

## **Policies and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure Evaluations Department of Mechanical Engineering**

This document provides the procedures for promotion and tenure (P&T) evaluations with details on the timeline, evaluation procedures, and evaluation criteria. The Section 1 provides a chronological order of events for planning and executing the P&T evaluations. Section 2 includes standard position descriptions, criteria for promotion in rank and/or tenure (with regard to research, teaching and service), and standard descriptions of procedures for a) obtaining external evaluations, b) evaluating teaching, c) evaluating research, and d) evaluating service. This document makes reference to several university and school documents that are included for reference as attachments.

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.

These written procedures and criteria have been adopted by vote of the full Mechanical Engineering Assembly (all tenure-track faculty in the Mechanical Engineering Department) at a regularly scheduled meeting of this body.

The Mechanical Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee will consist of all tenured faculty members at the rank of Associate Professor and above. Because the Mechanical Engineering P&T committee *is* a committee of the whole (i.e. all tenured faculty in the department), concurrence of a *separate* departmental committee of the whole is not applicable. For promotion cases from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with Tenure, the full committee is eligible to participate in the evaluation and to vote on the evaluation levels and the overall recommendations for promotion and tenure. For promotion cases from Associate Professor to Full Professor, only tenured faculty at the Full Professor rank are eligible to participate in the evaluation and to vote on the evaluation levels and overall recommendation for promotion. The department chair may participate in the evaluations, but serves as a non-voting member of the Committee.

### *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 and the department chair 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. A quorum of at least 60% of eligible faculty members must be present to hold a vote on conflict of interest.

### **Section 1: Timeline of events**

The review for promotion and/or tenure may be initiated by notification from the Provost for mandatory review. The review for promotion and/or tenure may also be initiated by the candidate prior to the mandatory review. All reviews for promotion to Full Professor are initiated by the candidate.

Note that this timeline directly addresses mandatory review. The department will not initiate a review, except in the case of mandatory review. Recommendations and requirements regarding candidate initiated review for either level are also included below.

Mid-January: Chair of P&T committee requests a list of at most 6 possible external reviewers from each candidate to be received by March 31. *Candidates may also identify up to 2 individuals that they would not wish to be included as external evaluators.* Per university guidelines, reviewers must hold an academic rank equal to or greater than the rank for which the candidate is being considered. Care should be taken in their selection, as all reviews received must be included in the package. Note that at least 6 external reviews are recommended by the university, and 4 are absolutely required, even with an explanation of circumstances if fewer than 6 letters are provided. *Also note that the final list should not include more than 3 evaluators suggested by the candidate, and exceptions to this standard must be explained and justified in the P&T file. Thus, it may be in the best interest of the candidate to submit names of only 3 possible external reviewers.*  
Candidate Initiated Review: January is the preferred time for a candidate to inform the P&T chair that he or she is initiating review for promotion and/or tenure. Even if the candidate is not certain, it is preferred to initiate the review at this time for planning purposes and to assure preparations are not rushed. The request for candidate initiated review can be withdrawn at any time.

Mid-March: Chair of P&T committee outlines tasks and obtains volunteers to evaluate teaching, research/publications, external evaluations, and service. *Note that peer evaluations of untenured faculty teaching should be made at least once per year.*

Chair of P&T committee reminds candidates that the list of external reviewers is due March 31. If March 31 is not a business day, the list will be due the next business day.

Early April: Chair of the P&T committee requests from the candidate copies of his/her current Candidate CV, and all publications by May 1 or the next business day. These documents or a subset thereof will be supplied to external reviewers. Candidates will be allowed to suggest a set of papers to be sent to the external reviewers, and the Candidate CV sent to external reviewers may be the official Candidate P&T

CV (formatted to current university requirements) or may be the candidate's professional curriculum vitae formatted/organized differently according to the candidate's preference.

