Department of Computer Science
Guidelines for Faculty Evaluation

Decisions regarding reappointment, promotion, tenure and merit should be made fairly and equitably. Decision-makers should be guided by a set of clear, generally accepted criteria consistent with the mission of the University and the Department. The purpose of this policy statement is to provide such guidance. The criteria outlined here supplement the standards outlined in the Appalachian State University Faculty Handbook.

Although a faculty member is evaluated in the three different areas of teaching, scholarship, and service, the most important function of faculty at Appalachian State University is teaching. The major purpose of scholarly activities and service activities is to support quality instruction. It is important that faculty remain current, especially in a field like computer science where changes occur rapidly. Scholarly activity on the part of faculty is essential to keeping the content of classroom instruction current and pertinent. Service activities enable the Department to function. Thus faculty in the Department are required to engage in both scholarly activities and service activities along with their teaching duties.

The Department of Computer Science recognizes that each faculty member is an individual with unique areas of expertise and interest, and that it is unwise to expect identical contributions to the Department or the University from everyone. Evaluation should be based on an individual's unique and total contribution. While every faculty member is expected to contribute in the three areas of teaching, scholarship, and service, the Department encourages faculty to make their own choices regarding emphasis. During the annual review with the Department Chair, each faculty member sets his or her allocation levels, typically making choices within the following ranges: 50% - 75% for teaching, 20 - 40% for scholarship, and 10 - 35% for service. Over time it is expected that a faculty member's allocation will change as he or she pursues new interests, develops new courses, or works on large projects.

In the annual review each faculty member must receive an indication from the Department Chair of his or her performance over the previous year in each of the three areas. It is expected that the Department Chair makes such evaluations without bias and as consistently as possible. Faculty receive one of the following ratings in each area: Excellent (E), Satisfactory (S), or Needs Improvement (NI).

Satisfactory does not necessarily mean "minimally acceptable", nor does it preclude merit increases. Receiving an evaluation of Satisfactory means that the work as a whole was done well and expectations were met. Needs Improvement means that some significant aspect of a faculty member's work was not done or poorly done. Excellent means that some significant aspect of a faculty member's work was truly outstanding, far beyond what was expected. A competent faculty member should expect to receive Satisfactory evaluations most of the time, and that work should be appropriately rewarded by administrators. Satisfactory does not mean "average for the Department." Evaluations should not be made on a bell curve but on the basis of individual accomplishment.

The Departmental Personnel Committee is to be made aware of a faculty member's past evaluations when that person applies for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure. While these evaluations are of great importance, the Departmental Personnel Committee is to bear in mind that each evaluation is the opinion of one person.

The following guidelines apply to decisions for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. For reappointment a faculty member should have received no more than one NI on his or her most recent evaluation. The faculty member should show evidence that he or she is working to improve in that area. For promotion to Associate Professor, the faculty member's record must be generally characterized by excellence in one or more areas. For promotion to Professor, the cumulative effect of the faculty member's previous evaluations should tend toward excellence in two or more areas. For tenure, the faculty member should exhibit satisfactory work in all three areas. If any NI's have been received, the deficiency must have been corrected in a timely fashion.

A faculty member being evaluated for reappointment, promotion and/or tenure is responsible for submitting to the Chair any documents or other materials which he or she deems appropriate. Materials must include a current vitae and copies of any scholarly publications or papers delivered at professional meetings. Materials may also include student evaluations for the past three years and supporting letters from alumni or others.

The following sections contain lists of activities divided into indicators of satisfactory work and indicators of excellent work. The lists are not meant to be exhaustive and should not be used in a rigid manner. Any activity listed under Satisfactory can be seen as Excellent if it is truly outstanding, and activities in the Excellent category may not be seen as excellent if done poorly.

Teaching

When evaluating teaching, both classroom performance and instructional activities performed outside the classroom should be considered. The following two lists are examples of indicators of satisfactory performance and of excellent performance, in no particular order.

Examples of Indicators of Satisfactory Performance

1. Meets all classes on time and for the requisite amount of time.
2. Sets expectations appropriately according to the level of the course being taught.
3. Grades fairly and consistently.
4. Returns graded assignments promptly.
5. Gives students timely feedback on their standing in the class.
6. Demonstrates respect for students.
7. Encourages student participation in class.
8. Organizes presentations so that students can take quality notes.
9. Has received positive student evaluations over the past three years, especially on questions dealing with the faculty member's enthusiasm, patience, and fairness.
10. Makes time for academic advisees.
11. Serves on graduate thesis committees.
12. Works with student organizations.
13. Frequently reassesses and revises courses.
14. Demonstrates concern for the academic and personal welfare of students.
15. Develops teaching materials that increase student learning. Such materials may be on the web but do not have to be.
16. Receives a satisfactory rating on a Peer Review.

