

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS  
CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND TENURE

Revised February 26, 2018

Effective Academic Year 2021-2022

## CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION AND/OR TENURE

### I. The Sciences and Mathematics College PRT Committee

- A. Mission: The mission of Arkansas State University is to educate leaders, enhance intellectual growth and enrich lives. This committee will encourage equivalence of promotion, retention, and tenure criteria of all departments within the college by collecting, reviewing, and suggesting changes in departmental promotion, retention, and tenure documents. Each department should strive to formulate criteria and standards that are as specific as possible to accommodate the different disciplines.
- B. Process: After applications for promotion and tenure have been considered by the departmental committees and chairs, the College Promotion, Retention, and Tenure Committee will review them. The applications and the recommendations of this committee will then be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics. These reviews and recommendations will be completed according to the calendar issued each year by the University Promotion, Retention, and Tenure Committee.
- C. Composition: The College will maintain a standing committee on promotion, retention, and tenure with eight members. Each of the four departments within the college will elect two representatives to serve on the committee. The Dean of the College may serve on the committee as a nonvoting member.
- D. Officers: The Chair of the Committee will be elected at the end of the academic year from among the members of the college committee. The Chair will represent the College on the University PRT Committee.

### II. General Guidelines

- A. Terminal Degree:
  - 1. For tenure or promotion to Assistant Professor, an earned doctorate is the terminal degree; the earned doctorate appropriate to the college, department, and assignment is usually required. The requirement for possession of the terminal degree for tenure or promotion may be waived in the exceptional instances when a faculty member has had employment and performance experiences that constitute a generally accepted substitute for the terminal degree. In these few instances, the academic department must establish criteria, subject to approval of the Dean of the college and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, for the substitution of appropriate experiences. The department must also document that it is a widely used and respected academic practice to accept the kind of substitution being requested. For promotion to higher ranks without a doctorate degree, a record of effective teaching and excellent research must also be demonstrated.
  - 2. Faculty at the instructor ranks who are currently in a tenure-track position and who complete requirements for the terminal degree should provide their department chair with evidence of completion. In this case, it is not necessary to apply for promotion. Upon

favorable recommendations by the Chair and Dean and approval by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor will be granted, effective immediately.

B. Time in Rank:

1. Except in unusual cases, the full six-year period in a pre-tenure status is needed to conduct an adequate review. In referring to a “year,” it is the policy of the university that a full semester of service under a pre-tenure status contract which begins on or before the first day of the spring semester in an academic year counts as a full year.
2. When warranted by exemplary productivity, any faculty member has the right to submit an application seeking tenure during any application period in which he/she exceeds the performance criteria expected during the mandatory tenure review. If a faculty member fails to earn tenure in this accelerated review cycle, he/she may apply for tenure again only in the sixth year of the pre-tenure cycle.
3. Promotion to Associate Professor will be awarded only after four years as Assistant Professor except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the discipline.
4. Promotion to Full Professor will be awarded only after six years as Associate Professor except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the discipline.

C. Criteria Used for Promotion and Tenure Evaluation:

Pre-tenure faculty will be evaluated for tenure and promotion based on the department, college, and university criteria in place during their third year of employment on a pre-tenure appointment. Faculty going up for promotion to Full Professor will be evaluated by the PRT documents in place at the beginning of the academic year of their application.

D. Negotiation of Tenure and Rank with Initial Appointment:

A prospective faculty member may negotiate the terms of initial employment with regard to tenure status and academic rank based on the professional productivity earned in previous employment settings. Any such terms must be approved by the Dean of the college and the chancellor of the university and based on the thorough review and positive recommendations of the departmental PRT committee within the academic unit in which tenure and rank will be held. Documentation of negotiated terms authorizing application for early tenure and/or promotion must be included with the PRT application. No obligation to grant tenure is implied by such an agreement.

III. Third-Year Pre-tenure Review:

The College Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee will not typically perform a pre-tenure review for faculty during their third year of employment on a pre-tenure appointment. However, at the discretion of the department in which the faculty member belongs, the College PRT Committee may meet to discuss the progress of a faculty member towards tenure and promotion.

At that time, the College PRT Committee will provide a written evaluation of the faculty member to assist that individual in meeting the requirements of tenure and promotion. This evaluation will be provided to the faculty member and included within the file of the Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics.

#### IV. Philosophical Framework and the Path to Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

It is the practice of Arkansas State University to identify and hire faculty with the potential and promise to achieve tenure and the rank of Associate Professor. While the processes of promotion to Associate Professor and tenure are not absolutely linked, it is the norm of the College that criteria for each overlap. What are the best practices and strategies to aid faculty members along this promotional path? What does it mean to be an Associate Professor? The purpose of this section is to provide faculty in the College of Sciences and Mathematics a guideline, best practices and strategy, for achieving tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

The core pillars of an academic institution of higher education are research, teaching and service. Each pillar is uniquely intertwined to serve the mission of the university as the institution serves to advance knowledge at the local, national and international levels. Tenure and promotion to Associate Professor criteria involve performance in these three areas. Candidates are expected to contribute to all three areas in order to receive a positive recommendation at the college level.

