

Criteria for the Evaluation and Promotion of the Faculty

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Overview

The Departmental Peer Committee and the Chairperson will evaluate faculty members regularly according to the intervals and procedures specified in the AFUM contract. Each evaluation of a faculty member will be made based on the total contribution of the faculty member to the Department, to the University, and to such other constituencies as may be appropriate in a given instance. It is explicitly recognized that the total contribution of a faculty member results partly from assignments made by the Department Chairperson, partly in response to departmental needs and opportunities, and partly by the individual's self-generated professional goals. It is also explicitly recognized that at different stages in a faculty member's career, the components making up the individual's total contribution may be somewhat different.

In a strong department, each person may have a different role. This role develops over time as faculty members perceive departmental needs and adapt their own strengths and enthusiasms to meet these needs. This process works best when it is spontaneous. In our Department, we want people who have the creative ability and the self-motivation to recognize a need or an opportunity, a job that needs doing, and to do it. We expect this process to continue as faculty mature. It is best cultivated by frequent, full, and uninhibited discussion by the whole faculty of the Department, its needs, its goals, its problems, and its aspirations. Involvement in this process is a quality that can be recognized and appreciated, but not always easily quantified. Nevertheless, it is one of the criteria by which we evaluate our faculty.

We expect all faculty members to participate fully in teaching, advising and curriculum development for the Department. Excellence in teaching is expected and evidence of innovation and improvement of courses is valued. Providing quality advising to our undergraduate and graduate students is an important departmental mission to which all faculty members are expected to contribute.

We also expect all tenure-eligible faculty members to carry on creative scholarly activity of a quality judged sound by their peers. We expect there will be a wide range of interests and styles in this activity. Usually this activity will take the form of scholarly research and publication, including successful pursuit of external funding at a level appropriate for the

individual's area of scholarship. Vigorous, creative, and high-quality scholarly activity is also a major component in determining the rate at which a faculty member advances in rank.

In addition to the faculty member's activities in teaching, advising, and scholarly research, each faculty member's service and outreach contributions will be evaluated. Service to the Department, the College, the University, the State of Maine, the professional community, and the public are all valued.

Thus, the faculty member's total contribution should include activities in teaching, advising, and curriculum development; scholarly work; and service and outreach. As emphasized above, the mix of these activities will vary from person to person and may vary over a faculty member's career. It is the faculty member's total contribution each year that is important, and a faculty member is expected to contribute in all of these areas unless his/her appointment specifies otherwise. The criteria delineated below assume a standard 50% research, 50% teaching appointment, and at all reappointment and promotion points, the Peer Committee will adjust expectations within the criteria for consideration of candidates with appointments that vary from this standard. The Committee will consider that quantities of various types of activities, output and results may vary, according to the research/teaching mix associated with the subject faculty person's appointment, but high quality will be expected in all areas of professional endeavor.

The actual activities carried out by a faculty member in any year are to be summarized in an activity report prepared by the faculty member, which forms the basis for the evaluation. The specific criteria to be used by the Peer Committee for evaluation and promotion are given below.

This document is written to cover the milestones of a faculty member who is on the usual appointment/promotion track in the Department (six years as assistant professor, then consideration for promotion to associate professor, and, if successful at that point, consideration for promotion to full professor a few years later). In case of considering the granting of tenure without promotion, the peer committee will use the criteria for promotion to the applicant's current rank (with tenure), as stated in this document. Early promotion to associate professor with tenure is discussed as one special case below, but other unusual cases will be handled by the Peer Committee in the spirit of the standard criteria herein.

For non-tenure-track faculty, the peer committee review for reappointment will be based on requirements stated in the contract that the faculty member received from the University and the duties assigned by the department chair during the period under review.

Composition of the Peer Committee

For matters of reappointment of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty, post-tenure review, appointment (or reappointment) of adjunct or cooperating faculty, and other routine matters, the peer committee will consist of three faculty members elected by the full department faculty to serve three-year, rotating terms. Each member serves as coordinator of the committee's activities during her/his third year on the committee.

For matters involving granting of tenure or promotion of current faculty, the peer committee will consist of all department faculty members at or above the rank/status that is the goal of the application. Thus for consideration of tenure, the peer committee will consist of all department faculty members who are tenured at the time of application. For promotion to Associate Professor, the peer committee will be all current Associate Professors and Professors, and only Professors will sit on the committee for consideration of promotion to Professor. In case of an application for tenure and promotion to Professor, the Peer Committee of all tenured Department faculty must first consider and vote on the granting of tenure. If that vote is in favor of the granting of tenure, then the Peer Committee of Professors will consider the promotion to Professor.

Criteria for Peer Committee Evaluation and Recommendation for Promotion

Faculty members in the Department of Physics and Astronomy are expected to contribute in each of the three areas of scholarship, teaching, and service. While appropriate service can strengthen a faculty member's record, it cannot make up for inadequate scholarship or teaching.

1. Scholarship

The faculty member must demonstrate development of a significant research program resulting in scholarly contributions to physics, astronomy, or a closely related field and a pattern of obtaining adequate resources to support that research.

Evaluation of Assistant Professors

The Peer Committee's evaluation will assess the Assistant Professor's progress toward meeting the scholarship requirements for promotion to Associate Professor and the granting of

tenure, except that external letters will not be required. Work in progress and previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

The Peer Committee must evaluate the extent, quality, and sustainability of the faculty member's scholarly activity. As part of this evaluation, the Peer Committee must obtain at least three letters evaluating the faculty member's scholarly contributions and potential for continued contribution from recognized authorities in the candidate's research area. These authorities must be from outside the University of Maine System. Normally six letters are obtained, three from individuals selected by the Committee and three from individuals selected by the candidate. Additional references (from within or without the University of Maine System) may also be sought at the discretion of the Peer Committee or suggestion of the candidate.

