

[Department Name]  
The College of New Jersey  
Disciplinary Standards for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

The attached disciplinary standards have been reviewed and approved by the Committee on Faculty Affairs, the Council of Deans, and the Provost.

To avoid creating a moving target for candidates for reappointment, the disciplinary standards in effect during a faculty member's first year of employment will be used for reappointment and tenure applications. Candidates for promotion will use the disciplinary standards in effect in the year in which they apply for promotion



\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
11/22/21

Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
11/22/2021

Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Provost

\_\_\_\_\_  
7/26/2022

Date

The Special Education, Language, and Literacy Department will next review its disciplinary standards in Academic Year 2026-2027.

**The College of New Jersey**  
**Department of Special Education, Language, and Literacy**  
**Disciplinary Standards**

**Section A: Alignment with Key Institutional Documents and Values**

The mission of the Department of Special Education, Language, and Literacy is to prepare and sustain community-engaged, impactful, and justice-oriented teaching professionals and practitioners who will meaningfully support the lives of students, parents, families, and communities. Such work centers the epistemologies and experiences of voices that are placed in the margins and recognizes the existence of multiple knowledges that can challenge current dominant orthodoxies. Our work spans fields of literacy, language, speech and hearing, special education, TESL, Deaf studies, educational foundations, education of the D/deaf and hard of hearing, and critical and feminist disability studies, among others. The department's undergraduate and targeted graduate programs are designed to align with the mission of The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) as a primarily undergraduate institution with targeted master's programs to prepare students to excel in their chosen fields and the guiding principles of the School of Education, which include demonstrating subject matter expertise, justice-oriented education, excellence in planning and practice, commitment to all learners, and the qualities of advocacy, collaboration, and leadership. Our goal is to prepare critically engaged professionals who embrace students' aspirational and familial capital, local knowledge, and enhance our collective sense of civic and educational responsibility. We value ways academic researchers engage with communities reciprocally and create coalitions within and outside the academy that draw on collective expertise and sustain full participation.

Our definition of a teacher scholar is consistent with the TCNJ model of a teacher-scholar. Scholarship in our department could be disciplinary, interdisciplinary, theoretical, conceptual, pedagogical, participatory, community-engaged, or applied. We engage in inquiry that results in creating new knowledge, broadens or deepens existing practice, or applies scholarship to effect improvement, support, and transformation in schooling. Because our research is predominantly conducted in schools or communities and focuses on human subjects who are labeled as vulnerable or minoritized, such as children or individuals with disabilities or whose first language is not English, we recognize that access to subjects and sites presents challenges that can inform or influence the trajectory of our research. Therefore, we recognize that our teacher-scholars' outcomes will reflect a range of scholarship to be completed at a pace that reflects their skill, expertise of method, and our collective awareness of the dynamics of social power and inequities involved in the research process.

**Section B: Categories of Acceptable Scholarly/Professional/Creative Work**

Because the fields of Special Education, Language, and Literacy are interdisciplinary and often concerned with but not limited to applied research, we recognize that a range of disciplinary standards need to be considered. Therefore, while the following framework is intended to generally apply to all disciplines represented in our department, we recognize that individuals will position their work in specific disciplines or at the intersection of disciplines. Teacher-scholars in the SELL Department

should articulate their positionality as a researcher, outline their own goals - both short-term and long-term, and indicate the ways in which their program of scholarship has advanced these goals.

### **1. Range of tangible scholarly outcomes**

The SELL Department recognizes a range of tangible scholarly outcomes that include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Journal articles
- Published reviews of books
- Book manuscripts
- Book chapters
- Conference presentations
- Grant proposals and reports
- Program/project evaluation
- Applied professional activities completed as a consultant or practitioner that impact practice or policy (e.g., designing curricula, expert testimony, contributions to professional standards, creation of training materials that impact field-based practice for practitioners)
- Editorship of peer-reviewed journals or special issues

Specific criteria for evaluating the quality of the above scholarly outcomes can be found in Section D of this document.

