

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY  
Department of Mathematics  
Promotion and Tenure Procedures and Criteria

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to specify procedures and criteria that will govern promotion and the awarding of tenure within the Department of Mathematics for official faculty applying for promotion and/or tenure after July 1, 2012. The guidelines set out in this document are intended to provide department-specific criteria and procedures consistent with those specified in the Boise State University tenure and promotion policies, namely, "Faculty Tenure Procedures" (BSU policy 4370, latest version Sept 1 2009) and "Faculty Promotion Guidelines" (BSU policy 4340, latest version July 23, 2008). These guidelines are also intended to be consistent with the COAS policy "College of Arts and Sciences Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor", July 2008. The Tenure Progress Review Committee is a personnel committee as defined in policy 4320, "Faculty Peer Review" (July 1, 1995).

PROCEDURES

**Annual Tenure Progress Review.** The annual tenure progress review of the Department's untenured faculty shall be carried out by a Tenure Progress Review Committee.

The composition and duration of the committee are now described.

**appointment:** The members of the Tenure Progress Review Committee will be appointed by the department chair. The chair may take into account the academic specialties of the untenured faculty members to be reviewed, with an eye to choosing those best qualified to evaluate their work.

**qualification:** The members of the Tenure Progress Review Committee shall be tenured members of the department.

**composition and duration:** The committee will usually have three members, appointed to three-year terms. One new member will be appointed each year at the beginning of the Fall semester. The longest-serving member of the committee will serve as chair of the committee.

**fourth member:** If there are enough untenured faculty members to be reviewed that an extra member of the committee is needed, the department chair may appoint an additional member. This will be done by appointing two members in the same year to serve the same three-year term. There will not be more than four members in the committee. If there are two longest-serving members of the committee, the department chair will select one of them as chair of the committee.

The charge of the Tenure Progress Review Committee is as follows:

- (1) To evaluate and review the progress of each untenured faculty member toward tenure in the areas of teaching, research, and service. The report on each candidate will state whether he or she is making satisfactory progress toward tenure in each of the three areas of teaching, research, and service, and whether he or she is making satisfactory progress toward tenure overall.

The review in the third year of service should be regarded as especially significant.

- (2) To request documentation from the untenured faculty for this purpose.
- (3) To invite input from other faculty in the department on the qualifications and progress of the untenured faculty members.
- (4) At the option of the committee, to solicit input from other people suggested by the untenured faculty member being reviewed in order to better evaluate his or her qualifications and progress. The committee shall **not** solicit evaluations of the candidate's publications by external reviewers.
- (5) The committee is to complete its evaluation process by reporting to the department chair by March 1 each year.

A concrete indication of the suggested schedule of activities for the Tenure Progress Review Committee each year follows:

**fall meeting:** The committee shall meet with the untenured faculty under review early in the fall semester to discuss procedures for classroom observations and requirements for submission of Tenure Portfolios. The department chair shall attend this meeting.

**observation of teaching:** Each member of the committee (or at least three members of the committee if there are four members) shall observe at least one class session taught by each untenured faculty member under review. Classroom visits shall be arranged in advance. After the visit, the observer shall discuss his or her observations with the observed. Either the observed or the observer is entitled to another visit on request.

**portfolio submission:** Each untenured faculty member under review shall make a Tenure Portfolio available to the committee by the first Monday after the first day of classes in the spring semester. This portfolio shall include any documents that would be required to be included in the eventual Tenure Application: this includes but is not restricted to a statement of date of eligibility for tenure, past evaluations of the faculty member by the department chair and the committee, a curriculum vita with description of publications, and numerical student evaluations. The department strongly recommends the inclusion of narrative components of student evaluations as well. The committee may require additional content (such as teaching portfolios); untenured faculty under review should be notified of any such requirements at the fall meeting. These portfolios shall be made accessible to all tenure-track faculty in the department.

**definition of punctual submission:** A Tenure Portfolio shall be deemed to have been submitted on time if it has been personally delivered to a member of the office staff or of the committee on or before the day it is due. The faculty member under review is entitled to a receipt documenting on-time submission if he or she requests it. This clause is designed to protect the faculty member under review, not the committee: it describes a sufficient condition, not a necessary one.

**later additions to portfolio:** The committee may request additional material from the untenured faculty member under review but is never required to do so. The committee may accept material submitted by the faculty member after the deadline for submission of portfolios, but is never required to do so.

**first spring meeting:** On or about January 20, the committee shall meet to discuss classroom observations and to assign the drafting of reports on untenured faculty members under review to individual committee members.

**second spring meeting:** On or about February 7, the committee shall meet to evaluate draft reports. Final versions of reports shall be written and submitted to the chair of the committee as soon as possible after this meeting.

