Guidelines on Reappointment, Tenure, & Promotion

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Approved by Dean Obare: January 27, 2020

Section I of this document describes the areas in which faculty are evaluated for reappointment to a second term as an Assistant Professor, tenure and promotion to Associate Professor (or tenure alone, if the initial appointment is at that rank), and promotion to Professor. Section II describes the expectations to be met at each of those three stages. These Guidelines are subordinate to the UNCG University-Wide Evaluation Guidelines for Promotions and Tenure and to any similar school-wide document that may be adopted for JSNN in the future.

The procedures that will be followed in regard to each stage are specified in a separate document, the Department’s Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, & Promotion.

Section I. Areas of Faculty Evaluation

Faculty will be evaluated in the three areas of teaching, research, and service. (UNCG Regulations permit Directed Professional Activity as an optional fourth category of assessment; however, JSNN and the Department of Nanoscience have elected not to use this category.)

I.A. Teaching

From the UNCG Guidelines (p. 3):

“The most fundamental function of the University is teaching. Research and creative activity, service, and directed professional activity, while important to the life of the University, do not have the central importance of teaching. Therefore, it is essential that excellence in teaching be encouraged and rewarded. Faculty members eligible for promotions and tenure should demonstrate their accomplishments as teachers and their continual efforts to improve their teaching.

“The University embraces all teaching strategies that enhance student learning both inside and outside the classroom, particularly critical thinking, higher-order reasoning, and problem-solving skills, and encourages a wide array of student learning opportunities including community engaged teaching, international experiences, and other diverse modalities and settings. Faculty members eligible for promotion and tenure should demonstrate their accomplishments as
teachers and their continual efforts to improve their teaching (UNC Policy Manual, 400.3.1.1[G]).”

I.A.1 Scope of Teaching

The Department of Nanoscience recognizes the following activities as falling into the category of teaching. If a faculty member engages in or plans to engage significantly in other activities that might be considered teaching, and wishes them to be included under that category in a reappointment, tenure, or promotion decision, they should first discuss the matter with the Chair, who will (if necessary) confer with the Dean. If it seems appropriate, the agreement to include those activities will be documented in writing.

The supervision and mentoring of students in research for MS theses and PhD dissertation is a particularly important teaching responsibility for Nanoscience faculty, given the department’s status as a graduate-only department, and will be given a prominent role in the assessment of teaching. Other teaching activities include:

- Instructing students in courses, laboratories, and internships, whether face-to-face or on-line.
- Developing students’ skills in writing, oral communication, data analysis and presentation, and other areas that contribute to their success.
- Mentoring students in research projects that are incidental to their thesis or dissertation research.
- Developing new courses needed by the department and revising courses already in existence.
- Teaching in any of UNCG’s special instructional programs, such as Lloyd International Honors College, Ashby Residential College, Freshman Seminar Program, etc.
- Developing courses for on-line delivery.
- Publishing or editing textbooks and other instructional materials.

I.A.2 Documentation of teaching effectiveness.

- Timely achievement of program milestones by one’s students.
- Graduation of MS and PhD students.
- Publications resulting from student research, with students as authors or co-authors.
- Initial job placement of graduates and subsequent career success.
- Student teaching evaluations administered via Class Climate.
- Peer observations of teaching.
- Letters from current or former students.
- Honors, recognitions, or awards related to teaching.
• Evidence of steps taken to improve one’s teaching, such as participation in workshops, incorporation of innovative techniques, revision of courses, etc.

Copies of teaching evaluations and peer observations will be kept in department files. It is the faculty member’s responsibility to maintain all other information that may be needed to document teaching effectiveness.

I.B Research and creative activity

From the UNCG Guidelines (p. 6):

“As part of its mission, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro rewards research and creative activities that advance knowledge, support teaching, apply innovation and entrepreneurship, and promote the application of knowledge for the benefit of society. Research and creative activities include all forms of discovery and integration of knowledge such as the solution of practical problems; critical analyses; the organization, creation, analysis and dissemination of knowledge resources; the creation and performance or exhibition of works of art; and their public dissemination. All faculty members are expected to engage in significant research or creative scholarly activities as appropriate to their fields or disciplines, their continuing professional growth, and the mission of the University.”

I.B.1 The scope of research

The Department of Nanoscience values the production of original scientific research, its synthesis and dissemination, and its application in practical settings. All faculty are expected to publish the results of their research in appropriate outlets, to participate regularly in scientific conferences, and to secure external support through grants and contracts to fund their research. Research may include basic scientific research, applied research that addresses specific practical problems, or community-engaged research that involves community members in both posing and solving problems with a scientific dimension. Collaborative research, whether with colleagues at UNCG or at other institutions, is welcomed and encouraged. Although not required at any rank, faculty are also encouraged to pursue the commercialization of research results, and such activity will be included in the category of research.