### **2. Range of modes of scholarship (e.g., Boyer; scholarship of discovery, scholarship of application, scholarship of pedagogy)**

The SELL Department values a range of modes of inquiry that include:

- Quantitative methods
- Qualitative methods
- Mixed methods
- Action research (teacher research)
- Theoretical research
- Single-subject design
- Applied research
- Pedagogical research
- Design Based Research
- Arts-Based Educational Research
- Program evaluation

We recognize that the above disciplinary modes of scholarship fall within any of the following categories:

- Scholarship of Discovery
- Scholarship of Application
- Scholarship of Integration
- Scholarship of Pedagogy

### **3. Flexibility in support of diverse paths in scholarship/professional/creative activity**

Teacher-scholars in the SELL Department may position their research in and across a wide range of disciplines that intersect with the fields of Special Education, Deaf Education, Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, Linguistics, Teaching English as a Second Language, and Literacy. Further, the department recognizes there are multiple ways to be an impactful scholar and a wide variety of different

outlets for dissemination of scholarship. We recognize that teacher-scholars may leverage their training, skills, and knowledge to make valuable contributions to local (i.e., contributing local school policy) and/or broad contexts (i.e., publishing in international academic journals). Regardless of the venues of dissemination, teacher-scholars should be able to describe how the diverse paths of their scholarly activity align with their research agenda.

#### **4. Recognition of discipline-specific challenges for scholarship in the given field**

The challenges for scholarship typically experienced by scholars in the SELL Department are centrally concerned with the process of conducting research with human participants, often within applied settings. Across all the department's disciplines, empirical research in applied settings with human subjects includes complex ethical considerations and must go through an IRB review process. Research within applied settings also involves the challenge of accessing participants. This is especially a challenge given that our subjects are diverse (including populations who are from culturally diverse groups, for whom English is not a first language, as well as individuals with disabilities) and involve individuals who belong to vulnerable groups. Research within schools requires district approval, which can be a lengthy process and can result in access to samples being restricted. For some research that involves very specific populations, scholars may need to travel (inter)nationally to collect data.

Lastly, some of these modes of inquiry, such as qualitative methods, require a lengthy period of intensive data collection and analysis, which must be completed before writing can begin. Such modes of inquiry can result in rich work, but it is produced over a more extended timeline of data collection, analysis, and dissemination. These, and other unique conditions for research in special education, language and literacy should be considered when evaluating the overall scholarship of faculty.

#### **5. Clarity and flexibility of criteria to evaluate the quality of the venue in which scholarship is disseminated**

Section D of this document outlines criteria used to evaluate the quality of venues for distributing scholarship. The SELL Department acknowledges that those criteria are not a comprehensive list. Further, the department believes that restrictive lists of criteria have the potential to act as a barrier to new and innovative scholarly research that would best be disseminated in new, emerging, and non-traditional venues. The SELL Department recognizes scholarship published in new and emerging venues as equally valuable to traditionally disseminated scholarship.

#### **6. Recognition of interdisciplinary work**

The SELL Department recognizes teacher-scholars' participation in interdisciplinary research as a valid, valued, and rigorous expression of their scholarly agenda. In fact, educational research (which makes up most disciplines represented in our department) is inherently interdisciplinary and is always intermixed with work done in a variety of disciplines (e.g., intersections of identity and learning). The SELL Department encourages interdisciplinary work in a host of fields including but not limited to: Deaf Education and Studies, Critical Disability Studies in Education, Special Education, English as a Second

Language, Linguistics, Speech and Language Development, and Literacy. As such, we place equal weight on interdisciplinary and single-discipline scholarship.

## **Section C: Criteria to Evaluate Different Types of Scholarly/Professional/Creative Work**

### **1. Clarity and flexibility of criteria to evaluate the quality of different scholarly/professional/creative products**

Special Education, Language, and Literacy are fields that have become increasingly interdisciplinary with permeable boundaries. The disciplinary standards need to appreciate the evolving nature of the research in these fields and demonstrate a respect for the individual differences in scholarship agendas that might emerge. The framework given below is intended to describe a broad set of evaluative criteria that validate these differences. Thus, we consider it important for each teacher-scholar to clearly articulate his or her plans for scholarly work, including how that work fits within the context of the emerging trends of disciplinary or interdisciplinary research and the impact of the work.