- Mid-April: P&T evaluation assignments are confirmed, and P&T committee approval is required for each external reviewer of each candidate.  
Candidate Initiated Review: Note that candidate initiated review **MUST be requested by April 15** (or the next business day), in order to be considered for evaluation in the next academic year.
- Early May: Requests for external reviews are sent to potential reviewers. Include a summary of the candidate's research area in the initial request letter. Note that external reviews are confidential to the extent permitted by law and university guidelines require that reviewers be made aware of this fact in the initial letter. Allow two weeks for a decision, and follow-up with phone calls if necessary.
- Mid-May: Additional requests for reviewers may be sent out to account for non-responders or those who have declined to review.
- Early June: Candidate CV for external evaluators, selected publications (4-7), and other relevant information will be sent to external reviewers. These documents will be prepared by the candidate in coordination with and approved by the department P&T chair. *Request completed reviews by August 1.*
- P&T chair request names for possible support letters (internal) from each candidate.
- Early August: P&T chair follows-up with late reviews to assure that a minimum of 6 reviews are received by September 1.
- Mid-August: Candidates are notified/reminded that their complete P&T package (all promotion and tenure information (in current university format), publications, teaching evaluations, etc.) are due in the ME office on September 15 or the next business day. This allows time for the department to complete evaluations and forward the package on to the School of Engineering for further consideration. The candidate is responsible for completing and providing necessary documents and information, in accordance with the Provost's guidelines, with assistance from the department.
- September: P&T committee begins compiling evaluations based on currently submitted materials. This compilation continues into October, when evaluations should be completed for each candidate.
- Early October: P&T committee develops draft official wording of candidate evaluations, summary statements, position descriptions, and so forth. Review of candidate

materials may continue, and candidates will be informed of typographical errors and other corrections they should make in their dossier.

Mid-October: P&T committee meets to finalize all sections of the evaluation and to vote on final disposition for each candidate. A quorum of at least 60% of the eligible faculty is required to vote on candidate ratings in each category of evaluation and on overall recommendation for promotion and/or tenure. A majority of affirmative votes (counting abstentions, though not recusals nor failures to vote, as non-affirmative votes) will result in a recommendation for tenure and promotion by the committee. The chair of Mechanical Engineering shall indicate separately in writing whether she or he concurs or disagrees with the recommendations of the committee. For candidates with a favorable evaluation and all candidates undergoing mandatory review, materials and department evaluations are sent to the School of Engineering for continued review, and a summary of the department evaluations and the chair's disposition and comments is simultaneously provided to the candidate, along with a letter explaining the rationale for ratings in each category of teaching, research and service. Once the candidate's P&T package is forwarded to the School of Engineering *no further changes (additions or deletions) to the P&T package are allowed unless there is a request for additional information/materials from the school and/or university level committees.*

Candidates will be provided with a summary of department evaluations and the chair's disposition and comments. Each candidate undergoing non-mandatory evaluation and who receives an unfavorable evaluation will be asked if he/she wishes their package to be sent on to the School of Engineering for further review (as this is not automatic unless the review is mandatory). The department and candidate retain a copy of the signed Receipt of Evaluation Summary form.

Candidates with an unfavorable evaluation are given one week to respond to the departmental evaluations, using the official response form and supporting documentation. The response form must be submitted to the School of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee. If a response is provided by the candidate, both the department and the candidate retain copies of the signed Receipt of Candidate Response form.

November: The School of Engineering reviews the P&T package for each candidate. The school P&T committee may present a request for additional materials to the department. If a request for additional materials occurs, then the chair of Mechanical Engineering and the chair of the P&T committee will assist the candidate in responding to the request. The School of Engineering P&T Committee finalizes its ratings and recommendation(s).

December: The Dean of Engineering reviews each candidate's P&T package, including ratings and recommendations at each level, and provides comments/disposition on each applicant prior to the P&T package being forwarded to the university level. The School of Engineering will provide a summary of the school-level

evaluations to the candidate. Candidates with unfavorable non-mandatory reviews will be asked whether or not they wish the package to be sent to the university level for review.