The following specific activities are recognized as falling into the category of research. If a faculty member engages in or plans to engage significantly in other activities that might be considered research, and wishes them to be included under that category in a reappointment, tenure, or promotion decision, they should first discuss the matter with the Chair, who will (if necessary) confer with the Dean. If it seems appropriate, the agreement to include those activities will be documented in writing.
• Research articles published in refereed journals and conference proceedings
• Research monographs published by recognized scholarly presses
• Invited, unrefereed research publications
• Non-research publications such as editorials, survey reviews, book reviews, and commentaries
• Edited volumes published by recognized scholarly presses
• Chapters contributed to edited volumes published by recognized scholarly presses
• Presentations (invited or contributed) at professional conferences
• Invitations to present research at institutions outside UNCG
• Publications or presentations resulting from pedagogical innovations or research on science teaching.

The department expects all faculty to secure external funding to support their research and their students to the maximum extent possible. This includes:

• Grants from federal agencies such as NIH, NSF, or DOD
• Grants or contracts from state and local agencies, private foundations, or industry sources (if recorded in RAMSeS)
• Gifts by private organizations or individuals (if recorded by the Development Office)
• Internal grants awarded by UNCG
• Contracts with industry to perform specific services
• Industry internships for students that benefit their professional development

The department values and encourages commercialization of research results as a supplement to the conduct of original research, and provided that it enhances the academic mission of the department and JSNN. Such activity includes:

• Submission of Innovation Disclosure Forms to the UNCGLaunch Office by the candidate and her/his students
• US or foreign patents applied for or granted
• Licensing of inventions of UNCG-born technologies to a 3rd-party commercial enterprise
• Creation of a start-up company based on UNCG research results

1.B.2 Documentation of research impact

• A list of publications, conference presentations, and other research products
• Explanation of the candidate’s role in multi-authored papers
• Information on the quality of journals and other venues in which the research is published, including journal impact factors where appropriate
• Information on the impact of the candidate’s research, including citation analyses where appropriate
• Evidence of broad attention to the research or commercial activities, such as press coverage (popular or scientific) or interviews.
• Letters from external reviewers in the case of tenure and promotion decisions (external letters are not required for reappointment)
• A list of grants awarded and proposals submitted, as documented in RAMSeS
• Letters attesting to “non-traditional” awards that cannot be documented in RAMSeS, such as in-kind contributions of research materials, or certain fellowships awarded to students
• In the case of proposals submitted but not funded, agency reviews that assess the quality of the proposal
• The evaluation of commercialization activities (such as patents, licensing, and start-ups) will take account of their local and regional economic impact, for which the candidate will provide evidence.

I.C. Service

From the UNCG Guidelines (p. 10)

“Service embraces activities that sustain the University and enable it to carry out its mission, contributes to the function and effectiveness of the faculty member's profession and discipline, and reaches out to external communities and constituencies, such as government agencies, business, private for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, and arts communities, where academic knowledge intersects with practical affairs and problem solving. Academic and professional service is essential to creating an environment that supports scholarly excellence, meets the internal operational needs of the University, and enhances the University's relationships to the UNC system, the local community, the region, state, and world. All faculty members are expected to engage in University service, with increasing involvement at unit and University levels at higher ranks.

“In addition to service on campus, faculty members often contribute to their professions and disciplines through involvement and leadership in professional organizations, interdisciplinary activities, community service, and community-engaged outreach. Professional, interdisciplinary, and community-related service will be given consideration as part of promotion and tenure review based on their importance to the discipline or profession and the mission of the University.”
I.C.2 The scope of service

All faculty are expected to contribute service to the Department, JSNN, the University, and the scientific profession, in a manner consistent with their seniority. In general, faculty are expected to contribute more service as they gain in seniority. Faculty may also contribute service to the community (local, State, national, or international) and the department will recognize such service, especially where it draws on their scientific expertise. However, community service is not required at any rank. Service will be recognized whether it is compensated or uncompensated. The following activities constitute the main types of service recognized by the Department:

- Serving as a member or chair of a committee at the Department, JSNN, or University level
- Holding a part-time administrative appointment at any level of the university
- Contributing to a report or review for UNCG or for another institution
- Serving on a grant review panel for a funding agency
- Reviewing manuscripts for a professional journal
- Serving as an editor, associate editor, or editorial board member for a professional journal
- Consulting to public agencies (local, state, or federal) or private organizations
- Providing expert testimony in court cases
- Consulting to private industry

I.C.2 Documentation of service contributions

- Generally, service contributions are documented by simply listing them, possibly with a brief description of the work involved. Where a service contribution is exceptional, or the candidate wants it to figure significantly in their evaluation, other evidence of its scope and impact may be provided, such as letters from entities to which the service was provided, or documentation of the impact of a report. In most cases, such evidence is not required.

