

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

PROMOTION AND TENURE  
CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

*Approved by the Vote of the  
Committee of Tenured Mathematics Faculty  
15 March 2005*

## 1. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

1.1. **Criteria for Promotion.** A candidate for promotion must have professorial rank and be in a tenure-track or tenured position.

1. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor.
  - a. A record in research and scholarly accomplishments with evidence of recognized impact in the candidate's field and with promise of a body of work of growing significance.
  - b. A record of proficient teaching.
  - c. A record of willing and responsible service.
2. Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor.
  - a. A record in research and scholarly accomplishments with evidence of impact, recognized at the national and international levels for its significance, in the candidate's field.
  - b. A record of proficient teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, with evidence of significant contributions to the educational mission of the Department.
  - c. A record of responsible service, including substantial service to any one of the following: the Department, the College, the University, or the profession.

An exceptional record in research may offset a lesser record that still displays proficient teaching and willing and responsible service. An exceptional record in teaching and service, exhibiting a major impact on the Department, can offset a lesser record in research that still displays recognized impact in the candidate's field.

1.2. **Criteria for Tenure.** A candidate for tenure must have professorial rank and be in a tenure-track position. Recommendations for tenure are made on the basis of proven performance in research, teaching, and service.

1. A candidate must satisfy all of the criteria for promotion to associate professor. In particular, a tenure recommendation for an assistant professor must be accompanied by a simultaneous recommendation for promotion.
2. A candidate's record must provide evidence of consistent and durable performance in research and scholarly accomplishments, in teaching, and in service.

While length of service at the University can be a factor in determining the consistency and durability of a tenure candidate's performance, substantial prior experience or an exceptional record of accelerated contributions can play the same role.

1.3. **Appointments with Tenure.** A person who does not hold a tenured or tenure-track position may be appointed to such a position with professorial rank. An appointment with tenure will be made only at the rank of associate or full professor.

## 2. APPLICATION OF THE CRITERIA

Evaluation of a candidate for promotion or tenure will include assessments of the candidate's cumulative record in research, teaching, and service. The cumulative record includes documented evidence of the candidate's performance in these areas at the University, as well as at other universities and research organizations. These evaluations must be based solely on professional merit. In no event shall a negative decision on promotion or tenure be based upon discrimination resulting from the candidate's race, sex, age, color, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, the exercise by the candidate of constitutional rights, or upon personal malice.

**2.1. Evaluation of research and scholarly activities.** Evaluation of research is based primarily on quality, although evidence of sustained activity is also essential. The candidate's research and scholarly activities will be evaluated by recognized experts in the area from outside the University, and their confidential appraisals of the candidate's work will be weighed heavily. These external evaluators will be asked to address the impact of the candidate's work on the field and its level of recognition. In addition, those parts of the candidate's research record which reflect the views of other mathematicians are germane. These may include refereed publications and other researchers' reviews of them, the quality of the venues in which such publications appear, peer-reviewed research grant funding, awards for research, research fellowships, invitations to conferences and symposia, colloquium invitations, and research books and monographs. Selection to be a referee of research papers, a reviewer of grant proposals, or to be a member of editorial boards, conference organizing or program committees, and other professional panels may also indicate indirectly the opinion of the mathematical community concerning the impact and recognition of the candidate's research. Supervision of graduate theses and dissertations and participation in research seminars can also indicate the vitality of the candidate's research efforts.

**2.2. Evaluation of contributions to the educational mission.** A candidate's record in teaching must document classroom instruction and may also document such items as supervision of undergraduate and graduate research, seminar presentations, curriculum development, and recruitment of students. Proficient classroom instruction displays clarity and rigor in the communication of mathematical concepts appropriate to different audiences at various levels, skill in motivating students, and fairness in maintaining reasonable standards in grading. The cumulative record of teaching evaluations by students and all peer evaluations of the candidate's teaching on record with the Department will be used to assess classroom performance. A candidate may submit additional documentation (examinations, syllabi, or web-based material for example) as evidence of proficiency for those aspects of teaching that may not be apparent in the classroom. Proficiency in the supervision of student research may be indicated by the number of students attracted to work with the candidate, by student completion of the degree, and by the placement of students on appropriate career paths. Significant contributions to the Department's educational mission go beyond the usual practice of conducting classes and supervising student research. Examples of significant contributions include development of new courses or degree programs, award-winning classroom teaching, the supervision of unusually large numbers of theses, the organization of long-running research seminars with student participants, or extensive contributions to Ph.D. qualifying or comprehensive examinations.