Candidates receiving a negative evaluation from the School of Engineering P&T Committee and/or the Dean of Engineering (as defined by university policy) will be allowed one week to provide a written response using the School of Engineering candidate response form. The response form must be submitted by the Candidate to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. If a response is provided, both the School of Engineering and the candidate shall retain copies of the Receipt of Response form.

- January: The University Committee on Promotion and Tenure (UCPT) begins evaluation of P&T packages for candidates that are forwarded to the university level for final evaluations. The university committee may present a request for additional materials to the department. If a request for additional materials is received, then the chair of Mechanical Engineering and the chair of the P&T committee will assist the candidate in responding to the request. Once the candidate responds to the request for information from the UCPT, he/she should immediately consider preparing an appropriate response to a possible negative final recommendation by UCPT and/or the Provost to the Chancellor. If the candidate believes there are grounds for appeal, the candidate should immediately begin preparing to make an appeal. Information and guidance on appropriate grounds can be obtained from the chair of the Faculty Rights Board.
- March: Candidate receives a summary of the final recommendation of the UCPT and the Provost. If UCPT and/or the Provost have given a negative evaluation or recommendation (per university policies), the candidate may, within the time allowed by university rules and regulations, file either a written response to be included in the record forwarded to the Chancellor, or may appeal the case to the Faculty Rights Board (based on established grounds for appeal), or both, as may be allowed in the university rules and regulations.
- May: Candidate receives final decision of the Chancellor.

## **Section 2: Details of the Evaluation Process**

### *Description of Position within the University*

Per the university initial review evaluation documents, the Position Description is to be completed by the Department Chair and signed by both candidate and chair early in the mandatory review process. No specific timeline is given, but this should typically be completed by early September, as it is relevant to the evaluation of teaching, research and service.

Part A. The percentage appointment in the department must be entered, and is typically 100%, unless the candidate holds a joint appointment.

Part B. While the position description may vary somewhat with specific individuals, it will be essentially the same for most faculty. Percentage effort in each category is typically 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% service, but the distribution of percentages must always add to 100% (regardless of joint appointments requiring multiple unit evaluations).

Part C. The standard position description is as follows:

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, Assistant/Associate Professor, is expected to teach and guide undergraduates and graduate students in courses and individually. The typical teaching load for tenure track assistant professors is two courses per year for the first year and three courses per year thereafter. However, this may be modified to compensate for substantial service and/or research loads, or for a significant laboratory course load.

Establishment of a research program is required, which must include all of these elements: peer-reviewed publications; competitive, externally funded research; and supervision of graduate students and/or post-doctoral trainees/students. While emphasis is placed on teaching and research, service on Departmental committees is expected, and service at the national level (e.g., committees, conference sessions, and paper/proposal reviews) is strongly encouraged.

Part D. Unique expectations for the candidate's position will be described in detail, as necessary. For individuals with unique expectations, the distribution of effort and the standard position description may need to be altered, as well. Generally, "None" will be entered under unique expectations.

Part E. The department criteria for promotion in rank or tenure must be included in promotion and tenure documentation. The information provided by the candidate to demonstrate achievement of the criteria must cover all areas of teaching, research, and service.

### *Criteria for Promotion and Tenure:*

The enumerated criteria used for candidate evaluation are not to be construed as a set of inflexible rules. Reasonable flexibility should be exercised in the evaluation of a candidate's accomplishments. These criteria are included on the Initial Review Evaluations form as part of the evaluation procedures. The standard Department of Mechanical Engineering criteria for promotion to associate professor with tenure are as follows:

**Teaching:** Teaching is evaluated on the basis of the combination of student teaching evaluations, peer teaching evaluations, participation in undergraduate and graduate advising, and candidate efforts to improve teaching. New assistant professors in Mechanical Engineering are typically given an initially lower than average teaching load of one course per semester, to assist them in building their research program. After one year, research active faculty members in Mechanical Engineering are typically expected to teach 3 courses per year.

