

## Physics – Departmental Criteria and Procedures

### **Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure**

Physics rule rewrite

December 18, 2006

Minor section number typos corrected October 22, 2008

Minor wording change in Introduction October 27, 2008

#### **1. Introduction**

This rule summarizes the procedures and standards of the Physics Department of North Carolina State University for evaluating faculty performance. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the NC State Academic Tenure Policy(<http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/employment/faculty/POL05.20.1.php>), and the Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) procedures ([www.ncsu.edu/provost/academic\\_affairs/rpt](http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/academic_affairs/rpt)).

The department makes two types of appointment: regular and special. Regular appointments involve teaching, research and service and are state-funded, tenure-track. Regular faculty members will be evaluated for RPT on the basis of all the standards discussed in these guidelines. Special faculty appointments involve some subset of research or teaching, and are contingent upon the availability of support. They are not tenure-track. Specific examples include research professorships and clinical or teaching professorships. Special faculty members will be evaluated for initial appointment or subsequent appointment and promotion on the basis of the standards that relate to their specific duties.

#### **2. Realms of Faculty Responsibility**

The aim of promotion and tenure in the Department of Physics is to recognize and reward colleagues who have achieved distinction in their academic careers, and who show expectation of continued intellectual development. Distinction is characterized by excellence in the conduct and direction of research and teaching. The following paragraphs describe the department's understanding of what comprises activity in these areas. Participation in service and extension activity, and general collegiality of faculty are also recognized as important contributions to the vitality of the Department. In this section and in those that follow, the three principal realms – research, service, and teaching - are listed alphabetically. The relative weight of each of these realms in any specific case is determined by the effort distribution as defined in a candidate's Statement of Mutual Expectations.

## **2.1. Research and Scholarly Activity**

Research and scholarly activity are critical inquiry directed towards the creation of new knowledge or the creative synthesis or application of existing knowledge. Research and scholarly activity will result in publications in refereed journals and positive external projection of the department, and will be carried on in conjunction with participation in professional meetings and service in professional societies and organizations. All activity that reflects on the professional competence and reputation of the faculty member contributes to defining distinction in research. The primary criterion for judging excellence will be external recognition by the faculty member's peer group, as manifested in honors, awards, publications, presentations, and particularly in invited presentations, funding, citations, and letters of recommendation. While funding is only one measure of distinction, it is an important factor in establishing a viable research effort at a university. Hence, recognizing that wide funding variations exist within physics, the Department expects its faculty members to obtain and maintain external funding appropriate for sustaining excellence in their particular research area.

## **2.2. Service and Extension**

Service is participation in the various functions and tasks necessary for the operation of the department, college, and NC State as a whole. These functions are diverse: committee service, student advising, management of common exams, supervising teaching assistants, managing Departmental facilities and personnel, and recruiting at the graduate and undergraduate level. Extension comprises service activity benefiting the people of the State of North Carolina. Examples are: liaison work with the teachers in the High Schools throughout the State, and participation in teacher education workshops. Assistant professors should not carry out service and extension activities at the expense of teaching or research beyond that specified in the Statement of Mutual Expectations. But the tenured faculty will recognize the importance of this work and will participate whenever they can usefully contribute.

## **2.3. Teaching**

Teaching is facilitation of learning aimed at helping students achieve their educational objectives. Effective teaching is vital to the mission of the University. Stimulating rigorous and successful instruction should be the goal of every faculty member. The department offers courses at three levels-- graduate, advanced undergraduate, and introductory undergraduate-- and recognizes that faculty members will have skills which may make it appropriate for them to specialize in teaching at one level more than another. In general, however, faculty should involve themselves in teaching at all levels. Innovative instructional methods, text development and new course development will be recognized as significant contributions to the teaching mission of the department.

### **3. STANDARDS FOR REAPPOINTMENT AS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**

Consistent with the guidelines set forth in Section 2, the following specific standards will be applied in considering reappointment:

3.1. Sufficient evidence that scholarly research activity is in progress. This should include any or all of the following:

- 3.1.a. awards or honors received
- 3.1.b. papers published in refereed journals and in conference proceedings
- 3.1.c. invited seminars and colloquia, and invited talks at professional meetings
- 3.1.d. abstracts and talks submitted to professional meetings.
- 3.1.e. proposals submitted and grants and contracts in effect.
- 3.1.f. service to or in professional societies and organizations
- 3.1.g. graduate students supervised in research
- 3.1.h. books authored and edited
- 3.1.i. activity, honors or awards that enhance the faculty member's professional status

3.2. Sufficient evidence of ability to work with colleagues and evidence of participation in the intellectual life of the Department and University, e.g., faculty meetings, seminars, colloquia.

3.3. Sufficient evidence of ability to teach effectively. Effectiveness will be judged from student evaluations, and from in class observation by a member of the senior faculty, chosen by mutual agreement between the candidate and the department head. Impressions of past graduate and undergraduate Physics students determined from exit interviews by the department head, may also be used where appropriate.

### **4. Standards for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure**

Consistent with the guidelines set forth in Section 3, the following standards will be applied in considering promotion from assistant professor to associate professor with tenure.

4.1. Sufficient evidence that outstanding scholarly activity is being achieved and that continued intellectual development can be expected. This should include all of the items listed in section 3.1, together with supporting letters from the faculty member's peer group. The peer group will consist of about five outside authorities (not including the dissertation adviser) who can provide an evaluation of the candidate's scholarship. Three of these outside authorities will be selected by the candidate and about two will be identified by the department.

4.2. Sufficient evidence of effective participation in Departmental service or extension activity. Evidence of ability to work with colleagues in the Department.

4.3. Sufficient evidence of effective teaching. This will be documented as outlined in section 3.3.

## **5. STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR**

Full professors play a crucial role in determining the academic quality of the University. The rank of full professor will be reserved for those who have clearly demonstrated continued intellectual development and who can be expected to provide leadership within the department, the University, and the scholarly community at-large. Length of service alone should not produce an expectation of promotion to full professor. Candidates who feel their case is exceptionally strong may request consideration for promotion by writing a letter to the Department Head.

Consistent with the guidelines set forth in the Section 4, the following specific standards will be applied in considering promotion from associate professor to full professor:

5.1. Sufficient incremental evidence that outstanding and distinguished scholarly activity has been achieved and that continued accomplishments and intellectual development are assured. This should include all of the items listed in 3.1, together with supporting letters from the faculty member's peer group. The peer group will consist of about six outside authorities (not including the dissertation adviser) who can provide an evaluation of the candidate's scholarship. About three of these outside authorities will be selected by the candidate and about three will be identified by the department.

5.2. Sufficient cumulative evidence of ability to work cooperatively with colleagues at all levels, in and out of the department. Service should show evidence of active leadership or contribution at the departmental, college and University level. Extension activity should show evidence of leadership at the state or national level.

5.3. Sufficient cumulative evidence of effective teaching in both lower and upper level courses.

## **6. PROCEDURES FOR RPT REVIEW**

The department follows the guidelines published by the Office of the Provost regarding the documentation and process for conducting reviews at the department level for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. These guidelines include dossier preparation, seeking and receiving external evaluations, and formal review steps at the department level. The RPT committee will review these dossiers at the beginning of the fall semester and communicate its advice to the DVF. The RPT committee will furthermore conduct an informal review of any anticipated RPT action in the spring semester prior to a formal action in the fall semester and the solicitation of letters of reference.

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