

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE: Information for Faculty Seeking Tenure, CCE, and Promotion Fall 2025



March 26, 2025 Faculty Service Panelists pictured from left to right: Susan Davis, Professor, Music; Francois Pierre-Louis, Professor and Chair, Political Science; Schiro Withanachchi, Associate Dean, School of Business; Director, Business and Liberal Arts Programs; Kate Pechenkina, Professor and Dean, Social Sciences; Soniya Munshi, Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, & Leadership (CETLL) and Associate Professor, Urban Studies.

Executive Summary

In Spring 2025, the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning & Leadership (CETLL) convened two panels about fulfilling expectations for service activities for faculty at various stages of tenure and promotion at Queens College. Each of the panels was comprised of deans, department chairs, and faculty members, including a Provost's Faculty Fellow. The panels aimed to address recurring faculty questions about service, including:

- what activities are recognized as faculty service
- how to document service activities
- how service activities factor into tenure, promotion, and CCE decisions

This informational document condenses the panelists' remarks. The document is recommended for faculty seeking tenure, CCE, and/or promotion to associate professor, full professor, or senior lecturer. (As per the 2023-2027 PSC-CUNY Contract, Lecturers have a pathway to promotion to Senior Lecturer.)

We invite you to read the full document to have the benefit of panelists' insights, and to share this information widely with your faculty colleagues.



May 14, 2025 Faculty Service Panelists pictured from left to right: Susan Davis, Professor, Music; Daniel Weinstein, Professor and Dean, Math and Natural Sciences; Stephen Grover, Associate Professor and Chair, Philosophy.

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Key Insights About Faculty Service

- All faculty are expected to do service as part of their faculty workload at QC. Approximately 20% of faculty effort devoted to service is standard at institutions like Queens College and can serve as a guideline for the amount of service normally expected of faculty.
- Service can take place at multiple levels: service to students, your department, the college, CUNY, the discipline, and the community (in Queens, and beyond).
- Service factors substantively into reappointment, tenure, CCE, and promotion decisions.
- Seek a mentor (such as a senior professor) who can guide and support your service activities along with other steps taken for tenure, CCE, and/or promotion.
- Support your own service and activities undertaken for tenure, CCE, and/or promotion through self-mentoring and use of various tools to track to-do lists, make materials searchable, etc.
- Document service just as you document teaching and scholarship, physically and/or digitally, and include it in your annual report as well as your Interfolio portfolio.

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Defining Service

Service refers to the contributions of time and expertise that faculty make outside of teaching and scholarship. Some service is routine (e.g., attending faculty meetings or commencement, advising individual students, writing recommendation letters) and does not need to be explicitly named in the faculty portfolio.

The internal service record is made up of all service activities that go beyond these routine expectations.

Activities that should be documented in the internal service record take place at six levels:

- **Students**, e.g., advising a student club; advising students in programs or departments with high numbers
- **Department**, e.g., serving on search, assessment, or the Personnel and Budget (P&B) committees; developing a new academic program; mentoring junior colleagues
- **College**, e.g., participating in search or academic senate-committees; leading campus-wide events
- **CUNY**, e.g., organizing or participating in university-wide panels or events
- **Profession/Discipline**, e.g., serving as grant reviewer, journal reviewer/editor, or conference organizer; serving in national and international professional organizations
- **Community**, e.g., judging science fairs; doing outreach to high schools; conducting a public talk for a community-based organization

Where to Begin?

Do service in your department. Serve on department committees. If you meet the criteria, consider serving on the Personnel and Budget (P&B) Committee for at least one term. The P&B gives you a bigger picture of your department and issues related to funding, hiring adjuncts, and more. This commitment is acknowledged as time-intensive and important service.

Do service outside your department. When you serve on campus-wide committees, you get to know people from different departments, different disciplines, and different schools. Various cross-campus initiatives may come out of service. These initiatives may be part of your research or your teaching--something innovative that inspires you to do something bigger, e.g., an interdisciplinary program you'd like to start on campus or at CUNY. The benefits of service to the college (outside your department) include the possibility of building collegial relationships and a broader network of colleagues. Your face and name will be more widely recognized as a member of the campus community. This can be important for various aspects of your professional progression and reputation.

QC's motto is *Discimus ut serviamus*—we learn so that we may serve. Service is part of our identity.

Strategies to Support Service Activities during the Tenure, CCE, and Promotion Processes

Build a relationship with your colleagues, department chair, and dean. They are here to support you. As one dean says, “you bother me when you don’t bother me.”

Be visible on campus. Build relationships with your colleagues across the campus. Attend college-wide events. Participate in activities within your department and outside your department. Introduce yourself to people.