Faculty will be evaluated relative to the percentage assignment in each of these areas annually. Tenure track faculty in the College of Sciences and Mathematics can negotiate duties and criteria to be used for the evaluation for PRT purposes at the time of hire with the Dean, the Chair of the Department, and when appropriate, the Director of ABI. These negotiated terms must be approved by and signed by the Chancellor and maintained for PRT purposes. Candidates will be evaluated only on professional activities performed since his/her hire or last promotion if hired as an instructor. Faculty members in the College of Sciences and Mathematics can hold either a majority teaching appointment or a majority research appointment, as indicated by the candidate's contract, and be expected to meet the following criteria to achieve tenure and promotion.

##### A. Expectations for Research:

The College Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee recognizes the importance of scholarly activity and will assess applicants based on documented evidence of the production of a body of scholarly works (grants, publications, patents, contracts, and presentations). Specific criteria for each of the above is to be determined by each of the departmental PRT committees. A faculty member applying for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor must demonstrate he/she is an effective researcher. The concept of "*peer review*" is central to maintaining the integrity of that knowledge base. Thus, the College of Sciences and Mathematics will always insist upon rigorous peer review at the national or international levels when promotion and tenure decisions are being considered. In general, abstracts do not meet this standard. Specific requirements for promotion and tenure for majority teaching faculty will be evaluated following the criteria provided in the PRT document of the candidate's respective department. As each discipline within the College varies considerably in terms of accepted scholarly measures (such as peer-reviewed publications, number of

grants and amount of extramural funding secured, etc) deemed as productive, individual candidates will be evaluated based on professional expectations within their appropriate sub-discipline. Mentoring of graduate and/or undergraduate students is part of that evaluation process.

Faculty members holding majority research appointments will generally be expected to publish a minimum of one refereed publication in a national or international journal on average per year, direct graduate students and serve on graduate student committees (if applicable), and provide evidence of involvement in extramural, nationally competitive grantsmanship in research.

Since the fruits of research and creative activities within the College of Sciences and Mathematics vary, each PRT candidate is responsible for presenting a documented record of research or creative activity consistent with their DPRT written criteria and standards. As the College Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee places greater emphasis upon the quality of research/creative activities, the candidate should indicate in their application for tenure or promotion to Associate Professor, the publication(s) that represent the highest quality from the candidate's body of work (Candidates are expected to provide copies of all publications.).

B. Expectations for Teaching:

The College Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee recognizes the importance of teaching and will assess applicants based on documented evidence of effective teaching. Associate Professors and tenured faculty have demonstrated that they are effective teachers. Teaching quality in the classroom can be demonstrated in several ways such as peer review, course evaluations, and assessment measures such as pre- and post-test scores. Supporting materials such as new course proposals and other relevant materials may be considered. Evidence of teaching effectiveness will be evaluated relative to the assigned course load (minimum of one course per year for faculty members holding majority research appointments).

C. Expectations for Service:

The College Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee emphasizes quality in service and places greater weight on effective participation in, peer election to, and leadership of important service activities. A faculty member applying for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor must demonstrate he/she is contributing in service activities that may include: student advisement; active university, college and departmental committee work; professional work within the discipline and the community; and other activities that enhance the image of the department and the college within the university, state and professional communities that it serves. Faculty members holding majority research appointments will be evaluated based upon a mutually agreed service load as negotiated between the college and the research centers.

D. The Career Associate:

Some Associate Professors may not pursue promotion to Full Professor for a number of reasons. Choosing to remain an Associate Professor teacher-scholar or pursue an administrative career can be fulfilling and the College of Sciences and Mathematics respects such individuals and benefits from their contributions. Nevertheless, faculty who choose to

remain Associate Professors must maintain quality instruction and serve as a mentor for junior faculty in addition to undergraduate and graduate students. Such scholar-teachers provide a critical role in the university setting and are highly valued in that setting.

#### V. Philosophical Framework and the Path to Promotion to Full Professor

It is the practice of Arkansas State University to identify and hire faculty with the potential and promise to one day achieve the rank of Full Professor. What are the best practices and strategies to aid faculty members along this promotional path? What does it mean to be a Full Professor? The purpose of this section is to provide faculty in the College of Sciences and Mathematics a guideline, best practices and strategy, for achieving promotion to Full Professor.

