

**Procedures of the Promotion and Tenure Committee
Department of Mathematics
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

2020-2021

These procedures supplement the latest versions of the following documents.

- (1) [*Promotion and Tenure, from the Provost \(Communication #9\).*](#)
- (2) [*Guidelines Concerning Cases for Promotion and Tenure, from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.*](#)
- (3) [*Guidelines and Procedures for Notice of Nonreappointment for Nontenured Faculty Members, from the Provost \(Communication #10\).*](#)

Officers

The first order of Committee business in the Spring, after the arrival of newly appointed members, is to elect a Chair and a Secretary. Meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chair of the Committee or by the Chair of the Department. The Secretary shall record all major decisions of the Committee and this record shall be kept as closed minutes. The closed minutes are distributed only to the members of the Committee and are kept on file in the departmental office. A distilled version of these closed minutes will also be prepared by the Secretary, and these open minutes will be made available to the faculty of the Department.

Records

The promotion dossier for each Candidate whose promotion is recommended to the College is saved forever in the personnel file of the Candidate in accordance with university policies. Materials used in the major decisions of the Committee shall be kept for at least one year after the decision is made. When it is decided to recommend that a Candidate be promoted, these materials should be kept until the Candidate has successfully been promoted. When it is decided to recommend that a Candidate not be promoted, these materials should be kept until it is clear that they will not be needed for an appeal of the decision. In view of the sensitive nature of the deliberations of this Committee, these materials shall not be made public; in particular, the confidentiality of the referees and of any communications from them shall be protected to the extent possible within the law.

Criteria for promotion

In keeping with the emphasis this campus puts on graduate education and research, promotions will normally be based primarily on the quality of research and scholarship. Performance in teaching and service to the mathematical and academic communities are also important in promotion decisions.

Promotion to associate professor normally requires the Candidate to have accomplishments and to show promise of becoming a leading scholar -- promise that is supported by tangible, developing evidence.

Promotion from associate professor to professor will normally be based on promise fulfilled, accompanied by evidence of attainment of national or international stature in a field.

In all cases, promotion and tenure decisions should serve the best interests of the Department and University.

Third-year review

It is University policy that in the third year of a faculty member's probationary period, an informal review of the individual's progress shall be undertaken. The results of this review shall be summarized in a letter from the Chair of the Department to the individual. This letter is first reviewed by the Dean and then given to the faculty member by the Chair of the Department. The Promotion and Tenure Committee should assist the Chair of the Department in performing this review.

Teaching evaluation

The Campus requires that each promotion dossier should include a careful evaluation of the Candidate's teaching; it should include the results of peer review of the Candidate's teaching, based on classroom visits as well as an evaluation of the Candidate's instructional materials. The Campus also requires that the promotion dossier include summaries of the results of ICES course evaluation questionnaires for every course taught during the period under review. Therefore, possible candidates for promotion should always distribute the ICES questionnaires to their classes and should preserve their instructional materials from recent courses.

Selection for review

The Committee shall annually request all members of the Department to propose the names of persons who should be considered for promotion. In addition, the Committee shall carefully examine the list of all those members of the department who do not hold the rank of professor in order to identify those who should be considered for promotion. A member of the Department may present his or her own name for consideration. It is College policy to grant a full review to associate professors upon request if more than six years have elapsed since the time of the last full review (external review).

The fact that a person was reviewed in a previous year and was not recommended by the Committee, or was recommended for promotion by the Committee to the College, and was not promoted, shall not prejudice his or her consideration in any subsequent year.

The probationary period for an assistant professor is six years, and any notice of nonreappointment must be given by the end of the sixth year, according to the Statutes. This implies that final review of the Candidate's case at the College level must occur during the Fall

of the Candidate's sixth year. The Committee initiates such a review during the Spring of the Candidate's fifth year, in order to obtain letters of evaluation in a timely way. Candidates potentially subject to nonreappointment should be furnished with all of the documents (1), (2), and (3) mentioned on page 1.

An assistant professor may be considered for promotion in any year prior to the sixth year, but such promotion cases should not be the norm and they require clear evidence of accomplishments that meet sixth year promotion standards. An early promotion recommendation that is denied may disappoint the faculty member, but, on the other hand, early promotion can be a useful tool to recruit and retain first-rate faculty members.

Participation

It is the duty of each member of the Committee to participate in the assessment of candidates, with the following exceptions. First, the statutes of the University specifically exclude any person from participating in decisions concerning his or her own promotion or the promotion of anyone related to him or her by blood or marriage. Such members of the Committee are automatically excluded from discussions of the Candidate. Second, a member of the Committee may request to be excused from participating in the evaluation of a candidate. Such a request may be granted if it is approved by a majority of the other members of the Committee and if it is made early in the consideration of the Candidate. Once such a request is granted, the Committee member shall not participate in further discussions of the Candidate. Third, associate professors on the Committee shall not participate in any discussions of possible promotions to professor.

