

Religious Education Rank and Status Document

Approved by the Academic Vice President's Council 29 March 2017

The mission of Religious Education at Brigham Young University is to assist individuals in their efforts to come unto Christ by teaching the scriptures, doctrine, and history of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ through classroom instruction, gospel scholarship, and outreach to the larger community.

Introduction

Employment as a faculty member in Religious Education at Brigham Young University is a privilege and a blessing. Our commitment to our college and the university is informed by the realization that our income and the resources with which we teach classes and conduct research are consecrated by the faith and devotion of those who sacrifice to make these resources available. In Religious Education, we demonstrate appreciation for our financial resources, our time, and our God-given talents by using them wisely and well. Quality teaching, scholarship, and citizenship are acts of discipleship, and we engage in all three with a spirit of consecration.

In harmony with expectations for the entire university, educating students “is the most important activity” in which we engage as faculty at BYU (University Rank and Status Policy, 3.3.1). In addition to high quality teaching, all Religious Education faculty members are expected to maintain a strong record of research and publication (see below for the teaching professional alternative), and to demonstrate exemplary citizenship in their department, their college, the university, and their professional discipline. Religious Education places a premium on collegiality and maintaining a hospitable work environment. Ultimately, the most important mandate for Religious Education faculty members in all of their professional endeavors is to build faith in Jesus Christ and in his restored church and gospel.

Rank and status reviews provide opportunities for faculty members to evaluate their progress, celebrate their strengths, and identify areas needing improvement. While this process serves as the basis for decisions regarding retention and promotion, it also guides in defining the course for a productive and fulfilling career. All faculty hired into Religious Education are expected to actively strive to attain the rank of full professor. Advancement to the rank of professor is not an automatic or inconsequential promotion, but rather is an acknowledgement of a faculty member's consistent, quality contributions and expertise in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and citizenship.

This 2017 document supersedes and replaces all previous Rank and Status documents in Religious Education. Therefore, Religious Education advancement committees and administrators will utilize this document and the university Rank and Status Policy when making their recommendations on a faculty member's advancement and continuing faculty status (CFS). Accordingly, faculty members will be evaluated in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and citizenship, with the understanding that superior performance in one of these areas does not offset less than acceptable performance in another area. All candidates bear complete responsibility for knowing and meeting expectations and schedules for rank advancement and attaining CFS. Every faculty member in Religious Education who is in a CFS slot is expected to read their colleagues'

advancement portfolios and to fully participate in the review process. Directives on faculty voting for advancement are contained in a separate memorandum.

For additional information on university expectations for professorial and professional faculty, see the BYU Rank and Status Policy (<http://policy.byu.edu/view/index.php?p=103>), the Faculty Hiring Policy (<https://policy.byu.edu/view/index.php?p=211>), and the Mission and Aims of BYU (<http://aims.byu.edu>).

I. Teaching

The Principles

“The high quality education of students is, and should be, the most important activity of Brigham Young University faculty. Good university teachers are themselves eager learners who imbue their teaching with the excitement of learning. They care about their students and work to exemplify Christian virtues as they teach. They are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with students and helping them learn. They have high standards, set clear expectations, and hold students to high levels of academic performance. They are always engaged in the process of improving their teaching. They master the content of their courses and stay current with the literature and techniques of their disciplines. They are mentors and role models to students. They provide an education that is spiritually strengthening, intellectually enlarging, character building, and leading to lifelong learning and service” (3.3.1).

In harmony with university teaching expectations, the primary mission of Religious Education is to teach the restored gospel of Jesus Christ rigorously and with the Spirit, and to build faith in him.

The Measures

Faculty members, no matter what their rank, are expected to develop and maintain a record of high quality teaching throughout their career. During the course of their employment faculty members may have varied assignments, so those making rank and status decisions should be sensitive to such things as the number of course preparations, the number of students taught, committee and administrative assignments, and other expectations. The items listed below are among those that will be considered in the evaluation of teaching, recognizing that no one item will be fully indicative of a teacher’s contributions.