**2.3. Evaluation of service.** A candidate's record of internal service includes activities in support of the educational and research missions at the Department, College, and University levels. A candidate's record of external service includes such activities as refereeing papers, reviewing grant proposals, service on editorial boards and review panels, participation in professional societies, and organization of conferences. Those aspects of a candidate's public or community service that relate directly to academic or scholarly capacities are also part of the service record. Qualities such as initiative, industry, reliability, and effectiveness are central to the assessment of service.

### 3. THE TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCESS

The tenure and promotion process spans the better part of a year. It involves decisions by the candidate, members of the tenured faculty of the Department, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College, the Provost, the University Committee on Tenure and Promotions, the President, and the Board of Trustees. A file containing evidence supporting the case, as well as the votes and recommendations that accumulate as the case proceeds, is crucial to the whole process. The process operates according to a calendar published each year by the Provost as supplemented in this document. This supplemented calendar is called the Timetable in this document. Actually, the Provost provides two calendars. According to the first, used by most candidates:

- (i) the determination of candidates and a preliminary review of their records occur at the end of the spring semester;
- (ii) during the summer the candidates assemble documents into files to support their cases;
- (iii) before the beginning of the fall semester an appropriate committee of the Department's tenured faculty seeks the recommendations of external experts to evaluate the research of the candidates;
- (iv) by mid-September, the candidates have finished assembling their files;
- (v) by mid-October the appropriate committee will have deliberated upon the cases and voted;
- (vi) thereafter, the cases are passed on through the remainder of the process. Candidates ordinarily learn by mid-May what the recommendation of the President will be. Final action by the Board of Trustees occurs at their summer meeting.

The second calendar, designed for candidates whose appointments began in January rather than August, is similar but abbreviated. According to the second timetable the President puts recommendations before the Board of Trustees before mid-November.

**3.1. Candidates for Promotion and Tenure.** Every year each nontenured tenure-track faculty member will be considered for tenure, and each tenure-track or tenured faculty member below the rank of professor will be considered for promotion, unless the faculty member requests in writing to the Department Chair, by the date given in the Timetable, that consideration be deferred (with the exception that a nontenured faculty member cannot defer tenure consideration beyond the next to the last year of a probationary appointment). *At any stage of the tenure and promotion process, a candidate may withdraw from further consideration by submitting such a request in writing to the Department Chair.* A candidate's file will be sent forward if the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions favorably recommends tenure or promotion. The file of a candidate for both tenure and promotion who gains a favorable recommendation for tenure or promotion, but not both, will be sent forward for consideration of only that aspect favorably recommended by the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions. Files of candidates in the next-to-last year of a probationary appointment will be sent forward for a full review, regardless of the recommendation of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions. In the event of an unfavorable recommendation, the file will also be sent forward at the candidate's request, made in writing to the chair of the appropriate committee by the date specified in the Timetable. Except in the case of tenure considerations in the next-to-last year of a probationary appointment, the consideration, deferral or withdrawal of a case shall not prejudice any future consideration of the candidate for tenure or for promotion.

**3.2. The Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions.** The Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions shall consist of all tenured members of the Department. The full professors on the Committee comprise the standing Subcommittee of Tenured Full Professors. The Committee on Tenure and Promotions deliberates and votes in cases for promotion to associate professor and in tenure cases where the candidate holds a rank lower than professor. The Subcommittee of Tenured Full Professors deliberates and votes in cases of promotion to professor

and in tenure cases where the candidate holds the rank of professor. In this document, the phrase “appropriate committee” refers to whichever group, described in the preceding sentence, has responsibility for the case at hand. In the case of an untenured associate professor who is considered simultaneously for promotion to professor and for tenure, both the Department’s Committee on Tenure and Promotions and its Subcommittee of Tenured Full Professors are referred to as the “appropriate committee”.

Faculty members on leave from the University are not required to participate in the deliberations or the voting of these committees, but they can elect to do so by informing the Chair of the Department in writing. Members of the Department’s Committee on Tenure and Promotions may not take part in the deliberations nor vote in a case where the familial relationship between the committee member and the candidate makes involvement in a promotion or tenure decision contrary to state law.