Full Professors impact their community in all three pillars that define the university: research, teaching and service. As researchers, Full Professors regularly contribute to the advancement of their discipline. As teachers, Full Professors have the experience and versatility to make themselves invaluable to the academic community. Not only do they contribute to the teaching mission of the department by way of providing academic depth and breadth, they demonstrate innovation in the classroom and provide guidance for junior colleagues. As for service, a Full Professor is a leader both within the institution and in their field. Thus leadership could take many forms including external roles in professional societies and internal roles in university administration.

#### A. Expectations for Research:

Scholarly research can be manifested quite differently across the college. Each discipline and department is unique as to how significant research is defined. Ultimately, Full Professors are contributing to the growth of their discipline. Here are some additional general guidelines to consider when developing an action plan for promotion:

- Full Professors recognize the importance of grantsmanship to accomplish research goals. It is understood that grant opportunities and availability are highly variable among disciplines. The Full Professor must ultimately be adaptive to the financial constraints of the institution yet outward thinking in establishing collaborations to offset those internal constraints.
- Full Professors recognize the importance of disseminating information to their peers. Dissemination of that information may occur through presentations and publications, with the greatest impact occurring at the national and international levels. Projects that are never published have minimal impact on the scientific community. Notes, letters, articles and other original contributions need be peer reviewed at the most rigorous levels. In general, abstracts do not meet this standard.
- Full Professors recognize the importance of preparing the next generation of researchers, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Full Professors have significant experience directing undergraduate and/or graduate student projects.

- Full Professors recognize that research is becoming increasingly multi-disciplinary and collaborative. Participation in collaborative research is encouraged but the candidate should clarify their contributions to collaborative efforts in the application for tenure or promotion.

It must be reiterated that outstanding research alone is not sufficient to make a candidate viable for promotion to Full Professor.

B. Expectations for Teaching:

As a teaching/research institution, Arkansas State University has a strong commitment to the education of our students. Educational processes occur both within and outside of the formal classroom. A continuous high level of commitment to instruction is expected of all Full Professors. Guidelines and general strategies for Full Professor applicants in this category include:

- Full Professors are experienced teachers who substantively contribute to the teaching mission of the department. Effective teachers use the same energy and passion in the classroom as they do in their research setting. Courses taught should not be limited to specialty courses within a discipline but should show breadth within the department. In addition to traditional courses taught during the academic year, innovation can be demonstrated through the offerings of Special Topics courses and summer workshops for teachers.
- A Full Professor demonstrates quality instruction. This demonstration goes beyond simply providing course evaluations; evidence should also include demonstrating innovation in the classroom, and demonstrating the outcomes of teaching efforts. This should include peer evaluations of teaching effectiveness.
- A Full Professor tries to improve not just his/her own classroom instruction but the overall departmental curriculum. The Full Professor has a responsibility to look out for the greater departmental and institutional student product. In addition to mentoring students, Full Professors seek ways to mentor and improve the teaching of junior faculty.
- Full Professors are involved in pedagogical development within their disciplines. Outcomes of these pedagogical efforts may include the writing of textbooks or other instructional materials that contribute to the discipline, grants to improve the pedagogy of peers or GK-12 teachers, awards demonstrating outstanding teaching, the creation of new courses, the development of methods and materials to improve teaching effectiveness, and/or other noteworthy pedagogical activities.

The College of Sciences and Mathematics at Arkansas State University recognizes that some Full Professor candidates may choose to focus on pedagogical research more so than traditional research within their discipline. In such cases, the accomplishments will be evaluated using the same standards as those for traditional research credentials including

originality of the contribution, rigorous peer review and impact on a national or international level.

C. Expectations for Service:

Service is a vital component of the functioning of a university. Categories of service include external service at the regional, state and national levels to the discipline in which one participates; internal service should occur at all levels within the university (departmental, college and university). Roles within these units may include permanent and ad hoc committees, task forces, search committees, and administrative positions. Faculty applying for promotion to Full Professors must demonstrate that they contribute to the service responsibilities of the department, college, university and their discipline as a whole. Moreover, successful applicants must demonstrate both the capacity to serve and the ability to lead. Leadership in service activities is one of the key requirements for the Full Professor. As with the other pillars of academic life, no faculty member can get promoted to the rank of Full Professor for service alone, nor should a faculty member expect promotion to Full Professor without fulfilling important university service.

VI. Conclusions

Just as individual members of a unit are unique, so is the path towards becoming a Full Professor. The burden of proof in any application for promotion to Full Professor lies with the applicant. Associate Professors should talk to the department chair, the PRT chair and members of the PRT committee to better understand the expectations of a Full Professor. Applicants are well advised to give careful thought to their PRT document, particularly to the arguments outlining and demonstrating achievement in research, teaching and service. A negative promotion outcome may result from an incomplete application, the need to strengthen research depth, the need to demonstrate quality teaching, or the need for a greater contribution to the operations of the university.