Excellent teaching is characterized in part by rigorous college-level course design and effective classroom instruction that combine to educate and to edify, being “spiritually strengthening” and “intellectually enlarging” (<http://aims.byu.edu>). Expected course design includes carefully defined student learning outcomes and well-aligned syllabi, instructional materials, and assessments. Evidence of effective teaching also includes attaining suitable peer classroom and content evaluations, student evaluations, and appropriate course GPA’s. Other evidences include the development of online and multimedia content, availability to students, effectiveness in mentoring students, exemplary supervision of graduate students as a thesis chair or committee member, and winning teaching awards.

Faculty members are expected to demonstrate ongoing steps to improve their teaching over time. Such steps include staying current in their discipline, responding productively to peer and student

feedback, studying teaching techniques, and participating in seminars, workshops, and conferences where good teaching is a primary focus.

Further Expectations for Professional Teaching Track Faculty

Unlike professorial faculty members, professional teaching faculty members in Religious Education are not required to engage in research and publication. However, certain types of regular, measureable, and consequential teaching-related activity are expected of them in addition to the teaching and citizenship expectations common to all faculty members. Such activity will demonstrate that these teaching professionals are not only staying current in their discipline of undergraduate teaching and learning, but are also contributing to the general improvement of teaching in Religious Education. Therefore, advancement committees and administrators will include the following expectations in their evaluation of professional teaching faculty members.

Professional teaching track professors in Religious Education have distinctive responsibilities that include teaching additional sections of courses and teaching sections with larger than average class enrollments compared to their professorial colleagues.

Professional teaching faculty members have an increased responsibility to provide college or department in-service on improving teaching and to develop products that enhance, support, or extend excellent teaching in Religious Education. Such products may include the development of new courses or course content, as well as the creation of multimedia or other related content for use in classroom or online instruction.

Professional teaching professors are also expected to demonstrate familiarity with current scholarship focused on excellent teaching in higher education and particularly in the teaching of religious education by reviewing discipline-related publications and by participating in teaching-related conferences and workshops. Professional teachers will establish a pattern of regularly imparting to faculty in their department and college the teaching-related knowledge and experiences gained through such interaction.

Beyond these measures, quality, peer-reviewed publications may further enhance the portfolio of a teaching professional professor, but they are not specifically required for advancement and they are not a substitute for quality performance in the above listed expectations.

II. Scholarship

Implementation

The scholarship requirements that follow apply to all *professorial* faculty members hired into CFS slots in Religious Education in 2015 and thereafter (see the alternative expectations for professional faculty in the previous section). Faculty who were hired before 2015 may, if they choose, submit their Initial Review and their Final (CFS) Review portfolios under the previous (2012) scholarship guidelines, but successful application for advancement to (full) professor by these faculty members will comply with the guidelines outlined below. Faculty who in 2015 were already associate professors with CFS may, if they choose, apply for advancement to (full) professor under the 2012 guidelines, as long as they apply by Fall 2020. By June 2021, the following scholarship expectations will apply to all Religious Education professorial faculty.

The Principles

As stated at the beginning of this document, “the mission of Religious Education at Brigham Young University is to assist individuals in their efforts to come unto Christ by teaching the scriptures, doctrine, and history of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ through classroom instruction, gospel scholarship, and outreach to the larger community,” with “the larger community” understood to include “the academy.” Congruous with this mission, the scholarship produced by Religious Education faculty members is expected to affirm faith in Christ and his restored gospel; never to diminish or annul it. Distinctively, Religious Education expects a dual scholarship role for *all* its professorial faculty members: research and publications in non-specialist gospel scholarship *and* disciplinary scholarship to the academy. Quality work in both of these categories helps fulfill Religious Education’s mission. Faculty members’ academic expertise and research will usually inform the types of gospel scholarship in which they engage. So, when possible, the results of disciplinary research and expertise will be made accessible to and available for non-specialist Church members and others.

Religious Education faculty share in the general scholarship expectations for all faculty at Brigham Young University, as spelled out in the University Rank and Status Policy:

“[Faculty] must be intellectually alive and current in their disciplines, not only through participating in the substantive developments of the discipline, but also through constantly honing the skills and tools of scholarship used in the discipline. In most disciplines this means that faculty will bring to their work the rigor of writing, subject the work to the criticism of peers, and share their insights with colleagues and students. A scholar is characterized by devotion to discovering and learning, by rigor and thoroughness in that learning, and by the determination to profess what is learned” (3.4.1).