**reports shown to reviewed faculty:** As soon as final versions are written and signed by the committee members, they are to be shared with the untenured faculty members under review. One week is allowed after this for the faculty member to apply in writing to the chair of the committee for a meeting with the committee to discuss the report and/or request revisions in the report. Each faculty member under review is entitled by university policy to one such meeting on request. A further week is allowed for the scheduling of such meetings and carrying out of any revisions which are agreed upon.

**letter of reply:** The candidate is permitted but not required to write a letter responding to the report of the Tenure Progress Review committee, which will be included in the candidate's tenure progress portfolio.

**submission to department chair:** The final version of the report of the Tenure Progress Review Committee on each untenured faculty member under review shall be signed by each member of the committee and by the faculty member (to acknowledge receipt), returned to the committee, and submitted by the committee to the department chair on or before March 1.

**continuing availability:** The Tenure Progress Review Committee shall be available for consultation with untenured faculty at other times during the academic year if this is requested.

**Departmental Tenure and Promotion Recommendation.** In each academic year during which a member of the department intends to apply for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, a Tenure Recommendation Committee shall be formed.

In each academic year during which a member of the department intends to apply for promotion to Professor, a Promotion Recommendation Committee shall be formed.

The procedure for selection of these committees is now described.

**composition:** A Tenure or Promotion Recommendation Committee shall consist of three tenured faculty members in the department. At least one member of a Promotion Recommendation Committee shall have the rank of full Professor; it is strongly recommended that all members of a Promotion Recommendation Committee have the rank of full Professor.

**election:** A Tenure or Promotion Recommendation Committee shall be elected by a vote of the tenured faculty members of the department at the beginning of the fall semester.

**common charge:** At the discretion of the department chair, a single committee may be elected as both Tenure and Promotion Recommendation Committee in a year in which there are candidates for tenure and promotion to both ranks. A committee serving both functions will have at least one member at the rank of full Professor, and it is strongly recommended that all its members be at this rank.

The responsibilities of these committees are now described.

**primary responsibility:** The prime responsibility of the Tenure or Promotion Committee shall be to write the departmental recommendation for each candidate who is applying for tenure (and promotion to Associate Professor) or for promotion to full Professor.

**receive and review applications:** The committee shall receive the Tenure or Promotion Application from each candidate, review each application and take it into account in the final report of the committee.

**definition of punctual submission:** A Tenure or Promotion Application shall be deemed to have been submitted on time if it has been personally delivered to a member of the office staff or of the committee on or before the day it is due. The applicant is entitled to a receipt documenting on-time submission if he or she requests it. This clause is designed for the protection of the candidate, not the committee: it describes a sufficient condition, not a necessary one.

**make applications available:** The committee shall make the Tenure or Promotion Application submitted by each candidate available for examination by tenured and untenured official faculty of the department.

**conduct advisory ballot:** The Tenure or Promotion Committee shall conduct an advisory vote by secret ballot of the tenured faculty in the department on the question of whether they support or reject the awarding of tenure and/or promotion to each candidate.

**number of questions:** The questions of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor for a candidate are to be separate questions on the ballot.

**opportunity for comment:** The ballot should solicit and provide space for additional written comments from members of the department on the merits of each candidate for tenure and/or promotion.

**contents of report:** The report of the committee to the department chair (a separate report for each candidate) shall summarize the results of the advisory vote of the department and summarize the additional written comments received (it is not necessary to include all written comments verbatim), and state the recommendation of the committee on each question before it. Additional relevant content might be included.

The primary responsibility of the candidate in this process is the submission of the Tenure or Promotion Application by September 15. The required contents of this application include:

**annual reports:** All annual reports of the department chair and the Tenure Progress Review Committee (in the case of candidates for tenure) shall be included in the application. In the case of applications for promotion to full Professor, only annual reports since the awarding of tenure are required.

**student evaluations:** Numerical student evaluations must be included in the application. Inclusion of narrative components of student evaluations is strongly recommended. In the case of applications for promotion to full Professor, only numerical evaluations since the awarding of tenure are required. Other evidence of teaching effectiveness may also be included.

**evidence of research activity:** Evidence of research activity, including but not necessarily restricted to a list of refereed publications, shall be included

in the application. An abstract of the required colloquium should be included in this section (see the last section of this document under research for a description of this requirement).

**list of reviewers:** Each candidate for tenure and/or promotion is required to provide a list of four reviewers knowledgeable in the candidate's research area. The department chair shall solicit letters from these reviewers about the candidate's research and include them in the candidate's folder. This list must be made available to the department chair by May 15th, along with a research portfolio, as described in the COAS policy document appendix C.

**evidence of service:** Evidence of service to the profession and to the institution shall be included in the application.

