School of Engineering
San Francisco State University

Criteria for Retention, Tenure, and Promotion
(Approved by the School of Engineering faculty on December 9, 2020)
Approved by the Office of Faculty Affairs & Professional Development Spring 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

This document details the criteria for retention, tenure, and promotion (RTP) in the School of Engineering, consistent with and supplemental to Academic Senate Policy (AS) #F19-241 and the CFA/CSU collective bargaining agreement. Any changes to this document are subject to review and approval by the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the School of Engineering. Revisions to this document shall also be submitted to the College Dean for review prior to adoption. Changes made during an RTP cycle shall not be effective until the following RTP cycle.

1.1 Committees and Committee Membership. The School of Engineering maintains two separate peer review committees for departmental evaluations of retention, tenure, and promotion. The *RTP Committee* is comprised of tenured faculty at Associate Professor and Professor ranks, and conducts evaluations of faculty at the Assistant Professor rank (including rare cases in which an Assistant Professor may have received early tenure without promotion). The *Promotion Committee* is comprised of tenured faculty at the Professor rank, and conducts evaluations of faculty at the Associate Professor rank (including rare cases in which an Associate Professor has yet to be awarded tenure). Committee membership and terms of office are as dictated by AS #F19-241. In addition, to the extent possible, the committees shall include at least one representative from each of the School's program areas.

1.2 Criteria. 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 only according to these three criteria as described below. In addition, accomplishments in these three areas that also support the University Strategic Plan and Mission (e.g., in the areas of diversity, equity, etc.) will be viewed favorably by the RTP/Promotion Committee. Additional criteria not specifically mentioned in this document may not be used. In the event that the criteria described by this policy have changed during a faculty member's period under review, the RTP/Promotion committee shall consider the nature and the timing of these changes in carrying out its evaluation. In addition, faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor may elect to be evaluated according to the RTP policy in effect at the time of hire when applying for tenure and promotion.

1.3 WPAF. Candidates for retention, tenure, and promotion are responsible for providing the RTP/Promotion 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, along with supplementary materials that present the candidate's accomplishments in teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and

contributions to campus and community during the period under review. In cases of service credit, the period under review includes the most recent number of years of service credit in the position for which the service credit was awarded. Candidates should include in the WPAF a self-statement that summarizes the candidate's accomplishments in each of the three areas outlined in Section 1.2. For publications and funded grants, it is recommended that the level of contribution of the faculty member be indicated. Evaluation will be based only on the candidate's accomplishments during the period of review that are verifiably documented in the WPAF. It is expected that candidates will submit a well-organized WPAF.

1.4 Retention. The School's RTP Committee conducts an annual review of every probationary faculty member for retention. The RTP Committee is responsible for providing an objective and impartial evaluation based strictly on the three criteria described in this document. The purpose of the annual review is to determine if the candidate is making sufficient progress toward tenure. If any recommendations are made for termination or a terminal year appointment, the RTP Committee will clearly state the reasons for such a decision. If the recommendation is for retention but there are some deficiencies, the RTP Committee will work with the candidate to devise an improvement plan that includes specific goals and timelines.

1.5 Tenure. For tenure reviews, the RTP/Promotion Committee is responsible for providing an objective and impartial evaluation based strictly on the three criteria described in this document. If the recommendation is against tenure, then the committee must specify the areas of deficiency. If the candidate is eligible to reapply for tenure, the committee must also suggest how the candidate can resolve the deficiencies.

1.6 Promotion. In response to a candidate's request for promotion, the RTP/Promotion Committee is responsible for providing an objective and impartial evaluation based on the three criteria described in this document. The outcome of the review will be promotion recommended or not recommended. If the decision is against promotion, then the committee must specify areas in which the candidate must improve in order to merit promotion.

Candidates for promotion are advised that the School applies the evaluation criteria differently for Assistant and Associate Professors, with higher expectations for promotion to the rank of Professor than for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. In both cases, accomplishments in all three criteria areas are required. Specific expectations by rank are outlined in the following subsections.

