

Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

Department of Biomedical Engineering

The University of Memphis

I. Overview

Candidates for Tenure and/or Promotion in the Department of Biomedical Engineering must meet the Department, College and University criteria in effect at the time of application. Submitted dossiers must comply with College and University requirements as they are described in the current edition of the Faculty Handbook. All candidates for tenure and promotion should demonstrate **significant** productivity in **research and scholarship, effective teaching and service**, consistent with documented expectations. The level of effort in each area, and its weighting in tenure and promotion decisions, will not be expected to be equal, but will be determined in consultation with the Department Chair and the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee (T&PC, see below) during the annual planning process. For annual and mid-tenure evaluations and applications for tenure and/or promotion, **it is the faculty member's responsibility to document contributions and accomplishments** according to Departmental, College and University guidelines. At the very start of employment and particularly throughout the tenure-track period, guidance and consultation is provided by the Department Chair and T&PC on annual basis to promote equity and transparency in the review process.

A. *Research and Scholarship*

Scholarship is a discipline-based or multi-disciplinary activity that advances knowledge and learning through the production of new ideas and understanding. The candidate should address the nature and scope of his/her research, providing evidence of **the presence of a research program in which the person makes significant, independent contributions**. Where there is collaboration, which is hoped for in many situations, the candidate should clearly document his/her specific contributions to the project(s). Scholarship is demonstrated by products, usually written, that are appropriate to the discipline and have been evaluated by peers. Specific products to be used in evaluating research and scholarship include:

Publications:

Refereed journal articles, **with consideration being given to the impact of the journal and citations by others to the articles**; books, book chapters, technical reports and proceedings of conventions or symposia will also be considered and examined as to significance. **It is the candidate's responsibility and opportunity to document the quality and impact of publications** (e.g., impact factor of the journals in which papers were published and an exemplary list of citations to individual publications). The Department Chair is to provide to the Dean a written discussion of the nature and scope of the outlets in which the publications have appeared. As the dossier is assembled, the candidate and chair are expected to discuss the publication venues that were chosen so that an effective discussion is presented.

Products other than publications:

- Invitations to speak at universities and professional meetings, especially those, which are national and international in scope.
- Invitations to serve on advisory boards, grant review panels and journal editorial boards.
- Invitations to serve as *ad hoc* reviewers for granting agencies and journals.
- Application for and receipt of extramural research grant and contract awards.
- Results obtained by receipt of funds returned to the faculty member, e.g., indirect cost recovery and faculty release time.
- Scholarly activity of the faculty member's students.
- Development of content-based seminars/workshops.
- Organization of professional society meetings.
- Participation in the scholarship of teaching.

(The candidate should enter service-like items in the above bullet list in **either** the service or scholarship categories, **but not both**.)

Both tenure and promotion require external review of a candidate's record of research and scholarship by qualified peers not affiliated with the University. A standardized letter, developed from models in the Faculty Handbook and approved by the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Department Chair, will be used to solicit external reviews. Reviewers will be provided with candidate's vita and samples of publications selected by the candidate.

B. Teaching

Teaching includes classroom instruction, course development, laboratory development, graduate student thesis/project supervision, mentoring students at all levels, testing, grading and professional development as a teacher. Effective teaching is an essential qualification for tenure and/or promotion, neither of which will be granted in the absence of clear evidence of teaching ability and potential for continued development.¹ Excellence in teaching is a strong recommendation for tenure and promotion, though it cannot be considered in isolation from research and scholarship and service. Clear evidence of a candidate's teaching effectiveness must be presented including at least one peer evaluation within the last three semesters.

C. Service

Faculty members are encouraged to pursue service activities that support the stated mission and goals of the University, College and Department. Service includes institutional service, professional service and community outreach. Generally, faculty members are expected to give priority to service activities related to their professional expertise. Given the urban mission of the University, community outreach is especially valued. Faculty should document the nature, scope and value of service activities. Service activity will be evaluated on the basis of effectiveness and its support of the goals and mission of the University, College and Department.

University service is a reflection of a commitment to University citizenship and includes participation in **Departmental** committees, administrative duties, advising student organizations,

¹ Exception may be granted only by the University's President in a written document, which must be attached to the candidate's dossier.

College and University committees and task forces, student and faculty recruiting, fund raising, open-house participation, continuing education activities, public relations and University-related public service activities.

