and creative work with scholarly impact. Peer review is the best way to identify work that belongs in the latter category. In these cases, common forms of peer review include recognition in an international competition, peer-reviewed design awards for built or unbuilt work (e.g., ACSA, AIA, NCARB, USBGC, ULI, Pritzker, Agha Khan), and publication in prominent professional journals. Note that many prestigious architecture awards do not appear in the AAU List of Highly Prestigious Awards.

Just as publication is evidence of excellence in the field, so is social or environmental impact. Candidates can assess the latter by documenting socio-economic impacts, media citations, letters, impact statements from stakeholders, evidence of influence in areas outside of the discipline (for example, in public policy), inclusion as case studies and precedents in peers' syllabi and courses, and demonstration of impact through other forms of altmetrics (i.e., metrics that measure impact in alternative or complementary ways to more traditional citation impact metrics).

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Practice recognition may include (listed alphabetically):

- Awarded or recognized competition entry
- Commission by RFQ/RFP
- Invited installation and/or exhibition design
- Invited research-oriented demonstration project
- Peer-reviewed award
- Publicly reviewed community engagement design initiative
- Recognized design-build program and/or initiative
- Selection for design intervention or inclusion in exhibition curated by others

For additional guidance see:

2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM

3.3

Public-Facing Events, Curation, and Exhibition

Like other academic colleagues, professors in architecture organize, plan, and implement public-facing events (i.e. conferences, colloquia, public seminars, workshops, and other forms of disciplinary exchange or public-facing events). For many, these are active content production and research activities and should be documented as such.

Professors also commonly participate in and curate exhibitions of thematic research, archival material, the work of their colleagues, or of practicing architects, designers, and/or those from allied fields. Architectural exhibitions have become a well-recognized means of producing and disseminating architectural knowledge, often accompanied by printed and/or online catalogs composed of scholarly essays, and other forms of graphic or audiovisual contributions. Curation and exhibition in architecture encompasses a broad range of outputs, from internal exhibitions of student work to internationally recognized and highly competitive venues. Methods of assessing the impact of a curated exhibition or event may include the number of attendees, the number and quality of citations, the number of news articles, level of coverage, social media mentions, number of grants or external funds awarded to support/execute the exhibition, and other metrics accepted in museum/curatorial practices that may showcase or demonstrate such an exhibition or event has noticeable impacts. Individuals should clearly demonstrate metrics of impact under this section, including who sees the work, the peer review or selection process.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Public-facing Events, Curation, and Exhibition may include intellectual framing, planning, and implementation of (listed alphabetically):

- Community program or outreach
- Conference
- Online platform
- Performances
- Symposium
- Websites or dedicated social media accounts
- Workshop

For additional guidance see:

2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM

3.4

Public Presentation

In architectural disciplines, peer-reviewed conference presentations, panel presentations, and invited public lectures constitute valuable forms of knowledge dissemination.

One element that distinguishes architecture from other fields in terms of public presentation are guest critiques for design reviews. It is customary in schools of architecture to invite either architects and/or fellow academics to participate in juries for end-of-term studio reviews. Depending on the university, these activities can be categorized as either teaching or academic service, but they should not be part of a research dossier.

The work of "juror" in a design competition should be considered part of "service," as meaningful evidence of someone's voice and opinion valued in an exclusive setting. However, if it shapes the disciplines in profound ways and has greater impact value, it is up to candidates to frame their work in this arena in the larger context of their research and practice.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Public presentations that typically constitute research/scholarship may include (listed alphabetically):

> Invited presentation on research/ creative practice:
> Academic institution: lecture series
> Academic conference/symposium: keynote presentation
> Professional conference/meeting: keynote presentation
> Refereed presentation:
> Academic conference: panel/session organizer
> Academic conference: session presenter
> Academic conference: panelist
> Professional conference/meeting

Public presentations that typically constitute service may include (listed alphabetically):

> Community partnership liaison
> Critic
> Facilitator (at town halls and the like)
> Juror

For additional guidance see:

2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM

3.5

Community Engagement

Products of community engaged scholarship typically fall into three categories: academic products, applied products, and community products. Faculty seeking promotion and tenure with a focus on community engaged scholarship should consider pursuing scholarship in all these categories.