1.6.1 Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. Candidates seeking promotion to Associate Professor are expected to have:
- demonstrated excellence in and a commitment to teaching, across a variety of courses
- developed and established a research program in their area of expertise
- received or been actively seeking external grants
- produced a strong record of publications, including publications that arose from work conducted while at SF State
- demonstrated a commitment to service at the School of Engineering level

Regular feedback and guidance will be provided to Assistant Professors as part of the established annual review process.

<u>1.6.2 Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor</u>. Candidates seeking promotion to Professor are expected to have:
- demonstrated excellence in teaching, with evidence of continuous improvement, curricular innovation, and the ability to teach a broad range of subject matter
- high quality professional achievement and growth, through continued research productivity or other activities in support of the mission of the School of Engineering
- expanded their service activities to extend beyond the School of Engineering to include significant service to the College, University, or community

To guide faculty seeking promotion to Professor, those at the rank of Associate Professor may request written feedback from the Promotion Committee and/or School Director regarding their progress in each of the three criteria outlined in this policy. This request should be made during the regular academic year. At minimum, an updated faculty curriculum vitae in RTP format should accompany such a request, although additional supporting materials can also be provided. This feedback will not involve requests or reviews of external letters. Feedback should be provided by the Promotion Committee within 30 days from the time at which review materials are submitted. The written feedback may be included in a candidate's WPAF materials when he/she applies for promotion, but shall not be considered to be an evaluation letter for purposes of that review cycle.

1.7 Early Tenure and/or Early Promotion. A candidate may be considered for early tenure and/or early promotion in *rare cases of exceptional achievements* during the period of review, especially in the area of professional achievement and growth. Candidates seeking early tenure and/or promotion must exceed expectations in all three RTP criteria, and are encouraged to consult with both the Director and the RTP/Promotion Committee prior to seeking early tenure or promotion for guidance on the strength of their case.

At minimum, all of the following conditions shall be met for consideration for early tenure and/or early promotion:
- In Teaching Effectiveness, Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) scores significantly higher than the departmental average, in conjunction with generally positive student comments demonstrating a dedication to teaching.
- In Professional Achievement and Growth, the candidate should have secured significant external, non-CSU funding as a principal investigator (PI), as well as primary authorship of articles in well-recognized, highly-ranked journals within his/her field.
- In Contributions to Campus and Community, the candidate should have a record of accomplishments that exceeds that described in Section 1.6.

2. EVALUATION OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS
The primary mission of San Francisco State University and the School of Engineering is teaching. All faculty members are expected to hold high professional and pedagogic standards and demonstrate excellence in teaching. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness will be based on

assessments of classroom teaching, curricular development, advising of student research and/or projects, and awards and recognitions.

2.1 Classroom teaching. Candidates are expected to be excellent classroom teachers, and possess the ability and willingness to teach lecture and laboratory courses in a broad range of subjects, including those outside of their immediate specialty. Evaluation of a candidate's performance in this area will be based on the following:

2.1.1 Student evaluations of teaching. Students evaluate all instructors each semester using a San Francisco State University's web-based system for Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE). The RTP/Promotion Committee will review these student evaluations (SETE reports) as one of the metrics for evaluating the quality of a candidate's classroom teaching. The RTP/Promotion Committee will also review written comments made by students as part of the survey.

2.1.2 Peer evaluations of teaching. Every year, the RTP Committee designates committee members to visit classes of all Assistant Professors. The Promotion Committee offers class visits to Associate Professors, should they wish to obtain them for applying for promotion to Professor. The evaluator will prepare a report to the candidate commenting on the quality and effectiveness of the classroom instruction for insertion into the candidate's WPAF. The RTP/Promotion Committee will review these peer teaching evaluations in its deliberation of promotion and tenure cases.

2.1.3 Letters from colleagues and former students. The RTP/Promotion Committee may consider letters from colleagues and former students that address the candidate's teaching effectiveness. However, anonymous letters will not be considered.

2.2 Continuous improvement in teaching. The RTP/Promotion Committee will consider activities such as improving existing courses and programs, developing updated assessment tools, and attending teaching conferences or workshops as evidence of a candidate's commitment to continuous improvement in teaching. The development of new courses and programs, significant course and laboratory revisions, and grants or publications related to curricular activity will be considered under the category of professional achievement and growth, as described in Section 3.

