

POLICIES FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE
Biomedical Engineering Department
University of Delaware

Passed by Faculty Vote: October 30, 2025

I. General Principles

Faculty members in the Department of Biomedical Engineering are promoted to a higher rank or receive tenure as a result of demonstrated excellence in scholarly activity, teaching, and service. The Department goal is to be one of the outstanding biomedical engineering departments in the country. Since such a status is primarily the result of peer recognition, the candidate for promotion must present evidence of the development of such recognition. Recommendations for promotion will be based upon all the accomplishments of the faculty member; however, emphasis will be placed on accomplishments since the candidate received his/her present rank.

The departmental policies contained in this document are consistent with the Promotion and Tenure Policies described in the University Faculty Handbook.

II. Criteria for Promotion to Rank

Assistant Professor

For appointment to assistant professor, the candidate is expected to have earned a doctoral degree in an area relevant to biomedical engineering faculty, and demonstrate the ability and desire to achieve excellence in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service.

Associate Professor

For promotion to associate professor on the tenure track, the candidate is expected to demonstrate excellence in scholarship, a proven commitment to excellence in teaching and service, and high quality performance in all areas. This evidence must include at least six external peer reviews written by top scholars in the candidate's field to judge the significance and impact of the candidate's scholarship.

Promotion to associate professor normally carries tenure. For the granting of tenure to an associate professor hired without tenure, the requirements are the same, but with special attention as to the candidate's scholarship, teaching, and service since joining this University.

For continuing track faculty, promotion to associate professor will be evaluated on the relative workload distribution between scholarship, teaching, and service, with excellence in their primary workload category, and high quality performance in all areas expected. A minimum of five external review letters evaluating the candidate's performance are required for promotion; for CT faculty, "external" can mean internal to the University of Delaware but external to the department.

Professor

For promotion to tenured professor the candidate must have established national or international stature and recognition as a leader in his or her field of research, demonstrated excellence in teaching, and demonstrated excellence in service to the university and professional communities. Excellence in all areas is expected. This scholarly excellence and reputation must be supported by clear evidence of the significance and impact of the scholarly work obtained from evaluations of a minimum of six experts outside the University through the external peer review process. Particular attention is paid to accomplishments at rank and there must be unmistakable evidence of significant development and achievement in scholarship, teaching, and service since the last promotion.

For continuing track faculty, promotion to professor will be evaluated on the relative workload distribution between scholarship, teaching, and service, with excellence in all areas expected. The candidate's excellence and reputation must be supported by clear evidence of the significance and impact of the assigned workload obtained from evaluations of a minimum of five experts of which at least two are external to the university through the external peer review process. All reviewers must be external to the department.

III. Evaluation Criteria

The following areas are considered for promotion and/or granting of tenure:

- Research and scholarship
- Teaching effectiveness
- Service to the Department, University, and the engineering profession.

Evaluation of candidate performance in these areas shall be inclusive of but not limited to those categories defined in Article III. Section B.8 of the College of Engineering Constitution and Bylaws.

Evaluation of Scholarship

The candidate should have a scholarship that is significant, innovative, and of high impact. Typical methods to determine the significance of scholarship may include:

- the quality (not just quantity) of peer-reviewed publications
- successful competition for major grants, fellowships, or prestigious awards
- the number of citations attributed to publications
- effective dissemination of scholarly work through activities such as publications, presentations, seminars, workshops, and other activities.
- contributions resulting in intellectual property, sponsored research, patents, novel designs, open innovations, startups, social ventures and/or other creative outputs

It is incumbent on the candidate to make a case for the impact of his or her work. When compiling the promotion dossier, candidates are encouraged to identify a small number of key publications and to indicate the quality of the journals, and, when appropriate, the number of citations and any other evidence that will assist the university committees in evaluating the impact of the work. The candidate is also encouraged to provide a statement, usually not more than two or three pages in

length, of the qualities embodied in these key publications. Candidates are encouraged to work with the Office of Economic Innovation and Partnerships to document evidence of societal benefit and usage resulting from their translational activities.

