DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY STATEMENT ON CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE

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.

In addition to the University criteria for appointment, reappointment, and promotion outlined in the Faculty Handbook the Department of Physics and Astronomy has approved the following statement to indicate specific ways in which a faculty member is to be evaluated in determining, whether the criteria have been met. This statement defines specific criteria, which are particularly suitable for the physics/astronomy profession and a physics/astronomy department offering a Ph.D. program.

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 Department Chair who will forward such request to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs for decision. Prior to rendering a decision, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs will consult with the Academic Dean.

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

A. Teaching

The teaching of physics and astronomy involves a variety of techniques including, lecture, problem solving, laboratory, demonstration, research, and directed study. A teacher should function effectively in each mode, consistent with the standards and requirements of the particular course and the preparation and level of the students. In evaluating teaching performance, attention is given to evidence of ability in each mode, although it is recognized that some instructors may necessarily have focused on one mode over another because of their teaching assignments and interests.

In considering a recommendation for tenure, attention is given to student review and peer review as appropriate. Elements of effective teaching which can objectively be evaluated include, but are not necessarily limited to, such items as: preparation of course syllabus, selection of text and other materials, use of visual aids, course administration, dealing with student problems in the course, fairness in testing and grading procedure, and sensitivity to student needs. Evidence of successful direction of dissertation research is expected.
B. Scholarship

In physics and astronomy, the primary method of demonstrating scholarship is publication in the appropriate journal, since this results in the most scrupulous and careful review. Scholarship is generally taken to be synonymous with research at the Ph.D. level in physics and/or astronomy. Books may be considered. Although not a substitute for basic research, publications concerning the pedagogy of physics/astronomy may also be considered.

In evaluating scholarship, primary attention is given to the quality of the research. While specification of an expected rate of publication is not desirable because of the variety of research areas and differing standards of what is considered an acceptable record of publication, evidence of a continuing, active research program is necessary.

In considering publication where multiple authorship is involved, it is usual to assume that each author made a significant contribution to the work. In physics and astronomy multiple authorship is the rule rather than the exception. Authors are often listed alphabetically, or if it is a joint publication of a student or postdoctoral fellow with the research director, the student or fellow's names are often listed first even when the director initiates the project and is responsible for some of the most important findings. When evaluating an individual faculty member, the chair should ascertain that individual's relative contribution to the work with multiple authors.

The journals in which papers are published are an important consideration. In physics or astronomy there are no significant local or regional journals. Generally no distinction is made between national and international, or U. S. and foreign published journals. Journals also have varying procedures for refereeing, and where evidence that a journal is more restrictively refereed can be presented, it may be used in evaluating the relative quality of publications. Usually there are several journals available for publication for any research field, However, publication of research predominantly or even exclusively in one journal does not imply any favored relationship with an editor or that publication in that journal is any easier, and is an accepted practice in physics or astronomy. In fact, it is not unusual for the focus for discussions in certain research areas to be restricted to one or two journals. Citations of research may be presented as evidence of the significance or impact of the research. The submission of a proposal to the National Science Foundation or the equivalent is generally considered the equal of a refereed publication.

A second indicator of scholarship is presentation of scholarly research papers at regional, national, and international meetings. Regular presentation is encouraged. Joint authorship of papers presented by students is common in physics and astronomy and is generally given equal weight with papers personally presented. Invited papers and refereed papers presented at meetings as well as papers published in conference proceedings are generally more significant than contributed papers at meetings.

Faculty are expected to seek both internal and extramural funding for research on a continuing basis. While it is not appropriate to specify a specific number of proposals that a faculty member should write since that would depend of the nature and progress of the research, the average expectation for the department is the submission of two extramural proposals per year.

C. Service
In evaluating service, activities such as but not limited to the following may be considered: public lecture; research seminars; participation in the Honors program; MLA program or continuing education programs; university and college committee service and committee chairmanships, faculty senate and related committee work; departmental committee assignments; admissions activity and graduate and undergraduate recruiting activity; professional society membership and participation including offices held; chairing sections at professional meetings; working with precollege teachers, judging science fairs, conducting tours for students; meeting with the press on science issues of public interest; popular articles on physics or astronomy; serving as a journal referee; book reviews.

