

Department of Mathematics Retention, Tenure and Promotion Criteria

Faculty Affairs Approved Effective Fall 2024

The RTP Guidelines were developed by the RTP committee of the Department of Mathematics and approved by all tenure/tenure track faculty at all ranks and levels. These guidelines are designed to establish clear expectations for retention, tenure, and promotion consistent with the University criteria specified in [Academic Senate Retention, Tenure and Promotion Policy # F22-241](#). The Guidelines are provided in order to create benchmarks or standards that candidates can use to evaluate their progress on all of the many different criteria that are provided in each of the policies. Faculty are encouraged to meet with their RTP Chair for any needed clarifications.

The Department of Mathematics is a program which prepares students for additional mathematical research scholarship; teaching careers; and work in business, industry, and government that apply mathematical and statistical concepts, at the undergraduate and graduate level. As such, our tenure/tenure track faculty members must embrace and reflect through their accomplishments a strong commitment to attracting and encouraging a diverse student population and creating opportunities for students to succeed in their studies and to thrive in their careers.

CONSIDERATION FOR EARLY TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

In accordance with [Academic Senate policy](#) 1.6, a faculty member may be awarded tenure and promotion earlier than the normal six-year probationary period. Following policy 1.6.2 A probationary faculty member may request early review for tenure and promotion according to the following schedule:

- No service credit: October of the 4th or 5th year after appointment
- One year of service credit: October of the 4th year after appointment
- Two years of service credit: October of the 3rd year after appointment

Substantially accelerated progress in all three areas of evaluation is required for early tenure and promotion consideration. Should a candidate wish to be considered for early tenure and promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor, they must discuss it with their Department chair, RTP chair, and RTP committee.

INTRODUCTION TO CRITERIA FOR RETENTION, TENURE, AND PROMOTION

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. Aspects related to advancing diversity, equity, and justice are specified in each of the three area descriptions.

By following these criteria, working with the RTP Committee in the Department of Mathematics, and attending college or university sponsored RTP workshops, faculty members can enhance their chances for success.

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 their 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, including a higher level of service. 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 are expected to 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 is expected to submit to the Committee the names of at least three potential external reviewers, at least three of whom are not co-authors or the Ph.D. advisor of the candidate. 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.

I. 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. 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Student evaluations of teaching. Students evaluate instructors each semester using a standard College of Science and Engineering survey. We acknowledge the concerns, based on research, that Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness (SETEs) may be biased against faculty that are not cisgendered white males (See, e.g., P. Spooren, B. Brockx, and D. Mortelmans, On the Validity of Student Evaluations of Teaching: The State of the Art,

Review of Educational Research, 83, no. 4 (2013), 598--642.) SETEs will be considered along with other measures of teaching effectiveness and student achievement including written comments made by students on the survey. Candidates are encouraged to administer mid-semester evaluations in the form of a questionnaire of their own design, which provides feedback from students about classroom practices. The Committee will view evidence of changes in such practices based on this feedback positively.

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. In addition, preparing students for a thesis, professional career, or doctoral program often requires study beyond the regular course offerings of the Department. Thus, candidates who direct theses, sponsor research activities, teach seminar courses, or direct independent study [MATH 696 (Applied Mathematics Project I), MATH 697 (Applied Mathematics Project II), MATH 699 (Special Study in Mathematics), MATH 899 (Special Study)] make a significant contribution to our students' education. The Department places a high value on these types of activities. The quality of the student research will be measured, among other ways, through student presentations, such as campus research showcases. Refereed publications that include students as co-authors will be viewed as strong evidence of a candidate's contribution to supporting teaching through research and scholarship.
3. **Curricular innovations.** The Committee will 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 and active participation in education-related conferences.** Professional conferences often address issues in collegiate mathematics education such as appropriate course content, new teaching methods, or alternative assessment practices. The Committee will consider presentations at professional conferences or active participation in workshops related to mathematics education as evidence of a candidate's teaching effectiveness. Research presentations at professional conferences may also be evaluated under professional achievement and growth.
5. **Advancing diversity, equity, and justice.** San Francisco State University serves a diverse student population, and the committee will consider evidence of the candidate creating academically rigorous, inclusive learning environments where all students from our diverse population participate. This may be accomplished by innovative pedagogical techniques (i.e., going beyond lecturing) that advance equitable student engagement with mathematics. Candidates are encouraged to participate in faculty workshops and conferences designed to promote equity and inclusion in education. The committee will value the development of curricula and programs to support historically marginalized or minoritized groups (e.g., Black, Latinx/e or LGBTQ+ students). The committee will view favorably a candidate's demonstrated application—in mentoring or teaching—of their knowledge of challenges and barriers encountered by students from these groups, and evidence of strategies employed to help address such challenges.

II. 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 mathematics could demonstrate professional achievement by publishing papers in refereed journals, while specialists in mathematics education could demonstrate professional achievement by successful grant funding of educational research. 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. The Committee considers refereed work published or accepted for publication—especially in research journals with strong reputations—as primary evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth. High citation counts can also provide evidence that a candidate's work is being used by other scholars. Less weight is given to publication of non-refereed papers and technical reports, and to unpublished manuscripts.

