

# **DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING**

## **TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES**

The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee approved these Guidelines On:  
September 27, 2008.

All tenured members of the Department Faculty reviewed, and reapproved these Guidelines without modification, at a Department Faculty Meeting on May 8, 2014.  
(Signatures are in the cover letter)

### **I. Overview**

- A. All candidates for tenure and/or promotion must meet department, college, and university eligibility criteria that were in effect at the time of his/her current appointment. The Departmental criteria amplify certain University and College criteria, as well as specify additional information regarding expected professional attainment appropriate to the Mechanical Engineering program.
- B. The Department's primary role is to provide quality instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Its faculty also endeavors to be actively involved in achieving excellence in research and scholarship and to perform a wide variety of service functions that target, among others, the wider university community, the state of Tennessee, and the engineering professions.
- C. While the Department is fully committed to adhering to these Guidelines, it also recognizes the need for flexibility in how they are applied, as each application is unique.

### **II. Annual Reviews/Evaluations**

By March 15th\*, the Department Chair will provide each tenure-track faculty member with written evaluations of her/his progress toward tenure and promotion. In preparation for this, by February 15th, the faculty member must provide the Chair with a dossier detailing his/her accomplishments in the areas of Instruction, Research and Scholarship, and Service. The dossier shall be in the format specified in the latest edition of the Faculty Handbook, except that evaluations of accomplishments in the area of Research and Scholarship by external peer-reviewers will not be sought. The Chair and the Department's Tenure and Promotion Committee shall independently evaluate these accomplishments relative to the criteria detailed in Section IV of these Guidelines. The Chair shall provide each tenure-track faculty member with copies of the evaluation reports and the member shall be given the opportunity to add his/her comments to these reports before signing them.

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\* For the caveat regarding all timelines in these Guidelines, see item IX on page 7.

### **III. Mid-Probationary Period Review**

Midway through the probationary period, the tenure-track faculty member will be evaluated as to his/her progress toward tenure and promotion, in accordance with policies stipulated in the latest edition of the Faculty Handbook. In preparation for this, by February 15th of the third (or middle) year following her/his current appointment, the faculty member must provide the Department Chair with a dossier detailing his/her accomplishments in the areas of Instruction, Research and Scholarship, and Service. The dossier shall be in the format specified in the latest edition of the Faculty Handbook. The Chair and the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee shall independently evaluate these accomplishments relative to the criteria detailed in Section IV of these Guidelines. The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee shall forward a copy of its evaluation to the Department Chair. The Chair will add his/her written evaluation to that of the TPC and deliver the document set to the Office of the Dean of the Herff College of Engineering. Following this, the document set will be reviewed by the College Tenure and Promotion and by the Dean, in accordance with policies stipulated in the latest edition of the Faculty Handbook. The applicant will be given an opportunity to confirm receipt of the reports of the reviews and to add comments to them.

### **IV. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor**

The bases of the Department's tenure and promotion evaluation criteria are the candidate's contributions to the Department, the College, the University, and the engineering profession, as well as the potential for the applicant's growth and future contributions while he/she is a faculty member in the Department. The applicant's contributions shall be reviewed with respect to the following areas:

- A. Instructional Activities
- B. Research and Scholarly Activities
- C. Service Activities

It is not expected that the applicant will be eminent in all three areas, but it is expected that he/she shall present supportive documentation that will indicate sustained and important contributions in the areas of Instruction and Research and Scholarly Activities. In addition, a reasonable amount of activity is expected in the area of Service.

For each area, examples are given to illustrate types of contributions that may be considered. These examples are representative only and equal weighting is not implied.

#### **A. Instructional Activities**

It is expected that the applicant would have devoted an extensive amount of effort to the development of the Department's instructional program. Therefore, the applicant must provide ample evidence to show his/her effectiveness in the area of Instruction. To this end, the applicant must provide student evaluations (SIRS Reports) for all courses taught. The following are examples of other elements that may be considered in the evaluation of the applicant's Instructional Activities:

1. Course development
2. Laboratory development
3. Introduction of new courses
4. Letters of evaluation from professional peers and/or former students

## B. Research and Scholarly Activities

These activities provide an insight into the candidate's potential for professional and scholarly growth. Furthermore, these activities complement and enhance instruction at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels, but particularly at the graduate level.

The research and scholarly achievements of an applicant are to be measured not only by the level of funding that he/she has secured from external agencies to support his/her research program, or by the number of his/her publications, but also by the quality of the research and the quality of the publications.