Have a mentor. Build a relationship with a senior professor you speak to regularly. A mentor supports your goals as a scholar and teacher and helps you sort through your documented activities and accomplishments to build your file/portfolio to submit. A mentor may comment on your scholarship and offer guidance around publishing. You may have different mentors for different aspects of faculty life. If you are unsure how to identify or approach a mentor, your dean can be a resource.

Do self-mentoring. Set goals for each semester. Set aside time each week to ask: what have I done to move toward these goals? Use technology to support your self-mentoring. Gamify your checklists. Use an app to make checklists with bullets and stars. Use tools that help you search for items, track your to-do lists, and motivate you to sustain the process. Some specific tools recommended by panelists include Taskade and Notion AI. Workflowy and Trello are non-AI options.

Be a mentor. Mentoring students or junior colleagues is important to their acclimatization and professional success. It can also be an incredibly satisfying activity. Not everyone may see themselves as a potential mentor, but you may want to explore this option- you might surprise yourself.

Don’t overextend yourself. It’s ok to say no to some requests for service, if you need to focus on a different aspect of your work. Speak to your chair and/or dean if you need guidance. That being noted, when faculty come up for tenure, CCE, or promotion - especially promotion to Full Professor - a thin service record is glaringly obvious and detracts from your case.

Strategies to Align Teaching, Service, and Scholarship

Teaching, service, and scholarship can work together if you think strategically about your role and your strengths at the college. Start with an inventory of your special interests, experiences, talents, and goals, and find ways to integrate the work you are doing and your skills with service to the college.

For example: If you're great with data visualization, you can participate in the accreditation process. If you are familiar with research involving human subjects, you can serve on an Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you're serving your field by hosting a conference and bringing local experts from the Queens College community, this work is considered service to QC and to the discipline. After a conference or other event, you could collaborate with some of the presenters and publish edited journal. If you're devoted to the environment, say "yes" when the President asks for faculty to serve on the Sustainability Committee. You might find that engaging students in campus-based sustainability efforts can become an experiential learning opportunity in a class you teach.

Another example comes from a QC colleague in the Education department who has served as chair and does a lot of advising. With a peer, he examined whether large language models and generative design could support their advising work by building a study around some of the most frequently asked questions in their advising sessions. This exploration served the students during advising contact time and was aligned with their work as faculty members. Later, they analyzed the data they collected and wrote an article for publication.

Or, find something you're passionate about and start a new initiative. For example, Schiro Withanachchi noted that creating the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program raised her visibility on campus. She received a course release to start this initiative, and the experience provided her with opportunities for scholarship and publication. Due to this work, she was invited to speak in various countries and receive a Fulbright award.

Strategies to Document Service during the Tenure/CCE and Promotion Processes

Familiarize yourself with Interfolio. Queens College uses Interfolio to collect and document information required for tenure, CCE, and/or promotion applications (as well as annual reappointments and third year reviews). The Faculty180 module of Interfolio is where QC faculty document their scholarship and professional history, including service activities. For more information about Interfolio, go to: qc.cuny.edu/academics/ihsigning-in/

Document all your service activities. Approach service as requiring the same documentation as teaching and scholarship.

A Develop a system of storing all the artifacts and records you need for reappointment, CCE, tenure, or promotion.

You may want to use a physical file to store hard copy items, and a digital file where you store electronic documents. You can use Dropbox or set up a Microsoft Team for this purpose. Make sure to keep digital copies of physical files in case of disaster striking.

Create subfolders (or channels): scholarship, teaching, service, and other (e.g. professional development). Any time you do any work related to these three areas, put a copy or evidence into those folders. You can also create an Excel spreadsheet with columns for teaching, scholarship, service, and other activities.

Keep a record of number of hours spent on service activities.

Engage in sound recordkeeping hygiene by updating your files regularly, at least once per semester.

B What goes in the physical/digital file to document your service activities?
Examples of evidence include:

- Thank you notes and other correspondence from students
- List of letters of recommendation you have written. You can indicate this effort in your narrative if the number of letters exceeds expectations.
- Invitations or thank you letters for speaking engagements, on and off-campus
- Evidence of leadership in conferences (e.g., session organizer, program committee member)
- Indications of positions on advisory boards, councils, etc.
- Media appearances or coverage of your work on radio, TV, newspapers, etc.
- Products from your service (e.g., documents you developed for submission to the accrediting body, a PDF of materials for a new program you created)
- Letters from colleagues who can affirm your efforts. For example, if you chaired or co-chaired a committee, ask for a letter from someone who has knowledge of the work done by the committee.
- A document developed by a committee or group to record a shared narrative of the work. This serves as institutional memory and reduces the labor of each individual documenting the work on their own.
- If you've done service but don't have evidence, think about whom you can ask for a letter documenting the work.

C Create a cover sheet that organizes the various items to help you develop a narrative.