- The candidate will meet the following requirements:
 1. Must have achieved a national reputation and be respected as a researcher in the professional community, as indicated by the external letters and other documentation of scholarly activity. This activity would normally include, at minimum,
 - a. publishing *refereed* scholarly works in which the candidate played a significant role,
 - b. obtaining adequate resources to support research activities, and
 - c. presenting talks at major national or international professional meetings.
 2. Must have, in the external letters and other documentation, indications that the scholarly activity has good likelihood for continued success.
- In support of the case for having met the above requirements, the candidate must submit evidence of scholarly accomplishments. The following are examples:
 1. Authorship or co-authorship of refereed articles, books or book chapters based on work since appointment as an assistant professor.
 2. Colloquia or talks presented at professional meetings or other institutions.
 3. Editorship of one or more scholarly books.
 4. Scholarly research proposals submitted and proposals approved by external funding agencies, including industries.
 5. Editorship or membership of the board of editors of a scholarly journal.
 6. Peer recognition of scholarly activity, including awards and prizes.

7. Organization of professional meetings, symposia, and workshops.
8. Productive research collaborations including technology transfer.
9. Published reviews of books.
10. Patent disclosures and submissions.
11. Other evidence of significant scholarly activity.

Early Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

To recommend for early promotion, the Peer Committee must determine that a candidate is an unusually productive scholar, in terms of the impact of the applicant's research work on the field. Such impact may be evidenced by, for example, particularly strong external letters, numerous citations in publications of others, recognition from national professional societies, and/or success in competitive funding application pools with national agencies.

Evaluation of Associate Professors

The Committee's evaluation will be based on the same scholarship criteria as for promotion to rank except that external letters will not be required. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

Promotion to Professor

The candidate must demonstrate outstanding scholarship and be recognized by peers outside the University of Maine System as having made a significant contribution in his/her area of expertise. In addition to meeting the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate must demonstrate significant additional scholarly contributions since promotion to Associate Professor. Also, the letters and other documented scholarly activity must indicate that the faculty member is internationally known and has likelihood for continued significant scholarly contributions.

Evaluation of Professors

The Committee will use the same scholarship criteria as for promotion to rank except that external letters will not be required. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

2. Teaching and Advising

Each faculty member is expected to contribute to the teaching and advising mission of the Department. Specific responsibilities are assigned by the Chairperson in consultation with the faculty member.

Evaluation of Assistant Professors

The Peer Committee's evaluation will assess the Assistant Professor's progress toward meeting the teaching and advising requirements for promotion to Associate Professor and the granting of tenure. Documents describing current and planned progress, previous Peer Committee evaluations, and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure (and Early Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure)

- In general, the candidate must have chaired at least one M.S. or Ph.D. committee and demonstrated effectiveness as a graduate student advisor. This effectiveness can be demonstrated by student accomplishments, advisory committee meetings, input to defenses, etc.
- The candidate must have established a record as an effective teacher. The effectiveness is evidenced by:
 1. Course evaluations by undergraduate and graduate students.
 2. Written and signed student comments.
 3. Awards and nominations for awards for teaching activities.
- The Peer Committee will also consider other evidence of teaching accomplishments that may include:
 1. Evidence of innovative teaching, including new methods of teaching and institution of new courses, as demonstrated by relevant documentation or publications.
 2. Informed judgements of colleagues.
 3. Measures of student performance by an independent mechanism such as comparative norm tests.
 4. Evidence of effectiveness as an undergraduate advisor, if such duties are assigned.
 5. Participation in teaching workshops.
 6. Presentations and publications on teaching.

7. Supervision of independent senior projects, participation in the Honors Program, development of courses, refereed publications describing new pedagogical approaches, approval of proposals relating to teaching research or acquisition of equipment for teaching.
8. If deemed necessary by the Peer Committee, Committee members may observe the candidate's teaching or review course materials.

Evaluation of Associate Professors

The Committee's evaluation of teaching and advising will be based on the same criteria as for promotion to rank. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

Promotion to Professor

Promotion to Professor requires a continued high level of teaching and advising performance, evaluated according to the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations shall be considered.

Evaluation of Professors

Continued high level of performance on teaching and advising criteria for promotion to rank is expected. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations shall be considered.

3. Service

Service within the University community can take many forms. Service outside the University is generally limited to activities in the capacity of a professional physicist or astronomer or to activities carried out as a representative of the University.

Evaluation of Assistant Professors

The Committee's evaluation will assess the Assistant Professor's progress toward meeting the service-related requirements for promotion to Associate Professor and the granting of tenure. Work in progress and previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations will also be considered.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

The case for promotion may be strengthened by a good service record, particularly if it has brought credit to the Department or the University.

- The Peer Committee will recognize achievement in the following areas:
 1. Contributions to College and University governance, planning, and programs through committee work and by taking on specific tasks.
 2. Contributions to Departmental governance, planning, and programs through committee work and by taking on specific tasks.
 3. Service as a faculty advisor to and/or participating in student organizations.
 4. Technology transfer of research and/or consulting for public and private organizations.
 5. Service to professional or scientific organizations as an office holder or committee member.
 6. Reviewing journal articles, grant applications, and books.
 7. Outreach activities involving K-16 education.
 8. Other evidence of significant service.

Evaluation of Associate Professors

The Committee's evaluation of service will be based on the same criteria as for promotion to rank. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations shall be considered.

Promotion to Professor

Promotion to Professor requires a continued high level of service performance evaluated according to the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations shall be considered.

Evaluation of Professors

The Committee will use the same service-related criteria as for promotion to rank. Previous Peer Committee and Chairperson evaluations shall be considered.

Approved by the Faculty 02/13/2006

Approved by Administration 03/2006