

TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL AND MATERIALS ENGINEERING

This document is a guideline for faculty members pursuing tenure and/or promotion in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering. Statements in this document represent the Department's procedures and expectations relative to the tenure-promotion process. They do not replace or supersede the requirements and guidelines specified in the FIU Tenure and Promotion Manual. It is very important that faculty members considering applying for tenure and/or promotion consult the FIU manual early in the process.

General Statement

The successful candidate for tenure and/or promotion in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering will have a track record of strong research productivity, activity and success in pursuit of external funding, effective graduate student supervision, effective teaching performance, university and professional service, and participation in collegial governance that contributes to the effective day to day functioning of the Department. Preparation for tenure-promotion dossier should begin on their first day at the university. Incoming faculty members should develop a plan to meet the criteria for tenure and promotion to associate professor early in their careers and take advantage of mentoring opportunities to facilitate their progress.

The Tenure and Promotion Process

For tenure earning faculty, the first milestone in the tenure-promotion process is the Third Year Review. Candidacy for tenure and promotion is normally declared in the spring of the faculty member's 5th year, with the tenure-promotion review beginning in the fall of the 5th year. Specific procedures and guidelines are outlined in the following sections. Candidate should visit the Provost Office website for updated FIU Tenure and Promotion Manual, forms and schedule at https://academic.fiu.edu/faculty_resources.html.

Third Year Review

The third year review is designed to provide an overall assessment of a faculty member's progress toward tenure in relation to Departmental and University expectations regarding the candidate's record of research, teaching, service, and participation in collegial governance. The review typically takes place in February or March of the third year of the faculty member's appointment at FIU (unless otherwise negotiated). The Chair will notify the faculty member and the Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC) will set a date for the review.

The review candidate will make a file available to faculty members at least one week prior to the third year review meeting through Panther180. Consistent with guidelines from the Provost's office (2/7/2019), this file will include a Curriculum Vitae, a list of courses taught, students supervised/mentored (including thesis and dissertation committees with a brief statement regarding the candidate's role in student mentoring), progress of seeking external funding, a 1-3 page description of the applicant's goals and a work plan for the remaining 2 years of tenure-earning status, copies of annual evaluations, and any supplemental materials. The third year review appraisal will take into account the starting date of the candidate. The candidate may choose to make an oral statement regarding her/his progress to TPC. In such a case, the candidate will leave the room while the TPC members discuss the candidate's record. The candidate will then be called back to answer any questions or concerns raised by the TPC members. The oral

presentation is not required for the review process, and therefore, there is no negative impact on the evaluation if the candidate choose not to make the oral statement.

The TPC will write a letter of appraisal based on the candidate's file and the major points discussed at the third year review meeting. This letter is signed by the Chair of the TPC and forwarded to the Department Chair and the candidate. The Chair will write a separate letter of appraisal. This letter will be signed by the Chair and forwarded to the candidate. The candidate may write a response to be attached to either letter to be included in the file. The Chair then submits the complete file with the letters to the Dean, who will subsequently make an evaluation for the Provost. Candidates may be required to include this report in the tenure-promotion file.

Tenure and Promotion

Any faculty member planning to apply for tenure and/or promotion in the coming academic year must verify with the Chair of the Department and the TPC their intention to apply early in the spring semester preceding the application. This will give the Department Chair time to select potential external evaluators. External reviews are a very important component of the tenure-promotion file. Candidates should review carefully the guidelines presented in the FIU Tenure-Promotion Manual. The candidate may supply a list of potential external evaluators to the Department Chair. External evaluators will be selected by Department Chair in consult with the TPC. As per University guidelines, no more than two reviewers will be selected from the candidate's list. A minimum of five letters from independent external reviewers who are in a position to provide an evaluation of the candidate's scholarly and professional activities. No solicited external letter can be removed from the file.

A letter to all potential external evaluators will be sent in early March. The candidate should prepare a file that will be sent early in April to those external evaluators who agree to write a letter for the T&P file. Evaluators will be asked to submit their evaluations by August 12. The file for external evaluators should include a vita, cohesive statements describing the candidate's research program, teaching, and service, copies of the five exemplar publications with high impact factor in which the candidate is the major contributor, and course syllabi. The candidate may suggest a list of publications to be attached to the file. The candidate will NOT have access to the external reviewers' letters. All contents of the letters will remain confidential.

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion are permitted to include letters from colleagues at FIU except TPC members from the department (internal letters) in the T&P file if they so choose. However, the candidate might ask for letters from FIU faculty members outside the MME Department with whom they have served on committees or collaborated with in research, co-teaching, or service activities.

The TPC will set a Departmental tenure-promotion meeting time in September. The tenure and/or promotion file should be made available to faculty two weeks prior to this meeting. At the meeting, the candidate may choose to make an oral statement regarding their record. The candidate will then leave the room while the TPC members discuss the record. The candidate will then be called back to answer any questions or concerns raised by the TPC members. The oral presentation is not required for the review process, and therefore, there is no negative impact on the evaluation if the candidate choose not to make the oral statement.