2.3 Advising of student research or projects. Supervising student projects and master's theses/projects will be considered by the RTP/Promotion Committee as an integral part of teaching effectiveness. Both undergraduate student projects and graduate theses/research projects are important. The RTP/Promotion Committee may also consider student awards, student presentations, other recognitions obtained by the advisees of the candidate, and publications by the candidate with students as strong evidence of effective supervising.

2.4 Awards and recognitions. Awards and recognitions that are related to teaching effectiveness will be reviewed positively by the RTP/Promotion Committee.

3. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH

The School of Engineering regards research, professional development, and scholarly publications as very important aspects of professional development and growth. Members of the engineering faculty are expected to conduct significant scholarly activities throughout thecareer at SF State. For tenure and promotion considerations, the RTP/Promotion Committee will also solicit independent external peer reviews in key areas of professional achievement (see Section 3.2).

Accomplishments in the area of Professional Achievement and Growth are expected to be primarily associated with one's activities as a faculty member at SF State.

3.1 Committee review. The RTP/Promotion Committee will consider the following activities in the evaluation of a candidate's professional achievement and growth: publications, proposal development, grants, laboratory development, creative works, awards, and professional consulting. High quality and productivity in publications, grants, and laboratory development will contribute the most to a favorable evaluation. Successes in other areas may be used to strengthen the overall evaluation of professional achievement. Faculty professional activities should also fit School's mission and benefit graduate and undergraduate students. The committee will consider external peer reviews of professional achievement (see 3.2) as an important input for tenure and promotion considerations.

3.1.1 Publications. The RTP/Promotion Committee will consider technical publications as one of the main metrics for measuring the candidate's professional achievement and growth. The School of Engineering values high quality publications in which the candidate makes significant contributions.

3.1.1.1 Journal publications. Papers published, or accepted for publication, in reputable, peer-reviewed journals are primary evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth.

3.1.1.2 Conference publications. In addition to refereed journals, it is typical to publish in refereed or peer-reviewed conference proceedings, symposia, and workshop proceedings. It is noted that some conferences are prestigious and characterized by low acceptance rates while some are not. The RTP/Promotion Committee will consider these venues as evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth but will include the quality and reputation of the conferences as a significant factor. An important activity within this area would be presentation of invited talks and tutorials at leading national or international conferences.

3.1.1.3 Books and monographs. Books, monographs, and other scholarly publications will be considered in the publications category.

3.1.1.4 Non-refereed papers and technical reports. Publications that have not been peer reviewed or unpublished manuscripts may be taken into account in this category, but receive significantly less weight.

3.1.2 Grants and Contracts. The School of Engineering expects candidates to actively apply for external support of their professional endeavors. Since grant proposals for external funding of research are often very competitive and typically receive extensive outside professional review,

successful external grant funding will be considered as strong evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth. All grants are viewed positively. However, more weight is given to grants on which the candidate is the Principal Investigator or plays a major role. The RTP/Promotion Committee recognizes that writing and submitting grant applications can take enormous amount of time and may also consider grant applications that are not funded. Reviewers' comments on an unfunded proposal may be taken into account. Candidates are also encouraged to take advantage of available internal grants. However, less weight shall be given to internal grants.

3.1.3. Research group and laboratory development. Establishing and maintaining an active research group is important for productive faculty research. In addition, the nature of faculty members' research activities can vary, with some research activities requiring physical, hardware-based or experimental laboratories that require significant development efforts. The RTP/Promotion Committee will consider successful development of active research groups and physical laboratories that support faculty and students as an important activity for professional achievement and growth.

3.1.4. Curricular and instructional laboratory innovations. Developing new courses, degree or certificate programs, and instructional laboratories and experiments can take a substantial amount of time and effort, but are critical for maintaining up-to-date programs and facilities that respond to industry trends and best serve the needs of School of Engineering students. Major redesigns of existing courses or major implementations of novel pedagogical methods or instructional technologies can also be considered in this category.

