Department of Computer Science
San Francisco State University
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Expectations for Retention, Tenure, and Promotion

This document details the expectations for retention, tenure, and promotion in the Computer Science Department consistent with Academic Senate Policy #F06-241.

The criteria for retention, tenure, and promotion are divided into three areas: (a) teaching effectiveness, (b) professional achievement and growth, and (c) contributions to campus and community. Candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion shall be evaluated on all criteria as described below.

The Department's RTP Committee conducts an annual review of probationary faculty. The purpose of the annual review is to determine if candidates for retention are making sufficient progress toward tenure. If the Committee decides a candidate is not making sufficient progress, but the situation is not sufficiently serious to recommend non-retention, the Committee and the Chair of the Department shall meet with the candidate to devise a plan for improving the candidate's performance to the level required for progress toward tenure. The plan must include a timeline and specific goals.

Successful candidates for tenure or promotion must meet the standard of excellence normally expected of faculty. A candidate's activities while in his or her current rank are of primary relevance to promotion considerations. Candidates for promotion are advised that the Department has higher expectations for promotion to Professor than for promotion to Associate Professor.

Candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion are responsible for providing the Committee with an up-to-date Working Personnel Action File (WPAF) by the closing date as determined by the University RTP Deadline Calendar. The WPAF consists of a candidate's curriculum vitae, an index of supplementary materials, and supplementary materials that represent the candidate's accomplishments in teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and contributions to campus and community.

Candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion should include in the WPAF a self-statement in each of the areas of teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and contributions to campus and community that summarizes the candidate's accomplishments. In cases where an activity may be considered in more than one area, candidates should make a selection in consultation with the Committee.

A candidate for tenure or promotion should submit to the Committee the names of at least three potential external reviewers. In addition to the reviewers named by the candidate, the Committee may solicit assessments from other external reviewers. The WPAF should

include letters from external reviewers solicited by the Committee that assess the quality of the candidate's activities.

Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

Effective teaching is central to the Department's mission. The Committee will consider, but is not limited to, the criteria described below to evaluate a candidate's teaching effectiveness. For example, a candidate who contributes across a wide range of curricular needs or at different levels of instruction will receive favorable consideration, as would a candidate who excels at filling a particular need.

1. Classroom teaching. Candidates are expected to be excellent classroom teachers. Evaluation of a candidate's performance in this area will be based on the following:

    a. Student evaluations of teaching. Students evaluate most instructors each semester using a standard College of Science and Engineering survey. The Committee will review these student evaluations as they provide some indication of the quality of a candidate's classroom teaching. The Committee will also review written comments made by students on the survey.

    b. Peer evaluations of teaching. The Committee will review letters of evaluation from Department faculty who have observed a candidate's classroom teaching. Candidates will be evaluated at least once per year by a faculty member of higher rank than the candidate's.

    c. Letters from students and colleagues. The Committee will consider other letters, either solicited or unsolicited, that address a candidate's teaching effectiveness. However, the Committee will not consider anonymous letters.

2. Directing theses and other activities. Connecting students with current research is vital for attracting students to the discipline and enhances both the graduate and undergraduate experience. These activities are central to the department mission for the graduate program and in preparing undergraduate students for graduate studies and R&D careers.

Candidates are expected to supervise culminating experience theses/projects. In addition, candidates should participate as committee members for culminating experience theses/projects, as departmental needs dictate.

Preparing students for a thesis, professional career, external publications, or doctoral program often requires study beyond the regular course offerings of the Department. Thus, candidates who sponsor research activities, publish refereed papers with students, teach seminar courses [CSC 690 (Undergraduate Seminar), CSC 890 (Graduate Seminar)], or direct special projects [CSC 697 (Senior Project in Computer Science), CSC 699 (Special Study), CSC 897 (Research), CSC 899 (Special Study)] make a significant contribution to our students' education.

3. Curricular innovations. The Committee may consider curricular innovations such as the development of original academic programs or courses, new and effective pedagogical approaches, or instructional applications of new technologies as evidence of a candidate's teaching effectiveness. Activities in this area may also be evaluated under professional achievement and growth or contributions to campus and community, depending on the nature of the activity.

4. Presentations at professional conferences. Professional conferences often address issues in Computer Science education such as appropriate course content, new teaching methods, or alternative assessment practices. The Committee may consider presentations at professional conferences or active participation in workshops related to Computer Science education as evidence of a candidate's teaching effectiveness. Research presentations at professional conferences may also be evaluated under professional achievement and growth.

Evaluation of Professional Achievement and Growth

All candidates are expected to engage in activities that enhance their professional achievement and growth. However, evaluation of professional activities should be sensitive to standards appropriate to a candidate's area of expertise. For example, researchers in Computer Science could demonstrate professional achievement by publishing papers in refereed journals or high quality refereed conferences. The Committee will consider, but is not limited to, the criteria described below to evaluate a candidate's professional achievement and growth.

1. Research and publications. Candidates are expected to have an active research program. Furthermore, the candidates' research program should involve students since research is an essential part of the student learning process

The Committee considers papers published or accepted for publication in refereed research journals or monographs as primary evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth. Much less weight is given to publication of non-refereed papers and technical reports, and to unpublished manuscripts.

The Committee will also consider presentations of current research at refereed high quality professional conferences as evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth. For example, the most important activities within this area include being an invited speaker at a national or international symposium or conference, and publishing and presenting research at refereed conferences sponsored by major professional associations, with selective review processes and with highly selective acceptance rates.

2. Grant funding. The Department considers it essential that candidates apply for funding of their research interests. Since grant proposals for external funding of research are often very competitive and typically receive extensive outside peer review, the Committee considers successful external grant funding as strong evidence of a

candidate's professional achievement and growth. Grant funding of research efforts includes funding from government research agencies, as well as funding from the computing industry. Grant funding of non-research projects may be evaluated under teaching effectiveness or contributions to campus and community, depending on the nature of the project.

The Committee recognizes the highly competitive nature of research grants. Therefore, it is essential that strong efforts are made towards obtaining research funding, regardless of whether the efforts are successful or are not successful.

3. Curricular innovations. The Committee may consider curricular innovations such as the development of original academic programs or courses, new and effective pedagogical approaches, or instructional applications of new technologies as evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth provided the activities receive sufficient recognition outside the Department. Activities in this area may also be evaluated under teaching effectiveness or contributions to campus and community, depending on the nature of the activity.

Evaluation of Contributions to Campus and Community

All candidates are expected to contribute to the smooth functioning of the Department by serving on Committees, advising students, and the like.   The Committee will consider, but is not limited to, the criteria described below to evaluate a candidate's particular contributions to campus and community.

1. Service to the profession. Candidates are expected to participate in professional organizations. The Committee may consider activities such as election to offices in professional organizations, honors and recognition by professional societies, participation on editorial boards, organization of conferences or symposia, or selection as a referee for manuscripts and grants as evidence of a candidate's service to the profession.

2. Service to the University. The Committee may consider activities such as administrative assignments, faculty governance, committee work, special advising assignments, program development, organizing and supervising department labs, sponsorship of student organizations, or direction of non-instructional projects as evidence of a candidate's service to the University.

3. Service to the community. The Committee may consider activities in which candidates use their professional expertise to enhance the relations between the community at large and the University or profession as evidence of a candidate's service to the community.