

Promotion and Tenure Procedures, Physics & Astronomy Department

Purpose: To articulate the standards and procedures for promotion and/or tenure for the Department of Physics & Astronomy

Applies to: Faculty within the Department of Physics & Astronomy

General Provisions

Scope and Purpose. The award of tenure and/or promotion in rank are among the most important and far-reaching decisions made by the Department because an excellent faculty is an essential component of any outstanding institution of higher learning. Promotion and tenure decisions also have a profound effect on the lives and careers of faculty. Recommendations concerning promotion and tenure must be made carefully, based upon a thorough examination of the candidate's record and the impartial application of these criteria and procedures, established in compliance with the [Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations \(FSRR\) Article VI](#).

It is the purpose of this document to promote the rigorous and fair evaluation of faculty performance during the promotion and tenure process by (a) establishing criteria that express the Department's expectations for meeting University standards in terms of disciplinary practices; (b) providing procedures for the initial evaluation of teaching, scholarship, and service; (c) preserving and enhancing the participatory rights of candidates, including the basic right to be informed about critical stages of the process and to have an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations; and (d) clarifying the responsibilities, roles, and relationships of the participants in the promotion and tenure review process.

Each level of review, including the initial review, the intermediate review, and the University level review, conducts an independent evaluation of a candidate's record of performance and makes independent recommendations to the next review level. Later stages of review neither affirm nor reverse earlier recommendations, which remain part of the record for consideration by the Chancellor. It is the responsibility of each person involved in the review process to exercise his/her own judgment to evaluate a faculty member's teaching, scholarship, and service based upon the entirety of the data and information in the record. No single source of information, such as peer review letters, shall be considered a conclusive indicator of quality.

Academic Freedom. All faculty members, regardless of rank, are entitled to academic freedom in relation to teaching and scholarship, and the right as citizens to speak on matters of public concern. Likewise, all faculty members, regardless of rank, bear the obligation to exercise their academic freedom responsibly and in accordance with the accepted standards of their academic disciplines.

Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest. Consideration and evaluation of a faculty member's record is a confidential personnel matter. Only those persons eligible to vote on promotion and tenure may participate in or observe deliberations or have access to the personnel file (except that clerical staff may assist in the preparation of documents under conditions that assure confidentiality).

No person shall participate in any aspect of the promotion and tenure process concerning a candidate when participation would create a clear conflict of interest or compromise the impartiality of an evaluation or recommendation.

If a candidate believes that there is a conflict of interest, the candidate may petition to have that person recuse him/herself. If a committee member does not recuse him/herself, a decision about whether that person has a conflict of interest shall be made by a majority of the other committee members.

Promotion and Tenure Standards

General Principles. The University strives for a consistent standard of quality against which the performance of all faculty members is measured. Nonetheless, the nature of faculty activities varies across the University and a faculty member's record must be evaluated in light of his/her particular responsibilities and the expectations of the discipline. These criteria state the Department's expectations of performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service necessary to satisfy the University standards for promotion for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor and for promotion to full professor, or equivalent ranks.

Teaching and scholarship should normally be given primary consideration, but the particular weight to be accorded to each component of a faculty member's activities depends upon the responsibilities of the faculty member. The College has traditionally recognized the 40-40-20 formula for weighting research, teaching, and service, except when weight is differentiated for unclassified academic staff members pursuant to their job description.

Teaching. Teaching is a primary function of the University, which strives to provide an outstanding education for its students. The evaluation of teaching includes consideration of syllabi, course materials, and other information related to a faculty member's courses; peer and student evaluations; a candidate's own statement of teaching philosophy and goals; public representations of teaching; and other accepted methods of evaluation, which may include external evaluations. Consideration is also given to faculty efforts used in directing the research of graduate students working towards advanced degrees as well as undergraduates engaged in research and research student support activities such as conducting seminars. The development of experiments for the instructional labs is also given consideration as well as the development of teaching resources.

High quality teaching is serious intellectual work grounded in a deep knowledge and understanding of the field and includes the ability to convey that understanding in clear and engaging ways.

The conduct of classes is the central feature of teaching responsibilities at KU, but teaching also includes supervising student research and clinical activities, mentoring and advising students, and other teaching-related activities outside of the classroom.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor, the record must demonstrate effective teaching, as reflected in such factors as command of the subject matter, the ability to communicate effectively in the classroom, a demonstrated commitment to student learning, and involvement in providing advice and support for students outside the classroom.

In the Department, the following teaching expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor: As indicated by multiple sources of evaluation (outlined above and described in the Department's Faculty Evaluation Plan), the record must demonstrate that a candidate's teaching, to an adequate or greater extent, reflects knowledge of his/her field and the recent developments therein, and that the candidate is effective in encouraging students' learning, helping them to think critically, apply their knowledge and develop problem solving skills, and in general facilitating the students' development as science-aware citizens and budding scientists. The record should also indicate responsible fulfillment of duties associated with teaching and advising.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate continued effectiveness and growth as a teacher, as reflected in such factors as mastery of the subject matter, strong classroom teaching skills, an ongoing commitment to student learning, and active involvement in providing advice and support for students outside the classroom.

