

Report on Academic Computing Recognition

This page records the official "Guidelines for the Recognition of Computing in Humanities Scholarship" recently approved by the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria.

Preface

These guidelines are intended to assist departments, chairs or directors and committees when considering applicants for appointment, re-appointment, tenure, promotion, and salary adjustment. The guidelines are also intended to assist candidates in preparing applications. The widespread use of new technology and non-traditional methods of communication requires that all universities apply fair and consistent evaluation criteria that recognize contributions wherever they may occur. Furthermore, at the University of Victoria, the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) in Humanities will apply section 10.3 of its Guidelines, which states, "The FAC should take into account the variety of computer-related or electronic activities that today constitute contributions to scholarship and teaching."

Candidates' Responsibilities

Candidates seeking recognition for computer related or electronic activities should summarize each contribution, being sure to include the following, where applicable:

1. relevance of the contribution to their discipline
2. evidence of the originality or innovative nature of the contribution
3. evidence of the application of the contribution outside their own discipline
4. evidence that the contribution has assisted the candidate in his/her performance of teaching duties or has improved access to knowledge in other ways
5. a description of the process involved in preparing and completing the contribution

Additional Considerations

1. Candidates should recognize that all contributions not appearing in traditional print format require careful and appropriate documentation. This documentation should be clear enough that the nature of the contribution can be understood by a non-specialist.
2. Candidates are encouraged to rank their supporting evidence or documentation wherever feasible. Formal assessments by experts and systematic evaluation by a group of users (e.g., a class of students would usually be ranked higher than the number of links to the candidate's web site, although the latter may be submitted as evidence).
3. Candidates are expected to specify and substantiate the exact nature of their contribution to collaborative work with other scholars, graduate students and technical support personnel. This is best achieved by having collaborators write notes detailing the candidate's contribution.

Committees' Responsibilities

Committees evaluating computer-related activities should recognize:

1. the possibility that computer-based or multi-media projects in the Humanities may contribute simultaneously to research, teaching, and university service (or other contributions specified in section 10.3 of the Tenure Document).
2. the need to acknowledge as a valuable contribution experimental or innovative work that, while yielding no conclusive results, may assist others in the pursuit of their research.
3. the right of candidates for tenure and promotion to have included among their referees at least one evaluator who is competent in the candidate's technological specialty.

Additional Considerations

1. Juried on-line publications should be viewed as comparable to juried print-based publications and the same questions regarding peer review and stature of publications should be asked.
2. In the same fashion that committees accept footnotes and bibliographical references to the candidate's work in scholarly publications as evidence of their contribution, committees should also recognize hot-links to respected web-sites as evidence signifying the acceptance of the candidates' work in the scholarly community. (For instance, a respected academic department may create a web page several layers deep and place the candidate's work/site on its top level with a comment recognizing it as a superlatively organized or innovative site.)

3. Media reports of computer-related work, such as newspaper articles and radio/television broadcasts, may also serve to indicate the increased profile on computer-related academic achievement to broader audiences; such media recognition of a candidate's work should not be alert to the nature of collaborative projects in computing (and to acknowledge the role of the candidate's technical abilities in the project design and implementation). Committees also need to distinguish between the lone researcher and the fully technically-supported one, given that the pioneering efforts of the former may require added expertise as well as initiative.

May 1998