2. Presentations. The Committee may also consider presentations of current research at professional conferences as evidence of a candidate's professional achievement and growth. The most important activity within this area would be as an invited speaker at a national or international symposium or conference. This includes invited lecture series delivered at such conferences and in graduate training workshops and schools.

3. Grant funding. The Department encourages candidates to 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 non-research projects may be evaluated under teaching effectiveness or contributions to campus and community, depending on the nature of the project. Highly positive reports of external reviewers of grant proposals that were not funded can be submitted as evidence of independent assessment of the candidate's research and scholarly accomplishments.

4. 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.

5. Advancing diversity, equity, and justice. The committee will consider a candidate's use of their professional expertise to broaden participation in mathematics, and to use mathematics towards the construction of a more equitable and just society. For example, the candidate may research structural barriers or create new opportunities for students and community members from historically marginalized populations to engage in research and scholarship. They may use mathematical tools—preferably in collaboration with community partners—to study issues of justice and injustice, and advance positive change in the local community and in the global setting. Leadership in a role that advances a cause that is critical to the mission of the department, college, or university may also be considered toward professional achievement and growth. A variety of peer-reviewed venues for dissemination are accepted as evidence of a candidate's contributions.

III. 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. Service expectations for assistant professors are considerably lower than for associate and full professors. The Committee will consider, but is not limited to, the criteria described below to evaluate a candidate's particular contributions to campus and community. In all three categories, the RTP committee will highly value efforts to attract, nurture, and support a diverse group of students. Campus, professional, and community service may be documented with letters or emails of invitation or thanks which illustrate the nature and extent of the candidate's contribution.

1. Service to the profession. Candidates are expected to participate in professional organizations. The Committee may consider activities such as service with 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, sponsorship of student organizations, or direction of non-instructional projects as evidence of a candidate's service to the University. Significant service at the College/University level may include serving at College/University committees with a time commitment equivalent to being a senator in the Academic Senate or a member of Senate subcommittees.

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. This may include giving talks for or consulting with community organizations on subjects related to candidate's field; writing for the media for a general audience or being interviewed on topics connected to candidate's field; and outreach activities that attract students to the University or that make the University better known to the community.

4. Advancing diversity, equity, and justice. The committee will consider evidence of a candidate engaging in service to historically marginalized or minoritized populations within the discipline. Such activities may include: recruiting and mentoring students or faculty from historically minoritized communities, serving on committees to address issues of systemic discrimination within the discipline, or the creation of spaces or events designed to support the success of students or faculty across professional and personal experiences. Designing, seeking funding for, and implementing programs that address the challenges and barriers encountered by students from historically marginalized populations will be highly valued by the committee. The committee will also consider community-based service to be of high importance and relevance, especially within the realm of advancing diversity, equity, and justice (e.g., running a Math Circle or an outreach program with a high proportion of participants from historically minoritized populations). Attention to diversity, equity, and justice may be demonstrated by articulating one's personal role as an essential and generative actor.

PROMOTION FROM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TO FULL PROFESSOR

The Department requires that faculty seeking promotion to Full Professor provide evidence of continued excellence in teaching, professional achievement and growth, and contributions to campus and community. In the area of contributions to campus and community, specifically, the expectation is for a combination of significant service at the department, college, and university levels.

Additionally, a candidate for Full Professor is expected to demonstrate their role as a leader within the profession. In this regard, the candidate is asked to create a separate Leadership section of their narrative, in which they describe their leadership activities. Possible examples of leadership that are loosely collected into each of the three areas of evaluation are listed below. A candidate is expected to exhibit leadership in at least one of the three areas.

A. Leadership in Teaching

Examples of evidence of leadership in developing departmental teaching more broadly include contributing to:

- Mentoring junior faculty through classroom observation and sharing of teaching techniques;
- Ongoing curriculum innovation and development
- Leading program development and evaluation;
- Leading broader departmental testing and implementation of different teaching approaches;
- Facilitating the development of student-centered equitable teaching by designing and offering professional learning opportunities to others.

B. Leadership in Professional Achievement and Growth

Examples of evidence of leadership in professional achievement and growth include contributing to:

- Attaining external funding (e.g., from state, federal, or external foundation sources);
- Steady dissemination of scholarly work (e.g., publications or presentations in their area of scholarly interest at professional conferences or meetings);
- Serving on editorial boards of professional journals;
- Continued success involving undergraduate and graduate students in research;
- Broadening participation in scholarly activity through programmatic collaboration or research leadership.

C. Leadership in Contributions to Campus and Community

Examples of evidence of leadership in contributions to campus and community include:

- Chairing a Department committee;
- Serving as the course coordinator of a multi-section course;
- Leading an effort in writing a grant proposal that will bring benefits to a wide range of students and faculty in the Department;
- Mentoring junior faculty and student leaders;
- Serving as a key officer of professional organizations;
- Serving as a board member or key organizer of a significant community service;
- Broadening participation in the academic community through programmatic collaboration or organizational leadership.

CONSIDERATION FOR EARLY PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

As per [Academic Senate Policy #F22-241](#), “while evaluation of an application for promotion from associate to full professor may be made at the beginning of the sixth year after promotion to associate, exceptions can

be made for (1) exceptional achievements in service and/or (2) exceptional achievements in professional achievement and growth.”

Document History

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