

# GUIDELINES FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

## College of Engineering University of South Florida

This document describes the College of Engineering (COE) guidelines for tenure and promotion as stipulated in the Board of Trustees regulations USF10.105 and USF10.106, USF System policy 10.116, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement and to fulfill the intent of furthering the mission of the University. Thus, these guidelines support high academic standards in awarding promotion and tenure and while ensuring a comprehensive, rigorous, and fair review of the candidate at the College level. The COE will follow the USF guidelines in evaluating faculty tenure and promotion (see <http://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-info/tenure-promotion.asp>). Criteria for tenure and promotion that specify documented and measurable performance outcomes have been developed and maintained by individual departments within the College. The purpose of this document is to ensure that members of the faculty who join the COE have a clear understanding of the expectations if they are to receive promotion and achieve tenure.

The College of Engineering is not currently a multi-campus unit. If the College of Engineering faculty are hired at branch campuses we will modify our governance and T&P documents to ensure that those faculty are included in matters of faculty governance and Tenure & Promotion to ensure they have a voice in departmental issues. We recognize the principles of equity of assignment, resources, and opportunities of faculty across a multi-campus university.

### COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING CRITERIA

Tenure and promotion in professorial ranks will be granted only to candidates who demonstrate excellence in academic and scholarly achievement. Performance is evaluated specifically in the areas of teaching and learning, research/scholarly activity, and service. Evaluation criteria regarding tenure and promotion are based on the USF guidelines. In accordance with the university requirements, candidates for tenure and promotion are expected to demonstrate excellence in research, excellence in teaching, and substantive service.

The departments of COE have defined criteria for tenure and promotion according to standards in their respective fields and disciplines, with specific measurable outcomes for types and levels of achievement for tenure and promotion. Given the diversity in research disciplines among COE faculty, these specific criteria could differ, and each case must be assessed individually. The standards/guidelines of departments Tenure and Promotion (T&P) document are available in print, in electronic media, and on the web to all members of the department.

- A. Letters from highly reputed, external reviewers to assess the readiness of the candidate for tenure and/or promotion are an integral part of the evaluation. Because the emphasis is on high impact and visibility, these letters will play a significant role in the decision process. External reviewers are expected to be highly regarded scholars in their field of expertise and should be familiar with the work of the candidate and/or should be able to assess the quality, the significance, and the impact of the work. **Tenure**

## 1. Overview: Process, Timeline and Probationary Period

Each candidate is expected to plan carefully and deliberately for the tenure process during all tenure-earning years; to understand her/his department's criteria for tenure; to heed and account for peer evaluations throughout the probationary period; and to provide complete, clear, and accurate materials for review through the appropriate system established by the University. The probationary period of the College of Engineering is six years. The candidate must achieve tenure no later than the end of the sixth tenure-earning year. Should tenure be denied, the faculty member will be offered one additional year of employment.

Around April the Dean's Office will provide a timeline of the process, with the expected due dates, and a list of potential candidates for Tenure, promotion, and Mid-tenure review to each Chair. The Chair will review and will submit any necessary corrections for the review and approval of the Dean's Office. It is the responsibility of the candidate to express the intent of applying for Tenure or Promotion to the Chair who will notify the Dean's Office for confirmation. Once all candidates are confirmed the Chairs working with candidates will be prepared a list of no less than ten potential external reviewers. The Chair will submit the list to the Dean's Office for review and approval. The Dean's Office will request any changes or amendments to the list to the Chair until a final list is approved. The Chair will be responsible to sending the letters to the approved external reviewers.

The candidate will prepare the application package with all the required documentation and the external review letters will be incorporated to the packages. Independent reviews of all materials will be conducted by the Departmental Committee, the Chair, the College's faculty Governance Committee, and the Dean. At each stage, there will be a written review and recommendation that will be made available to the candidate for his/her review and reaction, if deemed necessary. Once the process is completed at the College the packages go to the Provost Office for the corresponding review and recommendation to the President, who in turns conducts her/his review and submits her/his the recommendation about tenure to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees votes on the approval of tenure.