Section II. Expectations for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

II.A – Expectations for reappointment to a second term as Assistant Professor

Faculty are reviewed for reappointment in the third year of their initial 4-year appointment as an Assistant Professor. If reappointment is recommended and approved, then the candidate is reappointed to a second three-year term. If reappointment is denied, then the candidate’s employment ends at the end of the 4th year. The reappointment review covers all three areas described above and the candidate is expected to demonstrate satisfactory achievements in each area.
II.A.1 – Teaching

Candidates must have demonstrated effective classroom teaching, as shown by satisfactory student evaluations and peer observation reports. It is not necessary that a candidate have nothing but positive student evaluations and comments, or that peers did not suggest any ways in which teaching could be improved. At the start of one’s teaching career, there will often be some room for improvement. However, the candidate should show, in the narrative that they provide about their teaching (see Department Procedures) that they have taken note of any difficulties and are working to address them.

Chairing at least one dissertation committee, and serving as a member or chair of 1-4 additional committees, is expected by the time of reappointment.

Candidates are encouraged to provide any additional evidence of their commitment to the department’s teaching mission and to developing their own teaching effectiveness.

II.A.2 – Research

Candidates must show that they have initiated an independent program of research at UNCG that has the potential to be productive, impactful, and externally funded. Continued collaborations with mentors or colleagues at previous institutions are welcome, but by the time of tenure review there must be evidence of an independent program of research. Candidates for reappointment must have accomplished at least the following:

- **Publications/presentations:** Completion of any publications in progress at the time of hire based primarily on graduate or postdoctoral research. Submission of 1-3 papers based on research initiated at UNCG. Presentation of research results (papers or posters) at three regional or national meetings.
- **Grant proposal submissions:** Three grant proposals submitted to external agencies. Proposals submitted to any appropriate internal UNCG program.
- **Grant awards:** External awards are not expected by the time of reappointment, although an award would substantially strengthen the case. The candidate should have obtained at least one internal UNCG award to supplement their start-up funds.

II.A.3 – Service

In general, Assistant Professors are not expected to engage in significant service during their first term. The Department Chair will arrange for some limited assignments, but Assistant Professors should be cautious about accepting significant service outside the
department before reappointment and should discuss any invitations with the Chair before agreeing.

II.B – Expectations for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor

Candidates must be reviewed for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor no later than their 6th year unless otherwise provided in the initial hiring agreement. Early reviews for tenure based on exceptional performance are possible, but there is no “right” to an early tenure review, except as may be provided in the hiring agreement. The process to be followed in a tenure review (whether “on time” or early) is described in the Department Procedures.

If a faculty member is hired as an Associate Professor without tenure, the tenure review must occur no later than the 3rd year of the appointment, unless otherwise provided in the hiring agreement. The expectations for tenure in such cases are the same as for a person hired as an Assistant Professor. It is possible to consider the Associate Professor for promotion to Professor at the same time as they are reviewed for tenure, in which case the expectations for promotion are the same as those specified in Section II.C, below.

II.B.1 – Teaching

Candidates must have demonstrated effective classroom teaching, as shown by satisfactory student evaluations and peer observation reports.

Chairing at least three dissertation committees and serving as a member of 2-5 additional committees, is expected by the time of tenure.

Candidates are encouraged to provide any additional evidence of their commitment to the department’s teaching mission and to developing their own teaching effectiveness.

II.B.2 – Research

By the time of tenure, it is expected that the program of research will be successful (as shown especially by the number and impact of publications), ongoing (as shown by a consistent or increasing pattern of publications and regular involvement in professional conferences), and funded by external awards. Collaborative research is expected and encouraged, but the candidate must have established an independent research presence through such measures as corresponding authorship on papers, primary PI status on external proposals and awards, and lines of research that do not merely continue work begun as a postdoc or graduate student. Although some early publications (for example, those based on research started before joining UNCG but completed after appointment) may be taken into account in the tenure review, work
initiated and completed after appointment will be given primary weight. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the case for tenure:

- **Publications/Presentations:** An average of two or more peer-reviewed papers per year since appointment, with at least half the published papers as corresponding author. Highly significant papers (as determined by journal quality, citation analysis, the assessment of outside reviewers, or other appropriate measures) will be given greater weight than those deemed by the senior faculty to be less significant. A significant invited paper or book chapter will be considered equivalent to a peer-reviewed paper. However, non-peer-reviewed publications should not constitute more than a small proportion of the total. Consistent presentation of research papers or posters at regional and national meetings is expected.

