

Learning Sciences and Technologies Unit Promotion and Tenure Decision Guide

The following are guidance statements for promotion and tenure decision making. These guidance statements are articulated to assist new and continuing faculty in their career building. In addition, these guidance statements will provide direction for unit promotion and tenure decisions to promotion and tenure committees and school administrators. The intent of these guidance statements is to present a framework that generally describes the contours of the landscape for successful career building. It is ***not*** the intent that these guidance statements be viewed as a template or inflexible criteria.

Decision Categories, Critical Dimensions, and Data Sources

The following apply to all the evaluation categories below.

Teaching: The critical dimension for judging teaching is that relatively objective evidence be presented that documents the quality of teaching. Ordinarily documentation will come from consumer reviews (student evaluations of teaching) and peer reviews.

Scholarship: The critical dimension of applicable scholarly activities is that these activities undergo peer review by recognized professionals. Scholarship will be documented by presenting the products of scholarship such as journal articles, books, conference papers, book chapters, etc.

Service: The critical dimension of service is the impact of the service. The impact of service can be documented from testimonials, products produced, and other pertinent data.

Citizenship: The critical dimension of citizenship is that an individual is integrating well into the structure and functions of the unit. Examples include sharing less desirable assignments, accepting opportunities to contribute to the welfare of the unit and program, and participating in unit and program decision making. Generally, citizenship will be judged by unit and school administrators based on their perceptions and other indicators of citizenship.

University Standards: The *Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook* includes criteria and processes that must be applied to all career/personnel decisions. The decision guidance in this document is presented to assist the unit faculty and administrators apply these process and criteria. All candidates for annual review, reappointment, promotion and tenure, and promotion should be fully aware of the process and criteria presented in the *Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook*.

Pre-tenure Annual Review:

The purpose of the review is to ensure that individuals are making progress toward building a plausible case for being promoted and tenured.

Teaching should be adequate with rising indicators of success unless established as excellent. The unit and school average ratings should be one indicator employed in judging the quality of teaching; other indicators may include: course preparation, locations of teaching, integration into unit/program goals, and quality of learning outcomes.

Scholarship should be clearly trending toward developing and publishing professional communications that are documented for quality and recognition. In most cases, quality and recognition will be based on peer review in well established publications such as professional journals, books, invited papers, book chapters, monographs, and other comparable scholarly products. The quality of the scholarship will be based on the selectivity of peer review process of the professional journal, book publisher, invitation to prepare a paper, book editorial process, monograph editorial process, and the quality of the peer/professional review that a scholarly document receives.

In addition, judging scholarship should address participation in and presentations at local, regional, and national meetings. Other scholarly activities are encouraged to augment but not to substitute for these two main endeavors.

Service: will be judged based on the individual's assigned duties, negotiated expectations of the school and unit, and career progress. Ordinarily, service will not be emphasized as an important element of early career building.

Citizenship: It will be expected that all faculty pursue good citizenship with appropriate vigor.

Reappointment Reviews:

The purpose of these reviews is to make a decision about the continued appointment of individuals during their second and fourth years of service.

Teaching: Teaching quality should be clearly articulated and be sufficiently meritorious for students and the instructor. Special emphasis should be placed on developmental progress during the four year review if appropriate. Student and peer evaluations should be within reasonable standards for the type and delivery mode of the teaching.

Scholarship: Scholarship should clearly show potential at the two year review and appropriate achievement at the four year review. The potential total output of scholarship should be equated to between two to three journal articles per year. "Equating" is always a judgment issue; however, equal consideration should be

given to book chapters, invited addresses to prominent professional gatherings, developed curriculum materials, multi-media productions, and other scholarly activities that meet the critical dimension stated above that scholarly products “undergo peer review by recognized professionals.”

Service: Service should be modest at the school, college, and university levels except as specifically assigned by unit and school administrators. Depending on assignments, participation in professional and/or field service may be recognized. Any service responsibilities beyond “minimal” during the first two to three years of appointment should be based on clearly negotiated agreements with unit and school administrators.

Citizenship: Faculty are expected to be good citizens.

Promotion and Tenure Review:

The purpose of this review is to determine if the unit, school, college, university and Commonwealth are sufficiently sanguine about the accomplishments and potential of the individual to make a commitment to continue employment at Virginia Tech.

Teaching: Teaching must be at least competent as indicated by high levels of student accomplishments and reasonable levels of learner and peer evaluations.

Scholarship: Scholarship must be recognized by peer reviewed processes and reasonable/comparable in volume. The equivalent of eight to twelve journal articles in recognized and selective peer reviewed journals should be the cornerstone of the candidate’s plausible case for tenure. “Equating” is always a judgment issue; however, equal consideration should be given to book chapters, invited addresses to prominent professional gatherings, developed curriculum materials, multi-media productions, and other scholarly activities that meet the critical dimension stated above that scholarly products “undergo peer review by recognized professionals.” However, it is expected that the scholarship will be enriched with professional scholarly activities such as presentations at national and regional professional meetings and conferences.

Service: Service will be an important element of this review to project the candidate’s potential participation in future unit, school, college, and university governance. In addition, the candidate may wish to indicate potential for participating in professional organizations. The quality of service will be more important than the quantity and the expectation is that the total of all service will be relatively modest.

Citizenship: The candidate will be expected to have been and to present indications for the future of being a good citizen.

Promotion:

The purpose of this review is to judge the candidate's contributions as a scholar, teacher, service provider, and citizen against the highest standards of accomplishment within Virginia Tech and more broadly within the candidate's national and international peers. The judgment to merit promotion to professor is based on rigorous and extensive review of a candidate's contributions as a scholar primarily but also as a teacher and contributor to professional development.

Teaching: Competent and consistently successful teaching will be expected as demonstrated through continuous documentation of the outcomes of teaching.

Scholarship: Consistent, regular, and acknowledged scholarly communication that reports important information to others within the candidate's profession is essential. It is expected that the candidate's peers will support the quality and extent of the candidate's scholarship as well as the importance of the scholarship to the understanding of important issues within the profession. It is also expected that there will be a mix of scholarly activities but that recognized excellent peer reviewed professional communication (journal articles, monographs, book chapters, books, etc.) must hold a substantial place in the candidate's case for promotion.

Service: Regular and important involvement in the governance of the unit, school, college, university, and professional organizations can be an important element to demonstrate active participation and contribution. Service may support or enhance the case for promotion rather than serve as a key element in making the case.

Citizenship: Successful candidates should be exemplars of citizenship as frequent and valuable contributors to the welfare and progress of the unit, school, college, and university.

Learning Sciences and Technologies

Contextual Statement

The Learning Sciences and Technologies Unit is composed of three programs. These are Educational Psychology, Health Promotions, and Instructional Design and Technology. There are significant differences in these disciplines; however, common standards for expectations and excellence have been developed with guidelines for accommodations. The Unit encourages adherence to the current University initiatives relative to the missions of the University.

Mentoring Processes/Activities

This is a summary of the discussions of the Cross-School and Unit meetings of January 26, 2007. This serves as a draft to solicit feedback and make changes and additions to the document.

A. Junior Faculty Member

1. Junior faculty have some voice in choosing their mentor
2. Junior faculty complete an anonymous “mentoring evaluation” form that allows the faculty to rate the quality and amount of mentoring as well as make suggestions on how to improve it.
3. The junior faculty’s dossier serves as the FAR

B. Mentor

1. The Unit Chair identifies senior faculty to serve as possible mentors
2. The mentor is required to have served on the P&T Committee
3. The mentor cannot serve on the P&T Committee when the mentee is up for mandatory review in years 2, 4, 6.
4. Mentors should describe their mentoring activities in their FAR
5. Mentors are required to meet with their mentees at least once each semester
6. The mentor reviews the mentee’s dossier and provides advice on making the dossier consistent with the Unit’s standards.

C. Mentoring Process

1. Junior faculty members begin developing the dossier in the first year of appointment.
2. There is a procedural mentor during year 1; then this expands to a research mentor or mentoring group.
3. The years 1, 3, 5 reviews by the mentor(s) are informal and transmitted by the mentor(s).

4. The P&T Committee do not review the dossier in years 1, 3, 5. The reviews by the P&T Committee in years 2,4 are written and transmitted by the School Director.
5. The Unit will provide opportunities for junior faculty members to share their research with tenured faculty members.