“Because of diversity among the academic disciplines and because of the variety of intellectual tasks with which faculty are concerned, a faculty member's scholarship may take different forms, so long as the work is of high quality. Scholarship includes, among other things, the discovery of new knowledge and original insights that add to the world’s body of knowledge and understanding; the application of existing knowledge to the solution of practical problems; the integration of existing knowledge through interdisciplinary work; studying and improving the presentation of existing knowledge; and aesthetic or intellectual expression reflecting achievement in creative or performing arts” (3.4.2).

“Professorial faculty ... are expected to demonstrate consistent productivity of high quality scholarship over their entire careers. The scholar’s record shows a growing body of works that have stood the test of exposure to and evaluation by other scholars in the discipline. ... Both quality and quantity are relevant in assessing a faculty member’s scholarly record. It should be recognized that one truly exceptional scholarly or creative work may be more important than several others [of lesser consequence]” (3.4.3).

In addition to publications, successful candidates will be able to demonstrate other steps they have taken as active scholars to stay current in their disciplines. Examples may include participation in discipline-specific seminars and conferences, internships, and research leaves. Such beneficial

activities and an ongoing awareness of developments in gospel scholarship are expected, but are not a substitute for requisite publications.

“Gospel scholarship” is defined herein as peer-reviewed work published in journals and other venues whose principal readership is Latter-day Saints, who, while they may be interested in the field of study represented in the publication and even teach in gospel-related settings, generally do not have advanced degrees in the field and are not actively publishing in the field. By employing sound reasoning and methodologies, gospel scholarship appears in peer-reviewed journals and other venues devoted to bringing new insights and approaches to, and the application, integration, and presentation of, existing knowledge on topics of interest to non-specialist Latter-day Saint readers, as well as to others who may be interested in Latter-day Saint perspectives. Current examples of venues in which quality gospel scholarship may be published include the *Religious Educator*, Sperry Symposia, Church History Symposia, *BYU Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, and Latter-day Saint presses such as Deseret Book and Covenant Communications. (Writing done as part of a Church calling is not considered for university rank and status consideration.)

The “academy” is defined herein as the aggregate of scholars (usually with advanced degrees) who teach and research in recognized academic disciplines. Publications directed to the academy appear in reputable, peer-reviewed academic journals and other venues devoted to the discovery of new knowledge and original insights in the field, or to the new application, integration, and presentation of existing knowledge in the field, and whose main readership is other specialists in the field. Religious Education faculty members have training and publish in several different academic disciplines. Current examples of quality publication venues in these fields include periodicals such as *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, *Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy*, *Journal of Moral Education*, *Journal of Mormon History*, as well as university and other academically-oriented presses, such as Oxford, Farleigh-Dickenson, Oklahoma, and the Latter-day Saint Church Historian’s Press. When submitting work to the academy, faculty are encouraged to pursue publishing in influential and highly regarded national and international venues in order to provide broad exposure for their work.

Some publishers and venues, such as *BYU Studies Quarterly*, the Maxwell Institute, and the Religious Studies Center, publish gospel scholarship and work directed to the academy. Faculty members applying for advancement are responsible to clarify the nature of their publications (gospel scholarship or to the academy) with such venues, depending on the primary target audience as well as the tone and level of specialization of their article.

“Peer review” in this document generally indicates a double-blind review performed by scholars whose specific area of expertise, as demonstrated through their own quality publications, overlaps with the proposed publication in question. This is the standard employed by the Religious Studies Center publishing office, and generally constitutes the standard expected of all publications counted for advancement. If publishing venues (such as some LDS publishers) do not have such a peer review process in place, faculty members are responsible, with third party assistance (e.g., department RSC co-research directors), to obtain such review and to demonstrate in their portfolio that this has occurred. A publisher’s summative review should not be confused with the more

informal, formative review from qualified colleagues that all faculty are encouraged to obtain *before* submitting their work for publication.

The Measures

Rank and Status committees and administrators will evaluate a professorial faculty member's scholarship in light of the following measures.