**Mid-Tenure Review:** A comprehensive mid-tenure review will be conducted, typically during the third tenure-earning year. If an individual is credited with tenure-earning service at the time of initial appointment, the review will be conducted at the approximate mid-point of the probationary period. The candidate will prepare the mid-tenure review package with all the required documentation. Independent reviews of all materials will be conducted by the Departmental Committee, the Chair, the College's faculty Governance Committee, and the Dean. The Dean's Office will forward the Dean's mid-tenure reviews to the Provost's Office. Once all written reviews are completed the Dean's Office will coordinate a meeting with the candidate, the Chair, and the Dean's Office to go over the reviews. The mid-tenure review is intended to be informative: to be encouraging to faculty who are making solid progress toward tenure and instructional to faculty who may need to improve in selected areas of performance. Where progress is significantly lacking and apparently unlikely, nonrenewal may result.

## 2. Expectations of tenured faculty

The granting of tenure is a privilege that carries enormous responsibility within the department, the college, the University, and broader academic community. This responsibility includes maintenance of the highest academic standards, continued scholarly productivity, sustained teaching excellence, and ongoing beneficial service carried out in the spirit of collegial citizenship.

### **3. Evaluation for Tenure**

Evaluation for tenure involves three components appropriate to the departments in the college:

- a) Teaching or comparable activity (including advising and mentoring);
- b) Research/scholarly work;
- c) Service to the University, the profession, and the community.

The minimum criteria for tenure in COE are a display of **excellence** in both teaching and research and at least a **substantive** contribution to service. In addition, collegiality and participation as a citizen of the University are integral parts of faculty performance. A convincing case must be made that the candidate record represents a pattern indicative of a lifetime of continued accomplishment and productivity with potential for high impact on the field or society. The standards/guidelines of departments Tenure and Promotion (T&P) document and the USF T& P guideline will be strictly followed while evaluating a candidate for tenure and promotion.

#### **3 a. Teaching**

Teaching is interpreted broadly to cover all contributions to student learning including classroom and laboratory instruction, mentoring, and advising; development of new courses, laboratories and teaching methods; publication of new textbook; innovations in teaching to stimulate learning; development of educational software; and advising of students pursuing honors theses and graduate degrees at the masters and doctoral levels.

The first component in tenure decision is an evaluation of effectiveness in teaching. Each candidate must present a record of effective, high-quality teaching, as specified by the relevant department, that clearly reveals the candidate's ability to sustain a first-rate teaching program during his or her career. The record of activities leading to tenure must provide evidence of excellence in teaching. It is therefore vital that substantial and diverse evidence of teaching effectiveness be presented as part of the tenure application. To qualify for tenure, candidates should present a consistent pattern of positive evaluation in teaching.

In addition to student evaluations, which must be included, a candidate may present the following kinds of documentation of teaching effectiveness: instructional materials (such as labs, group projects etc.), assessment activities and products (such as papers, tests, performances, problem sets), and other material used in connection with courses (course syllabi); new course development, course redesign, contributions to curriculum development or other collaborative teaching efforts, and reflection of new developments in the field in course content; implementation of new teaching pedagogies and adaptation to new formats and media through incorporation of emerging technologies; professional development activities and efforts at improvement; peer and/or expert

observations and evaluations; student performance on pre- and post-instruction measures; exemplary student work and outcomes; records of advising and mentoring; supervision of teaching and/or research assistants; dissertation and/or thesis direction; and teaching awards. Approaches to teaching and concomitant sources of evidence of teaching effectiveness may vary across fields, departments, and candidates, and consequently, variance in candidate portfolios may also be expected.

### **3 b. Research/Scholarly Work**

Research/Scholarly work activities in different disciplines in COE range from research (creation and attainment of new knowledge whether basic or applied) to the development/implementation of improved standards of engineering practice. The record of activities leading to tenure and promotion must provide evidence of excellence in research/scholarly work. In order to attain tenure, a faculty member is expected to have established an original, coherent, and meaningful program of research and/or scholarship, even when working in a collaborative team and to have demonstrated and clearly documented continuous and progressive record of research and scholarship indicative of potential for sustained contribution and distinction throughout her or his career. Emphasis will be given to external peer recognition, as demonstrated by a record of competitively awarded external research grants and contracts, and to the demonstrable impact of research through citations, inventions, development, and commercialization of intellectual property, and technology transfer. Objective peer review of the candidate's work by scholars/experts external to the University is required to strongly support and justify the awarding of tenure.