The following characteristics, derived from Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate by Charles E. Glassick, Mary Taylor Huber, and Gene Maeroff, provide criteria for evaluation of engaged scholarship as part of faculty evaluation. These are intended to be used for evaluation of overall engaged scholarship packages/projects, not individual products:

> Clear goals
> Adequate preparation
> Appropriate methods
> Significant results
> Effective presentation

Peer review is important for the scholarly evaluation of community engaged research. However, promotion and tenure documents rarely discuss who qualifies as appropriate peers for reviewing community engaged research and its varied outputs. Therefore, peer review from sources outside the academy should be considered.

Significance of outreach scholarship includes the following:

> Defining or resolving relevant social problems or issues
> Facilitating organization development
> Improving existing practices or programs
> Enriching the cultural life of a community

Source:
2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Community engaged research products may include (listed alphabetically):

> Articles
> Book, texts, chapters, and monographts
> Conference posters, presentations, abstracts, and proceedings
> Contracts, grants, and gifts
> Community attained grants/funding
> Community awards
> Copyrights, patents, and inventions
> Curricula/texts
> Designs
> Displays/exhibitions
> Educational materials and instructional activities
> Electronic products
> Forums/workshops/seminars (intended for public attendance)
> Guides/handbooks
> Honors and awards connected to community engagement
> Newsletters
> Policies
> Presentations
> Reports
> Research briefs
> Social marketing/Apps
> Training and technical assistance
> Websites

For additional guidance see:

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3.6

Funding

Funding sources in architecture generally align with allied disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM fields. There are also established models for funding creative work in the arts and private sponsorship of design research.

Architects increasingly benefit from participating in transdisciplinary research teams, enabling them to pursue larger federal grants from agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Institutes of Health. They have also successfully obtained funding from foundations like the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, state departments of transportation, and municipal governments.

Dedicated funding for design research remains relatively scarce, highly competitive, and typically provides small amounts of money. This is particularly true for faculty engaged in artistic and humanities practices. Additionally, funding for social and climate justice initiatives can be complicated by state policies that restrict justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work. Faculty in these areas may increase their chances of obtaining funding by collaborating with established NGO's or foundations.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

Funding may include (listed alphabetically):

- Alternate forms of funding (such as crowdsourcing)
- Corporate sponsorship and/or industry partnership
- Foundation funding
- In-kind donation (including materials for projects, software, and educational resources)
- Municipal or governmental sponsorship
- Research grant: external/national: lead researcher
- Research grant: internal: lead researcher
- Research grant: external/national: secondary researcher
- Research grant: internal: secondary researcher

For additional guidance see:

2019 ACSA White Paper: Assessing the Quality of Architectural Research & Scholarship

2018 ACSA White Paper: Architectural Education/Research and STEM

3.7

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) involves the systematic inquiry into student learning that enhances teaching practices in higher education by making the findings public. SoTL contributes to the discovery of knowledge about teaching and learning in higher education and must meet the same standards of rigor, relevance, peer review, and dissemination as other forms of disciplinary research and creative activity.

Ernest L. Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate (1990) provides valuable insights for faculty who emphasize SoTL in their tenure and promotion cases. Evidence of SoTL can include papers, presentations, and publications that reflect discipline-specific pedagogy, teaching innovations, and analyses of interventions demonstrating improved learning outcomes. There are numerous ways to evaluate the academic impact of SoTL, including peer reviewed presentations and articles, publication in design journals and popular press, and teaching awards that recognize pedagogical knowledge and innovation.

Modes of Dissemination, Evaluation, and Impact

For an activity to be designated as SoTL, it should manifest at least three key characteristics:

> It should be public
> It should be susceptible to critical review and evaluation
> It should be accessible for exchange and use by other members of one's scholarly community

For additional guidance see:

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4.

Acknowledgments

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