The applicant must provide evidence of sustained and important contributions in the area of Research and Scholarly Activities. External peer-reviewers must evaluate these contributions. The following are examples of other elements that may be considered in evaluating the candidate's contributions to Research and Scholarship:

1. Peer-reviewed articles in archival journals in engineering or closely related fields
2. Peer-reviewed publications of presentations at engineering meetings
3. Authorship of books and/or monographs in engineering
4. Acquisition of funding from external agencies to support research programs
5. Supervision of graduate students' thesis and/dissertation research as major professor
6. Supervision of graduate students' research as member of thesis and dissertation committees
7. Evaluation of scholarly activities by external peer-reviewers

## C. Service Activities

Service to the University, the College, the Department, and the engineering profession are considered an important part of the evaluation.

The following are examples of elements that may be considered in the evaluation of the applicant's contributions in the area of Service:

1. Service to the University
  - a. Participation in University committees
  - b. Recruitment of students and public relations activities
  - c. Guest lectures
  - d. Continuing education activities

2. Service to the College and the Department
  - a. Participation in Department and College committees
  - b. Involvement in recruitment of students and public relations activities
  - c. Advising of student technical organizations
3. Service to the Engineering Profession
  - a. Holding office and committee membership in professional organizations
  - b. Presentations at technical meetings
  - c. Consulting on engineering projects
  - d. Membership in professional organizations
  - e. Serving as an editor or reviewer for a professional journal in Mechanical Engineering or a closely related field
  - f. Serving as a proposal reviewer for an external funding agency, such as the National Science Foundation

## **V. Criteria for Promotion to Professor**

The minimum criteria for promotion to the rank of Professor are outlined below. Examples are given to illustrate types of achievements that may be considered. These examples are representative only and equal weighting is not implied.

- A. Evidence of effectiveness in instruction in the Mechanical Engineering curriculum. The following are examples of elements that may be considered in the evaluation:
  1. Student evaluations (SIRS Reports)
  2. Course development
  3. Laboratory development
  4. Introduction of new courses
  5. Letters of evaluation from professional peers and/or former students
- B. Evidence of sustained and significant contributions in research and scholarly activities. The following are examples of elements that may be considered in the evaluation:
  1. Peer-reviewed articles in archival journals in engineering or closely related fields
  2. Peer-reviewed presentations at engineering meetings
  3. Authorship of books and/or monographs in engineering
  4. Acquisition of funding from external agencies to support research programs
  5. Supervision of graduate students' thesis and/or dissertation research as major professor
  6. Supervision of graduate students' research as member of thesis and dissertation committees
  7. Evaluation of scholarly activities by external peer-reviewers

- C. Evidence of service to the Department, College, University, and the engineering profession. The following are examples of elements that may be considered in the evaluation:
1. Service to the University
    - a. Participation in University committees
    - b. Recruitment of students and public relations activities
    - c. Guest lectures
    - d. Continuing education activities
  2. Service to the College and the Department
    - a. Participation in Department and College committees
    - b. Involvement in recruitment of students and public relations activities
    - c. Advising of student technical organizations
  3. Service to the Engineering Profession
    - a. Holding office and committee membership in professional organizations
    - b. Presentations at technical meetings
    - c. Consulting on engineering projects
    - d. Membership in professional organizations
    - e. Serving as an editor or reviewer for a professional journal in Mechanical Engineering or a closely related field
    - f. Serving as a proposal reviewer for an external funding agency, such as the National Science Foundation

(It is pointed out that, although the criteria for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are similar to those for promotion to Professor, the expectation is that an applicant for promotion to Professor shall provide evidence of a higher stature in all areas, but especially in the area of Research and Scholarly Activities.)

## **VI. Application Process**

- A. The applicant must notify the Department Chair, in writing, by April 1st of the year in which he/she intends to apply for tenure and/or promotion. Upon receiving this notification, the applicant may request to meet with the Chair for explanation of the application procedures and process to him/her. The Chair will ask the applicant to provide the names of four potential external reviewers of his/her Research and Scholarship accomplishments. The Chair shall call to the applicant's attention the restrictions on this list, as stipulated in the current edition of the Faculty Handbook. (Although, per the Faculty Handbook, this consultation between the applicant and the Department Chair is optional, the Department strongly encourages it.)
- B. The applicant must provide a dossier in which all his/her accomplishments in the areas of Instruction, Research and Scholarship, and Service are detailed. The format of this dossier must conform to all the requirements as given in the latest edition of

the Faculty Handbook. The dossier must be submitted to the Department Chair by September 1st.

- C. The Department Chair shall request from the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee the names of four potential external peer-reviewers of the applicant's Research and Scholarship accomplishments. From this list and that provided by the applicant, together with any other names that the Chair may have, the Chair, in consultation with the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee, will compile a final list of four external reviewers (and two alternates), ensuring that at least one external peer-reviewer is selected from the list submitted by the applicant. After that, the chair of the TPC will contact each external peer-reviewer to invite him/her to serve, to inform him/her of the nature of the materials to be reviewed, to outline the expectations/criteria of the Department with regard to Research and Scholarship Activities, and to provide the due dates for receipt of the review.
- D. Once the review of the applicant's dossier has been completed at the Department level, he/she is not allowed to add to and/or amend any part of the application dossier.