Professional service is a reflection of the candidate's commitment to his/her discipline and includes participation in committee activities, association leadership, conference planning, and evaluation of public and private institutions, processes and policies.

Community outreach includes planned activities related to the candidate's professional expertise and which involve interaction with community organizations and individuals not directly related to the University, such as guest lectures, and involvement in K-12 education.

II. Annual Evaluation and Planning

- a. At the appropriate time during the spring semester, tenure-track faculty members prepare an annotated report of their activities during the current academic year, and a plan for the next year. Reports and plans are submitted to the Department Chair and the T&PC.
- b. Shortly thereafter, the Department Chair and T&PC will prepare a written evaluation and meet individually with tenure-track faculty to discuss their progress, evaluation, and future plans. Following this meeting, the Department Chair will discuss the progress of individual tenure-track faculty with the chair of the T&PC.

Through the annual reviews, the candidate will assemble entries for the dossiers to be submitted for the midterm evaluation and the final tenure decision. The faculty member will be expected to comment on “negatives” (poor teaching evaluations, unsuccessful grants, etc.) in the dossier to assist the T&PC faculty in their evaluation. The faculty member should also comment on actions taken to address issues raised in previous annual reviews.

III. Mid-Tenure Review

In the spring of their third year for persons whose initial appointment includes the normal (six year) period to prepare for tenure review, in addition to the normal annual review, the tenure-track faculty will prepare and submit a file to the Department Chair documenting their progress toward tenure. For individuals with other periods, this will be approximately at the half-point of the period. The pertinent timeline for this process, with responsible parties and due dates, are summarized on the web site of the Herff College of Engineering (<http://www.engr.memphis.edu>). Except for letters from outside reviewers, the dossier for this review is identical to that used in the normal review.

IV. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion - Associate Professor

The basis of the Department of Biomedical Engineering tenure evaluation criteria are the candidate's contributions to the Department and the biomedical engineering profession. The candidate must clearly demonstrate a history of significant achievement as a professional educator and scholar, as well as a strong potential for future professional growth and development.

Candidates for tenure must meet eligibility requirements for promotion to associate professor. Minimum requirements for tenure and for promotion to associate professor are:

1. Earned doctorate from an institution offering studies in biomedical engineering or a closely related area plus at least five years appropriate professional experience in the instructional discipline or related area.
2. Evidence of outstanding performance in either instruction or research¹, or superior performance in two of the three areas, instruction, research or public service, or very good performance in all three areas.

The quality of research is more important than quantity in evaluating the candidate's research contributions; however, there must be evidence of a consistent and continuing publication record. Success in acquiring peer-reviewed grants and contracts (as PI or Co-PI) will serve as additional evidence of progress toward establishing a national research reputation. The candidate must have actively sought extramural funding and should have been successful in this endeavor. Evidence of mentoring of students through completion of graduate degree programs and some form of publication is typically present in the dossier.

Besides the documented impact of the candidate's publication record, the assessments by the external reviewers will be important in assessing how the candidate's publication record and extramural funding compares to those of candidates in similar situations.

V. Criteria for Promotion – Professor

Because there is no rank above that of professor, promotion to this rank must be made with greatest recognition of superior and sustained achievement with every expectation of a continuing contribution to the University and to the candidate's professional discipline. Candidates for promotion to the rank of professor are expected to be nationally and internationally recognized researchers and educators whose scholarship can serve as a standard for professional achievement. The documented impact of the candidate's record and extramural funding will be evaluated in comparison to comparable individuals at institutions similar to the University of Memphis.

Minimum requirements for professor are:

- (1) Earned doctorate from an institution in the instructional discipline or related area plus at least ten years appropriate professional experience² in the instructional discipline or related area. The candidate must have academic service at the University of Memphis in

¹ Documented evidence of research productivity that is leading to national recognition in the academic discipline is typically provided with annual expenditures for sponsored research obtained through funded grant proposals.

² Appropriate professional experience may not include experience that was concurrent with study in the same institution where the applicant worked toward or obtained an advanced degree.

at least two academic years prior to applying for promotion to professor, unless credit for prior service is specified in the offer letter and/or appointment papers.

