

# **Tenure and Promotion Criteria and Procedures Department of Computer Science and Engineering University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208**

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Recommendations of the tenured faculty of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering are based upon the criteria and procedures described in this document. The criteria provide standards that measure academic and professional growth. The procedures ensure objective decisions based solely upon professional merit.

## **Criteria for Tenure and Promotion**

Recommendations for promotion to or tenure at a professorial rank for a member of the faculty of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering are based upon the candidate's performance and promise of further accomplishments in three areas of academic endeavor:

- Teaching
- Research
- Service

The levels of performance necessarily differ in degree, with higher standards set for promotion to or tenure at higher ranks. In these areas, performance is rated as follows:

- Superior performance means performance at the very highest level.
- Very good performance is between superior and good.
- Good performance (denoted “satisfactory” in the Faculty manual) means performance that meets the expectations of the unit.
- Fair performance is between good and unsatisfactory.
- Unsatisfactory performance means performance that is less than “fair” and does not meet the relevant criteria in a given category.

An explanation of these performance ratings for each of the three areas is given in the Appendix at the end of this section. These ratings are applicable to all tenure and promotion recommendations.

## **Promotion to or Tenure at the Rank of Associate Professor**

The rank of associate professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering is awarded to those faculty who have established an independent research program and contributed to the teaching and service mission of the department. The candidate for promotion at this level must demonstrate good or better performance in teaching, research, and service. The criteria for tenure at the rank of associate professor are the same as those for promotion to associate professor with evidence of continued performance and growth. The normal time in rank at assistant professor is six years (request for tenure or promotion at the end of five years).

## **Teaching**

- The candidate must demonstrate good or better performance in formal classroom teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Student and peer evaluations of teaching are employed as evidence of teaching performance; these evaluations are considered relative to other factors including class level, course enrollment, and total student load.
- The candidate must effectively advise graduate students in research. Evidence of meeting this requirement includes (1) graduating M.S. and Ph.D. students, (2) presenting the resultant research work at national and international conferences, and (3) publishing the resultant research in appropriate journals.

## **Research**

- The candidate must have a rating of good or better in original research in recognized, peer-reviewed publications of national or international stature. Both the quality and the quantity of the work are considered in the evaluation. The record must be both sustained and continuing.
- There must be an independent assessment of the significance and quality of the published research. This is attested to by external peer review letters. A majority of the overall external review must be positive. Other relevant information may supplement this assessment.
- The candidate must demonstrate the ability to sustain a high quality research program. There must be sustained efforts to obtain funding through external grants and contracts.

## **Service**

For a rating of good in service, a junior faculty member is expected to cooperate in and effectively contribute to the necessary service functions of the department, college, or university, as assigned. Among these activities are service on departmental, college, or university committees; participation in student advisement; presentation of professional talks; and other services in the community. While these activities are of secondary importance in the overall performance of junior faculty, willing and constructive service is essential for a positive recommendation for tenure and promotion.

## **Promotion to or Tenure at the Rank of Professor**

The rank of professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering is awarded to those faculty who have achieved a level of academic stature and accomplishment worthy of general acknowledgment among peers at the national or international level. A professor is expected to enjoy the respect of colleagues in a specific discipline and to be an active leader in a field of research. A candidate for promotion or tenure at this level is evaluated on the basis of a combined record in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

Of the research, teaching, and service areas, the candidate must demonstrate superior performance in two and at least good performance in the other. Evaluation of the candidate is based upon the entire professional record, but emphasizes performance after promotion to (or appointment at) associate professor. The criteria for tenure at the rank of professor are the same as those for promotion to Professor with evidence of continued performance and growth.

Before being considered for promotion to (or being hired at) the rank of professor, a faculty member is expected to have at least nine years of academic or industrial experience in computer science, computer engineering, or a closely related field.

