



July 17, 2026

Deans, Chancellors, Executive Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs and Vice Provosts

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to reaffirm the University's commitment to recognizing the full scope of scholarly contributions made by our teaching track and clinical practice track faculty, particularly those achievements that extend beyond the traditional bounds of campus and published research in peer-reviewed journals. I also reaffirm that scholarship is an important component of faculty responsibilities in these tracks – as the Faculty Code Section 24-32 A states, “scholarship, the essence of effective teaching and research, is the obligation of all members of the faculty.”

The qualifications for appointment at the assistant professor, associate professor, or professor rank for any voting faculty track are detailed in the Faculty Code [Section 24-34 A](#). In particular, “[a]ppointment to the rank of associate professor requires a record of substantial success in teaching and/or research” and “[a]ppointment to the rank of professor requires outstanding, mature scholarship as evidenced by accomplishments in teaching, and in research as evaluated in terms of national or international recognition.” This expectation underscores that teaching itself is a core area for demonstrating scholarly distinction, especially when contributions are recognized beyond the local context.

Qualifications for teaching and clinical practice faculty are further detailed in Faculty Code [Section 24-34 B](#), which states that appointment at the associate professor rank in either track requires “extensive training, competence, and experience in the discipline,” while the professor titles require “a record of excellence.” The Code goes on to detail several ways in which scholarly excellence may be demonstrated, noting for both tracks that “while they may choose to do so through publication, such publication shall not be required.” At the associate professor rank, scholarship by teaching and clinical practice faculty members is expected to have had impact locally, while those with the rank of professor should have demonstrated impact on a wider scale.

Impactful scholarship in the teaching and clinical practice tracks may take a variety of forms. For example, faculty who author or co-author textbooks, or develop open-source educational resources, provide essential materials that extend well beyond our university walls and support both students and colleagues across the discipline. Some of our teaching track and clinical practice track faculty may demonstrate scholarship through the development or substantial revision of courses, integrating new pedagogical methods or current evidence directly into course objectives, content, and means of evaluation. Such efforts often shape curriculum not only within a single program but sometimes across

multiple units, reflecting thoughtful collaboration and curricular development and implementation. Clinical practice faculty may also demonstrate scholarship by championing novel interventions or initiatives that improve patient care or health care equity in our community and beyond.

Teaching and clinical practice faculty also make significant contributions by presenting at regional and national meetings on topics related to teaching in their specialty, serving as principal investigators or co-investigators on education-focused grants or clinical trials, or acting as peer reviewers for disciplinary or education journals. Many serve on conference planning committees, participate in national or regional educational task forces, or are invited to present or consult on pedagogy or clinical practice at other institutions. The impact of these roles may be seen in activities such as writing a regular column on pedagogical scholarship for a professional journal, leading accreditation visits for professional education organizations, or producing influential reports and white papers in their field. There is impact when faculty and clinicians beyond UW learn from these efforts and change their own practice.

Additionally, our teaching and clinical track faculty enrich educational experience for students by developing and leading study abroad programs, bringing a global dimension to our teaching mission, as well as by creating experiential learning opportunities that engage with our local community. As noted in Faculty Code Section 24-32. A, scholarship “is reflected not only in their reputation among other scholars and professionals but in the performance of their students.” These are just a few of the ways in which teaching and clinical faculty demonstrate scholarly excellence and contribute to the advancement of education far beyond the University of Washington campus.

I urge all Deans and Chancellors to ensure that promotion and tenure guidelines and processes within your academic units explicitly account for these substantial contributions. As the nature of academic work evolves, it is vital that our evaluation systems reflect the diverse forms of scholarship that define educational excellence today.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued leadership.

Sincerely,



Tricia R. Serio
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Professor, Biochemistry