

Promotion and Tenure Procedure, Criteria and Standards

I. INTRODUCTION

This document sets forth procedures, criteria, and standards for faculty promotions and appointments to tenure. The objective of the process described herein is to ensure that each candidate for promotion and/or tenure receives a fully documented, objective evaluation leading to the official Primary Committee recommendation made to the next higher reviewing body (Area Committee) according to official PNW policy.

The Primary Committee is an ad hoc committee, convened by the department chair. Membership shall consist of all faculty members (a minimum of five) in the Department/School who

- (a) hold tenured appointments at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor,
- (b) have a teaching appointment of at least 0.5 FTE,
- (c) have no supervisory duties over promotion/tenure-eligible faculty members, and
- (d) do not serve on the Area nor the Campus.

The department chair is not a member of the Primary Committee. At its first meeting, the Primary Committee shall elect its chair from among its membership and the chair shall be a voting member. The Department Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that the committee is properly constituted and that the committee's membership and leadership are reported to the Department faculty and the administration of the College and the University.

Candidates for the rank of Professor will only be reviewed by committee members of that rank. In instances where there is an insufficient number of eligible faculty members to serve on the Primary Committee, the faculty in the College/School/Department shall determine a process for selecting qualified faculty members. All substantive votes shall be cast by secret ballot.

The Primary Committee Chair should be an individual who has not had a close collaborative relation with any of the candidates under consideration; he/she should have had experience in prior Primary Committee, Area Committee, and/or University Committee evaluation processes. The Primary Committee Chair has the responsibility of managing all petitions before the Primary Committee in a timely and effective manner.

In the event that at least one petition for promotion to Professor comes before the Primary Committee, the Primary Committee Chair must be a Professor. When meeting to discuss the merits of a candidacy involving promotion to Professor the Primary Committee Chair will excuse from the meeting all members who do not hold that rank.

Responsibilities of the participants in the Tenure and Promotion Procedures are further described in Part Two of Purdue University Northwest's Academic Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures, in Section I. F.

Following this Introduction there are three major sections. The first, *Procedures*, describes broadly the process of initiating one's candidacy and the Primary Committee's role in evaluating such candidacies. The second section, *Criteria*, details the kinds of accomplishments that will typically be expected of all candidates, whether for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor, or promotion to Full Professor. Finally, the third section, *Standards*, provides guidance on differentiating the degree of criteria-compliance for candidates for promotion to Associate Professor and/or tenure vis-à-vis those for Full Professor academic rank.

II. PROCEDURES

Tenure-track faculty members at the Assistant Professor rank are to be reviewed annually on their cumulative progress toward promotion and tenure,

- (a) independently by their Primary Committee and Department Chair beginning in the fall of the second year of their appointment and, in addition,
- (b) independently by their Area Committee and Dean beginning in the fall of the fourth year of their appointment.

The review packet must be submitted to the Office of the Dean at the same time that promotion and tenure documents are due each year according to the schedule determined by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost. All procedures and processes are as those followed for promotion and tenure cases, except that

- (a) no review takes place by the Campus Committee and
- (b) Primary and Area Committees vote for one of the following two options:
 - i. sufficient cumulative progress toward tenure or
 - ii. insufficient cumulative progress toward tenure.

Tenure-track faculty members shall be reviewed by the Primary Committee every year beginning in the fall of the second year and by the Area Committee every year beginning in the fall of the fourth year. This evaluation will take into consideration the cumulative work of the individual faculty member. The Primary Committee will provide feedback to the candidate and summarize their findings in a transmittal report to the Chair.

It is the responsibility of the faculty member seeking tenure and/or promotion to initiate the process. The School of Engineering requires that the candidate supply the Chair with an electronic copy of the candidate-prepared dossier. The Chair must see to it that this copy is reviewed and passed along expeditiously through appropriate academic and administrative channels.

The dossier is the most important and critical document upon which the various committees involved in the process base their recommendation as to whether or not to grant tenure and/or promotion. It should be prepared with great care and must be complete. Its suggested format is presented below. The candidate should not include supporting letters in his/her preparation of the dossier.