- (2) Documented evidence of sustained contributions to instruction, including the training of graduate students leading to masters' and doctoral degrees, and directing post-doctoral research towards successful careers beyond the University of Memphis. The effectiveness in teaching will be measured primarily by input from students and faculty colleagues in the form of student evaluations, letters from former students, peer evaluations, receipt of awards or recognition for teaching excellence, and any other means that will attest to the candidate's teaching effectiveness. At least one peer evaluation of teaching effectiveness within the last three semesters is also required.
- (3) Documented evidence of sustained contributions to public service such as grant and manuscript review and/or committee service. Candidates for professor should have a record of institutional, professional, and community service that includes evidence of significant contribution to the curriculum, institutional and educational goals, or intellectual life of the University as a whole, especially as these activities demonstrate professional leadership. Additionally, service on important scientific review boards and panels, editorial and advisory boards and committees, and in professional organizations, and the organization of professional conferences/meetings is deemed appropriate for candidates seeking promotion to professor.
- (4) Documented evidence of high-quality research productivity and nationally and internationally recognized, sustained contributions to the academic discipline, with such evidence as:
 - publications in highest-quality peer-reviewed journals
 - significant record of invited presentations at important meetings and conferences and at major research universities;
 - authorship and/or editorship of review articles, books, or monographs; and by any other accomplishments that demonstrate the candidate is a leader in his or her scientific discipline.
- (5) Sustained record of external funding. Designation as the principal investigator of externally funded research program(s) or as recipient of special grant(s) for distinguished scholars is expected.

VI. Application Procedure for Tenure and/or Promotion

The Faculty Handbook provides the guidelines for application for tenure and promotion.

It is the candidate's responsibility to notify the Department Chair and the Chair of the Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee of his/her intent to apply for tenure and/or promotion. The deadline for the application is specified at the web site of the Herff College of Engineering. At the beginning of this process, the Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee chair supplies the candidate with the tenure and promotion schedule and forms, and the Departmental tenure and promotion criteria. However, it is the candidate's responsibility to document his/her activities in teaching, research, and service according to the current University format, as it is specified in the Faculty Handbook.

To apply for tenure and promotion, the candidate should address a letter to the Department Chair requesting a change in status in the spring semester before the next cycle of tenure and promotion. No form is specified for this letter, which should be as complete and concise as possible and should contain a list of five experts in the candidate's scholarly field who are not associated with the University. While submission by e-mail is appreciated, a printed copy for the file should be provided. The names of doctoral and postdoctoral mentors and collaborators with whom the candidate has joint publications are discouraged, but if included should be so identified. Pertinent rules are provided in the Faculty Handbook.

The applicant is encouraged to consult with the chair of the Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee on application protocol. The applicant's dossier should be submitted to the department office by a date specified in the time-line of the T&P process of the Herff College of Engineering (see the College web site). At the time of the submission of the dossier to the Department Chair, the candidate will include a statement indicating that the file is complete and that he/she understands no materials may be added to or removed from the dossier after the Departmental T&P Committee begins its review of the dossier. The contents of the dossier are specified in the Faculty Handbook.

VI. The Committee and Procedures

The Tenure and Promotion Committee of the Department of Biomedical Engineering will consist of all tenured associate and full professors, except the Department Chair. For consideration of promotions to professor, the committee will consist of only the professors in the Department. In the event that the Department has fewer than two faculty members eligible for a T&P Committee, the Department Chair will recommend to the Dean appropriate faculty members from related disciplines to constitute a committee of at least three faculty members. The chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee shall be elected for a term of two years by the members of that committee during the spring semester of the preceding academic year. A specific faculty member may not serve more than 1 consecutive term (2 years) as committee chair. The T&PC and Department Chair will participate annually in continuing education and training on best practices for equitable, inclusive, and unbiased review.

The Faculty Handbook provides many pertinent rules and procedures. These rules and procedures shall be followed as exactly as possible. Questions of process shall be directed upward through the administrative chain.

VII. Modification of Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

Amendments to this document may be proposed by all tenured and tenure track faculty members in the Department and must be approved by a simple majority. All Department criteria must be approved by the Chair, the Dean and the Provost. However, the criteria remain in effect until replaced by duly approved newer criteria. These guidelines are to be on file in the Department office and should be distributed to all new faculty members, to candidates for annual and midterm reviews and to applicants for tenure and/or promotion. These criteria are also to be included with tenure and promotion applications sent to the College.