

# **Tenure and Promotion at Colorado State University**

## **Criteria and Expectations of the**

### **Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering<sup>1</sup>**

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This document presents the criteria and expectations of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) in compliance with requirements at Colorado State University (CSU) regarding the award of tenure to tenure track (TT) faculty and the promotion of TT and tenured (T) faculty.

The period of time a TT faculty member spends as a non-tenured assistant professor is called the probationary period. Promotion to associate professor is typically considered after five years in rank as a TT assistant professor. The tenure decision is also considered at that time.

The probationary period is expected to last no more than six years (with the tenure and promotion decision being made in the final, sixth year). The faculty manual provides a mechanism for extending the probationary period, with approval from the Dean and the Provost. One common reason for such an extension is the need to take family medical leave. Also, the standard start of the probationary period is expected to be at the beginning of the academic year, i.e., at the beginning of the fall semester. When an assistant professor begins his/her appointment in the middle of the academic year (i.e., January or the beginning of the spring semester), the standard expectation is that the duration of the probationary period will be extended to six and one-half years. Shorter probationary periods may be possible (e.g., five and one-half years) when there are extenuating circumstances, provided formal approval has been obtained. For instance, shorter probationary periods are possible when faculty members gained TT experience at peer institutions. Considerations for shorter probationary periods need to be reviewed and approved by the promotion and tenure committees. In the case of faculty members who earned promotion and tenure at peer institutions prior to joining CSU, the promotion and tenure committees need to review and approve a recommendation for tenure and appropriate rank at the time of hiring.

Although tenured associate professors may remain in that rank indefinitely, they may be considered for promotion to full professor generally after five years in rank.

#### **Promotion to Associate Professor**

##### Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

A TT faculty member should demonstrate a commitment to, and a capacity for, delivering a significant body of instructional content with high quality. Evidence demonstrating teaching effectiveness may include:

- a) thoughtful evaluation by peers and students, especially when evaluations result from Department-level assessment of programs;
- b) assessment of student learning in the classes taught by the faculty member;
- c) enrollment in courses taught by the faculty member;
- d) well-organized syllabi that clearly indicate course expectations;
- e) indication of on-going course development (even if minor); and/or
- f) breadth of instructional experience that demonstrates successful teaching of a variety of courses at several levels (lower division, upper division, and graduate).

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<sup>1</sup> Modified from the Provost's White Paper (url) and approved by review of the CEE Department's Tenure and Promotion Committees.

CEE recognizes that effectiveness in teaching is not easy or straightforward to assess. Therefore, care is required when evaluating teaching success for each individual TT faculty member. For example, engaging classroom instruction may come naturally to some faculty members, whereas other members may experience initial difficulties in this regard. However, when a faculty member encounters issues or problems with teaching effectiveness, he or she should acknowledge and address them with the goal of continuous improvement. The use of available professional development resources in this area, such as The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) is encouraged.

Successful mentoring and advising of graduate students is an important part of effective teaching. A TT faculty member must participate in graduate-student committees, and successfully advise PhD and Master-degree students to degree completion. To earn tenure and promotion in CEE, a faculty member is expected to have advised at least one PhD and several MS students to degree completion before the end of the probationary period.

### Evidence of Research and Scholarly Accomplishments

Evidence of research and scholarly accomplishments is based on refereed publications in respected and renowned national or international outlets, with the primary emphasis on refereed publications in archival journals. In this regard, both quantity and quality of journal publications are considered.

Other evidence of accomplishments in research and scholarship include:

- a) presentations at regional, national, and international conferences;
- b) invitations to visit and present at peer (or higher) institutions;
- c) external funding activity (writing of proposals, obtaining awards, and obtaining renewals);
- d) measured consideration of citations by other authors;
- e) meaningful collaborations whose value can be documented;
- f) activity in applied research (engineering reports, invention disclosures, patents, etc.); and,
- g) development of a portfolio of juried creative scholarship in (inter)national venues.

In particular, consideration of this evidence must demonstrate that the TT faculty member has established, or is on the path to establishing, an independent research program supported by procurement of external grants and contracts for research projects conducted at CSU. The faculty member should be the principal investigator for several projects, which provide financial support of graduate students, and produce scholarly publications.

Although development of a strong disciplinary reputation with quality and impact are valued, interdisciplinary activity also is encouraged and will be taken into account when assessing evidence of scholarly work.

### Evidence of Service Contributions

There are two types of service contributions: internal and external.

Internal service includes membership on CEE, College of Engineering, and University committees, which can be standing and ad-hoc committees (e.g., faculty search committees), as well as activities such as advising student professional organizations (e.g. ASCE, Tau Beta Pi, Engineers without

Borders).

External service includes activities external to CSU, and especially involves activities for professional societies, such as professional society committee service, including serving on the organizing committees of national and international conferences, workshops, etc., organizing and/or moderating sessions at professional conferences, consulting with individuals and groups in the State of Colorado in extension and application of research findings, serving as a reviewer for competitive grant proposals and refereed publications, and serving as an editor, associate editor, and/or editorial board member of archival journals.

During the probationary period, TT faculty members generally are expected to participate in a less-than-average amount of service, thereby increasing time available for research and teaching activities. Although some internal service is necessary, particularly in terms of CEE committee service, external service is preferred as this service helps to establish a professional network benefitting career development.

## **Tenure**

Although tenure and promotion are evaluated separately, tenure usually is evaluated simultaneously with promotion to the rank of associate professor, and involves assessment of the same dossier. The distinction between promotion and tenure is that promotion comes with a new rank and generally a raise in salary, whereas tenure implies CSU's long-term commitment to the faculty member's position. In the case where an assistant professor simultaneously applies for both tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor, the written recommendation of CEE's Tenure Committee shall apply to both the tenure and the promotion decisions, as stipulated in the CEE Department Code.

Promotion should acknowledge accomplishments prior to appointment as a TT faculty member at CSU, and recognize achievements while a CSU TT faculty member. In the conferring of tenure, CSU makes a significant commitment to the faculty member, for many years to come. Therefore, a central element of the criteria for tenure is the promise of future accomplishment by the faculty member.

When tenure is denied, CSU generally grants the faculty member employment for one year past the end of the probationary period. Thereafter, employment at CSU is terminated.

## **Promotion to Professor**

A professor at CSU is expected to be a university leader, contributing in a major way to the mission of the CEE Department, the College of Engineering and CSU. An exemplary record of activity and achievement is expected in most of the major categories of activity, i.e., teaching, scholarship and funded research, and service. Also expected is evidence of leadership supporting CEE's mission and activities.

Much of the same criteria (for teaching, research, and service) noted for promotion to associate professor is applicable for promotion to full professor. However, now substantial emphasis is placed on national and international recognition of the quality and the impact of the faculty member's funded research and scholarship.

Promotion to the rank of professor entails an increase in leadership expectations. Examples of increased expectations include:

- teaching a broader range of classes;
- designing or developing new courses;
- participating substantially in curriculum development; and
- advising several PhD students to graduation.

Examples of research expectations include:

- research projects of longer duration and substantial funding;
- invitations to give broad-scope, keynote or other special presentations at conferences or universities;
- leadership of interdisciplinary teams on more complex projects;
- collaboration with an expanding circle of colleagues, in and out of CSU; and
- establishment of a substantial body of work that exemplifies national and international recognition of the faculty's reputation.

Examples of service contributions include:

- chairing internal and external professional committees;
- serving as an editor or associate editor for major professional journals;
- providing leadership to society in the significant implementation of research findings;
- regularly serving as a panel reviewer for grants; and
- leading significant activities in professional societies.