

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

Promotion and Tenure Criteria

Since the decisions on promotion and tenure within a department control the quality of all the future functions of a department, they are taken very seriously. Particularly, the decision to award tenure requires special care and takes into account the collegial nature of the department. The primary missions of this department coincide with those of the university: teaching, research, and service. Therefore, the “University Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure of Faculty” must dictate the criteria for the department and the content and presentation of the portfolio. The timeline provided each year by the University Provost will also determine the timeline for the promotion and tenure recommendations of the department.

Annual appraisal of progress toward tenure and promotion

The “Department of Physics Procedures and Criteria for Faculty Evaluation and Merit Pay Increases” are to be used by the department Chair to provide an Annual Evaluation of progress toward promotion and tenure. The evaluation will examine the teaching, research, and service record of faculty members who are or will be eligible for consideration for promotion and/or tenure. The Chair will provide a copy of the Annual Evaluation to each faculty member. In addition to the Annual Evaluation, “The general guidelines for 3rd year review of tenure track–faculty in the Department of Physics” will be used to provide a comprehensive review of the progress towards tenure and promotion of all tenure-track faculty members in the department after three years from the time of hiring. Both the Annual Evaluations and the 3rd year Review will be considered in promotion and tenure decisions. However, such decisions must comprise more than a summation of Annual Evaluations and the 3rd Year Review; in addition, promotion and tenure recommendations must require consideration of the following criteria:

Evaluation criteria:

Except for the Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) survey provided by the SUS, no information from anonymous or undocumented sources can be used in evaluating a faculty member.

1. Teaching effectiveness

Candidates must show that they are effective in and committed to the department’s goal of quality instruction. In order to make an informed recommendation, the following items will be considered:

- a. The SPOT summary sheets for each course taught during the period under consideration,

which must be included in the portfolio in addition to the Teaching and Evaluation Table, as described in the “University Promotion and Tenure Portfolio Preparation” guide. Particular attention will be given to the items that relate to the quality of instruction and the rating of the instructor compared with other instructors.

- b. Additional items from the SPOT survey, such as the level and size of the class and the availability of the instructor outside of class, may be taken into account also.
- c. Special circumstances associated with the faculty member's teaching may also be taken into account. Examples include, (i) the development of new courses, (ii) teaching on a remote campus, (iii) teaching of complex material that requires extra preparation, (iv) the preparation of courses that the faculty member has not taught before.
- d. Since the mentoring of graduate students is especially important in the development of a strong research program, it will be given special consideration in the teaching evaluation.
- e. Student advising, working with undergraduate students in Directed Independent Study, Research Apprenticeship, in-service teacher training, and non-traditional teaching such as freshman honors seminars may also be taken into account.
- f. A peer review of teaching is required; the minimum requirement is for two reviews within the past two years, one of which must have been conducted within six months prior to the submission of the portfolio. The review will normally include an in-class observation and a review of other materials, e.g., syllabus, copies of tests and quizzes, as described on the “Instructional Observation Form” used in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. Normally, the Master Teacher for the department will carry out the review but a senior faculty member may substitute if the Master Teacher is not available.

It is essential that candidates specifically address any below average teaching evaluations in their portfolio.

2. Research and other creative activities

Candidates must show that they are effective in and committed to the department's goal of scholarly research. It is essential that candidates demonstrate that they have been successful in making the transition to an independent researcher. In order to make an informed recommendation, the following items will be taken into account:

- a. The numbers and quality of physics publications will be one of the major quantitative measures of research productivity. Publications shall be listed in separate categories; books, refereed (peer-reviewed) papers in journals, refereed (peer-reviewed) papers in proceedings of meetings, book chapters, and patent applications. Publications that are non-peer-reviewed must be listed separately. Any papers submitted (“in press” or “under review”) shall be also listed, but “under review” will carry less weight. Generally, it is assumed that papers in major international archival journals, such as the American Institute of Physics journals, will be given extra weight.
- b. Non-written presentations such as invited talks, colloquia, contributed talks, posters, and seminars will also be considered a component of research productivity. Invited conference talks should be identified as such and will carry more weight.

c. It is to be expected that candidates will have made serious and professional efforts to secure external funding through federal, competitive research grants to support their research or other scholarly activities. The greatest credit will be given for federal, competitive research grants funded, but other methods of funding scholarly research may be given credit as well. Examples of such activities are: (i) efforts to obtain non-federal grants, (ii) equipment grants, (iii) travel grants, (iv) teaching and laboratory development grants, (v) arrangements with other institutions or companies to support the research of departmental graduate students.