- **External funding:** At least one competitive external award sufficient to support a graduate student and provide support for the PI’s research. An average of three external proposals submitted per year since appointment, unless substantial multi-year external support has been awarded, in which case the number of proposals submitted is expected to be less.

- **Entrepreneurial activity:** Although not required for tenure, entrepreneurial activity may be used to strengthen the case. All such activity must serve to enhance the department’s academic mission and must be based on a successful program of research. In general, one patent granted will be considered equivalent to a major published paper. Innovation disclosures and patent applications alone will be given little weight in the assessment of entrepreneurial activity. They are roughly equivalent to conference presentations of research.

- **Potential for continued success:** The combination of publications/presentations, funded awards, and review comments on proposals not funded should demonstrate that the success achieved so far will be continued after tenure and will eventually lead to a record that supports a recommendation for promotion to Professor.

**II.B.3 – Service**

By the time of tenure, Assistant Professors are expected to have provided service to the department in the form of committee memberships or other assignments that support the department’s mission and operations. Additionally, service at the School and University levels should be sufficient to demonstrate a commitment to the faculty’s service responsibilities and a willingness to make further contributions with increasing seniority. Professional service in the form of reviews of manuscripts and grants, editorial responsibilities, contributions to the operation of professional meetings or societies, is also expected. Community service, especially when it draws on the faculty member’s professional expertise, is valued but not required.
II.C – Expectations for promotion to the rank of Professor

An Associate Professor may be reviewed for promotion to Professor at any time after receiving tenure; there is no “minimum time in rank” required, although five years after tenure is typical. The University Regulations confer the right to a full review for promotion no later than the start of a person’s seventh year as a tenured Associate Professor. The process for invoking this right is explained in the Department Procedures.

II.C.1 – Teaching

Candidates must have demonstrated effective classroom teaching since tenure, as shown by satisfactory student evaluations and peer observation reports. Courses taught should have undergone regular revision to maintain currency in the rapidly changing fields in which our faculty work.

Candidates must demonstrate consistent and effective participation in graduate training as shown by the supervision of a minimum of five PhD students, and the approval of at least three PhD dissertations under their supervision since tenure. Candidates are also expected to have served consistently on the committees of other faculty’s students.

Candidates are encouraged to provide any additional evidence of their commitment to the department’s teaching mission and to developing their own teaching effectiveness.

II.C.2 – Research

Candidates for promotion to Professor must show evidence of sustained research productivity since tenure, a consistent pattern of external funding, and a national reputation as a leader in their field of research. Collaborative research is expected and encouraged, but the candidate should be the lead investigator on a substantial number of proposals, awards, and publications. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the case for promotion:

- **Publications/Presentations:** An average of three or more peer-reviewed papers per year since tenure, with at least half the published papers as corresponding author. Highly significant papers (as determined by journal quality, citation analysis, the assessment of outside reviewers, or other appropriate measures) will be given greater weight than those deemed by the senior faculty to be less significant. A significant invited paper or book chapter will be considered equivalent to a peer-reviewed paper. However, non-peer-reviewed publications should not constitute more than a small proportion of the total. Consistent presentation of research papers or posters at national and international meetings is expected.
• *External funding*: Sufficient external funding since tenure to support an average of two graduate students per year and provide support for the PI’s research. A minimum of eight external proposals submitted since tenure, with primary PI status on at least half. If substantial multi-year external support has been awarded, the number of proposals may be less.

• *Entrepreneurial activity*: Although not required for promotion, entrepreneurial activity may be used to strengthen the case. All such activity must serve to enhance the department’s academic mission and must be based on a successful program of research. In general, one patent granted will be considered equivalent to a major published paper. Innovation disclosures and patent applications alone will be given little weight in the assessment of entrepreneurial activity. They are roughly equivalent to conference presentations of research.

II.C.3 – Service

For promotion to Professor, candidates are expected to have provided significant service to the department, the School, and the University, some of it in leadership roles, such as chairing committees or task forces, holding office in the Faculty Senate, or holding administrative appointments. Professional service should be at a level that demonstrates a substantial presence in the discipline. This will normally take the form of frequent reviewing for journals and funding agencies, editorial responsibilities, involvement in professional societies, or consulting to agencies, industry, or academic institutions. Community service, including outreach to industry, especially when it draws on the candidate’s professional expertise, is valued and encouraged, but not required.