Contents of the Dossier

The dossier should adhere to the following structure, consistent with that described in the Purdue University Northwest Promotion and Tenure Guidelines. Please follow the dossier guidelines at: <https://academics.pnw.edu/academic-affairs/interfolio/>. (As indicated in the guidelines, instructions for preparing the extended CV may be found at: <http://www.purdue.edu/provost/faculty/documents/Form-36-INSTR-2017-18AY.docx>)

To meet the deadlines specified in the timetable distributed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost (VCAA) on February 1st of each year, the preliminary materials and lists of **8-10** reviewers suggested by the candidate plus reviewers suggested by the primary committee if applicable should be provided by the candidate to the Chair and the Dean's office by May 1st, the candidate should inform the Chair of his/her intention to undergo the process by February 15th, and submit his/her dossier in electronic format using Interfolio no later than the beginning of the third week of August. It is recommended that the candidate provide his/her preliminary dossier to the previous year's Primary Committee for consideration and feedback. The department chair shall immediately convene the initial Primary Committee meeting to elect its Chair and to begin deliberation of those petitions it has before it. Early in its deliberative process the Primary Committee may invite the candidate to appear before the Committee to make a statement and to respond to questions by the Committee.

It is the responsibility of the Dean of the College of Engineering and Sciences (CES) to ensure that confidential letters of reference are obtained. The letters will be solicited by the Dean of CES, using sources of qualified persons outside of PNW suggested by the applicant as well as other sources the Primary Committee may consider appropriate. Members of the Primary Committee who are familiar with the candidate's field should participate by suggesting and selecting the sources of the letters of reference. These sources should be well acquainted with some aspect of the candidate's field of research. Because of the time required to assemble a complete set of letters of reference, it is recommended that the process of soliciting them begin sufficiently early. The combined list of sources for reference letters that the Primary Committee assembles is then transmitted to the Dean of CES before the letters of reference are solicited. The confidential letters of reference should only be made available to the Primary Committee and higher levels of the evaluation process.

The Primary Committee shall evaluate each candidate using its published standards as being "recommended" or "not recommended" for award of tenure and/or promotion. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot. The final tally will include written votes by any Primary Committee members absent at the time of the balloting, provided such votes are received by the Primary Committee Chair prior to the meeting at which the balloting takes place.

The results of the vote shall include the total number of eligible voters, number of votes cast, the number of “recommended” votes, the number of “not recommended” votes and the number of abstentions. These results, along with any comments by Primary Committee members are to be transmitted in writing, along with the portfolio, by the Primary Committee Chair to the Area Committee following the timetable provided by the VCAA’s office. Relative rankings will not be transmitted in cases of multiple candidates.

Appropriate modifications to the above process may be made as deemed desirable by the Primary Committee in response to changes in PNW policy, or as appears desirable to improve the Primary Committee process. The present document and any future modification hereto is reviewed and approved by the entire full-time faculty of the School of Engineering.

III. CRITERIA

This section presents the criteria by which all candidates for tenure and/or promotion are to be evaluated. Inasmuch as these criteria hold for those seeking promotion to the rank of Associate Professor as well as Professor, the degree to which such criteria are fulfilled will vary among candidates. Thus, these criteria are to be used in connection with the Standards (presented in Section IV of this document) in the evaluation of any particular candidate.

The criteria employed by the School of Engineering for tenure and/or promotion are consistent with those listed in the Purdue University Northwest Promotion and Tenure Guidelines as well as those in the Purdue University System-Wide Policy on Tenure and Promotion. The candidate will be evaluated based on accomplishments in three broad areas:

- i) Teaching and other educational achievements (“Learning”)
- ii) Research and scholarly endeavors (“Discovery”)
- iii) Service to the department, the university, the profession, and the community (“Engagement”).

These criteria are further explained in the following paragraphs:

1. *Teaching and other educational achievements (“Learning”):*

Excellence in teaching is equated with excellence in the classroom and related interactions with students. It is measured by the faculty member’s ability to inspire students to learn the material presented and to understand its application to problems and situations not specifically covered in the class assignments. Outstanding teaching performance may be reflected by high student evaluation reports but is certainly gauged by producing students who have interest in, and a good working knowledge of the subject and how it interfaces with problem areas that will confront the student in his/her later academic and professional experience. Some indices which characterize outstanding teaching performance are:

- a. course/classroom innovations, creative approaches, and special education aids;
- b. range of courses taught (basic and advanced) and the students’ achievement in them, as well as the introduction of new courses, and substantial revision of old courses;
- c. student evaluations of the candidate’s teaching, both from current and former students;
- d. evaluations of the candidate’s classroom performance by faculty members visiting the classroom;
- e. advising undergraduate and graduate students, including special and interprofessional projects and thesis/dissertation supervision;

- f. strong support for curriculum planning along with student and program assessment;
- g. formal acknowledgment of teaching excellence as demonstrated by awards, invited or refereed articles on approaches to teaching, etc.;
- h. lasting contributions to the professional and personal growth of students.