#### *Engaged Scholarship:*

A defining characteristic of a teacher-scholar is engaged scholarship. Such scholars are engaged with their work in vibrant and reflexive ways. Rather than circumscribing their work to the realms of academia, they attempt to make their scholarship an integral part of everything that they do. Examples of this type of scholarship includes but is not limited to: Collaborative grant projects with local school districts, professional development sessions, publications in practitioner journals, and arts-based performances of empirical inquiry.

#### *Consistency and Continuity in Scholarship:*

Related to the criteria of engaged scholarship is the expectation that scholars demonstrate an ongoing commitment to their scholarship. While the direction of the scholarship might change with time and expand to new disciplinary or interdisciplinary directions, or new methodologies, it is important that scholars have a productive agenda that is characterized by presentations and dissemination of information. However, the overall quality of scholarship is recognized above the rate at which it was produced or the adherence to a single focus.

It is expected that rates of dissemination might vary given the disciplinary challenges in the field. Scholars are encouraged to detail the parameters of their respective discipline(s), articulate their goals for each and describe the ways in which their scholarship has grown and shifted. The department validates the fact that scholarship might involve taking risks, changing approaches, or developing new applications. While scholars are expected to have an active agenda, there may be changes in productivity because of administrative duties, service, family leave, sociopolitical or public health crises or personal crises, and candidates should not be penalized for these life events as they do not preclude promotion to tenure, Associate Professor, or Professor. Traditional notions and timelines of scholarly productivity historically exclude faculty of color, parents, women, and other minoritized reference groups.

### *Impact of Scholarship:*

The work of engaged scholars has impact in different ways. It impacts various communities: NJ learning community of which the scholar is a part, the broader disciplinary or interdisciplinary community, and professional communities. The impact could span different levels including local, state, national, and international levels. Of particular importance is scholarship that has the potential to directly impact the lives of children, adults, and/or families, and/or on the teaching and learning process.

## **2. Criteria to evaluate scholarship in the context of our TCNJ's values related to teaching**

The department recognizes that not all faculty scholarly pursuits lend themselves in clear and direct ways to the inclusion of students in the work. Therefore, scholars have the option to evidence a commitment towards involving students in scholarship. This could be done by including students in their scholarship through co-authored conference presentations, articles, or participating in MUSE. Scholars should describe the ways in which their scholarship has been used to develop new courses and to inform course content and instruction in the classroom. Involving students in one's scholarship (or the absence of student collaboration) is not the sole indicator for maturation and scholarly contribution.

## **3. Clear articulation of criteria for assessing the contribution of service and teaching/librarianship integrated with a scholar's research agenda**

Much of the scholarship in this area is of an applied nature with work revolving around schools, communities, educational policies, clinical settings, and professionals. Service, teaching, and research are not circumscribed to separate fields; they mutually inform each other. This work requires faculty members to bring forth their expertise and scholarship to their classroom instruction, course design, program development, and mentoring of students. In addition, it also involves providing the leadership or guidance to schools, communities, professional and accreditation organizations, as well as state or federal governments. Following are some examples of the service and teaching activities that would be encompassed under the realm of scholarship.

- Effecting positive change for P-12 students, teachers, and parents by spearheading local, regional, or national initiatives
- Contributing to processes of diagnosis and intervention in clinical settings
- Collaborating with schools or other agencies in initiating systems change
- Contributing to policy development at the state or federal level
- Collecting data through a service project
- Developing research with a service component

## **4. Distinctive criteria for reappointment, tenure, promotion to Associate Professor and Professor or promotion to Librarian II and Librarian I, with expectations for productivity reflective of the major stages of an academic career**

While the department recognizes the importance of providing some guiding criteria, we also believe that not all these criteria can be translated into hard numbers. Quality is more important than mere quantity. The section below provides some guidelines for each rank. While the section is expected to provide some guidance, it should not be interpreted to be exhaustive. As stated in the beginning, individual

differences in scholarship might result in different trajectories or different examples. Candidates should explain the implications of their scholarship and the impact in their essay.

