College of Science and Engineering

Expectations for Tenure, Promotion and Merit Increases

Each department in the College of Science and Engineering has developed a statement of criteria for tenure, promotion and merit increases that has been reviewed by the Dean, the College of Science and Engineering Advisory Committee, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the University Advisory Committee. While each one is intended to provide specific guidance to the faculty within a particular department, all are governed by a common set of college-wide expectations and by University policies and procedures.

Faculty and administrators who evaluate, make recommendations, and render judgments concerning the performance of their colleagues must consider a multiplicity of factors, establish weightings and priorities, and interpret the evidence using sound professional judgment. The key individual in this process is the department chairperson. This individual must certainly seek and consider input from various sources, with input from other faculty and the department advisory committee being a very important part of the process. Ultimately, however, it is the responsibility of the chairperson to make a recommendation and to communicate that recommendation to the Dean. The Dean depends on chairpersons for education and for help in making judgments concerning the quality of teaching, the quality and quantity of scholarship, and the extent and relevance of professional and service activities.

Criteria for Evaluating Faculty Performance

Each faculty member is evaluated in terms of achievement in the following areas of faculty activity:

1. Teaching
2. Scholarship
3. Service to the University, Profession, and Community
4. Student Advising
5. Professional Development

1. Teaching. The teaching of students, undergraduate and graduate, is a major function of Texas Christian University. For this reason, it is expected that all faculty will be knowledgeable, conscientious, and effective teachers throughout their careers at the University.

The evaluation of teaching performance is a difficult and complex task that should include evidence from a variety of sources, such as self-assessment, assessment by chairpersons and other faculty (which may involve classroom visits, interviews, and other forms of appraisal), and student perceptions of teaching, including written comments. The evaluation of teaching includes the rigor of a course for its level, the appropriate selection and use of teaching methods, fairness to and respect for students, and student learning outcomes.

2. Scholarship. Each faculty member is expected to be actively involved in scholarship or other creative activities appropriate to their discipline and assignment. Scholarship should be subject to professional peer review and should be a regular, on-going process. Peer review refers to evaluation and judgment of one’s scholarship by individuals with expertise in the same or related disciplines. One of the common forms of peer review is the evaluation by editors and/or their designates of manuscripts submitted for publication as articles in scholarly journals or as books or monographs.
A. **Publication and other expressions of scholarship.** Scholarship should be appropriate to the discipline. Scholarly work should be published as articles in recognized, refereed journals in the disciplines, as professional monographs, as contributions to other professionally directed publications which may include electronic journals, as chapters in books published by major firms or university presses, or as scholarly books published by such firms or presses. Publication in electronic journals is an acceptable means of presenting research findings, but such publications should be evaluated by the same criteria as print publications. Departments may identify additional expressions of scholarship and creativity, however, these creative activities must also be subjected to professional peer assessment.

B. **External grants and contracts.** Seeking external grants and contracts constitutes additional evidence of scholarship. Such support can pertain to teaching innovations and training grants as well as research. Faculty in all disciplines are encouraged to seek external support. Effort to obtain external support is a necessary condition for tenure and promotion.

C. **Pedagogical research.** Although not acceptable as the sole expression of scholarship, publications dealing with pedagogical issues are acceptable as a primary form of scholarship. A faculty member interested in research related to teaching methodologies and strategies should discuss these interests with the chairperson to get a sense of the department’s position.

D. **Editorial Work.** Serving as an editor of a scholarly anthology is not equivalent to publishing original research, but is nonetheless recognized as an important form of scholarship. Similarly, serving as a journal editor is not the same as publishing original research, but is a form of scholarship.

E. **Textbooks.** Preparation of textbooks may be recognized as a secondary form of scholarship, but authorship of a textbook is not the equivalent of publishing original research.

