I. Playwright

The playwright is the artist who writes the play, which serves as the foundation for exploration and performance by a creative ensemble. Playwrights may collaborate with stage directors, dramaturgs, designers, and actors in developing the script. Increasingly playwriting as a profession and in the classroom involves teaching screenwriting for film, television, and other forms of digitized media.

When evaluating documentation in a tenure dossier, external reviewers, administrators, and the tenure and promotion committee may ask themselves whether the candidate’s tenure portfolio demonstrates the ability to teach and use their practice to explore:

Production Expertise

- Expertise in dramatic construction and storytelling
- Skills in researching for the purposes of developing story ideas
- A deep understanding and ability to use theories of script analysis, dramatic criticism, and dramaturgy in the development of dramatic and theoretical works
- Ability to write illuminating dialogue and effective action
- Ability to develop engaging characters and complex character interactions

Historical Context

- A working knowledge of dramatic literature and theatre history across the globe, including classic and contemporary genres
- Excellence in textual and structural analysis of scripts
- An understanding of genre and aesthetics as they relate to dramatic literature and varying cultural world views

Collaborative Skills

- Excellence in oral and written communication skills to secure sensitive translation of the design ideas into a theatrical reality
- Ability to work and collaborate with artists and technicians, including students with various levels of experience
- An understanding of new play development workshops, contests, grants, and other funding sources, as well as an understanding of the new play development ecosystem as it relates to development and production
- An understanding of where the playwrights’ work best sit within the theatre ecosystem (i.e., who is most likely to commission and produce their work)
- An understanding of ethical practices associated with the field of professional and academic theatre and performance
- An understanding of how DEIJ is considered when selecting research projects for students
- An understanding of how DEIJ informs the recruitment of students, in cases where that is part of the candidate’s labor
- An understanding of how DEIJ issues impact their life at the university and an ability to think about their own implicit biases
The Playwright is best evaluated by attending a live performance of a production for which the author is responsible. Whereas the inclusion of a script and research are essential as support material detailing the process of the playwright, it does little to evaluate true ability in playwriting. Scripts, drafts, and other paperwork should be evaluated but they cannot substitute for the viewing of an actual production. Still or video photography might add some useful information to an evaluation but, again, are inferior to a live production. If recorded media are used for evaluation of a candidate, the circumstances of the recordings must be clearly stated. Such expertise is demonstrated by participation in the realized production, both on-and-off campus.