*Application for Tenure and Associate Professor:* It is expected that in the time period leading to the tenure/Associate Professor application, faculty members will make steady progress toward a clearly defined program of scholarship that demonstrates a carefully planned and thoughtful set of goals and objectives. Whether faculty members pursue a single area of interest or multiple areas of interest, they should explicitly articulate the connections between these areas of interest and their goals for scholarship within the teacher-scholar model of the college.

*Application for Promotion to Professor:* Promotion to professor requires a sustained pattern of achievement and a maturation of scholarship since attaining the rank of Associate Professor. This maturation of scholarship may be demonstrated in several different ways, including scholarship that addresses new or emerging issues in the field, publications in leading journals in the candidate's respective field, peer reviewed materials, publications of book/s, invitations to publish, present, or serve in an editorial capacity, and awarded local, state, or national grant activity. In addition, expanded student involvement in a faculty member's scholarship can be valued as an indicator of maturation but a candidate's materials are not considered deficient if student collaboration is not indicated. Regarding the sustained nature of scholarship, it is expected that a commitment to scholarly activity will be continuous throughout a faculty member's career. However, periods of lower productivity do not preclude promotion to Professor; such periods should be explained in the promotion materials. (See Section C1, Consistency and Continuity in Scholarship.)

## **Section D: Scope, Quality, Importance, and Coherence of Scholarly/Professional/Creative Program**

### **1. Clear articulation of how the department/program evaluates the scope (regional, national, international), quality, and importance of a scholarly professional/creative project**

Due to the varied nature of the scholarship reflected within the Department of Special Education, Language and Literacy, and the unique nature of building and implementing a research agenda within these fields, the following considerations are necessary to consider when assessing the merit of a scholarly body of work.

- Collaborative scholarly activities are honored and judged as valid examples of scholarly output; therefore, multiple authorship and involvement are recognized as meeting the criteria for publication.
- Research that is narrow in its scope is considered acceptable since many scholars in the department are in fields that have constraints regarding access to subjects or specific environments. Single-subject studies, autoethnographic, or ethnographic qualitative field observations, for example, all meet the criteria for scholarship in our department. Research based on these methodologies are considered valuable contributions to the candidate's respective field.

- Our department recognizes local, national, and international publications as contributing value to scholarly productivity and output. Not all disciplines that comprise the SELL Department are well-represented by journals with quantitative impact factors. As such we equally value empirical studies, theoretical contributions, and methodological pieces as evidence of a valuable and scholarly contribution to the candidate's field of study, teacher-scholar practice, and disciplinary expertise.
- Peer-reviewed and invited scholarly pieces are highly valued in the department. Editorials, white papers, technical manuals, pieces in popular magazines etc. are also of value when the impact to the field is articulated by the scholar.

Research in Special Education, Language, and Literacy can be concerned with specific populations of students, which can be small in overall numbers. The value of such research is not always captured by indicators that look only at factors such as the overall circulation or citations of a scholarly work. Therefore, we recognize a range of tangible indicators of disciplinary scholarship quality, which can be used to evaluate a faculty member's work. Faculty should articulate the intended impacts of their work and the rationale for their choice of a particular outlet. Disciplinary impact may include basic, applied, or pedagogical impact. The following indicators of disciplinary scholarship quality serve as a guideline for evaluating a faculty member's completed scholarship. While the information below is expected to help generate a conversation and provide guidance, it is not comprehensive, and neither is each work under each category expected to meet all the criteria within the category. Given the evolving nature of the field, there may be other criteria that are not necessarily mentioned below, which candidates might articulate in their essay. The following are examples of the criteria for evaluating the scope, quality, and importance of:

Journal articles:

- a. Peer review
- b. Acceptance/rejection rates for the journal
- c. Professional sponsorship or other affiliation status of the journal
- d. Status of the journal editors within the subfield
- e. The nature and kind of audience that the journal reaches. In this regard, while it may be feasible to look at overall circulation in some instances, in other cases, it is not only the number of people that the journal targets that could be used as a criterion but also who the audience is comprised of.
- f. Citations of one's scholarly work by others is not required but could be used as another means to enhance the scholar's dossier and provide evidence on the impact of the scholar's work. Citations of one's work should be accompanied by the scholar's explanation of how the citations provide evidence of the contribution of the work to the current scholarly literature. This could also apply to the section on books and conference presentations that follow.

Published reviews of books:

- a. Acceptance/rejection rates for the journal



- b. Professional sponsorship or other affiliation status of the journal
- c. Status of the journal editors within the subfield
- d. The nature and kind of audience that the journal reaches. In this regard, while it may be feasible to look at overall circulation in some instances, in other cases, it is not only the number of people that the journal targets that could be used as a criterion but also who the audience is comprised of.
- e. Citations of one's scholarly work by others is not required but could be used as another means to enhance the scholar's dossier and provide evidence on the impact of the scholar's work. Citations of one's work should be accompanied by the scholar's explanation of how the citations provide evidence of the contribution of the work to the current scholarly literature. This could also apply to the section on books and conference presentations that follow.

Books/Book Chapters (authored, co-authored, or edited):

- a. The quality of the publisher and recognition as an academic publisher
- b. Contribution to or reviewer for a book series
- c. Applicability of the book to real life such as textbooks that address aspects of teaching or teacher preparation
- d. Published reviews of the work
- e. Signed book contracts that are single author, co-author, or edited collection
- f. Development of assessment methods and tools for use in a remote learning environment
- g. Peer-reviewed (when applicable)
- h. Books that provide an original contribution to the field or inform a certain area of Discourse.

Conference presentations (e.g., symposia, papers, posters):

- a. A peer review process used for the conference proposal
- b. The acceptance/rejection rates of proposals (if available)
- c. The scope of the professional organization sponsoring the conference, i.e. international, national, regional, or state

Grants:

- a. Peer review by experts
- b. Academic standing of the agency and recognition in the field (e.g., federal funding, national foundations or organizations)
- c. Acceptance/Rejection rates
- d. Receipt and amount of funding (grants not funded may be considered scholarly output, albeit at a lower level than funded applications).

Program/project evaluation:

- a. Number and scope of documents produced as part of the program/project evaluation
- b. Status of the sponsoring agency

- c. Significance of the project and/or selection criteria as described by the sponsoring agency
- d. Expected or actual distribution impact as determined by sponsoring agency
- e. Reportable outcomes adopted because of the program/project evaluation
- f. Feedback of stakeholders and/or agency

Applied professional activities (expert testimony, curriculum development, professionally produced multimedia, professional development, contributions to professional standards etc.)

- a. Number and scope of scholarly outcomes related to the project (e.g., technical reports, curriculum documents etc.)
- b. Expected or actual distribution impact as determined by publisher or agency (for curriculum, professional standards, multimedia products etc.)
- c. Reportable outcomes of testimony, adoption of curricular materials, impact of professional development
- d. Feedback of community-based organizations impacted by the activities

Editorship of peer-reviewed journal:

- a. Scope and type of activities in the capacity of Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, Assistant Editor, or Guest Editor of a special issue of a journal
- b. Quality of the journal
- c. Number of published pieces as editor (e.g., framing/introduction to issues of the peer-reviewed journal)

Invited publications and presentations (these would include invited contributions to special issues of a journal, invited chapters in books, and invited addresses to meetings of professional organizations):

- a. The stature of the editor of the special issue or book
- b. The stature of other contributors to the publication or meetings of professional organizations
- c. The quality of the publisher
- d. The quality of the journal and the extent to which it is recognized for its contribution in the field
- e. The scope of the journal
- f. The scope of the professional organization or journal extending the invitation, i.e., international, national, regional, or state

## **2. Indication of the value of student involvement in, or the contribution to, scholarly professional/ creative work**

We strongly encourage our faculty members to involve students in scholarship in diverse ways. This might include co-authoring with students for presentations, research projects, or articles, or participating in MUSE. We strongly encourage but do not mandate student participation and this does not preclude a candidate from advancing.