### Teaching

- The candidate must demonstrate good or better performance in formal classroom teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Student and peer evaluations of teaching help measure teaching performance; however, other factors including class level, course enrollment, and total student load must also be considered.
- The candidate must also have a consistent record of successfully directing the research of graduate students.

### Research

- The candidate must attain national or international stature in his field as evidenced by a substantial record of original research in recognized, peer-reviewed publications of national or international scope. Both the quality and the quantity of the work are to be considered in evaluation. The record must be both sustained and continuing.
- There must be an independent assessment of the significance and quality of the published research. This is attested to by external peer review letters. A majority of the external reviews must be positive. Other relevant information may supplement this assessment.
- The candidate must demonstrate the ability to sustain a high quality research program. There must be sustained efforts to obtain funding through external grants and contracts. Generation of funding through external grants or contracts is normally expected in order to demonstrate substantial achievement.

### Service

- The candidate must possess a strong record of service within the department, University, and the professional community.

## Appendix Explanation of Performance Ratings

### Teaching

- **Superior.** A superior rating in teaching requires evidence that the candidate is among the best teachers in the department. It requires clear evidence of additional sustained activities beyond the three basic areas (given in the *good* rating below), such as curriculum or laboratory development, securing external funds for laboratory equipment, teaching awards, or effective use of alternative media such as television. A comprehensive list follows this section.
- **Very Good.** Performance that meets all of the requirements for a *good* teaching rating and some, but not all, of the requirements for a *superior* teaching rating.
- **Good.** The requirements for a rating of good in teaching are that the candidate (1) covers material appropriate to the course, (2) has an effective classroom presentation, and (3)

provides for effective evaluation of the student's performance. In addition, the candidate should show enthusiasm for teaching.

- **Fair.** Performance that meets only one or two of the three required elements for the *good* rating.
- **Unsatisfactory.** Performance that does not meet any of the three required elements for a *good* rating.

## Research

- **Superior.** The superior rating requires an established record of successful funded research and journal-quality publications resulting from it. A comprehensive list follows this section.
- **Very Good.** Some success in securing research funding in addition to the requirements for the *good* rating given below.
- **Good.** A consistent record of journal-quality publications and attempts to secure funded research through submission of refereed proposals.
- **Fair.** The candidate's scholarly output is deficient in quality or quantity. For example, a record that consists entirely of unrefereed or regional conference publications.
- **Unsatisfactory.** No consistency in refereed publications and submission of proposals

## Service

- **Superior.** A record that is recognizably among the best in the unit, including leadership roles in the university and the profession. A comprehensive list follows this section.
- **Very Good.** Performance that meets all of the requirements of *good* service and some, but not all, of the requirements for *superior* service.
- **Good.** Performance of all expected and requested service activities or functions in an effective and conscientious manner.
- **Fair.** Performance of some, but not all, requested service activities or functions. This level of performance indicates that the candidate is not fulfilling all assigned duties and should strive for improvement.
- **Unsatisfactory.** Does not perform any expected or requested service activities in an effective and conscientious manner.

## Evidence of Superior Performance

### Teaching

- Receipt of awards or recognition for teaching excellence.
- Participation in curriculum development.
- Authorship of textbooks, educational software, manuals, or audio or visual aids.
- Service on thesis and dissertation committees.
- Grants or contracts for educational activities.

- Direction of independent study, senior thesis, or research.
- Publications in the area of computer science and engineering education.
- Reviews of textbooks.
- Development of new or significantly revised courses.
- Development of new techniques in teaching.
- Preparation of materials for program accreditation or review.

### **Research**

- Invitations to present research seminars, lectures or addresses.
- Invitations to contribute to symposia.
- Authorship of review articles.
- Authorship or editorship of books or monographs.
- Editorship of journals.
- Service on grant review panels or editorial review boards.
- Awards or special recognition for research accomplishments.
- Citations in publications.
- Patents and copyrights.
- Development of computer software or hardware that achieves national recognition or usage.
- Service on conference program committees.
- Service on review committees at other universities.