3.1.5 Industry Consulting and Partnerships. The School of Engineering recognizes the importance and benefits of maintaining strong working relationships with industry and public agencies. Therefore, high-level professional consulting with industry that benefits both the faculty member and the industry partner will be considered as one aspect of professional achievement, specifically to the extent that it benefits students and/or results in publications, reports, patents, etc. Candidates, especially those hired from industry, are also encouraged to actively engage with industry organizations to secure student project sponsorships, industrial funding for teaching and research laboratory improvements, in-kind equipment donations, and internship or full-time job opportunities. Sustained efforts and successes in building industrial partnerships and sponsorships will be considered to be significant achievements in the category of professional achievement and growth. Industry activities should not be carried out to the detriment of a candidate's responsibilities as a faculty member at SF State.

3.1.6. Creative works, designs, and patents. Engineering faculty can demonstrate professional development and growth through various creative works, designs, and patents. Examples in this category are patents and designs that have contributed to successful products, and/or have been referenced by others.

3.1.7. Awards and recognitions. Awards and recognitions received by the candidate that are related to research accomplishments are strong evidence of excellence in research.

3.2 External review. The School of Engineering expects faculty members to make significant contributions to the body of knowledge relevant to their professional fields. To affirm the quality and significance of a faculty member's scholarship, for tenure and promotion reviews, a representative sample of the candidate's scholarly work must be evaluated by professional peers from outside the university. The external review is limited to the area of professional accomplishments. External reviews become a part of the candidate's WPAF and their effective period is for two consecutive year reviews (i.e., external reviews may be reused in the following year in cases where tenure/promotion is denied or deferred).

3.2.1 Selection of reviewers. The candidate will provide a list of four or more well-known scholars from reputable institutions in the candidate's professional field. This list should be provided by May 31 during the calendar year in which the tenure or promotion review is to begin. The RTP/Promotion Committee may add additional names as potential external reviewers so that valid reviews are obtained. External reviewers should not be candidate's relatives, close friends, major collaborators (co-authors and co-PIs during the period of review), thesis or post-doc advisors, or anyone who may have a conflict of interest in evaluating the candidate's work. The candidate should provide information on their relationship with potential reviewers by completing the "Relationship to Candidate" column on the Report on External Reviews Form (see Attachment 1). Normally, the reviewers are expected to be professionals at a higher rank or status than the candidate.

3.2.2 Obtaining reviews. The candidate, in conjunction with the RTP/Promotion Committee, will prepare a packet to be sent to external reviewers. The packet may include a summary statement and representative work of the candidate's key professional contributions in rank while at SF State and should be a part of the WPAF. The RTP/Promotion Committee will endeavor to obtain no fewer than three external review letters from the lists generated above (Section 3.2.1). The Committee will send external reviewers a letter outlining what is requested (see sample in Attachment 2), a copy of the School of Engineering RTP policy, and the packet of materials to be reviewed. The letter must clearly indicate that the review is NOT confidential and that the candidate will have access to it. To meet the WPAF deadlines, the RTP/Promotion Committee must work in a timely manner so that reviews are obtained and added to the candidate's WPAF well in advance of the WPAF closing date.

3.2.3 Use of external reviews. The RTP/Promotion Committee will incorporate external peer reviews as a part of the Professional Achievements and Growth review for tenure or promotion. The Report of External Review Form, the packet used in external review, and all external reviews shall be included as a part of candidate's WPAF. All external reviews should be kept confidential and should be viewed only by the candidate and those who are involved in the review process.

4. EVALUATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY
The evaluation of the contributions to campus and community will consider activities in service to the University, the community, and the candidate's profession. Normally, a strong performance in one of these areas would be expected.

4.1. Service to the University. Faculty members are expected to share responsibilities with colleagues to advance School, College, and University missions and objectives. To maintain vigorous and effective educational environment, faculty contributions to non-instructional activities are essential.

4.1.1. Committees and task forces. The RTP/Promotion Committee encourages active participation in committees, special-purpose task forces, and other faculty governance activities at the School, College, and University levels. At minimum,
- Faculty at the Assistant Professor rank are expected to be active participants in School-level committees and task forces. Leadership roles in committees/task forces are encouraged but not required.
- Faculty at the Associate Professor and Professor ranks are expected to chair School-level committees/task forces, and serve on the Academic Senate, and/or College/University committees, councils, and task forces.