F. **Presentation of papers.** Faculty are encouraged to present papers at meetings of international, national, or regional professional associations. However, presentation of papers at professional meetings will not be considered the equivalent of refereed publications and will not suffice as the sole expression of scholarly activity. Papers presented at meetings are occasionally published in a proceedings format. In general, papers published in proceedings are not considered the equivalent of papers that appear in regularly published refereed journals. In certain disciplines, however, such as computer science and engineering, conference proceedings are often the preferred outlet for presentation of research findings. Chairpersons should call attention to any presented papers or proceedings publications that in their judgment are particularly meritorious or noteworthy and/or that have been subjected to rigorous peer review.

G. **Book reviews.** Some faculty have the opportunity to write book reviews for newspapers and professional publications. These activities are of service to the public and the profession and may indicate that the faculty member has achieved local, regional, or national standing in the discipline. Such activities, however, are not the equivalent of publishing original research. Chairpersons should call attention to any reviews that are particularly meritorious or noteworthy.
H. **Multiple authorship.** Multiple authorship is common in many disciplines. The order of the authors’ names often does not accurately reflect relative contributions. When evaluating an individual faculty member, a chairperson should ascertain that individual’s relative contribution to the multiply-authored work and include that information in the evaluation.

I. **Minimum expectations.** For various reasons, it is difficult to specify rates or minimum numbers of publications and papers sufficient to meet Department, College, and University expectations. It is incumbent upon department chairpersons to assess quality and quantity of research records. The Chair in turn must provide guidance to the Dean and others who evaluate and act on recommendations. A variety of factors should be considered in evaluating research productivity, including, among others, the nature of the research activity, teaching and service load, and level of involvement in graduate activities. For example, it would not be unreasonable to expect greater research productivity from faculty in departments with relatively light teaching loads; also faculty from Ph.D. granting departments would in general be expected to show evidence of more scholarly productivity than faculty in departments without such graduate programming.

3. **Service.** Service to the profession, the institution, and the community is an important component of faculty responsibility. Service activities are to be encouraged and should be acknowledged and rewarded, but service ranks below teaching and scholarship in a hierarchical ranking of criteria. Non-tenured faculty, in particular, should seek counsel from their chairpersons concerning appropriate levels of service involvement. Like all faculty, they should be involved, but it is important that service activities not hinder their development as effective teachers and productive scholars.

All faculty are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the statement of professional ethics in the current *Handbook for Faculty and Staff*.

4. **Student advising.** Advising is an important, time-consuming activity. While not all faculty have advising assignments, chairpersons are encouraged to note the advising activities of the faculty in their departments, and to insure that good advising is acknowledged and rewarded.

5. **Professional development.** Faculty members are expected to keep themselves abreast of new and relevant professional knowledge, skills, and developments. They should actively pursue programs of study and self-development related to their principal subjects of instruction and professional interests and competencies. Departments with strong professional orientation may elect to place special emphasis on continued involvement in professional activities. The measurable manifestation of continued professional development should be improved teaching and/or research performance.

**Ethical Conduct**

Faculty members are expected to adhere to the ethical conduct code adopted by the TCU Faculty Senate as well as the professional ethics codes of their disciplines.

**Weighting of Criteria**

It is neither possible nor desirable to establish absolute, quantitative weightings for all the various categories of faculty activity. Teaching and research, however, will always be given greater emphasis than service and other activities, but the relative weightings of teaching and research may
vary slightly depending on circumstances. Faculty should refer to their department’s statement for more specific guidance.

1. **Tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.** In most instances teaching performance should receive slightly greater emphasis when decisions pertaining to tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are made. There obviously must be a record of scholarship that meets acceptable standards of quality and quantity, but tenure and promotion strongly rests on evidence that the individual being evaluated has been and will continue to be an effective teacher. Ph.D. granting departments and those with a strong research emphasis may choose to give equal weighting to teaching and research, but in no case should teaching be considered less important than research.