In the Department, the following teaching expectations to meet University standards apply for the promotion to the rank of professor: The record must be consistent with the University standards stated above including the additional factor of mentoring of graduate and/or undergraduate students in research.

Scholarship. The concept of “scholarship” encompasses not only traditional academic research and publication, but also the creation of artistic works or performances and any other products or activities accepted by the academic discipline as reflecting scholarly effort and achievement for purposes of promotion and tenure. While the nature of scholarship varies among disciplines, the University adheres to a consistently high standard of quality in its scholarly activities to which all faculty members, regardless of discipline, are held. In the Department of Physics and Astronomy, scholarship is defined as activity resulting in one or more of the following: research publications, text book or review article publications, scholarly presentations (either external or in-house seminars and colloquia), submission of research and/or facility-usage proposals, development of research infrastructure, hardware or software development, and refereeing papers. Performance in research is judged on the basis of publications in refereed journals, other technical publications, externally funded research grants, professional reputation as reflected in letters from colleagues, as well as other professional activities.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor, the record must demonstrate a successfully developing scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as the quality and quantity of publications or creative activities, external reviews of the candidate’s work by respected scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate’s regional, national, or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly agenda.

In the Department, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor: As indicated by multiple sources of evaluation (outlined above and described in the Department’s Faculty Evaluation Plan), the record must demonstrate, to an adequate or greater extent, that the candidate has engaged in a viable research program, the candidate publishes solid research papers regularly in major peer-reviewed journals, and the candidate has developed some recognition at the national level for their work with often an emerging international reputation.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate an established scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as a substantial and ongoing pattern of publication or creative activity, external reviews of the candidate’s work by eminent scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate’s national or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly career.

In the Department, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards also apply for the promotion to the rank of professor: In general, it is expected that a candidate for promotion to full professor will have a nationally or internationally recognized research program as judged by peers from outside the University. To attain such recognition in the fields of physics and astronomy, a candidate normally will have contributed articles regularly to the principal refereed journals for the previous several years and typically will have received external funding.

Service. Service is an important responsibility of all faculty members that contributes to the University’s performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a candidate’s particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being a good citizen of the University. The Department of Physics and Astronomy accepts and values scholarly service to the discipline or profession, service within the University, and public service at the local, state, national, or international level.

In the Department, a broader range of service opportunities is commonly available to faculty with increasing experience and time in rank. Faculty members are expected to share normal service duties within the

Department by chairing or serving on appropriate committees. In addition they are encouraged to participate in professional organizations, and to serve as reviewers for professional journals and funding agencies. At the Assistant Professor level, University service need not include a significant component outside the Department. External service, especially to the profession or nation, is highly desirable and the opportunity to participate in such is accepted as an independent assessment of academic stature. Other factors affect the opportunity for external service, and expectations of individual faculty members differ depending upon other responsibilities and duties.

Under the University standards for the award of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor, the record must demonstrate a pattern of service to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the Department, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of associate professor: As indicated by multiple sources of evaluation (outlined above and described in the Department's Faculty Evaluation Plan), the record must demonstrate, to an adequate or greater extent, that the candidate demonstrates a pattern of active service at one or more levels including regular and meaningful participation in activities necessary to the successful functioning of the Department. A record of substantial contributions to the larger university community, the profession or the discipline indicates meritorious service beyond minimum expectations.

Under the University standards for promotion to the rank of professor, the record must demonstrate an ongoing pattern of service reflecting substantial contributions to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the Department, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for the promotion to the rank of professor: The record should indicate significant participation in activities necessary to the successful functioning of the Department, College, and/or University at one or more levels. In addition, a record of contributions to the larger university community, the profession or the discipline at the local, state, national or international level is usually expected for the award of promotion to the rank of professor.

Ratings for Performance. Using the criteria described above, the candidate's performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service will be rated using the terms "excellent," "very good," "good," "marginal," or "poor," defined as follows:

- (a) "Excellent" means that the candidate substantially exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
- (b) "Very Good" means the candidate exceeds expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
- (c) "Good" means the candidate meets expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
- (d) "Marginal" means the candidate falls below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.
- (e) "Poor" means the candidate falls significantly below expectations for tenure and/or promotion to this rank.

Absent exceptional circumstances, no candidate may be recommended for promotion or tenure without meeting standards in all applicable areas of performance.

Promotion and Tenure Procedures

The Department of Physics and Astronomy conducts the initial review of the candidate pursuant to the procedures and requirements of [section 5 of Article VI of the FSRR](#) in connection with the candidate's responsibility in the Department.

Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Departmental Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Committee shall evaluate the candidate's teaching, research, and service. In the Department of Physics and Astronomy, the Departmental P&T Committee is a standing committee consisting of all faculty members who are tenured. In cases involving promotions to the rank of full professor, membership of this committee is restricted to full professors. In the Department's case, the Departmental P&T Committee is essentially a Committee of the Whole with appropriate rank.

For each candidate, an *ad hoc* committee is formed. The Department Chair nominates a subset of the Departmental P&T Committee (usually three faculty members) to serve on the candidate's *ad hoc* committee. Once the Departmental P&T Committee approves the nominations the *ad hoc* committee is appointed. Approval is achieved by majority vote. The Department Chair only votes to make or break a tie. For example, if the vote is 9 opposed and 10 in favor, the Department Chair can vote to oppose and thereby cause the motion to fail for lack of a majority. If the original vote is a tie, the Department Chair can vote in favor and thereby cause the motion to pass. If the original vote is a tie and the Department Chair decides not to vote, then the motion fails for lack of a majority. The *ad hoc* committee gathers and evaluates relevant factual material on the candidate and presents the information to the Departmental P&T Committee.

No students or untenured faculty members, except unclassified academic staff with the rank equivalent to or higher than associate professor, shall serve on the Departmental P&T Committee or vote on any recommendation concerning promotion and/or tenure. As stated above the Department requires that the members of the Departmental P&T Committee be of equal or higher rank to the rank for which the candidate is being considered.

Initiation of Review. Prior to the beginning of the spring semester, the Provost shall notify all faculty whose mandatory review year will be the following academic year, with copies provided to unit administrators and the dean. Upon receipt of this notice or if a faculty member requests it prior to the mandatory review year, the unit shall initiate procedures for evaluating the candidate for the award of tenure or tenure and promotion in rank.

At or before the beginning of the spring semester, the unit shall consider the qualifications of all faculty members below the rank of full professor, with a view toward possible promotion in rank during the following academic year. After considering a faculty member's qualifications, if the unit determines that those qualifications may warrant promotion in rank, or if the faculty member requests it, the unit shall initiate procedures for reviewing the faculty member for promotion to full professor.

Preparation of the Promotion and/or Tenure File. *NOTE:* Candidates who hold joint appointments prepare only one set of promotion and tenure materials for review by both units in which they hold an appointment. The initial review units (i.e., departments, centers, etc.) shall consult with each other on their evaluations and the evaluation process, but each initial review unit must provide a separate evaluation of the candidate's performance in the unit. Please refer to the [College's Promotion and Tenure Statement](#) for detailed instructions. It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the appropriate portions of the form and provide necessary documents and information in accordance with the Provost's guidelines, with assistance from the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

The *ad hoc* committee shall receive the form and accompanying materials from the candidate and finish compiling the record of the candidate's teaching, scholarship, and service in accordance with the Provost's guidelines.

The *ad hoc* committee shall provide for the solicitation of outside reviewers to assist in the evaluation of a faculty member's scholarship and in accordance with College procedures, with the Department Chair being responsible for sending out the letters soliciting reviews. Emphasis shall be placed on selecting independent reviewers in the same or related discipline who hold academic rank or a professional position equal to or

greater than the rank for which the candidate is being considered. The committee shall give the candidate the opportunity to suggest individuals to be included or excluded from the list of reviewers. The committee, however, is responsible for using its judgment in the final selection of reviewers. For College specific requirements and guidelines, please refer to "[Section B. Process for Obtaining Evaluation Letters from External Reviewers](#)" within the College's posted policy for promotion and tenure.

When soliciting external reviews of a candidate's scholarship, the Department Chair shall inform prospective reviewers of the extent to which the candidate will have access to the review. The College's confidentiality policy regarding soliciting external reviewers for the promotion and tenure review process is as follows:

"As a part of the promotion and/or tenure review process, we are soliciting assessments of Professor _____'s research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate's promotion and tenure dossier and are treated as confidential by the University to the extent we are permitted to do so by law."

Recommendations. Upon completion of the record by the *ad hoc* committee, members of the Departmental P&T Committee are invited to review and evaluate the materials on an individual basis. The material is presented by members of the *ad hoc* committee to the Departmental P&T Committee. The Departmental P&T Committee evaluates the candidate's record of teaching, scholarship, and service in light of the applicable standards and criteria and makes recommendations in accordance with the voting procedures detailed below.

Voting procedures in the Department of Physics and Astronomy follow those outlined in the Department's Bylaws and apply equally to the Departmental P&T Committee. A favorable recommendation and a rating of performance in each area of responsibility requires a majority with the Department Chair only allowed to vote to make or break a tie, as outlined above. If any person who is eligible to vote asks that a vote be conducted by secret ballot, the vote is conducted by secret ballot.

