



Departmental Criteria for Tenure

Last updated: 5/2/2015

Overview

The following descriptions are general requirements for a “typical” candidate. However, the needs of the department and the strengths of the individual are more important than any specific guidelines. It is the spirit of this document that matters, and that spirit is to have faculty who will meet the needs of our students in their quest for the best higher education that the State of Tennessee can provide, faculty who will through their service meet the needs of the university, and faculty who through their research, scholarly and creative activities will advance the disciplines of mathematics and statistics.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics’ guidelines for the evaluation of faculty for tenure are based on each individual’s Faculty Activity Report (FAR) data and the percentage of effort in the Faculty Workload (as determined by the Chair) during the years prior to the personnel action. These criteria may vary from individual to individual. For example, if a faculty member and the Chair have agreed that 22.5% of his/her time should be devoted to research (Note: this corresponds to 18 credits of teaching per year), then the research factor in the evaluation should count 22.5%. In this case, the evaluation of the quantity and quality of research will reflect the percentage allocated to the research component. Using this scheme it is possible for a faculty member with less research than another to be evaluated higher in the research component. For example, if a person whose research component was 22.5% published one paper in a peer-reviewed journal, submitted a paper in a peer-reviewed journal, and gave an invited talk at a conference during a year, he/she could get an “excellent” research rating, whereas someone with 45% indicated for research might only get a “very good” for the same results. In addition, the Faculty Workload documents, FAR documents and Mid-tenure review should be taken into consideration when evaluating the candidate.

In all cases, the criteria of “staffing needs of the department or institution” and “ability to work effectively with colleagues” are applied as preliminary filters. In this sense, if the granting of tenure to an individual is detrimental to the future of the department or university, then regardless of the performance of the individual, it is doubtful that the department would support such an action. Because a certain amount of cooperation within the department is necessary, collegiality is a requirement.

All candidates for tenure must meet approved departmental, college, and university criteria for achievement in each of the three areas of teaching; research, scholarly and creative activities; and service.

Candidates may present evidence of continuing professional development. Much of that evidence will be submitted in the sections on teaching, service, research, and scholarly and creative activity as indicated above. Additional evidence related to professional growth may include courses taken for credit, courses audited, seminars attended, and independent study activities. The candidate may present evidence, in the FAR, of contributions to institutional as well as to individually established goals in teaching, service, research, scholarly and creative activities.

The department looks favorably on candidates that are active and successful in supervising undergraduate and graduate research. Moreover, efforts by faculty members targeting student research, retention, graduation, under-represented minority participation, and student professional development are considered as valuable assets for tenure.

Teaching

Teaching is a fundamental activity for a faculty member at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). To apply for tenure, the faculty member is required to submit an application demonstrating that they are an effective teacher. Evaluation of instruction shall be based on the following criteria. Deficiencies in some criteria may be counterbalanced by superiority in others.

- No consistent concern based on student comments.
- Positive and supportive peer evaluations through class visits.
- Positive and supportive comments from knowledgeable students.
- How the candidate has improved teaching based on comments from peer evaluations.
- Command of subject matter.
- Ability to organize and present subject matter in a logical and meaningful way.
- Ability to motivate students.
- Curriculum and/or program development.
- Development of instructional techniques or teaching methods, including development of on-line teaching methods and/or courses.
- Mentoring of undergraduate, graduate or post-graduate students:
 - promote student research, scholarship, and creative activities.
 - successful direction in thesis or independent research projects.
 - effective research leadership of research projects intended in part to train students in research techniques.
- Books/published material in the area of teaching.
- Honors or other recognition for contributions to teaching.
- Considerations should include total number of preparations per semester, the number of courses per academic year, level of difficulty of the courses, the number of students assigned to the classes, and time and location of courses.

Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities

Research is an essential requirement for tenure, except in the rare case where a faculty member has been hired with the understanding that their primary responsibility is teaching. Typically, publication in peer-reviewed journals is the best evidence of research. However, any of the following should be given credit:

- Publications: textbooks, books or chapters in books, articles in refereed journals, articles in non-refereed journals, monographs, refereed and non-refereed conference proceedings, book reviews, and other related items. Self-published books are given credit pending on review letters of experts on the field (evaluating the relevance and contribution of such books). However, books under contract with a publishing company and articles in refereed journals, reviewed by recognized scholars, are looked upon more favorably than those that are not subjected to such rigorous examination.
- The Department of Mathematics and Statistics looks more favorably on publications in

high quality journals than those without such high standards.

- Development of open-source materials (e.g. software, books, manuals, tutorials, etc.).
- Ownership of patents, trademark, servicemark, or copyright.
- Actively presenting work at professional conferences. Invited talks (especially plenary or keynote addresses) are looked upon more favorably than other talks.
- Ongoing research as evidenced by submitted papers and papers in preparation.
- Active writing and submission of grant proposals. The Department of Mathematics and Statistics looks more favorably on funded grants.
- Review by outside experts may also be used.
- Honors or other recognition for contributions to research.

Service

Service is necessary for the department, university, and the profession to run smoothly. This being the case, evidence of service at least at the departmental level (including but not limited to formal or informal advisement of students) is expected. In addition, college or university service is strongly encouraged. Service to the discipline will also be recognized.