Evaluation of Teaching

The candidate should demonstrate excellence in teaching responsibilities. Typical methods to determine excellence in teaching include:

- faculty observations that attest to the candidate's competence
- student course evaluations administered by the University and samples of student comments from evaluations
- Evidence of student achievement of learning outcomes.
- Evidence of continual improvement of teaching.
- demonstration of initiative and innovation in the introduction and development of new courses and course materials, improvement of teaching techniques, and inclusion of innovation and translation as part of the curriculum

It is understood that good teaching implies excellence in activities both inside and outside the classroom, the latter involving the availability of the faculty member for advising students on an individual basis and one-on-one work to take research projects to successful conclusion.

The candidate is encouraged to provide a statement of teaching objectives, evidence of assessment of these objectives, documented efforts to meet the needs of diverse student learners, and evidence of a continuous effort to make appropriate refinements and approaches to teaching and to demonstrate objectively that teaching skills are evolving and improving.

Evaluation of Service

Strong performance as a citizen of the University, a contributor to one's profession, and active membership in the University community are important indicators of excellence in service. Service on departmental, college and university committees is expected of all faculty members, and is considered a factor in evaluation of the candidate for promotion. Service to the university will be measured by the contributions made by the faculty member on university, college and departmental committees and administrative assignments. Candidates will be evaluated on their effectiveness in carrying out essential service at a level consistent with assigned workload. Evaluation letters from the committee chair or from those affected by the candidate's work and having knowledge of it may be sought in the case of especially significant or demanding activities. Service to the broader community that advances the mission of the Biomedical Engineering department will be considered.

IV. Definition of Promotion and Tenure Committee, Eligible Voting Faculty

Composition of the Promotion and Tenure Committee:

The promotion and tenure committee (P&T committee) is to be composed of all tenured Department faculty eligible to vote in the Department and who are at or above the rank to which the candidate seeks promotion as of August 1. For promotion of continuing track faculty, the committee is composed of all tenured Department faculty eligible to vote in the Department and who are at or above the rank to which the candidate seeks promotion and also includes continuing

track faculty at or above rank for which the faculty seeks promotion. The minimum membership of the P&T committee is five voting members. The membership of the P&T committee for promotion of CT faculty shall include at least one CT faculty member.

In the early stages Biomedical Engineering may not have a sufficient faculty number at the appropriate rank. In that case, additional faculty participation from among the Joint Faculty will be added to the P&T Committee, as needed to reach or exceed five members. Selection of these members will be via nomination by the Department Chair and majority vote by the Department voting faculty. Upon consent of the outside department faculty, he or she will be made a full voting member of the P&T committee and will be expected to follow the procedures in this document. The chair of the P&T Committee will be an eligible committee member selected by the P&T Committee.

Eligibility of Voting Faculty at the Department Level:

Only tenured faculty above the current rank of the candidate member being considered will vote on promotion of tenured and tenure-track faculty candidates. Both tenured and CT faculty above the current rank will vote on promotion of CT faculty. Faculty who serve in positions requiring them to vote or act on the dossier at a later time may participate in the discussions but are not eligible to vote at the Department level. Faculty on leave are eligible to vote only if they are able to participate in person in the Department discussions prior to the vote. Their advice in writing is desirable in all cases.

V. Procedures

It is each faculty member's right and responsibility to know all relevant Department, College and University promotion criteria, policies and practices. It is likewise the right and responsibility of each assistant professor to meet with the Department Chair and senior faculty, who may be formally appointed as mentors, as soon as possible following the initial appointment in order to develop a coordinated plan of career development aimed at preparing the individual for promotion. Guidelines to such career development planning are contained in the Faculty Handbook.

If a faculty member wishes to be considered for promotion or tenure, it shall be that person's responsibility to initiate the process by so informing the Department Chair in writing by April 30. Only the faculty member has the right to withdraw the dossier at any point in the promotion process.

The candidate is responsible for preparing the dossier within the allotted time frame and organizing it as clearly and effectively as possible (with the exception of naming and collecting external reviewer letters). The candidate may provide new or updated objective information, such as new publications, journal acceptances, and new honors, to the dossier at any time during the promotion process and the addition will be so noted in the file. Instructions for the Promotion Dossier content and organization are available in the Faculty Handbook.

