

APPOINTMENT, RETENTION, TENURE, AND PROMOTION

A position paper on criteria for appointment and evaluation of interior design faculty in Higher Education Institutions

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INTRODUCTION

The mission of The Interior Design Educators Council, Inc. is the advancement of interior design education, scholarship, and service.

Interior design faculty appointments and evaluations for retention, tenure, or promotion continue to be debated subjects because the criteria are not well defined and widely differ among institutions. In 1985, an ad-hoc IDEC committee developed and published IDEC's first position paper on faculty tenure and promotion, which was updated in 1993. In 2019, a Tenure and Promotion Task Force completed a review of current policies at selected institutions in the United States and Canada. The intention of this review was to provide evidence of current criteria, credentials, and issues institutions were addressing as their interior design faculty members were appointed and/or reviewed for retention, tenure, and promotion. The following document is a revised IDEC Position Paper on Criteria for Appointment and Evaluation of Interior Design Faculty in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). It is globally recognized that within an HEI, appointment, retention, tenure, and promotion criteria should be clear and consistent, and the processes must be transparent. The criteria presented here are offered as an aid to those HEIs seeking assistance in the development or revision of appropriate appointment and evaluation criteria for interior design educators.

CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT

In general, the appointment of faculty at all levels should reflect the mission and unique characteristics of the institution and program and broad requirements of interior design education. Faculty prepare students for a wide range of professional interior design experiences. Interior design faculty should have academic preparation and professional experience appropriate to their areas of responsibility.

IDEC supports the Council for Interior Design Accreditation's (CIDA) recognition of an interior design degree as a necessary degree for faculty who teach studio courses, and that certification by (N)CIDQ is necessary for interior design studio faculty.

IDEC recognizes that a master's degree is a terminal degree for interior design faculty, and that the doctoral degree and/or specialized certifications are required by an increasing number of institutions, often based on the type of institution, i.e., Tier 1 Research, Teaching, etc. Defining which master's degree is accepted as terminal is often based on the specific institution. IDEC acknowledges that the MFA, MArch, and MBA generally are considered terminal master's degrees by HEIs globally. However, in interior design programs, where faculty members are teaching a significant number of studio and content lecture courses, other terminal degrees can be recognized. Masters degrees, i.e., MA, MS, MID, or other post-professional degrees, with substantial interior design practice experience are recognized by some HEIs as terminal degrees, and IDEC

recognizes these degrees and related experience as appropriate. The requirement for faculty to have interior design practice experience is an appointment criterion that can strengthen the academic quality of education and help faculty develop the body of knowledge.

CRITERIA FOR RETENTION, TENURE AND PROMOTION

Teaching, scholarship, and service are the three most widely recognized areas of faculty responsibility and the primary criteria for evaluating faculty throughout their academic careers. Engagement is a component of the three areas of responsibility but is not recognized by all institutions. Engagement is a two-way exchange of knowledge between faculty and public stakeholders that contributes to the strategic priorities of all those involved (Engagement, 2019). It is a method used by faculty to disseminate their academic teaching and research knowledge to audiences beyond academic journals and classrooms and can involve social media, workshops, seminars, or consulting (Brazzell, 2019). Engagement is often seen as a component or measure of teaching, scholarship, or service; generally, it does not stand alone as a fourth area of faculty responsibility. Often boundaries among these areas of responsibility, teaching, scholarship, and service overlap. For example, student advising may be considered an aspect of teaching or service; scholarship can be basic or applied research or creative activity with outcomes being used in classroom teaching or as engagement with the public; community service projects can involve content knowledge from teaching or application of research findings. Engagement can be used with any of these responsibilities as faculty broaden their input beyond the classroom and academic arenas.