Given our dual requirements in the area of scholarship—gospel *and* academy-related scholarship—and given the university's expectation that faculty members manifest "consistent productivity of high quality scholarship over their entire careers" by publishing in a variety of quality venues, candidates for CFS and rank advancement will document the reputation and selectivity of presses and journals and the nature of the peer review process of their published works (see 3.4.4.1E).

The minimum expectation for Religious Education professorial faculty members is an average of *at least one quality peer-reviewed publication per year*. More such publications will further strengthen the scholarship portion of a candidate's portfolio.

In harmony with BYU Rank and Status Policy 7.9.6, for CFS and rank advancement reviews department chairs or advancement committees "will obtain external reviews of the body of the faculty member's scholarship from at least three faculty members at well regarded academic institutions who have achieved reputations in the relevant field. ... Generally, reviewers should hold equal or higher rank to that being sought, and they should be persons whose personal association with the candidate would not be expected to bias the reviews." Department chairs or review committees will include a statement of how and why each external reviewer was chosen, an indication of each reviewer's "stature in the field," and a copy of each reviewer's curriculum vitae, in addition to the reviewer's actual evaluation of a candidate's work. Thus, faculty members are encouraged to effectively network with other professionals during their career in Religious Education.

Initial (Third-Year) Review for CFS. This review evaluates a faculty member's initial scholarly "performance" as well as their long-term "promise" (4.3). It includes an assessment of their budding research trajectory in the areas of gospel scholarship and publication to the academy. Even at this stage of their career, faculty members are expected to meet the minimum average for publications cited above.

Final CFS (Sixth-Year) Review & Advancement to the Rank of Associate Professor. "The final continuing faculty status review will include an assessment of the faculty member's performance and promise" (4.4) in the areas of gospel scholarship and publication to the academy, according to the dual expectations and the minimum average of publications outlined above. These publications must demonstrate "a *sufficient* record of high quality scholarship since appointment as an assistant professor" (5.2, emphasis added), the faculty member's ability to self-initiate meaningful scholarship, and the further development of his/her research trajectory. This trajectory will become increasingly important as a faculty member's career develops, as witnessed in the requirements for advancement to (full) professor.

Thus, candidates for CFS and advancement to associate professor should have a minimum of five publications (including any officially accepted for publication, as indicated by a letter from the publisher) by the time they submit their portfolio at the beginning of their sixth year. These publications will consist of quality, peer-reviewed scholarship directed to non-specialist Latter-day Saints (gospel scholarship) and to the academy. Successful candidates will generally have a minimum of two publications in each of these two categories (no double counting). Beyond that, the relative number of publications in each category may vary based on a candidate's interests, expertise, and area of research.

A candidate's "sufficient record" of scholarship (quantity *and* quality) will demonstrate capability as both a gospel scholar and as an active contributor to their professional discipline. It is generally expected that a candidate's portfolio will include a sizeable number of author-initiated publications, in addition to invited works, and a sizeable number of primary- or lead-authored publications, in addition to non-lead author status in multi-authored works. In the case of the latter, candidates are always expected to make clear the amount and significance of their contribution.

Most candidates' publications will generally be journal articles and book chapters. These must be rigorously peer reviewed and published in well-regarded venues. Work published in a volume of collected papers also counts, as long as the papers were subject to appropriate peer review. A quality, peer-reviewed monograph or textbook will count in lieu of multiple articles or book chapters. Due to the varying amounts of work required in editing different types of volumes (e.g., a symposium versus an encyclopedic volume), candidates must make their case for counting an edited publication in lieu of peer-reviewed articles. Similarly, while some significant creative works may be counted in lieu of some print publications, these must also be truly peer reviewed and must not comprise the majority of works cited for advancement. Candidates are responsible to clarify the nature of and the audience for such work.

Although publishing book reviews and encyclopedia-style entries demonstrates scholarly capability and serves to enhance a faculty member's portfolio, such efforts will generally be counted as additional evidence of a candidate's accomplishments, not as part of the minimum number of peer-reviewed published articles. Likewise, conference presentations, whether to non-specialist Latter-day Saints or to the academy, represent assumed scholarly activity and strengthen a candidate's portfolio, but they are not a substitute for expected publications.

