Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

Department of Physics
Radford University
Radford, Virginia

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides candidates for faculty positions in the Department of Physics at Radford University, and those faculty already present the criteria upon which they will be evaluated for tenure and promotion. It is the intent of the Personnel and Promotion Committees to ensure that all faculty members have an adequate opportunity to submit pertinent information for consideration by the Personnel or Promotion Committee and that each faculty member be informed of all recommendations.

EVALUATION SCHEDULES

The Personnel Committee will evaluate all faculty members without tenure yearly. The Personnel Committee will evaluate all faculty members with tenure but eligible for further promotion yearly until promoted, or until the faculty requests that the yearly evaluation cease. Any faculty member may request an evaluation by the Personnel or Promotion Committee in any year.

All evaluations must clearly state the opinion of the Personnel or Promotion Committee as to whether the faculty member is on track for tenure and/or promotion. Specific comments, either positive or negative, plus supporting evidence must support this opinion. If a negative comment is given, specific suggestions for improvement should be provided by the Committee. At the request of either the Committee or the faculty member evaluated, a meeting between the members of the Committee and the faculty member will be held to discuss the recommendations of the Committee.

In a year in which the faculty member is eligible for tenure consideration or in which the faculty member requests promotion, the Personnel Committee or the appropriate Promotion Committee shall follow the evaluation procedure outlined in the next section.

Radford University faculty are evaluated in three areas of performance: teaching, professional contributions, and university service. The percentages allocated to the three evaluation categories will be those currently found in the Radford University Teaching and Research Faculty Handbook.

TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES

By the date specified in the University timetable for personnel decisions, the faculty member shall initiate an application for tenure and/or promotion to the Department Chair and shall provide supporting documentation which must include a statement justifying tenure and/or promotion, past evaluations from the Department Chair including a summary of student evaluations, a current curriculum vitae, and any additional information appropriate to support the application. The Department Chair shall submit the faculty member’s application and documentation to the Chair of the Personnel Committee, in the case of tenure decisions, and to the Chair of the Promotion Committee in the case of promotions. The Personnel Committee or the Promotion Committee shall, by the appropriate deadline, make its written recommendation,
including justification, to the Department Chair. A copy of this recommendation shall be provided to the candidate. After reviewing the recommendations of the Personnel or Promotion Committee, the Department Chair shall forward his or her own recommendations to the Dean of the College of Science and Technology for further consideration and action. The recommendations of the Personnel or Promotion Committee shall also be sent to the Dean by the Chair of the Department. Additional details of this procedure can be found in the Faculty Handbook.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The general criteria for the evaluation of faculty are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The three major areas of evaluation are Teaching, Professional Contributions, and University Contributions. The list of activities presented below for each category is not necessarily complete and is intended to serve as a guideline for effective performance in each category. It is understood that individual faculty members will contribute to Departmental objectives in different ways.

Teaching

Radford University is primarily a teaching institution and this category must carry the greatest weight in the evaluation process. Effective teaching must be demonstrated by every faculty member. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness will be based on: (1) student evaluations; (2) documentation of teaching effectiveness presented by the faculty member and based on the Departmental evaluation criteria; (3) the assessment of the Personnel Committee; and (4) the assessment of the Department Chair. Other components of the evaluation in the Teaching category are participation of the faculty member in curriculum development, undergraduate research, advising, and overall program advancement.

Specific guidelines to be considered, starting with the highest priority include:

(1) effective teaching in the classroom and laboratory

   a. creating an environment that challenges the student so that it promotes learning and the growth of knowledge and interest in the subject matter
   b. keeping informed of current developments in one’s own and related fields
   c. continuing to assess teaching methods, including the use of input from colleagues in the Department when appropriate, in an effort to adapt to changes in the student population and to increase teaching effectiveness
   d. continuing to assess course content and of the specialized needs of the various student groups enrolled in Departmental courses
   e. continuing to update teaching methods based on current pedagogy and to revise course content based on the latest information in the field
   f. participating in programs designed to improve students’ performance in the classroom
g. following official course syllabi for classes taught  

h. giving regular, timely evaluation of student progress and feedback to students through numerous graded and returned assignments

(2) curriculum development

a. revising curriculum to prepare students for their careers  
b. regularly incorporating new ideas into existing courses based on current pedagogy  
c. developing new courses  
d. regularly updating existing laboratories for existing courses  
e. developing new laboratory experiences for existing courses  
f. cooperating with other departments to keep service course content updated for other majors  
g. keeping informed of new methods in the teaching of each course  
h. incorporating appropriate new technology into Departmental courses  
i. cooperating with other departments in the development of interdisciplinary courses and programs  
j. developing methods for the more accurate assessment of course and curriculum effectiveness

(3) participation in independent studies or undergraduate research

a. making available rigorous independent study opportunities for students consistent with students’ academic background, and that do not duplicate regular course offerings  
b. making available research opportunities for students consistent with students’ academic background  
c. working with students to present their results in an appropriate forum

(4) academic and career advising

a. actively assisting students in the preparation of semester schedules  
b. advising students with regard to careers or graduate school  
c. assisting students with their graduation applications  
d. providing effective assistance to students in obtaining off-campus or on-campus positions such as summer research opportunities

(5) promoting curriculum advancement

a. cooperating with colleagues who are providing leadership in areas of importance to the Department, including leadership in faculty development  
b. willing to consider and to test new ideas that may lead to meaningful improvement in the curriculum
c. willing to assume heavier teaching loads (as a last resort when additional faculty cannot be employed) in order to give colleagues time to work on high-priority projects
d. cooperating with other faculty in regards to shared supplies, equipment, facilities, and departmental tasks

**Professional Contributions**

The professional development of faculty members is essential to their growth and to the reputation of the Department, the College, and the University.