If any publication, talk or grant proposal was undertaken with co-workers or co-investigators, it is essential that candidates clearly identify and describe their own, personal contribution to the work.

3. Service

Candidates must show that they are effective in and committed to the department's goal of service both within and outside the university and to the profession. In order to make an informed recommendation, the following items will be taken into account:

- a. Credit will be given to a faculty member for participating in the governance of professional organizations such as the American Physical Society. Examples of such participation are: (i) being an officer in the society, (ii) organizing international meetings or symposia, (iii) organizing or Chairing sessions in meetings, (iv) reviewing research proposals, (v) reviewing journal publications, (vi) editing a journal.
- b. The activities of the faculty member in serving on departmental, college, or university - wide committees will be taken into account. This will include any activity that requires an investment of the faculty member's time and contributes to the management and intellectual life of the department or the university. The criteria for evaluating these activities are the amount of time required and the gravity of the decisions being considered.
- c. Community activities will be used in assessing the ranking in this category. Examples are: (i) participation in science fairs, (ii) speaking with high school students about physics and careers in physics, (iii) encouraging minority participation in university activities, particularly in physics, (iv) establishing contacts with local industry, (v) communicating with the general public to explain the value of physics in particular and universities in general to society.
- d. Efforts to convince members of the community to make donations to the department or to the FAU foundation for the development of physics or the university will be taken into account.

Professor

The minimum criteria for promotion to the rank of Professor are:

1. National or international status as a physicist as evidenced by a very strong publication record in peer reviewed journals and/or publication of scholarly books in physics.
2. Research support from recognized federal agencies, corporations or foundations over a period of time.

3. An outstanding record of teaching over several years.
4. Exceptional service to the university, the profession and the community. Evidence may be the election to office or as a fellow or officer in professional organizations or director of a program.
5. A demonstration of the ability to direct graduate students working on a dissertation to a satisfactory completion.

Associate Professor

The minimum criteria for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor are: 1. An outstanding record of scholarly achievement, normally as evidenced by publication of refereed papers, scholarly books, and the ability to obtain research grants while at FAU.

2. A clear demonstration that the candidate has made the transition to an independent researcher or scholar.
3. A consistently good record in teaching.
4. A commitment to services within the university through committee work and/or externally through participation with professional organizations, public schools, community agencies, and appropriate professional meetings.

Assistant Professor

For hiring at the rank of Assistant Professor the criteria are:

1. Should normally have experience beyond the Ph.D. such as postdoctoral experience with a good research record.
2. Evidence of the ability to be a good teacher.
3. Interest in being a productive and collegial colleague and professional in the field of physics.

Tenure

Criteria for tenure are the same as those for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, keeping in mind that awarding of tenure implies a commitment by the university and the department that the individual and departmental colleagues expect to co-exist in a mutually collegial manner for the remainder of their professional careers. As indicated in the University

Guidelines, "Promotion is based on accomplishments to date but tenure recommendations are based on collegial judgments about the likelihood that the candidate will make continuing contributions to institution and discipline." Therefore, the awarding of tenure should be viewed as the most important decision of the departmental faculty members. A faculty member hired as Associate Professor or Professor without tenure must demonstrate the ability to maintain and extend his or her research, scholarly or creative activities while at FAU.

Eligibility

The following groups are eligible to vote:

1. In consideration for promotion to the rank of Professor, only those who hold the rank of Professor are eligible to vote.
2. In considerations for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, only the tenured faculty members are eligible to vote.

November 2020