D. Academic Advising/Counseling

All faculty are expected to advise and counsel undergraduate or graduate students; this includes graduate students whose research the faculty are supervising.

E. Continued Professional Development

Faculty members are expected to remain current in professional knowledge, skills, and developments within their disciplines and fields of specialization. They should actively pursue programs of study and self-development related to their principle subjects of instruction and research and should continue to cultivate their interests and professional competency.
Criteria for Promotion to the Rank of Professor

A candidate for the rank of professor is expected to have met at a very high level the criteria for teaching, scholarship, service, advising /counseling, and professional development as specified in sections A, B, C, D, and E. Although emphasis at that rank is placed on the record of scholarly research, it is expected that, within the goals of TCU as a liberal arts university, a candidate for full professorship continues to demonstrate proficiency in teaching at all levels, exhibits a concern for the development and maintenance of quality and the encouragement of excellence in the physics and astronomy curriculum to the Ph.D. level, and evinces an interest in the general concerns of higher education, particularly in the education of a scientifically literate citizenry.

A candidate for full professor is expected to have a record of scholarly research in his or her area or areas of specialization, which is recognized by other researchers in the scientific community to be of high quality and making significant contributions to the field. Evidence should take the form of written evaluations or comments by other researchers, invited and contributed presentations at national and international meetings, contributed and invited publications in international journals or books, service as referee or editor for international journals and scientific publications, or other accomplishments, awards, or appointments which signify the candidate's stature as a researcher in the scientific community. In this context "international" refers to meetings, whether or not specifically designated, which have substantial participation by scientists from outside the U. S., or journals to which both U. S. and foreign scientists regularly contribute. As indicated in Section B, the Department expects faculty of all ranks to seek external funds in support of their research on a continuing basis; thus evidence for continued activity in the writing of grant proposals is expected of candidates for the rank of professor.
Department of Physics and Astronomy
Procedure of a Three year Review of Tenured Faculty
(Criteria for Evaluation are Specified Above)

Purpose

The goals, purposes, policies and programs within the Department of Physics and Astronomy are strongly dependant on the abilities and contributions of the individual faculty members whose interests and expertise are continually evolving. This implies that a periodic assessment of individual faculty members is necessary. The assessment is conducted on a rotating schedule and provides a review of each tenured member of the department every three years.

The chief function of the periodic review is to coordinate the projected needs of the department with the interests and expertise of the individual faculty members. The three-year assessment differs from annual merit reviews in its focus on department planning. This assessment procedure allows the department chair to discuss with each tenured faculty member the faculty member's strengths and contributions within the department's programs and how the faculty member will be able to contribute to the department's projected goals. This periodic review of tenured faculty does not effect the status of permanent tenure, and only faculty members with tenure are included in this assessment.

Procedure

1. The department chair will designate approximately one-third of the tenured faculty to be evaluated during the spring semester of each academic year. Each tenured faculty member will be evaluated at least once during three-year academic years.

2. The evaluation will address five areas: a) teaching, b) research, c) service, d) advising, and e) professional development. Criteria for each area of evaluation will be consistent with department's document on tenure and promotion.

3. The "professional development" section of the evaluation will a) assess professional development over the previous three years, and b) include a component that describes future performance expectations.

4. After a meeting with the faculty member to be evaluated, the evaluation will be conducted and written by the department chair in consultation with the departmental advisory committee (minus the faculty being considered if that faculty member is on this committee).

5. The faculty member who is evaluated will receive a copy of the evaluation.

6. Faculty members who accept the evaluation will simply acknowledge having received a copy of the evaluation. Faculty members who disagree with the evaluation will submit a proposed revision of the evaluation to the chair.

7. If the chair with the advisory committee's approval accepts the faculty member's proposed revision, the revised evaluation will become the official evaluation of record.

8. If the faculty member's proposed revision is not accepted, the department advisory committee will
decide on the final wording of the final evaluation.

9. When it is the department chair's turn to be evaluated, the department advisory committee will conduct and write the evaluation. As part of evaluating the department chair, the advisory committee will consider both the chair's record as a faculty member and the chair's performance as department chair. The department chair, like any other faculty member, may suggest revisions to the evaluation to the advisory committee. The committee will consider the proposed evaluation and decide on the final wording of the evaluation.