Internal review

The Committee may choose to perform an internal review of any potential candidate for promotion or tenure. The Committee shall decide whether to inform the Candidate that the review is taking place. The Committee shall choose a subcommittee to examine the Candidate's case; members of the subcommittee need not be members of the Committee. The subcommittee shall obtain a list of the Candidate's publications; a description of his or her service to the Department, the College, the University, and the mathematical community; and information concerning the Candidate's teaching. As part of the internal review, other relevant information may be solicited from persons inside but not from outside the University.

External review

After the internal review, the Committee may choose to perform an external review. The vote shall be by secret ballot.

The Committee shall choose research and teaching subcommittees for the Candidate; members of the subcommittees need not be members of the Committee. The research subcommittee will assist the Committee in selecting suitable letter writers and in evaluating the promotion case after letters have been received. The teaching subcommittee will assist the Committee in evaluating the Candidate's teaching through class visits and examination of course materials. For cases that are being put forward to the college, members of these

subcommittees may be asked to prepare the Departmental Research and Teaching Evaluations portions of the Promotion Dossier.

The Candidate shall be informed of the decision to perform an external review and of the composition of the research and teaching subcommittees, and shall be referred to these procedures, the LAS Guidelines on Promotion and Tenure, and Provost Communication #9. The Candidate shall be asked by the Chair of the Committee to draw up a list of four persons who are familiar with the Candidate's research and might be willing to serve as evaluators (letter writers). The Candidate shall also be asked to provide the Committee with a list of mentors and long-term collaborators. At this time the Candidate may also provide the names of one or two persons whose opinions are believed to be biased. According to University policy, it is the Committee's responsibility to consider such requests seriously, but it is not bound to honor them. (Communication #9)

After the Candidate has submitted his or her list of preferred evaluators, the Committee shall form its list of evaluators by selecting at least two names from the Candidate's list and by appending names of additional persons not on the Candidate's list. The number of additional names shall exceed the number of names selected from the Candidate's list. The total number of names shall be at least five.

Evaluators shall not be members of our Department, nor at a lower rank than the recommended rank of the Candidate, nor mentors nor long-term collaborators of the Candidate. Evaluators should be drawn from peer institutions or better, unless a strong case can be made for the eminence of an individual evaluator.

The Committee may find it necessary to expand the Committee's list as described above by adding the names of one or two collaborators of the Candidate, in order to form an accurate picture of the Candidate's research. In appropriate cases, the Committee's request to these evaluators may indicate that they are being invited because they are collaborators of the Candidate and they should be asked only to clarify the role of the Candidate in the collaboration. The reasons for such additional letters will have to be explained in the promotion dossier.

Evaluators on the Committee's list will be contacted, normally by email, to solicit a letter of evaluation; the message should request an immediate response indicating willingness to serve. An evaluator who agrees to serve will be sent a formal letter asking for an evaluation, as well as a fresh curriculum vitae and publication list for the Candidate. This material may also be accompanied by the Candidate's statement and summary abstracts (described below) and selected reprints or preprints. After a certain length of time, reminders will be sent to referees who have not responded. Additional referees may be added to the list later to compensate for referees who fail to respond.

We ordinarily do not telephone potential evaluators to determine their willingness to serve, in order to ensure that there is a written record of any interaction between the evaluators and the department. When a potential evaluator does not respond to email, the Committee

Chair may telephone the person. The conversation must be limited to matters such as willingness to serve and the address to which mail should be sent.

Supporting materials

The Candidate shall prepare a statement (at most three pages) of his or her goals and major accomplishments in research. In the case of promotion to Associate Professor, this statement should start with a section entitled "Accomplishments", consisting of one paragraph in length, providing tangible, developing evidence of accomplishments and the promise of becoming a leading scholar. In the case of promotion to Professor this statement should start with a section entitled "Accomplishments", consisting of one paragraph in length, providing tangible evidence of attainment of national or international stature in a field. This statement will be used in the eventual promotion dossier (Item V. A.). The Candidate may also provide to the Department Committee a longer (at most five pages) and more technical version of the research statement to be included in the information sent to evaluators. The Candidate will decide which (if any) of these statements is to be sent to the evaluators. The Department Committee recommends, for tenure decisions, that a statement be included. The Candidate may also provide summary abstracts of his or her publications for inclusion with these solicitations, as well as reprints or preprints. The Campus requires the Candidate to provide a self-review of his or her teaching activities that may include a statement of personal teaching philosophy, but not a self-evaluation of teaching competence. This statement will be included later in the eventual promotion dossier. (See Instructions for Preparing Promotion Papers in Communication #9.)

Confidentiality

Members of the Committee are obligated to maintain confidentiality concerning all aspects of an internal or external review, in particular, the evaluation letters, the identities of the evaluators, the discussions of the Committee, and the results of the votes. Individual committee members should not discuss a Candidate's P&T case directly with the Candidate. Any communications between the Candidate and the Committee, e.g with respect to clarifications or explanations needed by the Candidate in preparing documents for the individual Dossier, should be through the P&T Committee Chair, unless the P&T Committee specifically authorizes another member of the Committee or another person representing the Committee to communicate directly with the Candidate.