Advancement to the Rank of (Full) Professor. Candidates for the rank of professor are expected to show "an *established* record of high quality scholarship since becoming an associate professor" (5.3, emphasis added). Meeting this standard requires a sustained, substantial, and consequential research effort evidenced by high-quality, peer-reviewed publications in the area of gospel scholarship and to the academy. In harmony with these principles *and* the considerations mentioned in the previous paragraphs, faculty advanced to full professor must have published an authored monograph *or* four substantial, *thematically-related* articles, thus demonstrating their established research trajectory, as well as a minimum of three additional articles since submitting their portfolio for advancement to associate professor. Again, successful candidates will generally have at least two publications to non-specialist Latter-day Saints (gospel scholarship) and two to the academy. Beyond that, the relative number of publications in each category will be determined by the candidate's own interests, expertise, and area of research. An "established

record” of scholarship (quantity *and* quality) will clearly demonstrate a candidate’s success as both a gospel scholar and as an active contributor to the larger academy.

Post–Professor Expectations. The rank of professor carries the expectation that one will continue to pursue, profess, and publish scholarly work, rather than placing such endeavors on hold or setting them aside. Those who are granted the rank of professor are expected to continue to demonstrate a sustained, substantial, and consequential research effort, evidenced by the number and superior quality of their publications. Recognizing that major administrative and other assignments come to some professors and that these may involve large time commitments, it is still expected that professors will generally have at least one to two high-quality, peer-reviewed publications per year. Other expectations derive from the Rank and Status document in effect when a faculty member was granted the rank of professor.

III. Citizenship

The Principles

All faculty members in Religious Education, regardless of rank or assignment, are expected to exhibit consistently high-quality citizenship. Such citizenship involves service and civility, and is based upon the spiritual and academic values inherent in Brigham Young University and its sponsor, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Quality citizenship is thus manifest through personal integrity in all aspects of a faculty member’s employment. Good faculty citizens are actively engaged in dialogue, work, and service to improve their department, their college, the university, and their discipline. They are committed to the welfare and success of their students, colleagues, and all university employees. They are loyal to the leadership of the Church and the university. Faculty members are expected to live their personal lives and to perform their professional responsibilities in accordance with the teachings and practices of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Such faculty members thus promote a culture of good citizenship.

The Measures

To qualify for candidacy for CFS (third-year review), CFS, rank advancement, favorable annual performance reviews, and merit pay, faculty members will be in harmony with the citizenship principles listed above and the following measures.

Good faculty citizens willingly accept and perform department, college, and university-related responsibilities, such as committee work, mentoring, faculty peer review, administration, supervising graduate students, participating in study abroad programs, and speaking at campus functions. They also attend department, college, and university meetings at which their attendance is expected.

Good citizenship includes service in professional disciplines, such as the administration of academic organizations, arranging conferences, and serving as a reviewer for or on the editorial boards of journals and publishers. It also includes employing one’s professional expertise in service to the community and the Church.

Administrators are expected to provide citizenship opportunities to junior faculty that allow them to demonstrate their ability and commitment to being high quality citizens without unduly

burdening them as they seek to establish themselves in the areas of teaching and scholarship. Senior faculty, therefore, are more likely to be invited to provide a greater commitment in time and energy for university-related service.

Faculty who are good citizens are trustworthy, timely, keep sensitive and private information confidential, and extend the benefit of the doubt to others. They are courteous, respectful, and exhibit humility in dealing with students, staff, colleagues, and administrators.

Positive citizenship attributes will be demonstrated in a variety of contexts. For example, junior as well as senior faculty members are encouraged to provide thoughtfully considered input on topics discussed in department and college meetings. Although individual thinking, strongly held opinions, and rigorous discussions will likely result in some disagreement between faculty members in these and other settings, civility is manifest by listening to understand, disagreeing respectfully, allowing for compromise, and seeking to foster kindness and a sense of community. Disagreeing with others, in and of itself and when done respectfully, is *not* a sign of incivility. It is important that all faculty members employed in Religious Education have a voice in college and department endeavors and feel safe expressing their opinions. Actual decisions and outcomes, of course, may not always align with each faculty member's opinions.