### **Service**

- Appointments or elections as chair of university-wide committees.
- Active leadership within the department, such as heading search committees, engaging in special projects, undertaking administrative functions, organizing professional meetings, or conducting in-depth studies.
- Appointment to and effective performance in compensated administrative posts within the department, college, or university.
- Service on public advisory panels, boards, or workshops.
- Consulting service, whether compensated or not.
- Professional service to the media as a scientific consultant, or broadcast or participant.
- Public educational activities, such as leading professional development seminars or courses.
- Service on committees or as an officer in professional organizations.
- Participation as an organizer of professional society conferences or institutes.

## Procedures for Tenure and Promotion

The procedures below are intended to comply with the requirements of the *Faculty Manual*, which is the governing document in case of conflict. Furthermore, each required action must be completed in accordance with the tenure and promotion calendar issued by the Provost.

### Unit Committees

Candidates for promotion are considered by a promotion committee consisting of all tenured members of the faculty of the department who have higher rank than that of the candidates. The department chair may not serve on the committee. The department chair appoints a member of the promotion committee to be committee chair. The unit tenure and promotions committee may create subcommittees to assist the full committee in the performance of its work. Where possible, a subcommittee shall include both professors and associate professors.

Candidates for tenure are considered by a tenure committee consisting of all tenured faculty members of the department of equal or higher rank than that of the candidates. The department chair may not serve on the committee. The department chair appoints a member of the promotion committee to be committee chair.

The promotion committee is normally a subset of the tenure committee, and the same person serves as chair of both committees if the candidate is seeking both tenure and promotion.

In the event that any committee has fewer than five members, the department chair must notify the dean. The dean then consults with the members of the committee, the department chair, and the candidate before appointing additional tenured faculty of appropriate ranks from within the college to increase the size of the committee to at least five.

The committee constituted above is referred to as the *unit committee*.

The chair of the unit committee ensures that the unit procedures are followed. In particular, the unit committee chair informs candidates of their eligibility, provides the candidates with copies of the tenure and promotion criteria and procedures, coordinates obtaining external review letters, conducts the meetings of the committee, appoints the subcommittees that draft the committee's recommendation letter, communicates the general outcome of the unit vote to the candidates, and submits the results of the committee's deliberations to the department chair.

### Eligibility

An untenured member of the faculty is eligible for tenure; assistant professors and associate professors are eligible for promotion. Once each academic year all eligible faculty members are considered for tenure or promotion. A faculty member in the next-to-last year of a probationary appointment must be considered for tenure or declare in writing an intention to leave the university at the end of the probationary period. Other eligible faculty may decline consideration for promotion or tenure by informing the chair of the unit committee in writing. This action does not prejudice future consideration of the faculty member for promotion or tenure.

A faculty member who is considered for promotion or tenure is called a *candidate*.

## Notifications

By mid-April of each year, the department chair informs candidates of the university's tenure and promotion calendar, and the chair of the unit committee writes to each eligible candidate asking whether the individual wishes to be considered. In addition, in mid-August, the chair of the unit committee verifies that each eligible faculty member has been notified.

## Documentation

A candidate may place any relevant material into the file at any time before the departmental vote. Items that should be included in the file are:

- A current biography.
- A list of publications, papers accepted for publication, and papers submitted for publication.
- Reprints of publications and copies of manuscripts accepted or submitted for publication.
- A list of talks at professional meetings and colloquia presented at the University or other institutions.
- A list of courses taught.
- A list of graduate students receiving thesis or dissertation direction under the candidate.
- Teaching evaluations by students carried out on official forms and peer evaluations carried out according to established departmental guidelines.
- Information concerning assignments as journal referee and reviews written.
- Information concerning other activities such as university, college, or departmental committee work, student advisement, activities in professional societies, consulting, and other university or public service.