Peer evaluations and efforts for improvement are generally qualitative. Peer evaluators are typically assigned by the department P&T chair. While the student evaluations may include qualitative comments, they also provide quantitative ratings (0-5, from worst to best) categorized as follows:

Scale: Exceptional	4.20-5.00
Very Good	3.51-4.19
Good	3.01-3.50
Adequate	2.50-3.00
Poor	0.00-2.49

Because of the known effect of expected grade on the level of student evaluations, peer evaluations are generally of higher weight, though trends (consistently increasing or decreasing values) in student evaluations are also considered.

It is expected that directing graduate students in research activities will be a major component of graduate advising. This involves serving as a major advisor and chair of masters and/or doctoral level thesis committees. Participation as a member of graduate thesis committees of other faculty is also expected.

Faculty members are expected to participate in symposia, workshops, and similar opportunities to gain skills and ideas for improving their teaching. Educational or pedagogical research is considered for teaching with regard to professional development, but is primarily evaluated under research. Overall "good" levels of teaching (e.g., student evaluations above 3.00, and positive peer evaluation) are expected.

**Research:** It is required that research and publication will be a substantial component of the total professional activity. This must include advising and directing students and improving and establishing a funded research program. Candidates are expected to produce high-impact scholarly work that may take various forms such as refereed journal articles, refereed conference papers, books and book chapters, and patents. The impact of the scholarly work will be gauged by the P&T Committee and will be based on aspects such as: (a) the assessment of the research provided by external reviewers and (b) citations of the scholarly work using appropriate citation tools, (c) the quality of the journals, (d) the quality of the research as judged by the P&T committee itself, and (e) the external funding support for the research. Candidates must demonstrate ability to support and maintain their research program, as demonstrated by a major role in

attracting and acquiring a reasonable level of funded external grants. Candidates must serve as a major advisor and chair of masters and/or doctoral level thesis committees.

**Service:** The Mechanical Engineering Department prefers to limit the amount of service involvement at the school and university level for untenured faculty members in order to provide more opportunities for research development. Regular service at the department level and some service at the national level (such as professional organization service, conference session chair, peer review of manuscripts, and research proposal review) are expected.

The standard Department of Mechanical Engineering criteria for promotion to Full Professor are as follows:

**Teaching:** The criteria for promotion to associate professor with tenure must also be met in the time period since that promotion. In addition, faculty are expected to have a consistent record of good quality teaching and regular participation in symposia, workshops, and similar opportunities to gain new skills and approaches to demonstrate *continued effectiveness and growth* of their teaching. In other words, the candidate should have clearly demonstrated competence as a teacher. Further, the candidate should be a positive contributor to faculty and student morale and spirit and have shown leadership in the development of an atmosphere which promotes the pursuit of creative and intellectual learning.

**Research:** The criteria for promotion to associate professor with tenure must also be met in the time period since that promotion. In addition, it is expected that faculty will have demonstrated mastery of a specialty in his or her program of research and clearly demonstrated an ability to support and maintain his or her research. A candidate for the rank of Professor should have been engaged in significant research and publication or other scholarly activities which further the knowledge of the profession, and/or have engaged in significant professional activities which have clearly established their scholarly career and their position as a *leader in the profession*.

**Service:** The criteria for promotion to associate professor with tenure must also be met in the time period since that promotion. In addition, the candidate should also have demonstrated a continued contribution by way of *substantial service* to the Department, School, University, his or her profession, and/or the community at large. Substantial service may include (but is not limited to) participation in university faculty governance, national or international technical committees, associate and/or chief editor of a journal, conference organization.