A candidate may present the following kinds of documentation of a significant research program: reviews of books and articles; records of competitive honors and awards, grants, and fellowships; reviews of grant applications; citations of the candidate's work; evidence of impact on policy and practice; the quality and significance of journals, series, and presses by which the candidate's work is published or of other venues in which it appears; invited, refereed, or non-refereed status of publications; research awards and acknowledgments; and invitations and commissions. For collaborative and co-authored scholarship, the consideration will be given of the candidate's role and contribution to the work, consistent with standards of disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary scholarly practice. It is expected that the body of work of a candidate for tenure will be judged against the appropriate national and/or international standards within the area of research and scholarly activities, balancing the significance and quality of contributions with the quantity of publications and other scholarly products.

### **3 c. Service**

Service includes the categories of service to the University (which could be at the level of department, college, or university), the professional field or discipline, and outreach and engagement with the community. Professional service may include work for professional organizations and local, state, federal, or international agencies and institutions. Some examples

are contributing to the organization of workshops and conferences, editing journal and book monographs, serving on panels or chairing sessions at professional events, or being a sought after as a consultant on various matters related to one's discipline. It must relate to the basic mission of the University and capitalize on the faculty member's special professional expertise. Candidates for tenure must show substantive contributions in these areas.

## **B. Promotion**

### **1. Evaluation for Promotion**

As is the case with tenure, the judgment of readiness for promotion to higher academic rank is based upon a careful evaluation of a candidate's contributions in teaching, research/scholarly work, and service; the sections pertinent to the evaluation of these factors for the tenure decision apply as well to promotion. The promotion also requires collegiality and participation as a productive citizen of the University.

### **2. Standards for Promotion**

General standards for consideration of promotion to the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor are as follows. In each category, a candidate's achievements are evaluated in relation to criteria specified by the department for the rank sought as well as the candidate's assigned duties within the department.

#### **Associate Professor**

- i. A record of sustained excellence in teaching or other comparable activity appropriate for the department, including, a record of participation on thesis and/or dissertation committees, and as major professor for students pursuing BS (Honors), Masters, and Doctoral degrees.
- ii. A record of excellence in independent and/or collaborative research/scholarly work, supported by substantial, nationally-competitive research grants, and high impact, and sustained publications or their equivalent. Categories, criteria, and types of evidence for research/scholarly work may vary across departments. The record should be sufficient to predict, with a high degree of confidence, continuing productivity in research/scholarly work throughout the individual's career, as expected in the individual's field.
- iii. A record of the substantive contribution of service to the University, profession, and/or public as specified in the individual's department tenure and promotion guideline.
- iv. Letters from external reviewers who are highly distinguished and active in the candidate's field of research will strongly support and justify the awarding of promotion.

## **Professor**

Promotion to rank of Professor is fundamentally based on the same criteria as the promotion to Associate Professor but with the expectation that at this stage of the career the faculty member will have established a richer, more mature, and larger portfolio of achievements in the category of teaching, research, and service. General principles that will guide the evaluation of a candidate's application are provided below.

- i. Continued excellence in teaching or other comparable activity appropriate for the department since the time of promotion to Associate Professor. The record should demonstrate additional distinction in teaching with contributions in curricular innovation or development, activities towards the advancement of the College's commitment to engaging and training students for successful engineering careers, pursuits that integrate teaching and research, and seminar/presentations/workshops at national and state levels.
- ii. Established and recognized record of excellence in research/scholarly work of international visibility. The record should be one of both sufficient quantity, to show sustained and continuing high productivity in research/scholarly work, and of demonstrated quality that is supported by a record of high impact publications or their equivalent. It is expected that the faculty has a record of sustained competitively awarded external research grants since the time of promotion to Associate Professor.
- iii. Substantial contribution of service to the University and to the field, profession, or community, as appropriate to the mission and goals of the department, college and/or university. Expectations about the level of meaningful service contributions for candidates for Professor are significantly higher than those for attaining the Associate rank as specified in the individual's department tenure and promotion guideline. It is expected that candidates should demonstrate substantial commitment to and involvement in institutional service beyond the department. Leadership in the department, college, and university committees is expected and should be complemented by service in the professional discipline through activities such as holding office in a professional organization, organizing conferences, membership in editorial boards, and serving as an external evaluator on the national level.
- iv. Letters from external reviewers who are highly distinguished and active in the candidate's field of research will strongly support and justify the awarding of promotion. Compelling evidence of significant achievement among peers in one's discipline or professional field at the national or international level is an important part of the evaluation for promotion to the rank of full professor.