To deliberate and vote on a tenure or promotion case, the appropriate committee must have at least five voting members. When such a committee has less than five members, the Department Chair will notify the Dean of the College. The Dean, after consultation with the appropriate committee and the Department Chair, shall appoint the necessary number of tenured faculty members of appropriate ranks from within the College to increase the size of the appropriate committee to five.

### **3.3. The Recommendations of the Department’s Tenure and Promotions Committee.**

The appropriate committee provides a preliminary review of the records of candidates who have chosen not to defer the consideration of their cases. This preliminary review will take place within ten days of the date set in the Timetable for notification by faculty of deferral of consideration. The preliminary review will usually take place before the last day of classes in the spring semester. A rough draft of the ad hoc committee’s *Statement Summarizing the Candidate’s Performance in Teaching* as well as the candidate’s current curriculum vitae will be available at this meeting. The appropriate committee will vote by secret ballot on whether the candidate’s case merits full consideration. The chair of the appropriate committee will convey in writing to the candidate the resulting vote count.

By the date designated in the Timetable, typically before mid-October, the appropriate committee will meet to deliberate and vote on each candidate’s case. In matters of promotion and in matters of tenure for candidates holding the rank of associate professor or professor, the Department’s Tenure and Promotions Committee *favorably recommends* the candidate, provided at least two thirds of the votes, abstentions not counted, are favorable. For assistant professors, tenure is *favorably recommended* provided at least two thirds of the votes, abstentions not counted, for *both* tenure and promotion are favorable.

**3.4. The File.** A candidate’s Tenure or Promotion File documents the evidence upon which the decisions in the candidate’s case are made. It also contains all the ballots of all the votes taken in the case (by the University Committee on Tenure and Promotions, as well as by the appropriate committee in the Department) and all the individual vote justifications. The file contains, as well, all the written recommendations of the Department Chair, the Dean of the College, and the Provost. Decisions in the case must be based on evidence in the file.

The file has two parts: the primary file and the secondary file. The primary file is intended to house all the essential parts of the documentation of the case. Each year the Provost provides a format for the primary file. The secondary file is intended to house supporting evidence. For example, a list of publications with bibliographic information belongs in the primary file, while copies of each publication should be placed in the secondary file. It is required that statistical summaries of all available evaluations by students of the candidate’s teaching be placed in the secondary file.

The candidate may place in the file any material at any time before the date, usually in mid-September, set in the Timetable for the completion of the file.

3.4.1. *Material the Chair of the Appropriate Committee Ensures is in the File.* Prior to the vote of the appropriate committee, its chair shall ensure that the following items are in the file:

1. A statement, based on the criteria set forth in this document, summarizing the candidate's performance in support of the Department's educational mission, is placed in the *primary* file; any available statistical summaries of evaluations by students of the candidate's teaching are placed in the *secondary* file;
2. A copy of the letter soliciting evaluations of the candidate's research from external evaluators is placed in the *primary* file;
3. Brief summaries of the qualifications of each external evaluator are placed in the *primary* file;
4. Letters evaluating the candidate's research record solicited from external evaluators are placed in the *primary* file;
5. All documents sent to the external evaluators, which have not already been included in the file by the candidate, will be placed in the *secondary* file.

Once any of these items has been included, the file will be held confidential from the candidate, as far as state law allows.

3.4.2. *Statement Summarizing the Candidate's Performance in Teaching.* This statement is a narrative summary of the candidate's performance, assessed with respect to the criteria set forth in this document, in support of the educational mission of the Department. This statement is based upon all available evidence. The chair of the appropriate committee shall appoint an ad hoc subcommittee with at least three members to draft this statement. This subcommittee must include both professors and associate professors, if that is possible. Before the statement can be included in the candidate's file, it must be approved, in revised form if necessary, by a majority of the appropriate committee.

3.4.3. *The External Evaluators.* To evaluate the research of the candidate the chair of the appropriate committee, in consultation with the committee, selects mathematicians from outside the University. In the case of an associate professor who is simultaneously a candidate for both tenure and promotion, the chairs of the two committees will be responsible jointly for the selection. Five letters are required for candidates considered by the Committee for Tenure and Promotions, while six are required for candidates considered by the Subcommittee of Tenured Full Professors. The external evaluators should be research mathematicians, likely to be familiar with the candidate's work, who have sufficient stature to provide an authoritative evaluation. Normally, dissertation advisors, post-doctoral supervisors, and mathematicians who have collaborated on a significant portion of the candidate's research will not be chosen as external evaluators.

3.4.4. *Insertion and Removal of Material After the Unit Vote.* Subsequent to the unit vote, items may not be modified or removed from the file and only these kinds of items may be inserted in the file:

1. The vote of the appropriate committee and the ballots with written justifications from each person who voted must be inserted.
2. Letters sent to the Chair, the Dean, or the Provost for inclusion in the file by faculty members of the Department.
3. Written recommendations from the Department Chair, the Dean of the College, and the Provost. These three individuals may attach to their recommendations additional evidence, provided it relates to the criteria set forth in this document. In order for evidence of this kind to be included, the members of the appropriate Department committee, the Department Chair,

the Dean, and the Provost must be given an opportunity to assess the new information and to reconsider their votes or recommendations.

4. Information pursuant to actions taken prior to the unit vote. Examples of this kind include
  - a. letters from outside evaluators solicited prior to the unit vote but received afterwards;
  - b. acceptance for publication or actual publication of an item referred to in the file before the unit vote;
  - c. published reviews appearing after the unit vote of publications referred to in the file prior to the unit vote;
  - d. award of a grant, if the grant application was mentioned in the file prior to the unit vote.In order for new information of this kind to be included, the members of the appropriate Department committee, the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Provost must be given an opportunity to assess the new information and to reconsider their votes or recommendations.
5. The votes and ballot justifications of the University Committee on Tenure and Promotions.

#### 4. PROCEDURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

##### 4.1. Responsibilities of the Candidate.

1. By the date in the Timetable, candidates should inform the Department Chair in writing as to whether they intend to remain candidates. Those electing to remain candidates must provide the chair of the appropriate committee with a copy of their *curricula vitæ*.
2. Once the preliminary vote is known, the candidate must decide whether to remain a candidate.
3. By the date in the Timetable for contacting the external evaluators, the candidate must provide to the chair of the appropriate committee the following items that will be sent to the external evaluators: a *curriculum vitæ* (including a current list of publications), a statement providing an overview of the candidate's research, and copies of either all or at least a representative selection of the candidate's mathematical work. The candidate is free to provide other documents to be sent to all external evaluators.
4. By the date in the Timetable, the candidate's work on the Tenure or Promotion file must be completed and the file delivered to the chair of the appropriate committee.
5. In the event that the recommendation of the Committee on Tenure and Promotions is unfavorable for either tenure or promotion or both, the candidate may submit to the chair of the appropriate committee a written request, by the date specified in the Timetable, that the case be sent forward for full review.
6. Should new information become available to the candidate on some aspect of the case that is mentioned in the file prior to the vote of the appropriate committee, the candidate may convey this information to the Department Chair with a request that it be inserted in the file.

##### 4.2. Responsibilities of the Voting Members of the Appropriate Committees.

1. Each member should be familiar with the candidate's file prior to the meeting at which the case is deliberated.
2. Each member must cast votes of "yes", "no", or "abstain". In cases involving both tenure and promotion, two votes are required—one on tenure and one on promotion.
3. Each member must attach to each ballot a justification, based on the evidence in the candidate's file and on the criteria set forth in this document, of the vote cast.
4. By the date set in the Timetable, each member must deliver the ballots, with attached justifications, to the chair of the appropriate committee.
5. Each member has the responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of the contents of the candidate's file and of the deliberations and vote count of the committee.

#### 4.3. Responsibilities of the Chairs of the Appropriate Committees.

1. By 15 April, the chair of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions, in consultation with the Department Chair, must draw up a Timetable for the tenure and promotion process which is compatible, as far as this document allows, with the Provost's Calendar.
2. The chair must appoint ad hoc committees to draft a statement summarizing the candidate's performance in teaching. The ad hoc committees must be appointed early enough so that the draft statement is available for the preliminary vote.
3. The chair will convene and preside over a meeting of the committee for the purpose of considering the candidate's record and taking a preliminary vote. The chair will convey the vote count, in writing, to the candidate.
4. In consultation with the committee, the chair will select external evaluators of the candidate's research.
5. The chair has the responsibility to advise the candidate in the assembly of the tenure/promotion file. The chair should also ensure that the candidate knows how the tenure/promotion process works, including any rights of appeal or grievance.
6. The chair must contact the external evaluators, in accord with the Timetable, and obtain the required number of evaluations. Each external evaluator must receive the same material. The cover letter should set an appropriate deadline for the receipt of evaluations, and should request biographical information about the evaluator. In addition to the cover letter only the following material should be sent to the external evaluators:
  - a. *For candidates for promotion:* Either paragraph 1.1.1 or 1.1.2 of this document, as appropriate;
  - b. *For candidates for tenure:* Paragraph 1.1.1 and subsection 1.2 of this document;
  - c. Paragraph 2.1 of this document;
  - d. All the material provided by the candidate for review by the external evaluators.
7. The chair must ensure that a copy of the cover letter and all materials sent to the external evaluators are placed in the candidate's file.
8. The chair, with the help of the committee members, must provide short biographical sketches of the external evaluators. These sketches will be included in the candidate's file.
9. The chair must include in the file each letter solicited from external evaluators.
10. Not less than five days before the date set in the Timetable for the vote of the appropriate committee, the chair must convene the committee to deliberate on the candidate's case and to distribute ballots.
11. The chair must notify the Chair of the Department and the Dean of the College five days prior to any meeting of the committee for the deliberation of a candidate's case.
12. By the date set in the Timetable, the chair and two other committee members appointed by the chair will count the ballots. The vote count will be reported to the members of the committee. The chair of the committee will convey, in writing, to the candidate only the information as to whether, on each of tenure and promotion (as appropriate to the case), the recommendation of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions is favorable or not. In the event of an unfavorable recommendation, the chair will also inform the candidate in writing of the date by which a request to go forward with the case must be received.
13. By the date set in the Timetable, after the vote counts and all ballots, with their justifications, have been inserted into the files, the chair shall deliver those files to the Department Chair which are forwarded either on the recommendation of the Department's Tenure and Promotions Committee or at the written request of the candidate.
14. By April 15, the chair shall convene a meeting of the appropriate committee to elect a chair for the next year. The term of office of the chairs of the appropriate committees runs from April 15 until the following April 14.

15. At the request of the Department Chair, the chair will convene a meeting of the committee to consider and vote by secret ballot on the attachment of tenure to an offer of a faculty position.
16. As the need arises or at the request of the Provost, the chair of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions shall appoint an ad hoc committee to amend or revise this document. Subsequent to a meeting of the faculty of the Department on any proposals, the chair will convene a meeting of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions to deliberate and vote on any changes to this document. Any revision or amendment requires approval of the majority of the committee, abstentions not counted, by secret ballot. Any revision or amendment approved the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions is only effective after it has been approved, as well, by the University Committee on Tenure and Promotions.

#### 4.4. **Responsibilities of the Department Chair.**

1. The Department Chair must assist the chair of the Committee on Tenure and Promotions in drawing up a Timetable for the tenure and promotion process.
2. By April 15 the Department Chair must notify, in writing, each potential candidate for promotion or tenure that his or her case will be considered, unless the faculty member chooses to defer consideration. This notification must include the Timetable for the process.
3. In accord with the Timetable, the Department Chair shall inform the chairs of the appropriate committees of the names of those eligible faculty members who have not deferred consideration.
4. By the date set in the Timetable, the Department Chair must include in the file a statement that, in each of the matters of tenure and promotion, as appropriate to the case, either supports the case, rejects the case, or abstains. This statement must be based on the evidence in the file and the criteria set forth in this document,
5. By the date set in the Timetable, the Department Chair shall convey the file to the Dean of the College. At this time, the Department Chair shall inform the faculty of the Department of the identity of all candidates whose files are being conveyed to the Dean. The Chair will also remind the faculty that they can send letters to the Dean or the Provost for inclusion in any candidate's file.
6. Should the candidate bring new information germane to the case (see subsection 3.3) to the attention of the Department Chair, it is the responsibility of the Department Chair to see that the information is included in the file, wherever the file is at that particular time. The Department Chair should also provide the new information to those faculty members who have already voted and to those administrators who have already made their recommendations, in order that they may reconsider their votes or recommendations.
7. In the case that an offer of a tenured faculty position is considered, the Department Chair will request that the chair of the appropriate committee convene a meeting of the committee for the purpose of deliberating and voting on the matter of attaching tenure to an offer.
8. At the request of the chair of the Department's Committee on Tenure and Promotions, the Department Chair will convene a faculty meeting of the Department to discuss drafts of amendments or revisions to this document.