The dates noted by parentheses in the following section are for guidance only and the University's schedule for promotion should be consulted for binding deadlines.

[April 30 of the candidacy year]

1. The candidate gives the Department Chair written notification of his/her intention to apply for

promotion.

[by May 1]

2. The candidate shall supply to the P&T Committee Chair a list of five to seven potential peer reviewers who are expert and well established in the candidate's field and a statement indicating the extent and nature of the candidate's relationship with each suggested reviewer. The candidate may also provide a short list of individuals not to be used as peer reviewers and comment on the expected biases of those individuals.
3. The candidate submits to the P&T Committee Chair the following materials: a personal statement, a curriculum vitae, and selected evidence.

[May-August]

4. Confidential letters of peer evaluation shall be obtained from highly qualified external referees . All letters of evaluation shall be included in the dossier. The peer review letters will be treated as confidential, in accordance with University policy, so as to preserve the confidentiality of the reviewers.
5. Peer reviewers, expert and well established in the field of the candidate, will be selected as follows.
 - The departmental P&T Committee will prepare a list of proposed reviewers.
 - The list will include the entire list supplied by the candidate plus additional names suggested by the P&T Committee.
 - The number of names on the list must be greater than the number of letters to be solicited.
 - The candidate is informed of all names on the complete list and has the opportunity to comment on them.
 - The Committee then selects reviewers from this list.
 - The number of candidate-selected reviewers and P&T Committee-selected reviewers will be, as a goal, an equal number, and the dossier will identify the source of reviewer selection.
 - The names of the reviewers selected are not divulged to the candidate.
6. Letters requesting peer evaluations are sent, together with copies of principal sections of the draft dossier and representative publications.

The information requested from the external referees will include the following:

- a) Please comment on the quality, on the impact, and on the significance of the candidate's research. Additionally, please address how the candidate's record of work compares with other top scholars at a similar career stage.
- b) Please provide a curriculum vita or short biography describing the reviewer's credentials, and a statement of the reviewer's relationship to the candidate.

In the dossier, each peer review should be accompanied by the request letter, a curriculum vitae or biographical sketch describing the reviewer's credentials, and a statement indicating the nature of the peer/candidate relationship.

[by September 1]

7. The candidate submits the final version of the dossier to the Department's P&T Committee Chair.

[September 1-30]

8. Copies of the dossier will be made available to each member of the P&T committee. When the letters of the external reviewers have been received, the P&T Committee Chair will call for a meeting to consider all of the evidence. The P&T Committee Chair presents the entire dossier to the P&T Committee. The Committee vote will be by a written ballot, either in person or by proxy, in which each Committee member will be asked to indicate a vote. These ballots, as well as the external reviews, are for the confidential use of the Department P&T Committee and are not shared with the candidate.
9. The Department P&T Committee will prepare a letter of recommendation to be added to the candidate's dossier. The letter must be addressed to the Department Chair to whom it is transmitted. The letter must indicate the numerical vote, describe the Committee's composition and explain the reasons for the decision. All Committee members must sign the letter. Minority opinions, also signed, can be appended to the letter.

[October 1]

10. The full dossier, including the letter of recommendation of the Department P&T Committee, is forwarded to the Department Chair.
11. The candidate is also to receive a copy of the letter of recommendation of the Department P&T Committee in full.
12. In the case of an unfavorable recommendation, the candidate can appeal the initial decision once, within five business days of receipt of the Committee's letter. The appeal, in writing, is to be submitted to the P&T Committee Chair and should lay out the basis of the appeal. The Committee will meet to consider the appeal within ten business days of its receipt. A letter containing the results of the Committee's appeal deliberations will be given to the candidate within a further ten days. Copies of the appeal letter and of the Committee's reply will be added to the dossier.

[October 15]

13. The Department P&T Committee's and the Chair's recommendations are transmitted to the College P&T Committee. The University's schedule for promotion should be consulted for the remainder of the process.

VI. REVISIONS OF THIS DOCUMENT

To revise this document, a majority vote of the full Biomedical Engineering voting faculty is required, with each full-time member, including the Department Chair, having one vote. Voting faculty are defined within the Biomedical Engineering Bylaws.