Institutions vary in the weight that they assign to these three responsibilities, which is generally based on the institution type and nature of the position. Frequently, within the same institution, some faculty may have heavy teaching responsibilities and minimal service and scholarship responsibilities; other faculty may be expected to make more contributions to scholarship than to teaching. This can depend on the type of appointment or stage in career. Further, it is noted that a faculty member's responsibilities to all activities might vary across their life cycle. It is paramount that institutions clearly define a faculty member's responsibilities annually. For example, at the annual review, a faculty member can identify annual goals and determine if completion of the goals will meet the department's and university's expectations for advancement. It is the responsibility of faculty members to explain and document how their activities fulfill the criteria of their appointment and institution when preparing their application for retention, tenure, or promotion.

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING is recognized by IDEC as a criterion for faculty retention, evaluation, and advancement. Each interior design faculty member contributes as an individual to the total educational program through specialized knowledge and

expertise. Scholarship of teaching research findings emphasize the importance of high-quality teaching and advising at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Boyer, 1997). Teaching excellence is expected in all faculty members and can be measured in many ways.

Although a faculty member's classroom effectiveness is an important component of the scholarship of teaching, the impact of faculty on an increasingly diverse student body outside the classroom is also important. Institutions will decide whether advising and mentoring are evaluated as teaching or service however, efforts to facilitate student growth and to recognize the value of diverse populations through advising and mentoring are critical components of faculty responsibilities.

Evaluation of Teaching Excellence can include:

- 1) development and preparation of classroom materials such as design project assignments, instructional materials, lecture materials, and project evaluations/critiques;
- 2) leadership in developing improved curriculum, courses, and teaching resources;
- 3) innovative instruction and other contributions to teaching activities of the Institution;
- 4) supervision of the work of honors and graduate students;
- 5) publication of articles in refereed journals on teaching methodology and other areas of educational instruction;
- 6) contribution of service-learning projects or other recognized innovative teaching methods with measurable results;
- 7) student reviews , as indicated by teaching evaluations;
- 8) peer review of classroom teaching, teaching materials, student outcomes, etc.; and
- 9) assessment of student advising and mentoring as individuals, groups, or organizations.

EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARSHIP including RESEARCH, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY is recognized by IDEC as a criterion for faculty retention, evaluation, and advancement. Scholarship is known as the discovery and dissemination or application of knowledge and the creation and performance or production of works of art and design. Research and creative scholarship that extend across disciplinary boundaries display the

scholarship of integration. Scholarship of application emphasizes the significance of applied research and methods that link practical, real-life activity to theory, including major societal issues. Research and creative scholarship have equivalent contributions to make with respect to the development and application of knowledge, the quality of the instructional program, and the growth and professionalism of interior design. All of these contribute to the interior design profession's body of knowledge.

Ultimately, scholarship is to be in a form that is reviewed or refereed by peers and disseminated in a format that can be cited and retrieved. It must be judged by peers to be an addition to knowledge (new knowledge or innovative application of existing knowledge). Weight can vary based on the reputation and selectivity of the venue for dissemination, the reputation of the jury or reviewers, and the role of the faculty in the activity.

Research may focus on physical, aesthetic, sociocultural, behavioral, and psychological issues concerned with the interface between humans and the built environment, as well as design education in all its facets. Such activity should be empirical and based on experimental, observational, theoretical, and/or historical investigation. Scholarly inquiry in the form of evaluation of innovative teaching techniques, critiques of built environments or significant interiors, philosophical papers, and critical literature reviews can legitimately contribute to the body of knowledge.

Creative scholarship is defined as original creative activity including studio arts, product design, and interior design practice. Creative work may include but not limited to the design and production of visual art objects, furnishings, accessories, textiles, art-based installations, or contemporary spaces and/ or re-creation of historic spaces. Interior design practice is concerned with improvement of the interior environment and thus the enrichment of the quality of human life. Innovative conceptual design and/or design solutions developed through a problem-solving approach (which may involve constraints imposed by complex client, economic, and environmental conditions) may make important contributions toward achieving this goal.