**external funding:** While not required, evidence of an active effort to seek external funding (for teaching, research, or service) is important for promotion to full Professor.

Candidates should consult the precise description of required components of the application and order of these components in the COAS policy and also consider any requests regarding format communicated from the Provost.

The timeline for this process is described.

**external reviewers:** By May 15, the candidate will supply the Department Chair with a list of four names and addresses of potential outside evaluators, and four copies of a research portfolio. For details of what is expected of the candidate and the chair under this point, see the COAS policy appendix C.

**application:** The applicant shall submit the Tenure or Promotion Application by September 15 (as noted above, the list of reviewers and research portfolio should be submitted to the department chair by May 15th). The committee may solicit additional content from the candidate (e.g., to amend the omission of required content), but is never required to do so, and the committee may accept additional submissions from the candidate after the deadline but is never obliged to do so.

**solicitation of letters:** The department chair shall solicit letters from reviewers about the candidate's research as soon as the list of reviewers is available. The department chair shall place copies of these solicitations in the candidates' applications and replace them with the letters from reviewers as they become available.

**availability of applications to faculty:** Applications shall be made available to the official faculty (tenured and untenured) of the department by September 23.

**election:** The election shall be conducted over a period of at least five working days, in a timely manner to allow the committee to prepare its final report to the department chair by October 8.

**report to the department chair:** The committee shall report to the department chair by October 8.

**department chair's report to the dean:** The department chair shall forward the recommendations of the committee and his or her own recommendations to the College Tenure and Promotion Committee by October 15.

## REMARKS ON THE AREAS OF EVALUATION

**Teaching.** The Department of Mathematics expects candidates for tenure and/or promotion to provide evidence of teaching effectiveness, as characterized in the Tenure Guidelines adopted by the College of Arts and Sciences.

Among the characteristics listed in those guidelines is “up-to-date knowledge of the subject”. The department does not expect each of its members to be an expert in each of the (numerous) subfields of mathematics. However, it does consider an in-depth knowledge of the subjects being taught to be an essential component of effective teaching. The degree to which that knowledge must be “up to date” varies with the course taught. Some areas of mathematics are quite classical and well-established, with few recent changes which are relevant or accessible at the undergraduate level. Other areas of mathematics have seen recent changes in content, philosophy, or approach which are of considerable significance for undergraduate education, and faculty teaching courses in those areas are expected to keep abreast of such changes and incorporate them into their teaching. And all faculty in the department are expected to keep in touch with current innovations in pedagogical techniques which are relevant to their teaching.

Students in each of our classes are given the opportunity to fill out online student evaluations of the course, which include questions developed by the department and the opportunity to write their own comments. Faculty are required to submit numerical summaries of the department standard questions for their student evaluations in courses taught in the Fall, consistent with the university policy 4300 which states that each faculty member shall be evaluated by students at least once a year; they are encouraged to submit all student evaluations, including comments, for all courses taught.

The department chair and the members of the Tenure Progress Review Committee shall have the right to sit in on classes taught by candidates for tenure in order to make constructive suggestions and gather evidence of teaching effectiveness. The department chair may do this on his or her own initiative or at the request of the candidate. The Tenure Progress Review Committee has the charge of doing this yearly for each untenured faculty member under review, as described above. Candidates for tenure may also invite other colleagues to observe their classes for the same purpose.

Department faculty are encouraged to discuss all aspects of their teaching with interested colleagues—content, approaches, tests, assignments, notable student difficulties and successes, innovative techniques, and so forth. Such discussions should be of value in both fostering and documenting effective teaching practices.

**Research and Scholarship.** The Department of Mathematics expects candidates for tenure to be engaged on a continuing basis in significant research activity in mathematics, mathematics education, theoretical computer science, statistics, or other mathematical sciences. The department recognizes that adequate time for concentrated thought is a resource essential to such activity, and intends to support research and scholarship through appropriately reduced teaching loads.

The most important evidence of research is publication in refereed professional journals or refereed conference proceedings and such evidence is required. It is difficult to specify attributes of a candidate’s publication record that are sufficient for the granting of tenure and this document does not attempt to do so.

In addition to refereed papers, any or all of the following may be counted as evidence of research and scholarship.

- (1) Invited or contributed talks at professional meetings.
- (2) Colloquia or seminar talks at other universities.
- (3) Research Monographs.
- (4) Textbooks or trade books.
- (5) Technical reports or other unrefereed publications.
- (6) Software projects or hardware projects.
- (7) Educational software packages, etc.
- (8) Published reviews of professional literature (e.g., for *Mathematical Reviews*).
- (9) Refereeing papers submitted to professional journals or conference proceedings (this is usually counted as professional service).
- (10) Funded grant proposals, either external (NSF, SBOE, etc.) or internal (FRAP, FRG, etc.)
- (11) Postdoctoral Study (e.g., summer institutes, mini-courses, workshops, etc.)

