



Departmental Criteria for Promotion

Last updated: 5/2/2015

Overview

The following descriptions are general requirements for a “typical” candidate. However, the needs of the department and the strengths of the individual are more important than any specific guidelines. It is the spirit of this document that matters, and that spirit is to have faculty who will meet the needs of our students in their quest for the best higher education that the State of Tennessee can provide, faculty who will through their service meet the needs of the university, and faculty who through their research, scholarly and creative activities will advance the disciplines of mathematics and statistics.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics’ guidelines for the evaluation of faculty for promotion are based on each individual’s Faculty Activity Report (FAR) data and the percentage of effort in the Faculty Workload (as determined by the Chair) during the years prior to the personnel action. These criteria may vary from individual to individual. For example, consider two faculty members, one whose Faculty Workload requires that 22.5% of their time should be devoted to research and that they teach 18 credit hours per year, and another whose Faculty Workload requires 45% of their time devoted to research and that they teach 12 credit hours per year. Excellent teaching and research are expected of both, but the quantity of research expected of the faculty member with the heavier teaching load may be less.

Workload and FAR documents should be taken into consideration when evaluating the candidate. In all cases, the criteria of “staffing needs of the department or institution” and “ability to work effectively with colleagues” are applied as preliminary filters. Because a certain amount of cooperation within the department is necessary, collegiality is a requirement.

All candidates for promotion to senior ranks (associate professor and professor) must meet approved departmental, college, and university criteria for achievement in each of the three areas of teaching; research, scholarly and creative activities; and service. Promotion in rank carries the implication of attainment of criteria as well as increasing levels of achievement in the discipline. Candidates for promotion to senior ranks are expected to demonstrate both a higher quality and a greater cumulative quantity of achievement in each of the three areas than are candidates for promotion to lower rank.

Candidates may present evidence of continuing professional development. Much of that evidence will be submitted in the sections on teaching, service, research, and scholarly and creative activity as indicated above. Additional evidence related to professional growth may include courses taken for credit, courses audited, seminars attended, and independent study activities. The candidate may present evidence, in the FAR, of contributions to institutional as well as to individually established goals in teaching, service, research, scholarly and creative activities.

The department looks favorably on candidates that are active and successful in supervising undergraduate and graduate research. Moreover, efforts by faculty members targeting student research, retention, graduation, under-represented minority participation, and student professional development are considered as valuable assets for promotion.

Teaching

Teaching is a fundamental activity for a faculty member at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). To apply for promotion, the faculty member is required to submit an application demonstrating that they are an effective teacher. Evaluation of instruction shall be based on the following criteria. Deficiencies in some criteria may be counterbalanced by superiority in others.

- No consistent concern based on student comments.
- Positive and supportive peer evaluations through class visits.
- Positive and supportive comments from knowledgeable students.
- How the candidate has improved teaching based on comments from peer evaluations.
- Command of subject matter.
- Ability to organize and present subject matter in a logical and meaningful way.
- Ability to motivate students.
- Curriculum and/or program development.
- Development of instructional techniques or teaching methods, including development of on-line teaching methods and/or courses.
- Mentoring of undergraduate, graduate or post-graduate students:
 - promote student research, scholarship, and creative activities.
 - successful direction in thesis or independent research projects.
 - effective research leadership of research projects intended in part to train students in research techniques.
- Books/published material in the area of teaching.
- Honors or other recognition for contributions to teaching.
- Considerations should include total number of preparations per semester, the number of courses per academic year, level of difficulty of the courses, the number of students assigned to the classes, and time and location of courses.

Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities

Research is an essential requirement for promotion, except in the rare case where a faculty member has been hired with the understanding that their primary responsibility is teaching. Typically, publication in peer-reviewed journals is the best evidence of research. However, any of the following should be given credit:

- Publications: textbooks, books or chapters in books, articles in refereed journals, articles in non-refereed journals, monographs, refereed and non-refereed conference proceedings, book reviews, and other related items. Self-published books are given credit pending on review letters of experts on the field (evaluating the relevance and contribution of such books). However, books under contract with a publishing company and articles in refereed journals, reviewed by recognized scholars, are looked upon more favorably than those that are not subjected to such rigorous examination.
- The Department of Mathematics and Statistics looks more favorably on publications in high quality journals than those without such high standards.

- Development of open-source materials (e.g. software, books, manuals, tutorials, etc.).
- Ownership of patents, trademark, servicemark, or copyright.
- Actively presenting work at professional conferences. Invited talks (especially plenary or keynote addresses) are looked upon more favorably than other talks.
- Ongoing research as evidenced by submitted papers and papers in preparation.
- Active writing and submission of grant proposals. The Department of Mathematics and Statistics looks more favorably on funded grants.
- Review by outside experts may also be used.
- Honors or other recognition for contributions to research.

Service

Service is necessary for the department, university, and the profession to run smoothly. This being the case, evidence of service at least at the departmental level (including but not limited to formal or informal advisement of students) is expected. In addition, college or university service is strongly encouraged. Service to the discipline will also be recognized.

Expectations for Assistant Professor

- Must have a terminal degree.
- Adequately trained in the discipline.
- Ethical conduct.
- Collegiality.
- Teaching effectiveness.
- Promise of productive research, scholarly, and creative activity.
- Willingness to serve the needs of the department, school, and university.

Expectations for Associate Professor

Evidence of (a) high quality professional productivity which may lead to national recognition in the academic discipline or (b) high quality professional productivity that is consistent with the goals of ETSU. In addition, the following criteria are to be considered in the evaluation:

- Must have a terminal degree.
- Minimum experience: Tennessee Board of Regents Policy (<https://policies.tbr.edu/policies/faculty-promotion-universities>) will be followed.
- Teaching effectiveness.
- Demonstrated service to the department and college.
- Productivity in the area of research as well as evidence of continuing scholarly activity. Typically, this is represented by the candidate publishing in peer-reviewed journals since they were hired. However, grant writing, writing a textbook, professional presentations, and other activities listed under Research should be given credit.
- Collegiality within the department is important.
- Professional and Ethical Conduct is expected.

Expectations for Professor

Evidence of teaching excellence and superior contribution to student development, superior scholarly or creative activity, and superior professional service will contribute to the positive record of the candidate for advancement to the rank of professor. In addition, the following criteria are to be considered in the evaluation:

- Must have a terminal degree.
- A faculty member may apply for promotion to professor after having completed five full years in the rank of associate professor, provided that exceptions to the years-in-rank requirement may be made by the president under special circumstances.
- Teaching effectiveness.
- Significant productivity in the area of research. Typically, this is represented by the candidate publishing in peer-reviewed journals since they were promoted to associate professor. However, grant writing, writing a textbook, professional presentations, and other activities listed under Research should be given credit.
- Professional service: Must be a leader in the profession. Evidence of this includes but is not limited to: invitation to be a plenary speaker at a regional, national or international conference.
- Collegiality and leadership within the department are important.
- Service at the departmental, college, and university level is required.
- Ethical conduct: evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity, and a high degree of academic maturity and responsibility.
- In addition, the candidate's body of work as a whole as well as their professional reputation should be taken into account.