Also, Committee members should avoid discussions with any evaluator about a promotion case until it has been decided. In the rare situation in which there needs to be contact between the Committee and an evaluator while a promotion case is being decided, this should be done by the Committee Chair after consultation with the Committee, unless the P&T Committee specifically authorizes another member of the Committee or another person representing the Committee to communicate directly with the evaluator.

Communications

Committee members may communicate with each other and with the Committee as a whole by email. Minor organizational decisions may be made via email communications. More substantive decisions (e.g. choice of letter writers) may be made via email if necessary. All decisions requiring secret ballots must be made by the Committee during its regular face to face meetings.

Conducting Meetings

To a limited extent, Committee members may participate in meetings via phone or electronic link. When this is the case, if a secret vote is to be taken, the Committee member not on site will either not participate in the vote, or a method will be devised for that Committee member to vote by a method consistent with the intent of secret balloting. Committee members cannot give another member their proxy to vote for them.

The previous rule will not apply if face-to-face activities on Campus are suspended. During such periods, the Committee may hold electronic meetings, including taking secret votes, as long as the confidentiality of the meetings and of secret balloting is ensured.

Recommendation

After the letters from the evaluators have arrived and there has been ample time for deliberation and discussion, the Committee must vote whether to recommend that the Candidate be promoted or promoted with tenure. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot. The Committee shall vote on the appropriate form of the following proposition:

“The Promotion and Tenure Committee recommends that [name of Candidate] be promoted to the rank of [Associate] Professor [with tenure].”

It is required that the result of this vote be recorded in the promotion dossier, if one is prepared. The Committee shall immediately inform the Chair of the Department, in writing, of the result of the vote.

If the case is forwarded by the Chair of the Department to the College, then the Chair of the Committee shall prepare the promotion dossier in a form suitable for transmission to the College by the Chair of the Department. The promotion dossier shall be presented for approval to the Committee, apart from the required section entitled Special Comments by the Unit Executive Officer. The descriptive material in the promotion dossier shall be reviewed by the Candidate for accuracy if it was written by the Chair of the Committee, and by the Chair of the Committee if it was written by the Candidate.

If promotion and tenure are not recommended and the Candidate is an assistant professor in the sixth year of the probationary period, then normally the Chair of the Department will notify the Candidate that he or she will receive a notice of nonreappointment. The document *Guidelines and Procedures for Notice of Nonreappointment for Nontenured Faculty Members* (Provost’s Communication #10) spells out the procedures to be followed.

Subsequent events at higher levels

All promotion and tenure cases are reviewed by the Executive Committee of the College before the middle of December. A formal vote is taken by secret ballot on each case. The Dean formulates his or her recommendation to the Provost on the basis of the vote and debate within the Executive Committee. By the end of December, all units will receive notice from the Dean on actions in the College. The Chair of the Department is encouraged to pass along notice of the action to the Candidate, together with a clear indication that further review at the campus level is required. The review at Campus level is done in the Spring semester and is normally not completed until late April. When the Provost notifies the College of his/her decision, the Dean will in turn notify the Chair of the Department. Final action by the Board of Trustees comes in mid-summer.

Nonreappointment

The Committee may be requested by the Chair and the EC to consider a question of the possible issuance of a letter of nonreappointment to a faculty member. The Committee shall then appoint a research subcommittee and a teaching subcommittee for the faculty member in question, hear them and receive their reports. The Committee shall discuss the case and vote by secret ballot on whether it shall formulate a recommendation regarding nonreappointment to the Chair and the EC. For a positive decision, there must be strictly more yes-votes than no-votes. If the Committee does not decide to formulate a recommendation to the Chair and the EC, the matter is closed. If the Committee decides to formulate a recommendation to the Chair and the EC, the Committee shall discuss, as long as necessary, what the recommendation should be, and shall then vote on it by secret ballot. Regardless of the outcome of the vote, the Committee shall forward the reports of the research and teaching subcommittees to the Chair and the EC for their information.

Appeals to this Committee

Any member of the department who feels that he or she has been treated unfairly in a matter of promotion or tenure may appeal, through the Chair of the Committee, requesting that the Committee reconsider its recommendation.

Hiring with tenure

When hiring a new faculty member at the rank of Professor or Associate Professor, with tenure or without tenure (“Q” appointment), the procedures to be followed should mirror as closely as possible those detailed above for current faculty members who have been proposed for promotion. The Committee shall reach its decision in each case by secret ballot. The Committee shall vote on the appropriate form of the following proposition:

“The Promotion and Tenure Committee finds that [name of Candidate] is eminently qualified to be [Associate] Professor [with tenure] in this department.”

Report to the Chair of the Department and the Executive Committee

When all of the Committee’s decisions have been made and appropriate promotion dossiers have been sent to the College in final form, the Committee shall inform the Chair of the Department and the Executive Committee of its actions. A brief and general summary of the reasons for each decision may be communicated to the Executive Committee by the Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee. In doing so, it is essential that the identity of each external evaluator and the content of his or her evaluation letter shall not be revealed and that the interests of each Candidate be protected.

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