Specific guidelines to be considered, starting with the highest priority include:

(1) involvement in research  
   a. participating in research which contributes to the faculty member’s development as a scholar and a teacher  
   b. encouraging students to play an active role in the development of research projects and to be an integral part of the research where possible  
   c. writing grant proposals to support the research  
   d. obtaining financial support for research projects  
   e. publishing or presenting results of original research

(2) externally published works that enhance the reputation of the author and the University  
   a. writing or revising textbooks  
   b. contributing to review articles  
   c. contributing to test banks, solution manuals, and other publisher projects  
   d. reviewing textbooks

(3) submission of proposals to support Department goals  
   a. submitting proposals for the purchase of equipment  
   b. submitting proposals that address the improved use of current technology in the classroom and the laboratory  
   c. utilizing new equipment and technology  
   d. submitting proposals for the improvement of departmental infrastructure

(4) participation in professional organizations  
   a. presentations at professional meetings  
   b. holding office in professional organizations  
   c. organizing a professional meeting  
   d. chairing sessions at professional meetings  
   e. attending professional meetings
University Contributions

Participation in College and University activities is important. Every faculty must make some contributions in this area.

Specific guidelines to be considered, starting with the highest priority include:

(5) participation in Department governance
   a. serving as Chair of the Department
   b. serving as Chair of the Personnel, Promotion, or Search Committee
   c. serving on the Personnel, Promotion, or Search Committee
   d. serving on special committees as needed

(6) contributions to University and College programs
   a. participating in efforts to improve recruiting, new student orientation, advising, program assessment, career planning and post-graduate placement
   b. participating in Program Review
   c. initiating change in the Department’s programs
   d. participating in development of interdisciplinary courses or programs
   e. supporting and advising Departmental and campus-wide student groups
   f. sponsoring student activities
   g. speaking at campus-wide forums, programs, or workshops
   h. attending campus-wide forums, programs, or workshops

(7) participation in College and University governance
   a. serving on the Faculty Senate
   b. chairing councils and committees
   c. serving on councils, standing committees, and ad hoc committees

(8) activities that enhance the reputation of the University
   a. developing collaborative programs with industry, schools, and governmental agencies
   b. speaking to local schools or groups
   c. providing community service related to academic expertise
   d. receiving awards that bring recognition to the University

CRITERIA FOR AWARDING TENURE
As mandated by the Faculty Handbook, faculty members are evaluated in three areas of performance: teaching, professional contributions, and university service. Evaluation percentages in each category are specified by the Faculty Handbook. This document also outlines specific requirements for faculty to meet the performance ratings of “Outstanding”, “Above Expectations”, “Meets Expectations”, “Meets Expectations Minimally”, “Below Expectations”, and “Poor”.

For faculty members seeking tenure, the minimum Department ranking requirement for the teaching category is “Above Expectations” from the Chair. It is expected that faculty will also meet the ranking level of “Above Expectations” for one of the two remaining evaluation categories (professional contribution or university service), with the other category meeting the minimum ranking of “Meets Expectations”.

The minimum criteria for the awarding of tenure are specified in the Faculty Handbook. Beyond these minimum criteria, a faculty member seeking tenure must have demonstrated the following competencies, starting with the highest priority.

1. demonstrated consistent development as an effective classroom teacher
2. engaged in scholarly activities appropriate to the faculty member’s discipline
3. contributed significantly to the development and improvement of the Department
4. engaged in professional development activities
5. participated actively in Department, College, and University programs, activities, and obligations
6. provided effective academic and professional advisement
7. participated actively in professional organizations
8. maintained and developed professional competencies
9. worked effectively with colleagues and students

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION IN ACADEMIC RANK

The minimum criteria for promotion to each rank are specified in the Faculty Handbook.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

For faculty members seeking promotion to associate professor, the minimum Department ranking requirement for the Teaching category is “Above Expectations” from both the Chair and Personnel Committee. It is expected that faculty will also meet the ranking level of “Above Expectations” for one of the two remaining evaluation categories (Professional Contribution or University Service), with the other category meeting the minimum ranking of “Meets Expectations”.
In addition to meeting the minimum criteria stated in the Faculty Handbook, a faculty member seeking promotion to associate professor must have the following competencies, starting with the highest priority:

1. demonstrated consistent development as an effective classroom teacher
2. engaged in scholarly activities appropriate to the faculty member’s discipline
3. contributed significantly to the development and improvement of the Department
4. engaged in professional development activities
5. participated actively in Department, College, and University programs, activities, and obligations
6. provided effective academic and professional advisement
7. participated actively in professional organizations
8. maintained and developed professional competencies
9. worked effectively with colleagues and students

PROFESSOR

For faculty members seeking promotion to full professor, it is expected that they meet the ranking level of “Outstanding” for at least one of the three evaluation categories (Teaching, Professional Contribution or University Service) from both the Chair and Personnel Committee, with the other categories meeting the minimum ranking level of “Above Expectations”.

In addition to meeting the minimum criteria stated in the Faculty Handbook, a faculty member seeking promotion to professor must have the following competencies, starting with the highest priority:

1. demonstrated consistent development as an exemplary classroom teacher
2. engaged in multiple scholarly activities appropriate to the faculty member’s discipline and level of experience including (but not limited to) refereed publications, multiple presentations at professional meetings, and books or book chapters.
3. contributed significantly to the development and improvement of the Department throughout the course of service
4. continually engaged in multiple professional development activities
5. continual participation in Department, College, and University programs, activities, and obligations
6. demonstrated long-term exemplary academic and professional advisement
7. demonstrated long-term participation in professional organizations
8. demonstrated long-term development of professional competencies
9. demonstrated long-term exemplary work with colleagues and students