## **VII. Composition and Functions of the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee**

- A. The composition of the Committee shall be in accordance with the requirements specified in the latest edition of the Faculty Handbook.
- B. The Chair and the Dean of the Herff College of Engineering (if he/she is a tenured member of the Department) are not eligible to participate in any part of the process leading to the Committee's written evaluation of a candidate.
- C. By April 1st, the chair of the Committee shall be elected, by secret ballot, from among the members. (The longest serving member of the Committee shall convene the meeting at which this election is held.)
- D. The minimum size of the Committee shall be four members. Quorum will be achieved when at least half the membership is present.
- E. If there are not at least four faculty members in the Department who are eligible to evaluate a candidate's application, the Department Chair shall select tenured faculty members from other departments of the Herff College of Engineering and/or the University to serve on the Committee. The eligible Department faculty must approve all such appointments, and the appointment(s) shall be effective for no longer than one academic year.

- F. All voting shall be by secret ballot, and all votes shall be counted at the end of each motion. All decisions will be based on a simple majority of the votes cast.
- G. All recommendations from the Committee shall be accompanied with supporting statements. Upon completion of evaluation of an applicant's tenure and/or promotion dossier, the Committee chair will forward the Committee's recommendation to the Department Chair. The recommendations of the Department Chair shall be independent of those by the Committee.
- H. In a case where the Department Chair applies for tenure and/or promotion, the Committee's recommendations shall go directly to the Dean of the Herff College of Engineering.

### **VIII. Modification(s) of Tenure and Promotion Guideline**

- A. The Guidelines will be reviewed and modified, if deemed necessary. All tenured and tenure-track members of the Department may participate in the review. However, all modifications shall require a two-thirds majority vote by all tenured faculty members in the Department.
- B. Copies of the modified Guidelines will then be sent for approval to the Dean of the College and the Provost.

### **IX. Timelines**

Timelines showing all the steps, responsibilities of various parties, actions, and due dates are presented in the tables below. (Note that in cases where there is a conflict between these timelines and those stipulated in the relevant section on the Provost's Office website, the latter shall take precedence.)

Herff College of Engineering Tenure and Promotion Procedures

Step	Responsibility	Action	Due Date*
1	Department Chair	Appoint/Elect Chair of incoming Department T&P Committee	April 1
2	Candidate	Notify Department Chair of intent to apply for Tenure and/or Promotion and provide list of suggested external reviewers	April 1
3	Department T&P Committee Chair	Independently develops a list of potential external reviewers.	April 15
4	Chair	In consultation with Department T&P Chair, finalize list of reviewers and solicit their agreement to review the candidate's materials.	May 1
5	Candidate	Assembles examples of scholarly work and vitae to submit to external reviewers.	May 15
6	Department Chair or T&P Committee Chair	Send cover letter, candidate's materials, and Department T&P Guidelines (criteria) to reviewers	June 1
7	Candidate	Complete dossier and supporting materials (following Faculty Handbook guidelines); submit to Department Chair.	September 1
8	Department Chair	Collect all materials (Candidate's dossier, External Review Letters and Vitae); Submit to Department T&P Committee.	September 15
9	Department T&P Committee Chair	Schedule and lead Department T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Department Chair.	October 7
10	Department Chair	Review candidate's dossier and provide recommendation to Dean's Office, who will forward to College Committee.	October 15
11	College T&P Committee Chair	Schedule and lead College T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Dean.	November 15

\*Note: Monday will be the due day for dates that fall on a weekend.

### Herff College of Engineering Reappointment Review Procedures

Step	Responsibility	Action	Due Date*
1	Candidate	Complete dossier and supporting materials (following Faculty Handbook guidelines); submit to Department Chair, who will forward to Department T&P Committee.	February 15
2	Department T&P Committee Chair	Schedule and lead Department T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Department Chair.	March 1
3	Department Chair	Review candidate's dossier and provide recommendation to Dean's Office.	March 15

\*Note: Monday will be the due day for dates that fall on a weekend.

### Herff College of Engineering Mid-Probationary Review Procedures

Step	Responsibility	Action	Due Date*
1	Candidate	Complete dossier and supporting materials (following Faculty Handbook guidelines); submit to Department Chair, who will forward to Department Committee.	February 15
2	Department T&P Committee Chair	Schedule and lead Department T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Department Chair.	March 1
3	Chair	Review candidate's dossier and provide recommendation to Dean's Office, who will forward to College Committee.	March 15
4	College T&P Committee Chair	Schedule and lead College T&P Committee review meetings; draft committee recommendation for member review; finalize; submit Committee recommendation with all materials to Dean.	March 30

\*Note: Monday will be the due day for dates that fall on a weekend.