Examples of Indicators of Excellent Performance

1. Develops new courses or significantly improves existing courses.
2. Directs undergraduate and/or graduate students in research.
3. Serves as the chair of a master's thesis committee.
4. Develops innovative pedagogical methodologies and materials. Such materials may be on the web but do not have to be.
5. Possesses a reputation as an excellent teacher among current students, alumni, and other faculty.
6. Has received excellent student evaluations over the past three years, especially on questions dealing with mastery of the subject and the ability to convey information clearly.
7. Is available to help students outside of class.
8. Has received a teaching award.
9. Publishes widely-adopted or acclaimed instructional materials.
10. Participates in curricular and/or extracurricular travel with students.
11. Exhibits mastery of subject matter that is relevant and current.
12. Challenges students intellectually while instilling excitement in the subject matter and enhancing students' ability to work autonomously.
13. Serves as a reviewer, referee, or editor of a pedagogical publication, grant proposals, or draft manuscripts of these.
14. Develops pedagogical materials which lead to publication of a paper or presentation at a professional meeting.
15. Writes a grant proposal related to instruction.

Scholarly Activity

Scholarly activity in Computer Science may take many forms, each equally valuable and each necessary within the Department. However, it is not necessary that every faculty member engage in every form of scholarly activity at any one point in time. Rather, it is expected that over time each faculty member take part in each of the various forms of scholarly activity. The following is a description of various forms of scholarly activity, but it is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Contributions to the Advancement of Knowledge This is the classic activity commonly called "research." It involves original reflection and results in the development of new knowledge in the individual's field of expertise. Activities of this type typically result in publications in technical journals and/or presentations at conferences.

Application and Transmission of Knowledge Activities of this type involve the application of professional expertise and may include software development or design, consulting either inside or outside the University, editing, writing commentary on the research of others, serving on advisory boards, making presentations at conferences and seminars, developing professional standards, and writing textbooks or laboratory manuals.

Investigations in Previously Unfamiliar Areas of Study This activity may be undertaken to stay abreast of new developments in computer science, prepare to teach a new course, or prepare to undertake a new project. Such investigations may include self-study or attending workshops and typically lead to the production of materials to document the gained expertise and/or presentations designed to share the knowledge.

Seeking Resources to Support Professional Inquiry This activity involves writing grant proposals designed to obtain funding for scholarly activities.

The following should serve as a guide for evaluating scholarly activity. The lists are in no particular order.

Examples of Indicators of Satisfactory Performance

1. Publishes an article in a journal or book.
2. Publishes a laboratory manual.
3. Presents a paper at a professional meeting.
4. Makes a clear contribution to the research of another.
5. Undertakes a self-development investigation which results in the creation of new material for a course or other project.
6. Has work cited in some other person's scholarly publication.
7. Participates in a workshop for professional skills development.
8. Reviews scholarly manuscripts or funding proposals.
9. Is invited to speak at a professional meeting.

Examples of Indicators of Excellent Performance

1. Publishes an article in a refereed journal.
2. Publishes a textbook.
3. Serves as an editor of a refereed academic journal.
4. Serves on an editorial board of a refereed academic journal.
5. Receives a research or publication award.
6. Serves as a grant reviewer for a national or international research organization such as the NSF.
7. Submits a grant proposal to support scholarly activity.
8. Receives external funding for scholarly activity.
9. Is invited to speak at a major professional meeting.
10. Produces original software that is well-received in the academic or industrial community.

Service

When evaluating service it is important to consider both attitude and activity. It should be evident that a faculty member considers himself or herself a member of a team working toward the same goals in teaching and scholarship. A faculty member should strive to enhance the working conditions of others in the Department, strongly support decisions made as a Department, and share knowledge gained in his or her teaching or scholarly activity.

In addition, faculty may be of service to the Department, the University, the community or the profession in the following ways. Again, these are not exhaustive lists and are in no particular order.

Examples of Indicators of Satisfactory Performance

1. Serves on a Department or University committee.
2. Gives presentations to school or other groups such as undecided majors, academic advisors, community organizations, or clubs.
3. Makes recruiting trips for either the undergraduate or the graduate programs.
4. Serves as the coordinator for a course with multiple sections.
5. Serves as the moderator of a University mailing list.

Examples of Indicators of Excellent Performance

1. Takes on responsibility for certain Department functions such as writing accreditation, assessment, or planning documents, producing brochures, overseeing Family Day activities, or maintaining Department web pages.
2. Runs a seminar program for the Department.
3. Chairs a Department or University committee.
4. Serves as an officer of Faculty Senate.
5. Serves as an officer of a professional society.
6. Maintains Department equipment or performs system administration duties.