This list should not be construed as being exhaustive or as placing priorities upon any of these items and is given merely as a guideline. However, all information required by the Provost must be included in the format specified.

In addition, the candidate should include the names of two to five potential referees from outside the university.

## Detailed Steps

At any time before the file is forwarded to the dean, a candidate who is not in the next-to-last year of a probationary appointment may decline in writing to be considered further. This action does not in any way prejudice further consideration of the faculty member for promotion or tenure.

**Requesting Preliminary Evaluation** A candidate in the next-to-last year of a probationary period must submit a file and be considered for tenure in the current year. However, other candidates may wish to assess the advisability of requesting tenure or promotion in the current year. They may do so by submitting abbreviated files to unit committee and requesting a preliminary evaluation. The committee's findings are transmitted to the department chair, who meets with the candidate to discuss the findings and relevant annual evaluations. The candidate then decides whether to continue the process. Preliminary evaluations are conducted at the end of the spring semester.

**Submitting the File** By early September a candidate requesting tenure or promotion must submit to the committee a completed file and a list of potential outside referees.

**Obtaining Outside Evaluations** The chair of the unit committee requests evaluations of the candidate's record from at least five faculty members outside the university who

- have a national or an international reputation
- serve at peer or peer-aspirant institutions
- work in a field closely related to that of the candidate
- hold equal or higher rank than the candidate is seeking.

Resumes of the evaluators will also be requested for inclusion in the file. . Fewer than half of the evaluations may be from reviewers suggested by the candidate; the others are selected by the unit committee chair, with consultations as necessary. The replies, when received, are placed into the candidate's file by the unit committee chair.

**Evaluating the File and Voting** Early in the fall semester, the unit committee reviews each candidate's file and the outside evaluations. The committee meets as a whole to evaluate the candidate's performance; the members then vote by secret ballot on whether the candidate is to be recommended for promotion or tenure. Each committee member must provide a written justification, based on the unit criteria, with the ballot. An affirmative vote from the unit committee requires a "yes" vote from at least 60% of its members. Abstentions are not counted in the total number of votes. Abstentions, which are strongly discouraged, must be clearly justified. The ballots and justifications are placed in the candidate's file and are available to the unit committee, department chair, and others authorized to examine the file.

**Reporting the Vote** Within a day of the vote tally, the chair of the unit committee informs each candidate in writing of the vote by reporting it as affirmative or not affirmative; however, the specific vote count, justifications, outside evaluations, and the committee's recommendation letter (see below) must not be revealed to the candidate. If the vote is not affirmative, the department chair will summarize the negative vote to the candidate.

**Withdrawing a Request** A candidate not in the next-to-last year of a probationary period may elect to withdraw from further consideration for tenure or promotion by informing the unit committee chair within one week of the vote notification. This action in no way prejudices further consideration of the faculty member for promotion or tenure.

**Appealing an Unfavorable Vote** A candidate may appeal the committee's recommendation by notifying the unit committee chair, who invites further written comments from all of the tenured faculty and calls a meeting of the unit committee to consider the appeal. A record of the deliberations is placed into the candidate's file, which is then forwarded to the department chair.

**Committee Recommendation** As a result of the vote by the unit committee, either:

- A letter indicating that the candidate is recommended by the unit committee is placed into the candidate's file. The letter is drafted by a subcommittee of at most three members of the unit committee and is subject to approval by the unit committee. The letter must include the rationale for supporting the candidate's request. The candidate's file is forwarded to the department chair, who gives a separate recommendation and forwards the file to the dean.

- A letter indicating that the candidate is not recommended by the unit committee is placed into the candidate's file. The letter is drafted by a subcommittee of at most three members of the unit committee and is subject to approval by the unit committee. The letter must include the rationale for not supporting the candidate's request. The decision of the unit committee not to recommend the candidate in no way prejudices future consideration of the faculty member for promotion or tenure. The candidate may elect to withdraw from further consideration or request the file to be forwarded with the unfavorable unit vote.