In the case of an extraordinary experience or event beyond the individual’s control that affects a non-tenured faculty member’s professional performance, the faculty member may request an extension of the probationary period. Such request should be timely, but no later than one year after the event of consequence. In making request for an extension of the probationary period, the faculty member relinquishes any and all claims to *de facto* tenure. A faculty member may address such a request directly to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs or to the Dean or Chairperson who will forward the request to the Vice-Chancellor for decision. Prior to rendering a decision, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs will consult with the Dean.

2. **Promotion to Professor.** Although the degree of emphasis may vary among departments, the record of scholarship, in general, is the major factor influencing decisions on promotion to Professor. The overall research record is important, with particular attention being paid to the record since tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Evidence of on-going success in scholarship is necessary, and there should be evidence of national-level visibility within the discipline. In regard to the latter, it is appropriate for a chairperson to solicit peer review by individuals external to the university. Continuing effort to obtain external research support is a necessary condition for promotion.

Faculty holding the rank of Professor should serve as multi-dimensional role models for their colleagues. It is assumed that faculty nominated for promotion will have continued to develop as effective teachers and will have continued to contribute in the service area.

3. **Tenure and Promotion timetable and procedures.** These are specified by the Provost’s Office and are updated annually.

4. **External Letters for tenure and promotion.** TCU mandates external letters be used for tenure and promotion considerations. The College’s protocol is as follows:

   a. **Selection of potential reviewers:** Each department can establish a specific selection protocol that conforms to the following:
      - The Chair compiles a list of five to seven potential reviewers by consulting with the candidate and with members of the departmental Advisory Committee. The objective is to have at least two external letters. The list of potential Reviewers can include graduate or post-doctoral advisors as determined by individual departments. It is acceptable for the candidate to recommend collaborators as potential reviewers but the majority of recommended reviewers should be non-collaborators. Collaborators are defined as coauthors on publications within the past 60 months or co-investigators on pending or funded grant proposals. It is the candidate’s prerogative and obligation to point out external referees whom he or she believes might be biased or unfair.

   b. **Protocol and Logistics:**
      - In April prior to the academic year in which the tenure decision is made, each of the five to seven potential Reviewers should be contacted in order to ascertain whether
they would be able to provide an evaluation of the candidate. At the discretion of the department, they will be provided with a short (e.g., two-page) biographical sketch of the candidate that outlines teaching, research and service responsibilities and accomplishments. The Reviewers will also be provided with a letter succinctly outlining the expectations of the department for tenure and promotion and the criteria by which candidates will be evaluated.

- Chairs are encouraged to send follow up emails to potential Reviewers who have not responded to the initial email before June 1.
- In mid-July, the Reviewers who agreed to provide a letter will be provided with a complete curriculum vita, and any other materials the candidate feels should be used in their evaluation. The potential reviewers will also be provided with the departmental and college Tenure and Promotion Policies. Reviewers will be instructed to evaluate the candidate in the context of the teaching, research, and service expectations of faculty of Texas Christian University. A September 1 due date will be given.

5. **Merit evaluations.** The criteria and processes used for developing tenure and promotion recommendations should also be applied to annual merit evaluations. Faculty with notable achievement in all areas of faculty activity should be recommended for the highest relative increases. Individuals with notable achievement in either teaching or research and satisfactory achievement in the other areas should be ranked below the top echelon. Faculty who have delivered an overall satisfactory performance should be recommended for average or near-average increases, and faculty with limited achievement in one or more areas (no publications or on-going research activity, for example) should receive lesser increases (or, in some instances, no increase). In addition to consideration of faculty achievement, the Dean and Chairperson occasionally must also consider additional factors such as departmental salary structure and equity issues as they develop salary recommendations.

6. **Expectations for tenured faculty.** Each department has established expectations for tenured faculty and procedures for conducting periodic evaluations of tenured faculty. Expectations for tenured faculty do not differ appreciably from those for non-tenured faculty. The primary functions of this process are to encourage faculty to establish goals consistent with departmental needs and objectives and to develop specific plans to increase professional effectiveness, as appropriate.