This list is intended to be neither exhaustive nor prescriptive; no candidate is expected to provide evidence in all of the above categories, and other forms of evidence may legitimately be counted. All evidence provided must be directly related to professional activity within the discipline. Consulting activities may be counted as research or scholarship in some cases; the candidate will determine in consultation with the departmental Tenure Progress Review Committee whether a given consulting activity is more appropriately regarded as scholarly activity or professional service.

Candidates for tenure are encouraged but not required to provide the Tenure Progress Review Committee with a statement describing their current research interests and plans; papers, monographs or advanced textbooks they are studying in the course of pursuing their scholarly interests; ongoing collaborative arrangements with colleagues at Boise State or elsewhere, and so forth.

A tenure-track faculty member is required to present a colloquium on his or her research to the department at least once between the beginning of his or her third year of service and the submission of his or her application for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. A candidate for promotion to full Professor is required to have presented at least one colloquium on his or her research to the department after becoming tenured and before applying for promotion.

Each candidate for tenure or promotion is required to provide a list of four reviewers knowledgeable in the candidate's research area. In a manner consistent with the College and University Policies, the department chair will solicit letters of evaluation from the reviewers and include them in the candidates' folder.

With reference to applications for full Professor, we quote the language of the University promotion policy: "The rank of Professor represents the highest academic achievement which can be attained. This rank should be reserved for those who are truly and demonstrably outstanding among their peers. Thus, a candidate for full Professor is expected to have achieved additional distinction clearly above that of an Associate Professor". A candidate must achieve tenure and presumably the rank of Associate Professor in order to have a continuing career at Boise State, and will usually apply no more than once (though University documents leave open the possibility of applying twice in successive years). There is no such restriction

on the possibility of applying for full Professor, nor is there any presumption that every faculty member in the department will achieve this rank.

**Service.** The Department of Mathematics expects candidates for tenure and/or promotion to engage in service activities which benefit the discipline, the department, the College, and the University. Service activities which benefit the community as a whole are encouraged, where appropriate, but are not required.

To clarify the place of service in tenure and promotion decisions, we insert language from the COAS policy: “BSU 4340 specifies that candidates will be advanced for promotion only when their records clearly demonstrate outstanding performance and commitment to teaching and scholarly activities; these two criteria represent the most significant elements of the faculty’s mission at Boise State. Service, although expected of every candidate, cannot be considered in place of or substituting for teaching and scholarly activities.”

All candidates for tenure and/or promotion are expected to provide evidence of service in each of two broad categories: professional and institutional. The distribution of service activities between these two categories will vary with the individual candidate, and the appropriate balance will be determined in consultation with the department chair. It is acceptable for an individual’s service load to be heavily weighted to one side or the other, if the chair so approves, but all candidates for either tenure or promotion are expected to have made positive contributions in each category.

Professional service includes such activities as holding office in local, state, national, or international organizations, or chapters thereof; it also includes involvement in the organization or administration of meetings or other activities of such organizations. A non-exhaustive list of such organizations appropriate to the mission of the department would include the American Mathematical Society, Mathematical Association of America, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Idaho Mathematics Coalition, Association for Computing Machinery, Association for Symbolic Logic, Association for Women in Mathematics, American Statistical Association, Operations Research Society of America, and International Mathematical Union.

Another very important form of professional service is work as a referee, reviewer, or editor for professional journals, conference proceedings, textbook or monograph publishers, government or foundation granting agencies, etc. Such activities involve an element of scholarship and hence were also listed in the previous section. They are to be regarded as secondary evidence of scholarly activity, but primary evidence of professional service.

Institutional service includes committee work at all levels of the University—departmental, College, Faculty Senate and its standing Committees, Ad Hoc Committees, etc. It also includes service as the department’s Library representative; supervision of internship, tutorial, or student paper-grading activities; writing departmental reports; helping with administrative activities; involvement with Science Competition Day or Discover Boise State Day, and miscellaneous other tasks and duties. Much of this work is non-glamorous; every member of the department is expected to make some contribution in this area.

Another category of institutional service that is beneficial to the Department of Mathematics is that of helping with planning, configuration and administration of the department’s computer network and laboratories. These responsibilities lie



primarily with the system administrator. However faculty lending their technical expertise to improving the computing environment for students and faculty will be recognized as providing service to the department.

The department does not require that every candidate engage in service activities that are most appropriately construed as “public” or “community” service rather than professional or institutional service. However, examples of such activity that might legitimately be taken into account in the service category in decisions about tenure or promotion include consulting (if not appropriately considered research), service as an expert witness, and discipline-related activities with local schools or youth groups (if not more properly considered teaching).