In this respect, the candidate must keep a teaching portfolio where significant information on his/her teaching philosophy, innovations, accomplishments, and personal testimonials are collected. It can also include information on the professional development and personal growth of former students. Often, the best proof of effective teaching is only available long after the actual teaching was done, when the students are working in their chosen professions or new programs have become institutionalized. This teaching portfolio is not meant to be a document expressly developed for the promotion process but, rather, an on-going record that every faculty member is encouraged to maintain. Its main purpose is to serve as a tool for reflection and the generation of new ideas useful for one's personal improvement as an educator.

2. Research and scholarly endeavors ("Discovery"):

The School of Engineering recognizes the responsibility of all faculty members to contribute to the continuing development of the departmental fields. The School also recognizes that the departmental fields embrace a very wide range of technologies, both specialized (disciplines) and integrative (design). Hence, measures of excellence in research and scholarly endeavors must be interpreted in terms of the candidate's particular specialty within these fields. The candidate is expected to demonstrate his/her accomplishments in disseminating contributions to the fields in modes appropriate to his/her specialty.

In the case of faculty members specializing in one or more of the engineering science disciplines, achievement in research and scholarly endeavors is usually measured by such indices as:

- a. funded research, particularly externally-funded, peer-reviewed research grants;
- b. books or monographs published commercially, both intended for classroom use or for reading by professionals;
- c. refereed articles in archival journals, conference proceedings, or encyclopedic works, or peer-reviewed articles published in electronic form;
- d. Scientific presentations at professional conferences, universities and/or research laboratories;

- e. published reviews of papers and books for journals;
- f. computer software developed and made available for educational, research and/or commercial use;
- g. dissemination of knowledge to non-professionals by presentations, books, articles, etc.

This faculty recognizes that the total value of such contributions is measured not only by their number, but also by their significance to colleagues and to the profession.

The School also recognizes that teaching scholarship is a valuable form of scholarship which should be held on par with scientific scholarship. Candidates for tenure and/or promotion may have demonstrated accomplishments in this area, beyond their day-to-day teaching expertise. Such additional accomplishments could include:

- a. articles in peer-reviewed journals specializing in teaching methods;
- b. membership and activities in societies which focus on teaching and classroom development;
- c. research grants specifically related to teaching or program development;
- d. development of text books or monographs published commercially;
- e. presentations.

In addition, it is recognized that faculty may be involved in engineering practice. For such cases, the candidate should be evaluated using criteria appropriate to that field. For example, candidates could be evaluated on practical achievements such as:

- a. significant articles presenting design approaches and published in recognized professional and trade journals;
- b. patent applications and awards representing improved uses of technology and having commercial potential;
- c. designs produced during consulting or other activities that result in significant products or technology;
- d. computer software for optimizing product/system performance, or for improved component/system design;
- e. recognition as an expert in his/her professional field and serving as a witness in product or professional liability litigation;
- f. awards derived from student competitions.

The School considers the candidate's accomplishments in research and scholarly endeavors to be in many cases difficult to adjudicate wisely, owing to the diverse nature of the departmental fields. Ultimately, the

judgment must be made on the basis of the candidate's stature in comparison with faculty having similar professional interests in other leading U. S. universities.

3. *Service to the department, the university, the profession, and the community ("Engagement"):*

Evidence of the candidate's contributory role in the improvement of the educational process at PNW (or former university affiliation) is an important element in his/her promotional evaluation. This area is differentiated from that of teaching in that here the measure of performance is based on successful interaction with faculty and programs on a university-wide basis. Some of the indices which may characterize accomplishment in this area are:

- a. working with students and faculty in creation of project activities and cultivation of new programs and initiatives, short courses and seminars, enrichment programs for underrepresented groups in engineering, etc.
- b. revision and development of new curricula and degree programs;
- c. constructive work related to the improvement of the program in relation to the ABET and NCA accreditation processes;
- d. participation in activities aimed at improving the quality of teaching at PNW;
- e. service on Departmental, Campus, and University committees;
- f. involvement with student branches of professional societies and other student organizations;

In tenure and/or promotion decisions, the School also considers contributions to the profession at large through service to professional, educational, and policy-making bodies. These contributions are especially important in relation to promotion to Professor. Although there are many ways in which this area of responsibility may be served, among the most common are:

- a. service on committees or as an officer of national professional societies or any other service to these societies;
- b. professional consulting services to the government and its agencies on the federal, state and local level;
- c. participation in the activities of the ABET;
- d. service to local professional organizations;
- e. participation in technical advisory committees for major industries or corporations;

- f. organization of national and international technical meetings;

One of the founding goals of this university is to improve the quality of life of the community at large. This goal is largely accomplished through its educational programs, but this does not mean that faculty cannot contribute to the community's welfare in a different, often more direct way, as well. The School recognizes that individual philanthropic activities and volunteerism is a valuable service that should be rewarded. Among the many activities that would fall in this category are:

- a. uncompensated participation in educational programs other than PNW's;
- b. involvement in civic and cultural activities, especially if occupying leadership roles;
- c. fund-raising efforts on behalf of the community.

IV. STANDARDS

As pointed out in the preceding Section, the general criteria by which candidates are judged are to be the same whether for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professorship or for promotion to Professorship. What differentiates these two academic levels, then, is degree of accomplishment in each aspect of the criteria. Unfortunately, objective measurement of such criteria is a tenuous exercise at best, and is often dangerous in that it tends to replace subjective judgment.

The School is following an approach of not prescribing countable criteria (e.g., number of different courses taught, number of refereed publications, etc.). Instead, it presents the following standards, which are intended to guide the Primary Committee in its assessment of: how completely does the candidate meet the criteria? The fundamental guideline in this assessment is: how do the candidate's qualifications measure up against those of other candidates for promotion to the same level at PNW and at other leading U.S. universities? A further guideline is that the granting of tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor is to be judged on a combination of actual and potential accomplishments. Promotion to Professor, on the other hand, is to be assessed solely on actual accomplishment.

The comments given below are intended to provide further guidance in defining the level of criteria-compliance for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor vis-à-vis promotion to Professor. As no single candidate is ever expected to meet with distinction all of the elements of the criteria given previously, the comments which follow are intended to be merely illustrative.

1. Teaching

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor will normally be expected to have taught several different undergraduate and graduate courses. An ongoing commitment to thesis/dissertation supervision will also be expected with emphasis placed upon undergraduate and graduate supervision and excellence of performance.

Those petitioning for promotion to Professorship should be able to document a rather extensive history of courses taught, graduate students advised, etc. Some measure of distinction in the teaching function, at some point in the candidate's career, will normally be expected. Continuing commitment to supervision of ~~research~~ master thesis is also expected. Some candidates will be able to show a long-range impact on their former students, as evidenced by their subsequent professional and personal growth.

2. Research and Scholarly endeavors.

Candidates for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor will be expected to have made several significant contributions to scholarship, whether in engineering science, education, or engineering practice. The significance of these contributions will be evidenced by scholarly publications, research grants and other achievements, as detailed in the Criteria.

Candidates for promotion to Professor, in addition, should have a substantial number of these contributions, possibly including major ones such as authorship of books, etc. Contributions of high quality (as judged by the candidate's professional peers) as well as the breadth of scope represented by these contributions are of greater merit in the candidate's evaluation than are several items —research articles, for instance— in a narrow field.

Analogous distinctions are to be drawn for aspirants regarding their efforts in engineering practice. The granting of tenure and/or promotion will depend upon documented potential, e.g., articles, software development, leadership in student design competitions, etc. Promotion to Professor rank will depend upon substantial proven accomplishment in specific areas such as those detailed in the Criteria. All candidates, however, are expected to demonstrate accomplishment in the traditional engineering science disciplines, not only in engineering practice.

3. Contributions to the Department, the University, the Profession, and the Community.

The candidate's role in the education program at PNW (and/or former university affiliation) is a vital one. It is expected that candidates for Professor rank will demonstrate past accomplishments involving personal leadership (e.g., strong involvement in departmental or extra-departmental committees, developing multidisciplinary educational programs, etc.) The granting of tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor will imply participation, not necessarily leadership, in such activities.

It is recognized that roles of leadership in such broad contributions to the Profession, as those enumerated in the Criteria, are normally reserved only for senior people, and hence successful candidates for tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor will often be lacking in these respects. Nevertheless, some contribution in activities such as those mentioned, will normally be expected. Candidates for promotion to Professor will be judged much more intensely on documented contributions in such activities.

A similar thing could be said of contributions to the Community at large taking into account, however, that the level of such contributions do not need to and usually do not in fact correlate with the junior or senior academic rank of the candidates, but rather with their social and economic position, family situation, and multiple other factors.