

**CRITERIA FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION  
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Tenure and promotion procedures are set forth in The Faculty Manual (June 2010) of the University of South Carolina. Although The Faculty Manual provides guidelines for department and college policy, it is the responsibility of the tenured faculty of each department to formulate specific criteria and procedures for tenure and promotion within the unit. This document details specific criteria and procedures to be used by the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (hereafter termed as Department) to implement University guidelines.

Recommendations of faculty members for promotion and/or tenure are extremely important decisions that ultimately determine the quality and strength of the Department, both present and future. The basis for these decisions shall be evidence presented by the candidate on his or her activities in the areas of teaching, research and scholarship, and service.

**II. COMPOSITION OF THE UNIT COMMITTEE AND VOTING POLICY**

The tenured faculty in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering will act as the Unit Committee in dealing with tenure and promotion decisions for its faculty. All tenured faculty members of the Department will be eligible to vote on candidates for tenure so long as they are of equal or higher academic rank. All tenured faculty members of the Department with a rank equal or higher than the rank sought will be eligible to vote on candidates for promotion. Tenured faculty members in the Department holding administrative positions which enable them to make recommendations on the candidate (Department Chair, Dean, Provost, or President) may not vote at the Unit level.

The Unit Committee Chair for the upcoming academic year will be elected by the tenured faculty in the Department by April 15 of each year. The Unit Committee Chair must be a tenured full Professor. The Unit Committee Chair should not serve more than three years consecutively. Under unusual circumstances, exceptions to the "three years consecutively" policy may be made.

If, at the beginning of the academic year, there are fewer than five tenured faculty members eligible to vote on any tenure or promotion decision which might be forthcoming during the academic year, then the Unit Committee Chair, in consultation with the Department Chair and eligible faculty members in the Unit Committee, will choose sufficient additional faculty members from other engineering departments within the College of Engineering and Computing.

A person selected from outside the Department will be asked to serve for one year; however, that person may be asked to serve again if the need exists.

Eligible voters shall vote “yes”, “no”, or “abstain” on tenure and promotion considerations. At least two-thirds of the "yes" and "no" votes must be "yes" for the candidate to receive a positive recommendation from the Unit Committee. A negative recommendation for tenure or promotion is without prejudice to subsequent consideration. Written justification of all votes at the Unit level (including votes of “abstain”) is mandatory.

A tenure and/or promotion file must include external evaluations of the candidate’s research and scholarship. The number of outside reviewers is at least five (5). The Department Chair, in consultation with the Unit Committee Chair, will select the outside reviewers. The candidate may supply a list of five (5) reviewers to be considered by the Unit Committee. The outside reviewers will be contacted by the Unit Committee Chair or members of the Unit Committee at the direction of the Unit Committee Chair.

For faculty holding joint appointments, each secondary unit must be given an opportunity to propose outside evaluators and to comment on evaluators proposed by the primary unit. Primary and secondary units should work together to obtain a suitable, representative group of evaluators. In any event, an evaluation must be solicited from at least one evaluator nominated or approved by each secondary unit. (FM. Section II)

The outside reviewers normally should be senior, accomplished faculty members at major research universities. Leading scholars in a particular field may be used as outside evaluators even if they are not at major research universities. Up to two (2) non-university specialists in the candidate’s field may be used as outside evaluators. Reviewers should not be the candidate's dissertation director or normally should not be co-authors or co-investigators during the last 4 years<sup>1</sup>

Candidates must prepare and provide copies of documents to be sent to outside reviewers around October 1 for the mid-year cycle or July 1 for the regular cycle. The documents should include an up-to-date vita prepared according to the current T&P format and copies of up to five refereed and other significant publications. Outside reviewers will be asked to evaluate the candidate's performance in the area of research and scholarship. A copy of the Department's tenure and promotion criteria will be provided to outside reviewers.

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<sup>1</sup> In the field of Civil and Environmental Engineering, researchers are often engaged in preparing codes and standards for design. Such codes of practice are written by committees of 10-50+ professionals who are the leaders in the field. In addition, memberships in these committees rotate. If a faculty member is engaged in writing such a committee document, we face the potential of eliminating as reviewers all the top people in the field.

The candidate bears responsibility for the preparation of the documents to be sent to outside reviewers and the file presented to the Unit Committee.

### **III. TENURE AND PROMOTION IN THE DEPARTMENT**

#### **A. Background**

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members in the Department have duties in three primary areas: (1) teaching, (2) research and scholarship, and (3) service. Evaluation of each faculty member's performance in these three areas shall be considered in any decision regarding retention, promotion, or tenure. The performance of the applicant in the three areas will be reviewed for the entire academic career of the candidate with primary attention given to the period during which the candidate was at the current rank. The Department expects that the candidate's performance will reflect consistent growth and improvement over the years.