## **C. Responsibilities of the FGC Concerning T&P**

### **Activities Prior to T&P Meeting**

Pre-meeting assignment and meeting attendance policies are as follows.

1. Upon obtaining a list of applicants from the Dean, the Chair of the Faculty Governance Committee in consultation with the rest of the committee will appoint a member of the committee to present one or more applicants to the committee. Members will not be assigned applicants from their own department. It is the responsibility of the appointed member to formally review the application in-depth, and bring any discrepancies noticed in the application packet to the attention of the committee. Discrepancies in the packet will be brought to the attention of the Dean. In addition, all members should review each application and similarly present their observations to the committee during the committee deliberations.
2. No discussion, deliberation, or other type of communication-communication-related to the candidate's evaluation should occur or take place outside the meeting.
3. The Chair of the Faculty Governance Committee will notify all committee members in writing regarding the time and place of the committee meetings. It is advisable that such communications be made at least two weeks in advance whenever possible and that all committee members notify the Chair of their attendance. Committee members unable to attend all meetings should notify the Chair of the arrangements made for their substitution.
4. Members must be present for the deliberations to vote on all candidates.
5. It is expected that all members or their replacements are present for deliberations and voting.
6. Members absent from one or more meetings will not be allowed to vote in absentia.
7. A member is ineligible to vote on candidates from their own department.
8. Only a member of higher or equal rank shall participate in the deliberations and vote on a candidate under consideration. For instance, for promotion to Full Professor, only other full professors may participate in the deliberations and vote.

### **Conduct of the T&P Meeting**

The following is the recommended procedure for conducting the tenure and promotion meeting. Any deviation in the procedure outlined below must be by a unanimous vote of the FGC.

1. No discussion, deliberation, or other type of communication-related to the candidates evaluation should occur or take place outside the meeting.
2. All discussions and deliberations pertaining to tenure and promotion shall be confidential.
3. Upon calling the meeting to order, the Chair shall appoint two committee members to count the votes and to verify and record the count.

4. Deliberations on each applicant shall begin with a presentation by the committee member appointed to the task. The committee member may provide the Chair with a list of the discrepancies that need to be addressed in the application.
5. At the conclusion of the two presentations, the Chair shall open the meeting for general discussion of the applicant. Such discussion shall continue until all members are ready to vote or a motion to vote is passed.
6. All voting shall be by secret ballot. The Chair of the Faculty Governance Committee will provide committee members with appropriate ballots in which the name of the applicant and the matter to be voted on are clearly indicated. Separate ballots shall be provided for tenure and for promotion votes. Note that the elements for promotion votes are different from those for tenure votes. It is advisable to organize the ballot based on the respective pages from the T&P manual.
7. Members are not eligible to vote for candidates from their own departments. They may, however, participate in the discussions of the candidates from their own departments.
8. Overall rating votes, i.e. Excellence in each category (Research, Teaching, and Service, and Overall) will be chosen based on the median of the votes cast in each category. In case of a tie, the rating shall be "rounded-up", i.e. the better of the two ratings shall be chosen.
9. The Chair shall collect the ballots. One of the assigned committee members shall count the votes and the count shall be verified and recorded by the other member.
10. At the end of the evaluation of all candidates, the Chair will ask if any committee member wants to reconsider the vote on any of the candidates. Only one revote is allowed per candidate. The revote procedure is the same as the first vote.
11. The Chair, in cooperation of the committee members, shall prepare a brief statement to be included in the application packet. This is of particular importance in those cases where the vote has been split or negative. Without such a statement, the committee's evaluation of the applicant is not complete. The final version of the statement shall have majority approval of the committee, excluding the departmental representative.

## **CHANGES TO THESE GUIDELINES**

Any changes to these guidelines require the approval of the College Faculty Governance Committee and the Dean.



**Signature Page**

Approved by the College Faculty Governance Committee on June 6, 2020

Name: Huabei Jiang, Chair, Faculty Governance Committee, College of Engineering

Signature: 

Date: June 6, 2020

Approved by the Dean of the College of Engineering on \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Robert H. Bishop

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_