4.1.2. Student and student organization advising. Student advising is a central function of faculty in the School of Engineering and is a critical aspect of our ability to maintain accreditation and a vibrant student body. In this category, the RTP/Promotion Committee will take into consideration the maintaining of office hours and advising-week appointments, counseling of student organizations, assisting in student event planning, mentoring of student competition teams, and preparation of letter of recommendations to support graduate school and scholarship applications.

4.1.3 Other university service. This subcategory includes assisting in School fundraising/marketing efforts, special program coordination, hosting of professional events, website development, working with alumni groups, working with the Engineering Advisory Board, visiting schools and community colleges for the purpose of recruitment, acting as liaisons to visitors, direction of non-instructional projects on campus, and representing the School, College, or University at special events.

4.2. Service to the community. The University does not exist alone and must maintain a strong relationship with various communities. SF State is well known for its social engagement and community service. Engineering faculty members are strongly encouraged to work with Institute for Civic and Community Engagement (ICCE) on civic and service projects that utilize the professional expertise of the faculty. The Committee will consider activities in which candidates use their professional expertise to serve K-12 schools, non-profit or non-government organizations, government agencies, and the community at large.

4.3. Service to the profession. Members of the faculty are expected to participate in professional organizations in engineering and higher education such as the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), and other major professional/educational organizations. As a strong evidence of a candidate's service to the profession, the RTP/Promotion Committee will consider activities including the following:

4.3.1. Professional organizations and publications. Election to offices or major committees of national or international professional/educational organizations. Participation on editorial boards of publications.

4.3.2. Organizing professional conferences. Organization of conferences or symposia related to engineering research and/or education.

4.3.3. Honors and awards. Honors and recognitions by professional societies in connection with service on committees, conferences, etc.

4.3.4. Lectures. Participation in various distinguished lecture programs.

4.3.5. Professional reviews. Serving as a reviewer for manuscripts and grant applications.

Attachment 1

Report on External Reviewers

Candidate's Name: _____

Reviewers suggested by candidate (Include institutional affiliation)	**Relationship to Candidate**

Reviewers suggested by RTP (Include institutional affiliation)	**Relationship to Candidate**

Sample Letter to External Reviewers

Dear [name]:

Thank you for your agreeing to provide an external review of the research work of [candidate], who is being considered for [e.g., "tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor"]. Your input will be an important part of our overall evaluation process. Please provide your independent, honest, objective assessment of the candidate's research and scholarly accomplishments as evidenced by the enclosed material.

San Francisco State University (SF State) is one campus of the 23-campus California State University system. We are a comprehensive, non-PhD-granting university serving about 30,000 students. The School of Engineering is a unit within the College of Science and Engineering and offers undergraduate and master's degrees in Civil, Computer, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineering. For more information, please visit our web site at https://engineering.sfsu.edu/. Faculty members in the School of Engineering are expected to demonstrate professional achievement and growth through research, scholarship, and/or creative work.

We have enclosed a copy of [candidate]'s *curriculum vitae*, [other candidate materials], along with a copy of the School of Engineering policy on retention, tenure, and promotion. You may wish to note that the candidate's teaching load, averaged over the past [x] years has been around [y] courses per semester. In addition to your overall assessment of [candidate]'s professional achievements, we are particularly interested in your responses to the following three questions:

- Does the record reflect that [candidate] is a meaningful contributor to [her/his] professional field?
- What are some of the strengths and weaknesses reflected in [candidate]'s professional work?
- What is the quality of the journals and conferences in which [candidate] has published?

Note that we do not seek input on the candidate's teaching effectiveness, nor do we solicit an explicit recommendation for or against tenure/promotion.

Again, thank you for agreeing to perform this review. We greatly appreciate your time and effort and highly value your candid opinions. Please be advised that external reviews are NOT confidential to the candidate. However, your letter will be treated as confidential to the extent possible and is intended to be read only by the candidate and university reviewers. Given that the review of faculty in the School of Engineering is scheduled to begin on [WPAF closing date], we would request that you provide your response by no later than [date letter requested].

Sincerely,