Suggestions for Faculty Seeking Promotion after Tenure or CCE

- ***Continue to request teaching observations.*** Although tenured/certificated faculty are no longer required to have peer observations of teaching, individuals who are pursuing promotion are encouraged to request teaching observations. Make sure that these observations and reports are added to your portfolio every semester/year.

Tenured/certificated faculty are required to have an annual evaluation with their chair until they are tenured full professors (see Article 18 of the PSC-CUNY Contract). Your chair's report should address the service contributions you have made.

It is vital that your portfolio reflects a complete record of peer observations of teaching and annual conferences.

- ***Continue to explore opportunities to be a leader*** in your department or in a program. Put yourself out there to consider an administrative role if this aligns with your goals.

- Scholarship has to be there. Service won't get you over a lack of scholarship.

- Faculty are expected to make more substantial service contributions at this level than initial tenure. See the Committee of Seven's notes on this topic from May 5, 2023 (qc.cuny.edu/provost/communications-from-the-office-of-provost/)

- Faculty at this level should be doing service at the college and, if possible, university level. The move to full professor is "beginning to establish your legacy at QC, not just in your discipline, but how you contribute to the college."

- Teach a range of courses, including new courses (i.e., not the same courses you taught for initial tenure).

- If you don't get full professorship, you can re-apply:
 - After a negative recommendation from the Committee of 7, the dean puts together recommendations on what this person should do (e.g. publish a book or a second book, get critical response/citations, etc.). You should wait at least a year or two before applying again so that you can build up your portfolio. It's important to have the support of the department chair for full professorship and that your chair be aware of your intentions with sufficient time to solicit external letters and review your portfolio prior to submission.

The Committee of 7

Background

The Committee of 7 reviews all applications for reappointment, tenure, CCE, and promotion. The committee is comprised of 7 department chairs (one from the School of Education and two from each of QC's other three schools). In the fall, the Committee of 7 meets to review applications for tenure, CCE, and promotion to associate professor. In the spring, the Committee focuses on applications for full professor.

Note that the Committee of 7 does not make the final decisions about tenure, CCE, and promotion. The Committee makes recommendations to the College Personnel and Budget Committee, which subsequently flow to the President for decision (except in the case of early tenure, which must go to CUNY and the Board of Trustees). That being said, the Committee of 7's recommendations carry a great deal of weight in the outcome of a case.

Since the Committee is comprised of chairs who know how departments run and are aware of the differences between departments, the Committee members help each other discern which service activities are meaningful (service on a committee that requires a significant amount of work vs. committee that doesn't do a lot). Deans present each case to the Committee at the beginning of their deliberations and provide context for each faculty personnel action.

How the Committee of 7 Reviews and Weighs Different Materials

- The Committee of 7 considers the totality of your record, including but not limited to letters from at least six external evaluators selected by your departmental P&B, Chair's report, departmental P&B report, departmental and caucus vote, publications or creative expression portfolio, work in progress, reappointment letters, teaching portfolio, teaching evaluations and observations, and service portfolio.
- The service record is an important part of the Committee of 7's deliberations.
- The CV is the first thing the Committee looks at. The CV should include all publications, lectures and talks you've given, courses taught, service to the department, and service to the college. Categorize different types of service on your CV.
- Deans present each case to the Committee and provide context for each faculty personnel action at the beginning of their deliberations.
- In Interfolio, there is an external reviewer section that the candidate doesn't see. In addition, you can include support letters from students, colleagues, mentors (current and former), but note that these do not carry much weight in promotion and tenure actions for professorial faculty titles. You should heed your chair's advice on whether to include these items in your portfolio.

Impetus for the Faculty Service Panels in Spring 2025

The two CETLL-sponsored panels on faculty service as well as this information document grew out of recommendations from an Advisory Board serving the Queens College Inclusive Excellence 3 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI). With staffing and support from the Associate Provost for Innovation and Student Success, QC convened an HHMI grant Advisory Board of faculty and staff who developed strategies to strengthen inclusive practices across Queens College. The Board identified a need to provide faculty with information about the expectations for all faculty to do service. The Board also sought to expand acknowledgement of the significant contributions of labor and time made by faculty doing service. In its role providing training and resources for faculty professional development, CETLL followed up on the Board's recommendations, convening the two panels and offering this information document for faculty.

On March 26, 2025, the discussion was moderated by **Soniya Munshi**, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning & Leadership (CETLL) and Associate Professor of Urban Studies. The panel featured **Susan Davis**, Professor of Music; **Kate Pechenkina**, Professor and Dean of Social Sciences; **Francois Pierre-Louis**, Professor and Chair of Political Science; and **Schiro Withanachchi**, Associate Dean of the School of Business and Director of the Business and Liberal Arts Programs.

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