Peer review methods of most forms of scholarship are well established and meet academic standards. However, peer review methods of designed interior spaces are not well developed but must also meet academic standards. This can be achieved by invitation to select reviewers to review such inputs and outcomes as plans, photos, or virtual walk-throughs. In some cases, actual walk-throughs of interiors can occur. The assessment must be related to both the intended problem solution and criteria by which it is met and contribution this makes to the body of knowledge. Invitations to review can come from institutional administration, the faculty designer, the client, or others with relationship to the designed interior. Images of the design solution can be used to measure retrievability as well as provide dissemination opportunities. It is not likely that these interiors will be published in refereed journals or professional periodicals as they are valuable contributions to practice but are not usually appropriate for professional

design periodicals. The criteria for appraisal rests on innovative design problem identification, design process, and/or design solution. These are the components of a designed interior that are to be assessed.

Evaluation of Research and Creative Scholarship Excellence can include:

- 1) contribution to the expansion or application of the body of knowledge of interior design;
- 2) grant proposals written and submitted;
- 3) grant proposals funded;
- 4) copyrights and patents;
- 5) publications in refereed journals within the design discipline or in other disciplines where the content is relevant to a broader audience;
- 6) publication in refereed journals on teaching methodology and other areas of educational instruction;
- 7) refereed presentations at conferences;
- 8) refereed papers published in conference proceedings;
- 9) acceptance by and exhibition in a juried exhibit or show;
- 10) juried design solution such as a design competition or award;
- 11) invited publications or exhibitions; and
- 12) designed interior with written problem statement, process, and/or solution that is documented for assessment by peer reviewers.

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE is recognized by IDEC as a criterion for faculty retention, evaluation, and advancement. It is acknowledged in HEIs that collaborative, integrative service is critical to the maintenance and growth of institutions ensuring accountability and service to constituents—students, citizens, agencies, business, and industry. Academic service refers to activities in a faculty member’s department, college, or university. Professional service is important for the maintenance and growth of professional organizations that serve the faculty member’s profession including education and design-related organizations. Public service often involves faculty

members serving the community in areas of their expertise, bringing academic knowledge to local, regional, or national agencies. Evaluation of service is often difficult to document. Several methods exist and can be used including assessment of a faculty member's contributions via letter or message from peers, leaders, and students as well as citations for outstanding service to an organization. These also can document assessment of expertise, contributions to projects, and impact of the faculty's knowledge or assistance.

Evaluation of Service Excellence can include:

Service to the institution can include:

- 1) participation in curriculum development;
- 2) leadership or active participation in committees at all levels;
- 3) leadership in program maintenance and development;
- 4) service across disciplines;
- 5) participation in regional, national, international, or specialized institutional accreditation reviews; and
- 6) student advising and mentoring as individuals, groups, or organizations.

Service to the profession can include:

- 1) active participation, including leadership roles, in professional organizations at local, state, regional, national, or international levels, and
- 2) developing and presenting seminars and continuing education programs.

Service to the community can include:

- 1) service to governmental and nonprofit organizations related to issues concerning interiors and related content;
- 2) dissemination of special design expertise;
- 3) service-learning activities that engage students and community groups; and

4) service to the wider community beyond the immediate educational setting to enhance the visual environment or protect the health, safety, and well-being of the public.

CONCLUSION

The position of the Interior Design Educators Council for appointment and evaluation of interior design faculty for retention, promotion, and tenure has been outlined above.

Interior design faculty members must have academic preparation and professional experience appropriate to their areas of teaching responsibility. They must be prepared to impart their knowledge to students, add to the interior design body of knowledge through research or creative activities, and contribute to academic and professional service. Depending on the institution, they may do these all to varying degrees, i.e., they must excel in one of the three areas of responsibility, or two of the three, or all three. These must also be the same evaluation criteria that apply to all faculty of the institution, although criteria measurements should reflect specific disciplines.

Appointment, retention, tenure, and promotion policies administered by an institution affect faculty, students, communities served, the quality of education, and ultimately the status of the profession. IDEC is pleased to share the results of its research and deliberations in this regard. It is hoped that this position paper will assist in the ongoing development of policies for the appointment and evaluation of interior design faculty.

References

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