### **3. Clear articulation of productivity expected (i.e., provide guidepost numbers, not hard and fast numbers)**

As stated in earlier sections, we value quality over quantity. The numbers below are expected to provide some guidelines.

*Tenure/Associate Professor:* In the time leading up to the Tenure/Associate Professor application, it is expected that scholars will clearly articulate their goals, have articulated their plans for scholarship, and have made significant movement towards those goals. Scholars at this level should have disseminated recently completed scholarly work such as their dissertation. They should have also begun collaborative or independent work on new scholarly projects. It is expected that scholars will have produced at least 6 tangible scholarly outcomes that represent contributions to the field (meeting the criteria for assessing quality listed above in Section D.1) including:

- at least 2 publications
- at least 2 peer-reviewed presentations at state, regional, national, or international conferences or scholarly output that represents applied scholarship.

*Professor:* By the time scholars are professors, it is expected that they have demonstrated maturation in their scholarship plan, as well as progress towards that plan. The scholar's research might explore diverse areas within the field, venture deeper into the disciplinary core, or take a risk to traverse interdisciplinary boundaries. Whatever the course of the scholarship, scholars should be able to articulate their contribution to the field's current discourse and their role as teacher-scholars. Scholars at this level should have produced at least 7 tangible scholarly outcomes that contribute to the field (meeting the criteria for assessing quality listed above in Section D.1) since being promoted to Associate Professor, including:

- at least 4 publications
- at least 3 peer reviewed presentations at state, regional, national, or international conferences
- a published book or a funded grant proposal could further enhance the candidate's portfolio.

### **4. Clarity for evaluating the quality and coherence of a sustained and ongoing program of scholarly/professional/creative work that matures over time**

Sustained scholarship is based on a deep and consistent inquiry with the area(s) of research. It is expected that by this time, scholars have a strong sense of why they have chosen the work that they do and what its contribution is to the disciplinary or the interdisciplinary fields. The candidate should provide a comprehensive explanation of their trajectory towards this level of scholarship. The candidate's record of scholarly outcomes, including publications and presentations should reflect a cohesive plan of research.

## **Section E: Authorship**

### **1. Clear articulation of the ways in which the department/program evaluates different authorship patterns (e.g., single author vs. multiple author) in scholarly/professional/creative projects**

Research in education is characterized by collaborative publications by multiple authors. We recognize first-author, single-author, and co-authored publications, thus acknowledging the collaborative process in the creation of scholarly outcomes. All applicants for tenure/promotion are required to articulate in their CV the specific contribution they made to any co-authored publication. However, the nature of collaboration is such that the work represents the efforts of the team as a whole. We recognize first-author, single-author, and co-authored publications as equally legitimate and rigorous paths to publication. As such, we place equal weight on first-, single-, and co-authored publications and presentations.

## **2. Clear articulation of how the department evaluates scholarly/professional/creative work that results from smaller vs. larger scale projects**

The wide range of research and professional work represented by the Department of Special Education, Language and Literacy mandates a unique approach to evaluating the scale of any individual's portfolio of work. Larger scale projects are not in and of themselves necessarily considered better than projects completed on a smaller scale. Depending on the existing literature and research, projects that appear small in scale may actually represent significant beginnings to an area of study. The department values the rich tradition of smaller studies in the field of education emerging from modes of inquiry such as single subject design, case studies, and qualitative methodology, and recognizes the impact that some of these studies have historically had in informing policy and practice in education.

## **3. Clear identification of the role played by and value of student engagement in the scholarly/professional/creative work**

Student engagement in scholarly/professional/creative work is supported by the department and those that lead to journal articles and dissemination in local, regional, national, and international presentations are valued in the promotion process.