

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY FACULTY EVALUATION, TENURE & PROMOTION POLICIES

(Adopted by the Faculty on March 26, 1996 with final revisions by Committee A on May 31, 1996 and October 28, 1997. Approved by the Provost December 1, 1997)

1. Faculty Evaluation Procedures

1.1. Annual Evaluations of All Faculty

Annual evaluations of each faculty member's performance in research, teaching, and service are made by Committee A. An important source of information in this evaluation is the departmental Faculty Activities Form, which each faculty member fills out. This form solicits factual information regarding such items as publications, external funding, citations from the *Science Citation Index*, presentations at professional meetings, supervision of graduate students, courses taught, and contributions to university, professional, and public service. The form also solicits prose comments, including a self evaluation. Faculty are further invited to submit any other materials (course syllabi and exams, for example) they would like Committee A to consider.

Committee A bases its evaluation on this and other information, including faculty vitae, evaluations of teaching, and, if applicable, input from interdisciplinary units. In addition Committee A makes a composite evaluation that is ordinarily weighted 50% research, 33% teaching, and 17% service. (Some faculty, by mutual agreement with Committee A, may have other weightings of research, teaching, and service.)

After the evaluations are completed, each faculty member has an opportunity to respond in writing to Committee A. A more comprehensive personal interaction (including a discussion of the evaluation, and of the weightings to be applied to the following evaluation period, if desired) takes place in the Fall semester, when each faculty member schedules a visit with Committee A.

Recommendations for merit salary increases ordinarily take into account all annual composite evaluations subsequent to the last year in which merit based salary increases were awarded.

1.2 Annual and Cumulative Review of Progress Towards Tenure

Committee A closely monitors the progress of each untenured faculty member during each year of his or her pre-tenure period. In addition to the information that is ordinarily available for annual evaluation (see above), the annual assessment of cumulative progress towards tenure includes in-class peer evaluation of teaching by Committee A. Committee A thus prepares an annual written assessment of cumulative progress towards tenure. This assessment is given to the faculty member and is the subject of a discussion with him or her. It is also sent to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

During the mid-point year of a faculty member's pre-tenure period, this annual review entails a more extensive assessment of cumulative progress towards tenure. This evaluation may include consultation with other faculty who can provide a considered appraisal of the teaching and/or research of the faculty member being evaluation (e.g., members of the same research group). If deemed desirable by the faculty member and by Committee A, this midpoint assessment may also include external letters of evaluation.

1.3 Reappointment of Probationary Faculty

Decisions on reappointment of untenured faculty are made annually in accord with the Norman Campus Faculty Handbook. Reappointment is not guaranteed, and consequently departmental recommendation of reappointment is not automatic.

2. Promotion and Tenure Procedures

For consideration of both tenure and promotion, it is important to recognize that different subfields of Physics and Astronomy have rather different working conditions and criteria. For example, in experimental high-energy physics, very large collaborations are the norm, and publications are often delayed for several years until a large experiment is completed. Moreover, appropriate rates and venues of publications vary widely across the disciplines that make up our department. Therefore criteria for tenure and/or promotion must be determined in the context of national norms appropriate to the candidate's subfield.

1. Each year Committee A prepares a list of names of faculty it wishes to consider for tenure and/or promotion during that year. (This list necessarily includes any untenured faculty who are in the next-to-last year of their pre-tenure period.) In addition, faculty at the Assistant and Associate Professor rank may nominate themselves in writing to be considered for promotion. All faculty nominated by either of these methods will be considered.
2. Each person considered for promotion and/or tenure names two full professors in the Department to act as advisors who will assist the candidate in preparing his or her tenure file.
3. Each person under consideration (in consultation with the advisors) submits a list of at least three persons to act as external evaluators in accordance with University policy. Committee A adds at least as many names and assembles the final list of evaluators. The Chair then writes these external evaluators, asking for written evaluations of the candidate's qualifications.
4. The candidate prepares a file that includes a complete current vita and publications list and data on teaching. This file also includes information about grants and contracts received; theses and dissertations directed; outside employment activities; university, professional, and public service; and any other material required by the Provost. This material, along with the external

evaluations and internal evaluations written by the advisors, is made available to all departmental faculty. Subsequently, a faculty meeting is held to discuss the case for promotion and/or tenure. At this meeting, all external letters are read by the Chair. In addition, the advisors summarize the pros and cons of the candidate's case in a letter (or letters) that are read to the faculty. In addition, the Department asks graduate students to report to the faculty their views on the candidate's case. Following the meeting, the faculty have several days to vote for or against promotion and/or tenure. Secret ballots are used that require each voter to state confidential reasons for his or her vote. All tenure-track and tenured faculty vote on candidates for tenure and for promotion to Associate or Full Professor. For candidates being considered for tenure, the vote by tenured faculty is reported to the Dean, as required by the University; in addition, an advisory vote by untenured faculty is reported.

5. Committee A has access to the candidate's complete file, including all external evaluations as well as all ballots, when it meets to consider its recommendation.

6. A recommendation from Committee A, a recommendation from the chair, a record of the secret vote of the faculty, and the complete dossier, are sent to the Dean.

3. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

3.1. Criteria for Tenure

Except where special administrative duties have been assigned or in other exceptional cases, the primary considerations in tenure deliberations are the candidates' records in teaching and research. Additional considerations include service (Departmental, professional, and public) and collegiality (creating and contributing to an environment that encourages the teaching and research efforts of others in the Department). Tenure thus requires documented evidence of distinction in teaching and the establishment of a nationally recognized research program. "National recognition" can be demonstrated in the external letters, publication in refereed journals, citations to published papers written or co-authored by the candidate, refereeing for journals and funding agencies, and participation in national and international conferences at a level sufficient to establish the candidate's visibility in his or her sub-field. In addition, candidates for tenure must have made a concerted effort during their pre-tenure period to attain a competitive level of external funding sufficient to support a nationally recognized, ongoing research program.

3.2. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor

The Department expects that Assistant Professors who are candidates for tenure will simultaneously be candidates for promotion to Associate Professor. Criteria for this promotion include a demonstrated record of continuing distinction in both teaching and research. In addition, the candidate must show that he or she has attained national

recognition in teaching or research. This level of accomplishment must be demonstrated through the candidate's impact on his or her discipline, as evidenced by a record of regular publications in refereed journals and participation at national conferences.

3.3. Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor

Consideration of cases for promotion to Full Professor will be based on a thorough evaluation in order to determine whether the candidate has attained leadership in his or her subfield. In addition, the candidate must have established a record of documented excellence in teaching and have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the Department and the University through regular service. The candidate's leadership in the research community shall be demonstrated by the impact of his or her research on the appropriate subfield. The candidate's professional influence can be demonstrated in one or more of the following ways: (a) presentations of research both in colloquia and at national or international conferences, (b) a strong record of publication in high quality refereed professional journals at a level commensurate with international norms in his or her subfield, (c) continuing external funding for the candidate's research program, and (d) external letters solicited as part of the evaluation process.