### *Composite Evaluations and Recommendations*

Note that these and all subsequent evaluation procedures are included on the Initial Review Evaluation form as part of the documentation of evaluation procedures.

Note also that this part of the evaluation is normally completed last, after evaluation of the individual areas of effort (teaching, research, and service). The department committee must agree on the overall evaluation level for each of the three areas of teaching, research and service (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Marginal or Poor; or other ratings as specified by university policy and/or forms). For evaluation level in each category, the candidate will be assigned the

highest level that receives a majority vote of those present and/or who communicated their vote early or via proxy. Based on the distribution of votes, votes at each level will be added votes from levels above, until a majority is achieved. The committee will determine the recommendations regarding promotion and tenure (Recommended, Not Recommended, or Not Applicable). Vote distribution must be reported for promotion and/or whether or not to grant tenure. A positive recommendation will be arrived at by a majority of affirmative votes (counting abstentions, though not recusals nor failures to vote, as non-affirmative votes).

The overall evaluation and recommendations must be supported by documentation addressing reasons for evaluation in each of the areas of effort evaluated and all types of data considered. These rationale shall be provided to the candidate with the overall recommendations reported on the Initial Review Evaluation Summary for Candidates or similar form, as required by the university.

The department chair must indicate concurrence or lack thereof with the recommendations of the department P&T committee. The chair must also document the reasons for concurrence (or lack thereof) on the Initial Review Evaluation Summary for Candidates form or in an attached letter.

### *Evaluation of Teaching*

The evaluation of teaching is normally led by a subcommittee of 3-4 tenured faculty members, but in no case shall fewer than two (2) tenured faculty members perform primary evaluation of the teaching. Based on the procedures below and the departmental criteria for promotion and/or tenure, the subcommittee will draft an evaluation of the candidate's teaching to be reviewed and approved by the P&T committee.

Multiple sources of information will be used as the basis for the evaluation of classroom teaching. The candidate's written statements describing course objectives and course content for each course from course syllabi and/or other documentation will be reviewed. Reports by evaluators, who had observed classroom teaching over a period of several years, will be examined to evaluate the candidate's instructional methods and command of the subject matter, and commitment to student learning. Student performance in assigned homework, projects, and examinations as well as their preparation to succeed in upper level courses will provide the basis for assessing evidence of student learning. Student classroom evaluations will provide additional data on command of the subject matter, the ability to communicate effectively in the classroom, and support of undergraduate students outside the classroom. The candidate's participation in classroom teaching improvement activities such as workshops and seminars, and comments from peer evaluators, trends in student evaluation score, and teaching awards will be examined for evidence of development as a teacher. Peer letters evaluating classroom performance will be included in the P&T dossier for each candidate.

The candidate's stated undergraduate advising record will also be used to evaluate participation in undergraduate advising. In addition, the candidate's statement and record of graduate student advising and mentoring will be evaluated. Though post-doctoral mentoring is not a requirement, any documented experience in this area will also be considered within the teaching evaluations.

Overall, the quality and quantity of teaching achievements will be evaluated in the context of the percent effort stated for teaching and the department, school and university criteria and standards. The overall evaluation of teaching will rank the teaching in the standard categories. The distribution of the vote will be provided, if needed, per university requirements and forms.

To generate a summary level ranking to be reported to the candidate, votes at each level will be added to votes from all the higher levels, until a majority of votes is reached (the highest level of performance with a majority of votes at or above that level). The overall results will be reported as part of the initial evaluation and on the Department Evaluation Summary for the Candidate form.

#### *Evaluation of Professional Performance*

This evaluation is generally only applicable to librarians and is not applicable for Mechanical Engineering faculty.

#### *Evaluation of Research*

The evaluation of research is normally led by a subcommittee of three (3) or more tenured faculty members. In no case shall fewer than two (2) tenured faculty members perform primary evaluation of the research. Generally research should be evaluated by those tenured faculty members who have an interest and knowledge in the same or related research area, when available. Based on the procedures below and the departmental criteria for promotion and/or tenure, the subcommittee will draft an evaluation of the candidate's research to be reviewed and approved by the P&T committee.