The TPC will conduct and record the vote of the faculty within a week following the meeting and write a letter for the candidate's file based on the candidate's record and the major points discussed at the tenure-promotion meeting. The TPC letter will include a discussion of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. It may also include a discussion of the candidate's progress with respect to any issues raised in the third year review.

For candidates seeking tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, only tenured faculty members holding the ranks of Associate or Full Professor are eligible to vote. For candidates seeking promotion to Full Professor, only tenured faculty members holding the rank of Full Professor are eligible to vote. But anyone of the department faculty may review the candidate's file.

The Chair of the Department votes separately and writes a separate letter for the candidate's file.

The candidate should fulfill the requirements for their tenure and/or promotion category listed in the FIU Tenure and Promotion Manual and the following departmental expectations.

The tenure-track candidates hired as an associate professor or a full professor without tenure should fulfill the requirements for the corresponding rank of their tenure application. They may choose to take or give up the time credit on the tenure clock in their initial offer letter (if any).

Departmental Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

Research Expectations

The candidate's research should show a steady stream of published, in press, and publishable research. If there are gaps in the record, the candidate should explain why.

Exact expected number of publications is difficult to pin down and will depend in part on the nature of the candidate's research. However, a general rule of thumb is that the candidate should strive for an average of at least two publications per year (empirical article, review paper, chapter, edited book, etc.) first-authored by the candidate or candidate's supervised students and postdocs in refereed journals with an impact factor considered high in candidate's research field.

Conference presentations (posters and papers) are expected and encouraged, but they do not take the place of published papers unless the papers have undergone a rigorous peer-review process analogous to that of refereed journal publications and they are published in a peer-reviewed proceeding.

The more recent publications or in press articles should be based on research conducted at FIU. Publications with a mentor will be considered, especially if they occur chronologically earlier in the file. However, the candidate should demonstrate the establishment of a research program independent of the graduate or post-doctoral mentor by the time of the third year review. Papers published with FIU students as first author establish the candidate as an effective mentor and are viewed favorably by the Department.

External Funding

The Department recognizes that some important and productive research areas attract and depend on external funding, whereas others do not. However, the national standing of the University and the Department depend increasingly on demonstrating success in obtaining external funding.

Furthermore, it is increasingly the case across the University that external funding will be necessary to support laboratory space and maintenance. Thus, the Department expects candidates for tenure and promotion to show evidence of grant-seeking activity and success in obtaining external funding as a principal investigator through a competitive selection process to maintain a sustainable independent research group.

Teaching Expectations

The Department values effective teaching, both in the classroom and in activities outside the classroom. Evidence of effective teaching includes positive trends in student evaluations, evidence of student learning, evidence of innovation in the classroom and knowledge of the current trends in education, positive trends in student enrollment in courses taught, the creation or significant modification of new courses, tracks, certifications or other programs, participation in workshops or short symposia on relevant topics, contributions to the preparation of the documents for the undergraduate program, participation in the evaluation and accreditation of the Department. Development of new courses, modification of the existing courses, development of electronic means for delivery of the courses are also highly appreciated.

Although not required at this time, faculty might consider obtaining peer evaluations of their classroom teaching to include in the tenure-promotion file as a supplement to student evaluations.

Mentorship

The Department recognizes the benefit of having a culture of inclusion. It is important for faculty, staff, and students to acclimate to policies and procedures of the university in a timely manner to be productive, the faster they acclimate the more productive they will be. For that reason, it is important that faculty become strong mentors to students, colleagues, and staff within the department, across the university, and in their respective field, no matter their incoming rank. It is expected that candidates looking to be promoted to the rank of Associate Professor particularly focus on becoming an effective mentor to undergraduate and graduate students. New faculty should apply to the Graduate School, as soon as possible, for Graduate Faculty status and Dissertation Advisor status.

Examples of effective mentorship activity at the undergraduate level include becoming a faculty mentor to student clubs, supervising undergraduate research experiences, advising Senior Design teams, providing career advice and assisting in internship and job placement, providing opportunities to attend conferences or meetings and present their work. Examples of mentorship at the graduate level include supervision of graduate thesis research including a track record of graduate mentees meeting departmental milestones (i.e. students create a committee, complete required coursework and qualification examinations, complete thesis or dissertation documents in a timely manner), participating on thesis and dissertation committees, supporting graduate research through external funding sources and assisting students with applications for internal (i.e. DYF, DEA, Presidential Fellowship) and external research support (i.e. NSF GRFP, DOD NDSEG, NASA STRI, McNair, GEMs, travel grants), encouraging participation in and

organizing departmental seminars and invited speakers, providing opportunities to attend conferences or meetings and present their work, training and evaluating graduate teaching assistants, encouraging proper safety awareness and documenting, maintaining, and making available records of laboratory policies. It is expected that by the time of evaluation of promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate has shown the ability to supervise at least one student though the entire process of obtaining a doctorate degree.