#### **B. Eligibility for Tenure and/or Promotion**

Faculty members in a tenure-track position must hold an earned doctorate in Civil Engineering or in a closely related field. To be awarded tenure and/or promotion, candidates should have relevant experience in a college, university, or industry. The Department follows the guidelines in the University Faculty Manual relative to time in rank (The Faculty Manual June 2010).

#### **C. Evaluation Areas for Tenure and Promotion**

##### **1. Teaching**

The candidate's file must include information on his or her competence as an instructor. To document competence as an instructor, the candidate's file must include student and peer evaluations as specified below.

- a. *Student evaluations of teaching performance from the student questionnaire currently used by the Department.* The candidate should conduct full-class student evaluations for each class taught. All completed student evaluation forms for at least the last three years (or the period of employment at USC if less than three years) should be included in the candidate's secondary file. A written summary prepared by the Unit Committee Chair should be included in the primary file. The written evaluation shall include computed numerical averages for the responses to questions related to the *overall effectiveness for the instructor*

and the *overall quality of the course*. Values for lower division undergraduate courses, upper division undergraduate courses, and graduate courses should be interpreted differently. It is expected that the values of lower division undergraduate courses, upper division graduate courses, and graduate courses will be different, and therefore should be interpreted differently. The values for graduate courses will be higher than the upper level undergraduate course, and in turn, these will be higher than the values of the lower level undergraduate courses.

- b. *Peer evaluations of teaching performance derived from class observations.* Members of the Unit Committee will visit the classroom at the request of the Department Chair after consultation with the candidate. Each peer evaluation will be submitted to the Department Chair. At least one peer evaluation shall be conducted annually. Written peer evaluations for at least the last three years (or period of employment at USC if less than three years) should be included in the candidate's primary file.

The following items serve as additional evidence for the quality and quantity of teaching. This list is not exhaustive and candidates are not required to have supporting information for all areas listed.

- i. Awards or recognition for teaching
- ii. development of a laboratory
- iii. course development which includes innovative teaching, preparation of new courses and participation in developing the course organization
- iv. engaging in planned activities to improve teaching effectiveness
- v. advisement and mentoring of students and student organizations
- vi. supervision of student research or independent study.

## **2. Research and Scholarship**

Because of the nature of Civil and Environmental Engineering as a discipline, it is recognized and acknowledged that faculty members may be involved in original basic or applied research, or combination thereof. Basic research is defined as expanding the existing knowledge base through theoretical developments and/or experimentation and/or original thought. Applied research involves innovative application of existing principles to current problems.

Faculty performance in the area of research and scholarship will be judged in terms of both quality and quantity. Support for the quality of research and scholarship may be evidenced by (1) statements provided by outside reviewers, (2) statements from faculty who have collaborated with the candidate on his or her scholarly activities, (3) refereed publications<sup>2</sup>, and (4) other appropriate items.

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<sup>2</sup> A universally accepted convention that would delineate author order and corresponding level of contribution in manuscripts does not exist within the field of civil and environmental engineering because of the diverse nature of journals and specialties within the field.

The following items serve as evidence for the quality and quantity of research and scholarship. This list is not exhaustive and candidates need not have activity for all listed items. However, each successful candidate must give evidence of peer-reviewed publications of scholarly work and demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain a research program.

- a) publication of peer-reviewed articles in high-quality professional journals.
- b) authoring or editing of monographs, books, book chapters, or book reviews
- c) publication of standards for engineering practice or design
- d) publication of high-quality research reports
- e) presentations at professional and/or scholarly meetings, research seminars, and/or colloquia at universities
- f) supervision of masters students, doctoral students<sup>3</sup> and post-doctoral researchers  
written evidence for the quality of the candidate's work by other authors, including (1) citations of the candidate's work, (2) evaluations of the candidate's scholarly work by nationally recognized researchers, and (3) peer reviews provided by grant agencies
- h) awards for scholarly work.

In addition, a candidate's file must include the following information:

- a) list of funded research grants<sup>4</sup> and contracts
- b) list of unfunded proposals submitted for external funding and the peer reviews, if available
- c) list of useable education/research equipment obtained from non-departmental sources
- d) financial support provided for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows or other research personnel.

### **3. Service**

Service is defined as applying one's knowledge, time, and effort to help others in various technical and administrative endeavors. A proven record of service is required of all tenure and promotion candidates. Documentation of the quality of the service can be of several forms, including but not limited to the following items:

- a) reports from individuals who were the recipients of the service or who were otherwise knowledgeable about the service
- b) local, state, national or international award or recognition for service
- c) recognition by election or appointment to a leadership position in a professional or community organization.

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<sup>3</sup> Supervision of doctoral students will carry more weight than that of masters students.

<sup>4</sup> PI of a grant will normally receive more credit than a Co-PI.

Service activities may be in one or more of the following settings: professional, department/college/university, and community/society. In general, an increasing record of service is expected with increasing rank and years of service. The following list is neither exhaustive nor prioritized, and a candidate's file need not be supported by all listed items.

### Professional

- a) service on editorial boards or grant review panels
- b) participation on regional or national technical committees or task forces
- c) reviewer of manuscripts for professional journals
- d) organization of professional conferences and/or symposia

### Department/College/University

- a) participation on Department, College, and University committees, task forces, etc.
- b) Administrative positions in Department/College/University program, center or institute
- c) other service activities supportive of the Department/College/University mission
- d) advising and mentoring of students and student organizations
- e) mentoring of junior faculty

### Community/Society

- a) consultation with industry or local, state, federal, or international agencies
- b) presentation to a community group.

## **D. Specific Criteria for Tenure and Promotion**

The candidate's record of teaching, research and scholarship, and service should be extensive enough to indicate past performance, and potential for continued professional growth and development.

### **1. Criteria for Awarding of Tenure and/or Promotion to Associate Professor**

In accordance with The Faculty Manual, while the decision to promote a faculty member rests largely on an assessment of evidence of past achievements or promise, the decision to grant tenure rests largely on anticipation of continued professional growth and development in directions of special relevance to the core missions of the Department and University. For tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate must present evidence of either (i) excellent or better in research and scholarship, good or better in teaching, and a good or better record in service; or (ii) good or better in research

and scholarship, excellent or better in teaching, and a good or better record in service. In addition, progress toward establishing a national or international reputation in a field must be evident.

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

For promotion to professor and for tenure at the rank of professor, the candidate must demonstrate excellent or better performance in research and scholarship, excellent or better performance in teaching and good or better performance in service. The candidate must document a sustained record of effective teaching. The candidate must demonstrate continued development of a significant, creative, and independent research and scholarship program as evidenced by a sustained record of refereed publications and external funding to support his or her research program. The successful candidate also must have a proven record of continuous service on a variety of levels within the University and evidence of substantive service to the profession.

It is expected that the candidate has attained national or international stature in a field demonstrated one or more of the following:

- a) a substantial record of refereed publication in high-quality national and international journals
- b) service on editorial boards
- c) invited keynote presentations at national/international professional meetings
- d) authorship of nationally/internationally adopted text or reference books
- e) participation in national/international collaborative research projects
- f) supervision of doctoral students
- g) supervision of post-doctoral researchers.

## **3. Definitions of Key Descriptive Terms Used in the Criteria**

The following terminology will be used to evaluate a candidate's performance. Fair is the minimally effective level in this context.

*Outstanding: The candidate's performance is far above the minimally effective level. In regard to teaching, the candidate's performance is assessed to be among the best in the Department. In regard to research and scholarship, output is of high quality, and a national/international reputation is evident. In regard to service, the candidate's record indicates a significant contribution to the profession and practice at the national and/or international level.*

*Excellent: The candidate significantly exceeds the minimally effective level of performance. In regard to teaching, the candidate is involved in a wide variety of teaching-related activities and is performing teaching duties effectively and above the level expected for faculty in the Department. In regard to research and scholarship, output is of high quality, and a national/international reputation is clearly possible, if not likely.*

In regard to service, candidate's record indicates a notable contribution to the profession and practice.

*Good: The candidate's performance is clearly above the minimally effective level. The candidate shows promise of high quality in the future.*

*Fair: The candidate meets the minimally effective level of performance.*

*Unacceptable: The candidate has accomplished less than the minimally effective level of performance.*

#### **E. Criteria for Hiring “with Tenure”**

The hiring of people with tenure at the rank of associate or full Professor will be in accordance with University policies and procedures in effect at the time of the appointment. The candidate for an appointment with tenure at the rank of associate or full Professor is expected to meet the performance criteria for tenure and promotion to the corresponding rank given in this document.

#### **F. Third Year Review**

All untenured faculty members, regardless of rank, will undergo a performance review between the third and fourth years at their current rank in accordance with University procedures and calendar.

#### **G. Annual Review**

The criteria outlined in Sections III.D will be used to evaluate and rate the performance of faculty members of the Department. The performance of tenured professors will be evaluated by their department chair if they are working within the department and by their immediate supervisor if they are working outside the department. The performance of all others will be evaluated by eligible Unit T&P Committee members and the Department Chair. In the case of joint appointments annual evaluations will be solicited from the secondary unit or units. The secondary unit will use the criteria outlined in Section III.D.

Approved by the University Committee for Tenure and Promotion, 3/21/2012.