Research will be evaluated with respect to the cumulative impact, quality and quantity of publications, patents, pending grant applications, and funded external grants. A sustainable program of research will require both publications/patents and external funding. Cumulatively, all publications at the University of Kansas since the candidate's last appointment will be reviewed and rated (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor) by members of the subcommittee. Based on external letters and citations, the professional (regional, national, and/or international) reputation will be evaluated. External evaluations will also be used as objective evidence of quality and impact of the research. The program of research will be evaluated for progress beyond that completed for the terminal degree or a prior appointment level at the University of Kansas, and the promise of continued productivity. The quality and quantity of research achievements will be evaluated to determine impact in the context of the percent effort stated for research and the department, school and university criteria and standards.

The overall evaluation of research will rank the research in the standard categories. The distribution of the vote will be provided, if needed, per university requirements and forms. To generate a summary level ranking to be reported to the candidate, the highest level of performance with a majority of votes at or above that level will be reported. The overall results will be reported as part of the initial evaluation and on the Department Evaluation Summary for the Candidate form.

#### *External Evaluations*

The P&T committee shall obtain external reviewers from a cross section of the candidate's technical area. The process of obtaining external evaluations will follow the current university "Guidelines on Requirements for External Evaluations – Promotion and Tenure Review." From the candidate list, and from others recommended by the committee, 7-8 persons will be asked to evaluate the candidate. If less than seven agreed to serve as evaluators, then additional evaluators will be identified and recruited. Agreement from at least 7 evaluators will be sought by mid-May. A response by all evaluators will be requested by the beginning of August. Reminder letters and phone calls will be used to help assure that evaluations are received in a

timely manner (by at least September 1). The evaluation letters, CV's of evaluators, etc. will be compiled and included in the P&T dossier for each candidate per university requirements.

Because the evaluations are to be given as confidential and are to remain confidential to extent possible under the law, the following statement is required to be in the letters to external evaluators:

“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.”

In addition, the letter to external evaluators will request that they address the areas required by the current university “Guidelines on Requirements for External Evaluations – Promotion and Tenure Review.” The materials sent to the external evaluators will include the Candidate CV, selected publications (4-7), and other relevant information deemed pertinent by the departmental P&T committee.

In cases where the candidate has extended the timeline for their mandatory review year (per University policies), or other special circumstances occurring during the time period between appointment as Associate Professor to consideration for promotion to Full Professor, the Candidate and P&T Chair will discuss the option of apprising external evaluators of the special circumstances in the timing. The candidate may choose to disclose this information in the letter to external evaluators or in his/her CV, or the candidate may choose not to disclose this information to external evaluators.

#### *Evaluation of Service*

The evaluation of service is normally led by a subcommittee of 3-4 tenured faculty members, but in no case shall fewer than two tenured faculty members perform primary evaluation of the service. Based on the procedures below and the departmental criteria for promotion and/or tenure, the subcommittee will draft an evaluation of the candidate’s service to be reviewed and approved by the P&T committee.

The subcommittee will review the number and type of departmental, school-level, and university projects and committees served by the candidate. In addition, the relative activity (workload) of the committee will be considered. The subcommittee will also evaluate the number, type, and activity of regional and national service activities by the candidate, as these are important for bringing recognition to the university.

The overall evaluation of service will rank the service in the standard categories. The distribution of the vote will be provided, if needed, per university requirements and forms. To generate a summary level ranking to be reported to the candidate, the highest level of performance with a majority of votes at or above that level will be reported. The overall results will be reported as part of the initial evaluation and on the Department Evaluation Summary for the Candidate form.

See also University of Kansas Rules and Regulations, Article VI, and documents/forms provide by the Office of the Provost and the School of Engineering.