Service Expectations

Because the Department and the University recognize that junior faculty members need time to establish a successful research program, service expectations are minimal for faculty members in the first few of their tenure earning years. Service activities are expected to increase somewhat in the latter tenure earning years, but should not take the place of research accomplishments. This may include service at the professional, departmental, college, university, and/or community levels.

Professional service might include such activities as serving on committees for national organizations, reviewing for major journals, or helping to organize and review for conferences. University service activities might include serving on Department, College, or University committees or assisting in other ways in the service needs of the University. Community service may include such activities as giving talks, judging science fairs, or participating in other initiatives that benefit the community.

Collegial Governance

Faculty members are expected to demonstrate good academic citizenship by contributing constructively to the effective day to day functioning of the Department through participation in collegial governance (Department meetings, votes, Department wide initiatives [such as recruitment days, department-wide colloquia], etc.), and participating as representatives to department, college and university committees.

Departmental Expectations for Promotion to Full Professor

Research Expectations

The candidate should have a clearly established nationally recognized program of research as evidenced by a stream of publications in top tier journals with high impact factors and additional publications in the pipeline. Only research published subsequent to the candidate's last promotion is included in the promotion file. The quality of the candidate's research must be recognized by independent external reviewers with stature in the candidate's field.

Exact expected number of publications is difficult to pin down and will depend in part on the nature of the candidate's research. However, a general rule of thumb is that the candidate should strive for an average of at least two publications per year (empirical article, review paper, chapter, edited book, etc.) first-authored by the candidate or candidate's supervised students and postdocs refereed journals with an impact factor considered high in candidate's research field.

Conference presentations (posters and papers) are expected and encouraged, but they do not take the place of published papers unless the papers have undergone a rigorous peer-review process

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External Funding

The Department recognizes that some important and productive research areas attract and depend on external funding, whereas others do not. However, the national standing of the University and the Department depend increasingly on demonstrating success in obtaining external funding.

Furthermore, it is increasingly the case across the University that external funding will be necessary to support laboratory space and maintenance. Thus, the Department expects candidates for promotion to show evidence that external research proposal activity and success in obtaining external funding as a principal investigator since the candidate's last promotion through a competitive selection process to maintain a sustainable independent research group.

Teaching Expectations

The Department values effective teaching, both in the classroom and in activities outside the classroom. Evidence of effective teaching includes positive student evaluations, evidence of innovation in the classroom and knowledge of the current trends in education, positive trends in student enrollment in courses taught, the creation or significant modification of new courses, tracks, certifications or other programs, participation in workshops or short symposia on relevant topics, contributions to the preparation of the documents for the undergraduate program, participation in the evaluation and accreditation of the Department. . Development of new courses, modification of the existing courses, development of electronic means for delivery of the courses are also highly appreciated.

Although not required, candidate might consider obtaining peer evaluations of their classroom teaching to include in the promotion file as a supplement to student evaluations.

Mentorship

The Department recognizes the benefit of having a culture of inclusion. It is important for faculty, staff, and students to acclimate to policies and procedures of the university in a timely manner to be productive, the faster they acclimate the more productive they will be. For that reason, it is important that faculty become strong mentors to students, colleagues, and staff within the department, across the university, and in their respective field, no matter their incoming rank.

In addition to the requirements for promotion to Associate Professor, faculty looking to be promoted to the rank of Full Professor must demonstrate a track record of effective mentorship of junior faculty members.

Evidence of mentorship of junior faculty from senior faculty members can include informing new faculty of the formal and informal policies and procedures of the university, co-authoring grant applications or refereed journal articles, co-advising students, co-teaching courses or providing insight and review of teaching practices, leading or participating in grant writing workshops or other structured mentoring activities, advice regarding and influencing a culture of research, teaching, and service balance, acting as a resource and providing introductions to colleagues with similar research and/or teaching interests, providing feedback on reviews of grant applications and publication reviews.

Service Expectations

Although service does not take the place of an established and successful research program, a track record of leadership in service activities is expected of candidates for promotion. This may include leadership in service at the professional, departmental, college, university, and/or community levels.

Professional service may include such activities as holding office in national organizations, serving on editorial boards of professional journals, and serving on grant review panels. University service may include such activities as taking leadership roles at the Department, College, and University levels and heading important committees or initiatives. Community service might include such activities as spearheading initiatives that benefit the community.

Collegial Governance

Faculty members are expected demonstrate good academic citizenship by contributing constructively to the effective day to day functioning of the Department through participation in collegial governance (Department meetings, votes, Department wide initiatives [such as recruitment days, department-wide colloquia], etc.), and participating as representatives to department, college and university committees.

These guidelines were discussed at the faculty meeting on Feb. 13, 2020 and proved by subsequent secret ballots among tenure and tenure-track faculty. The document takes effect immediately. The current tenure-track faculty members may choose to follow these guidelines or the guidelines effective at the time of their appointment letters for their immediate-upcoming tenure and promotion. The document was updated to include the conclusion of the vote of the faculty, which was concluded on March 27th, 2024 which established that the candidate will not have access to the letters and the confidentiality of the T&P external letters.