The *ad hoc* committee shall prepare the evaluation and summary evaluation sections of the promotion and/or tenure forms according to the view of the Departmental P&T Committee. Individual members of the Departmental P&T Committee can review the final evaluation statements and request reconsideration by the Departmental P&T Committee if it is felt that these statements do not reflect the view of the Departmental P&T Committee. The forms and recommendations shall be forwarded to the Department Chair, who shall indicate separately, in writing, whether he or she concurs or disagrees with the recommendations of the Departmental P&T Committee. The Department Chair shall communicate the recommendations of the Departmental P&T Committee, and his or her concurrence or disagreement with the recommendation, to the candidate and provide the candidate with a copy of the summary evaluation section of the promotion and tenure form. Negative recommendations shall be communicated in writing and, if the review will not be forwarded automatically, the Department Chair shall inform the candidate that he or she may request that the record be forwarded for further review.

Favorable recommendations, together with the record of the initial review, shall be forwarded to the College Committee on Appointments Promotion, and Tenure conducting the intermediate review. Negative recommendations resulting from an initial review shall go forward for intermediate review only if it is the candidate's mandatory review year or if the candidate requests it.

Intermediate Review.

The candidate may submit a written response to a negative recommendation by the Department, or to a final rating of teaching, research, or service below the level of "good" included in the evaluation section of the recommendation. The written response is sent separately by the candidate to CCAPT.

A request for information by CCAPT and/or UCPT shall be sent to the Department Chair who shall immediately provide a copy to the candidate and inform the *ad hoc* committee. The Department Chair and/or *ad hoc* committee shall prepare the Department's response in accordance with the Department's review procedures.

The candidate shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the Department's response and/or to submit his/her own documentation or comment to the CCAPT and/or UCPT as applicable.

Approved by:

Department of Physics and Astronomy / Faculty Senate Committee on Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure

Approved on:

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Effective on:

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Review Cycle:

Annual (As Needed)

Related Policies:

[Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations Article VI: Promotion and Tenure](#)

Related Procedures:

[Statement On Promotion and Tenure for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences](#)

Related Forms:

[Guidelines and Documents for Promotion and Tenure](#)

Review, Approval & Change History:

06/12/2017: Dean of CLAS Approved adding the following language to Unit PT statements:

For College specific requirements and guidelines, please refer to "[Section B. Process for Obtaining Evaluation Letters from External Reviewers](#)" within the College's posted policy for promotion and tenure.

03/01/2017: SPPT Review and approval of CLAS P&T policy changes.

02/14/2017: CAC review and approval on revision to Section B. on the [Process for Obtaining Evaluation Letters from External Reviewers](#). to ensure procedural clarity.

06/12/2017: Updated FSRR 6.5.1

04/13/2017: Amendments to the Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (FSRR) 6.5.1 were approved by the Faculty Senate:

Prior to the beginning of the spring semester, the Provost shall notify all faculty whose mandatory review year will be the following academic year, with copies provided to unit administrators and the dean. Upon receipt of this notice or if a faculty member requests it prior to the mandatory review year, the unit shall initiate procedures for evaluating the candidate for the award of tenure or tenure and promotion in rank.

At or before the beginning of the spring semester, the unit shall consider the qualifications of all faculty members below the rank of full professor, with a view toward possible promotion in rank during the following academic year. After considering a faculty member's qualifications, if the unit determines that those qualifications may warrant promotion in rank, or if the faculty member requests it, the unit shall initiate procedures for reviewing the faculty member for promotion to full professor. ~~After seven years in the rank of associate professor, a faculty member who believes he or she has the qualifications for promotion, despite the failure of his or her unit to initiate the~~

review process for promotion to full professor, may initiate the promotion review process himself or herself. In such cases the unit will treat the candidate in the same way that it treats other candidates for promotion to the rank of full professor.

09/02/2015: Made updates to boiler plate text:

- 1) Under General Provisions, paragraph three, “Chancellor” has been changed to “next review level;”
- 2) Under Initiation of Review, the following was added, “*NOTE*: Candidates who hold joint appointments prepare only one set of promotion and tenure materials for review by both units in which they hold an appointment. The initial review units (i.e., departments, centers, etc.) shall consult with each other on their evaluations and the evaluation process, but each initial review unit must provide a separate evaluation of the candidate’s performance in the unit. Please refer to the [College’s Promotion and Tenure Statement](#) for detailed instructions.”
- 3) The following was added under to paragraph concerning outside reviewers, “The committee shall give the candidate the opportunity to suggest individuals to be included or excluded from the list of reviewers. The committee, however, is responsible for using its judgment in the final selection of reviewers.

02/29/2012: Approved by Faculty Vote

03/27/2012: Approved by the Faculty Senate Committee on Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure