

# COEN FAC 001

## Tenure and Promotion Policy

**Effective Date: December 1997**

**Revised: April 2002, January 2006, May 2010, April 2017**

**Provost Approved: July 2017**

**Scope:** This policy governs the awarding of tenure and promotion for tenure-eligible faculty in the College of Engineering.

For the purposes of tenure review and promotion to associate professor, this policy applies to all tenure eligible faculty appointments including those with joint administrative/faculty positions where appointment to the faculty begins after July 1, 2017. Pre-tenured faculty who were appointed prior to July 1, 2017 may choose to be evaluated under this policy or the tenure and promotion policies in effect at the time of their appointment.

Candidates for promotion to the rank of professor in fall 2017 may elect to be evaluated either according to current policy or to the guidelines in force immediately prior to current policy. After 2017, all candidates for promotion to professor shall be evaluated according to current policy.

### **I. Preamble**

BSU Policy 4340 outlines the expectations, requirements and process for faculty tenure and promotion; this college policy specifies requirements for the development of departmental tenure and promotion policies and articulates the process and principles for college-level review of applicants. This policy uses the term “department” to describe both departments and schools within COEN. Annual review of faculty members and tenure progress review for the pre-tenured faculty are addressed in a separate COEN policy.

### **II. Departmental Tenure and Promotion Policies**

Each department of COEN shall author, ratify, and implement a policy governing the granting of tenure and promotion within the unit. As part of the ratification process, each policy must be consistent with university policy, college policy, and approved by the Dean.

University policy provides generic examples of activities relevant to performance in teaching, research, and service, the three prime areas of faculty responsibility and evaluation. The expectations and duties of individual faculty, however, vary significantly across departments, based on factors such as number of full-time faculty, range of degrees offered, and nature of disciplinary practices.

Therefore, the tenure and promotion policies of the department shall include more specific activity descriptions for each of the three areas of evaluation to reflect the unit’s mission, consistent with the overall mission of the university.

The department’s policy shall articulate criteria for each area of evaluation that define a level of performance necessary to meet departmental standards and expectations with respect to granting of tenure and promotion to associate professor, and to promotion to professor. These criteria must provide clear and substantive guidance for both the faculty member seeking promotion and/or tenure and for the reviewers.

### **III. Mandatory Features of Tenure and Promotion Criteria**

#### **A. Teaching**

One fundamental aspect of mission of the college of engineering is the education of our students. One of our guiding principles is “an unshakeable focus on student learning.” As such, the highest premium must be placed on the importance of teaching in the development and evaluation of faculty.

Teaching and learning in the College of Engineering takes many forms. Faculty and students work together in person and online. They engage in educational activities in traditional classrooms, research and teaching laboratories, industry, and the community. Faculty members are expected to practice evidence based instructional methods and to assess student learning and make improvements based on this assessment.

Evaluation of teaching should include assessment of what students have learned, student evaluations, and external evaluations. Examples of types of external evaluations include, but are not limited to peer visits or a mid-semester assessment process (MAP) from the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Faculty members are expected to demonstrate a commitment to improving their teaching, to assess student learning, and to be scholarly teachers. They are expected to be reflective about their pedagogy and be responsive to any potential barriers to learning that have been identified in their teaching activities. They are expected to be cognizant of the research that is pertinent to resolving the learning problems they face and to use this research to improve learning in their classrooms. Faculty members are expected to practice scholarly teaching which is based on critical reflection using systematically and strategically gathered evidence with the goal of maximizing learning through effective teaching.

In departments with graduate programs, faculty members are expected to serve as a mentor for graduate students and in most cases as a major advisor for a thesis based degree. The character of the department and the negotiated workload of the candidate will affect these criteria. Departmental tenure and promotion policies shall describe the relevant expectations and criteria regarding progress of graduate students.

#### **B. Research and Creative Activities**

Boise State University is a public, metropolitan research university providing leadership in academics, research and civic engagement. In the College of Engineering, research is essential to our mission. All tenure-track and tenured faculty members are expected to engage in research and/or creative activity. These activities must lead to peer-reviewed products. Faculty members are expected to seek external funding for their scholarly activities. Educational research that leads to peer-reviewed publication is considered research. The expected quantity and quality of these activities is dependent on the character of the department and the documented workload assignment of the faculty member.

Collaborative research is strongly encouraged. When applying for tenure and/or promotion, the candidate should describe his or her specific contributions to collaborative projects. On projects where the candidate serves as co-PI or senior personnel, their role in the project should be described so their impact on the success of the project can be determined. Interdisciplinary research and

research with industry partners is also encouraged. Involving Boise State students is strongly encouraged based on the character of research and the department.

Departmental tenure and promotion policies shall describe the relevant expectations and criteria regarding productivity and quality. If a department employs specific metrics of impact or quality for the purpose of evaluation relative to tenure and promotion (e.g., H-index or critical reviews), the processes and standards shall be described explicitly in departmental policy, with supporting evidence that such metrics are commensurate with peer institutions.

### **C. Service**

Faculty service is both necessary for the operation of the university and a source of significant value for the university as a social institution. University policy describes four types of service: service in support of students (e.g., undergraduate advising); service to the profession (e.g., editorial work); service to the institution (e.g., committee work, holding administrative posts); and service to the community (e.g., *pro bono* consulting). In these ways, faculty members are expected to contribute to their department, college, university, community or profession. Where appropriate, departmental policies shall include discipline- or department-specific examples of service to guide candidates in planning their service commitments and evaluation committees in assessing service performance.

While individual workloads place different requirements on different faculty members, every faculty member in COEN is expected to contribute relevant and high-quality service to the university community at various levels.

## **IV. Additional Expectations and Criteria for Promotion to Professor**

University policy states that the rank of professor “should be reserved for those individuals who are truly and demonstrably outstanding among their peers.” For promotion, faculty will make sustained, distinctive, broad-value contributions to the academic enterprise. In addition to the criteria outlined in Section 3, promotion to full professor requires demonstrated contributions beyond these criteria. This involves the following:

- Ongoing success in all three areas: teaching, research, and service consistent with allocated workload;
- Excellence within at least one area;
- Demonstrated leadership that supports collaborative efforts; and
- Specialization as appropriate to the candidate’s interests and expertise.

A faculty member whose performance is substandard in any of the three areas of evaluation may not be promoted to professor. In other words, all candidates must consistently meet expectations in teaching, research and service as documented in their annual evaluations. If a candidate’s workload assignment requires more service and less teaching and research, the expectation for excellence in teaching and research shall not be compromised but the expected volume of teaching and research may be reduced.

A department may impose expectations or criteria for promotion to professor, however that policy shall be consistent with this policy. All of the following standards are expected in order to be promoted to Professor.

**A. Teaching**

- a) Incorporate evidence based instructional practices and assess their effectiveness;
- b) Describe a teaching philosophy and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement;
- c) Consistently receive satisfactory student reviews, and when student reviews are not satisfactory, create a plan for action to improve.

**B. Research**

- a) A track record of peer-reviewed scholarship;
- b) Successful mentoring of graduate students (in departments that have a graduate program);
- c) Scholarship supported by external sources.

**C. Service**

- a) Contribute to department, college and university committees or serve as chair of a department;
- b) Contribute to professional societies (reviewer, conference organizer, committees);
- c) Consistently demonstrate leadership in service activities;
- d) Serve as a mentor to colleagues at Boise State.

**V. College-Level Review**

There are three independent stages of review within COEN: departmental review, COEN committee review, and Dean review. The departmental review and vote is described in the university policy and in specific departmental policies.

**A. COEN (College level) Committee Review**

At the beginning of each fall semester, the Dean's office shall compose the COEN Tenure and Promotion Committee, as prescribed by university policy. The committee shall have a chair, elected by majority vote of the committee members.

The function of the college committee is to review each dossier submitted for tenure and/or promotion and to issue a formal recommendation to grant or deny tenure and/or promotion. The COEN Tenure and Promotion committee shall review each dossier and ensure the following criteria are met:

*Completeness and Organization:* To be eligible for consideration by the committee, the dossier must be complete and properly organized. All of the documents described in university policy and other applicable policies must be present and arranged in the prescribed order. At this stage of review, two of the documents described in university policy will be absent: the college committee's recommendation and the Dean's recommendation. If the dossier is not complete or is not properly organized, the committee chair shall request that the Dean task the applicant's department (chair or other appropriate departmental member) with remedying the problems identified within two business days from the time of notification. If the response is inadequate, the committee may recommend to the Dean that the dossier be returned to the department without further review.

Annual Evaluation (TPRC and Chair) Review: In order for the final recommendations from the chair and departmental committee to be legitimate, they must be founded on processes that progress with regularity, thoroughness, and transparency. The dossier must provide clear evidence that the candidate and department have each observed the procedures prescribed in relevant policies, particularly with respect to evaluation processes and timelines. If it does not, the committee chair shall request that the Dean call upon the candidate's department to address questions and concerns relating to the identified deficiencies within five business days of notification. The outcome of the committee's request and any forthcoming response may figure as partial justification for a recommendation from the committee that is contrary to the final recommendations of the department.

Review of Department's evaluation relative to criteria: In order for the department's final recommendations to be legitimate, they must be founded on fair and accurate assessment of the candidate's performance and must be consistent with the annual tenure and promotion committee Review and the annual evaluation from the chair of the department and from the Dean. The dossier must provide clear evidence that the department properly applied the departmental, college, and university policy criteria in evaluating the candidate in each instance of review. If the department's recommendation or the chair's recommendation is inconsistent with annual evaluations, the tenure and promotion committee chair shall request that the Dean call upon the candidate's department to re-evaluate the dossier relative to the annual evaluation. Inconsistencies in the recommendation relative to the annual reviews may be partial justification for a recommendation from the committee that is contrary to the final recommendations of the department.

Summary Review: The committee shall review the dossier and evaluate the candidate relative to the departmental, college and university criteria for tenure and/or promotion.

## **B. Committee Procedure**

In the interest of protecting candidates and the integrity of the process, each tenure and promotion committee is to conduct its business in strict confidence, restricting substantive communication and deliberation to the time and location of formal committee meetings.

Committee recommendations shall be determined by formal confidential vote and reflect the majority. Each committee member shall vote either to grant or deny tenure and promotion to associate or promotion to full for each candidate; abstention is not permitted, though a committee member may, with prior approval from the Dean, formally recuse herself or himself for appropriate reasons.

When conducting the formal vote, the committee chair shall tally and record the vote count, which shall be communicated in writing to the Dean as: unanimous for, unanimous against, majority for, majority against or evenly split.

From BSU Policy 4340: Within three days of its decision, the chair of the college tenure and promotion committee shall place the committee's written recommendation into the candidate's application materials and provide a copy to the candidate. If the committee's recommendation is to deny tenure and/or promotion, the faculty member may request a meeting with the committee within five working days of the notification. If requested, the committee must grant a meeting with the faculty member within five working days of the request. Within three working days of meeting with the

candidate, a written final recommendation shall be added to the application materials, with a copy to the candidate and forwarded to the Dean of the college.

**C. Dean Review**

The Dean shall evaluate each dossier in accordance with the four review types employed by the committee and shall notify the candidates of their recommendations in writing, consistent with university policy.

**VII. Procedure and Process**

The College of Engineering procedure and process follows the university policy (BSU Policy 4340).

Attachment: TENURE AND PROMOTION - Email Templates Requesting External Letters of Reference

**TENURE AND PROMOTION - Email Templates Requesting External Letters of Reference****First Email**

*Subject line: Assessment of Research (and Scholarly) Activities - Dr. ABC, Boise State University*

*Dear Dr. XXX:*

*My colleague, Dr. ABC, is in the process of applying for (tenure and promotion or promotion) to the rank of (Associate Professor or Professor) in the XYZ Department at Boise State University. In addition to letters of assessment from evaluators nominated by the candidate, Boise State policy requires me, as chair, to seek letters of assessment from independent evaluators. I would appreciate your contribution as an independent evaluator in this important milestone for Dr. ABC. If you agree to participate, I would request your evaluation letter by xxx.*

*Please let me know by yyy or earlier whether you would be able to help in this important process. If you agree, I will promptly send the official request to you by email with supporting information (College of Engineering Tenure and Promotion policy, candidate's CV and four/five publications.)*

*Sincerely,*

**Second Email**

*Subject line: Assessment of Research (and Scholarly) Activities - Dr. ABC, Boise State University*

*Dear Dr. XXX:*

*Thank you for your willingness to write a letter of assessment on behalf of Dr. ABC, who is in the process of applying for (tenure and promotion or promotion) to the rank of (Associate Professor or Professor) in the XYZ Department at Boise State University.*

*In accordance with the College of Engineering's Tenure and Promotion Policy, we are requesting that you assess the candidate's scholarly record in terms of its quality, significance, and productivity. We are not requesting that you make a recommendation regarding the issue of (tenure and promotion or promotion). It is also important for you to know that Dr. ABC's typical workload assigned to research and scholarship during the evaluation period has been (x%) of total effort.*

*Considering the above details, we ask that you include the following in your letter:*

- 1. Describe your current position at your institution;*
- 2. If applicable - how long have you known Dr. ABC and in what capacity;*
- 3. Assess the quality of the research (and scholarly) activities. Is the work of high quality and does it result in publications, conference presentations, research funding, etc.;*
- 4. Assess the significance of the research (and scholarly) activities. For example, how have his/her contributions advanced or changed the way researchers view the discipline, addressed a critical need, or solved a difficult problem; and*
- 5. Assess the candidate's record in terms of productivity (frequency and overall quantity of publications, amount of funding, etc.) for other candidates at this rank.*

*Your letter will become part of the candidate's file for the duration of the review process and will be shared with individuals directly responsible for making recommendations and decisions. The candidate will not be informed that you have written a letter, and the letter will not be accessible to the candidate unless the University is legally required to make it available.*

*Dr. ABC's curriculum vita and a single PDF containing four or five representative papers from her/his group are attached for your reference. Also attached is the College of Engineering Tenure and Promotion Policy.*

*In order for us to complete a timely review, please submit your evaluation letter on the appropriate letterhead by xxx. Thank you for your time and effort in this important process. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (ssss).*

*Sincerely,*