Guidelines for Tenure & Promotion

College of Engineering at Lawrence Technological University

Summer 2018
Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for Tenure-Track Faculty

Tenure and Promotion Governance Committee (College of Engineering)

1. Introduction

This document has been established to provide guidance for new tenure-track faculty in the Lawrence Technological University College of Engineering with respect to the attainment of both tenure and promotion to Associate Professor rank. Its main purpose is to outline general expectations regarding the three components of faculty activity – teaching, scholarship, and service – and to inspire recent hires toward levels of achievement as expected by university administration. These guidelines are unique to the College of Engineering, and may differ from guidelines for tenure provided to faculty in other colleges within Lawrence Tech. The College of Engineering has several graduate programs including master’s level and doctoral programs that necessitate a higher expectation of funded research and scholarship from faculty. This document was initiated by tenured faculty members of the College of Engineering and finalized after a collaborative assessment with the college level and university level administration. This document does not supplant the wording of the Lawrence Tech Faculty Handbook or other official documents maintained on the Provost Office web page at:

https://www.ltu.edu/provosts_office/tenure_sabbatical.asp

The attainment of tenured status is an important milestone in an academic career. Tenured faculty are essential to the proper operation, growth, and development of a university. Tenure provides certain rights and protections to a faculty member, while at the same time conferring reciprocal levels of responsibility and leadership expectations. It is also essential to the maintenance of academic freedom and integrity, the success of accreditation processes, and general institutional prestige. The entire university has a strong stake in supporting faculty efforts toward tenure and the expectation to make substantial long-term contributions to the health and success of Lawrence Tech.

This document provides examples of faculty activities that are considered essential to the growth of a faculty member, and support the tenure and promotion portfolio since they assist in the long-term growth and stability of the university. It is recognized that each faculty member will bring a unique set of interests, skills, and accomplishments to the university, and will have diverse strengths in all three spheres of activity (teaching, scholarship, and service). In general, administration has high expectations for all faculty members with respect to teaching and therefore, this sphere is considered very important. The scholarship activities typically set faculty members apart in the performance evaluation for tenure and promotion. Service is necessary for university functionality and long-term stability and growth but tenure-track faculty
must moderate their activities to ensure other expectations are fulfilled. Nonetheless, at Lawrence Tech, none of the three spheres is considered unimportant.

Tenure-track faculty should strive diligently to develop positive professional relationships with students, staff, peers, mentors, and administrators in their work environment. Administrators in particular often call upon faculty to perform functions essential to university operation. Certain of these roles may seem a bit foreign to you at first (e.g., leading laboratory tours for high school students, or speaking to parents at recruiting events). Such service activities are important, but they must **not** be your primary activity outside of teaching, so it is important that you keep these in check so that they do not occupy a significant amount of your time. But successful, cheerful cooperation in such endeavors will leave a lasting impression that you are a good long-term fit for Lawrence Tech. It is important, therefore, that you work with your department chair to seek a balance within your schedule for such service, and it is critical that each time you secure publicity or formally documented recognition for your various service activities so that the university community will know you and can recognize the added value that you bring to Lawrence Tech.

Tenure-track faculty should be proactive in seeking helpful and formative evaluations and feedback throughout their pre-tenure employment period. Informal input from students may provide opportunities for improving teaching methods and will also help to build relationships and student recommendations that could be forwarded to administrators. Objective appraisals of teaching, scholarship and service activities by peers, department chairs, deans, and university administrators should be collected and used to document accomplishments and improvements throughout the pre-tenure period, rather than waiting until the final years before submitting the tenure portfolio.

Keep in mind that the granting of tenure to any tenure-track candidate is a recognition of the future capabilities and contributions of the candidate that are based upon the demonstrated previous performance of teaching, scholarship and service at Lawrence Tech. The granting of tenure is correctly viewed as a confirmation by the university of the passion, vision and goals possessed by the candidate going forward in their career. In essence, the granting of tenure is a projection of future success based on the assessment of their contributions to the university up until that point.

This document serves as a guide only and it is essential and critical that you work each semester with your department chair to assure that your tenure-track progress is sufficient towards your goal of gaining tenure. A multiplicity of factors – including program enrollments, projected demographic trends, and the university’s general financial position – may decisively impact the tenure scenario for any given faculty member. Many of these factors could be unrelated to your work performance and well outside your individual control. In other words, there is no guarantee that an applicant who meets (or appears to meet)
the criteria put forth below will be granted tenure. However, the document still represents a good-faith attempt to offer the best possible advice on professional success in academia and, in particular, at Lawrence Tech.

2. **Overview of the Tenure and Promotion Process**

The tenure and promotion process in initiated with a sequence of two reviews. A midterm review, occurring at the three year mark, is intended both to help the institution to gage the faculty member’s progress and to provide the faculty member with valuable feedback on that progress. The final review, occurring at the six-year mark, immediately precedes the tenure decision by the university.

A portfolio, summarizing the candidate’s accomplishments while at Lawrence Tech, must be submitted for each of the two reviews mentioned above. Portfolios should follow the standard format requirements specified on the Provost’s website; there the candidate can find much other useful information pertaining to the tenure and promotion process (e.g. timeline, process, number of copies of the portfolio required, etc.).

3. **General Requirements**

   a) **Teaching**

   Lawrence Technological University has been traditionally a private, student-focused university in which approximately 80% of its current revenue is from student tuition. Because student success is a primary indicator of the institution’s overall success, it naturally follows that evidence of high instructional quality is a key element in every successful tenure application portfolio. The nominal teaching load specified by the Lawrence Tech Faculty Handbook is 24 credit hours during the annual contract period. Under certain circumstances, a faculty member may be granted release time in exchange for increased commitments to research, advising, or assigned administrative duties (such as being a program director or departmental assessment coordinator). In addition, faculty members are awarded 3-credit release time in each semester of their first contract year to support development of scholarship activities. The minimum number of teaching hours per semester is generally six. More detailed information about teaching expectations is included in Section 4. At this point, it suffices to note that each faculty member is expected to attain satisfactory evaluation scores, to teach a variety of courses as needed by his/her department, and to play prominent roles in curriculum maintenance, assessment, and development.

   b) **Scholarship**

   The term scholarship refers to research or other creative professional contributions. This is a major factor in determining a tenure-track faculty member’s success in being granted tenure. You must
have a proven track record in this area while at Lawrence Tech to be granted tenure. It covers activities including but not limited to writing grant proposals, performing or supervising research investigations, writing reports and papers, authoring textbooks, and applying for patents, etc. It may also include certain forms of specialty curriculum development. All of these actions facilitate intellectual growth and contribute to the missions of the College and University. Research, especially, brings prestige to the institution and attainment of competitive research grants and publications in peer-reviewed journals are critiqued as part of the tenure and promotion review process. It provides supplemental funding, new facilities, and unique educational opportunities for graduate students and undergraduate students. As individuals holding terminal degrees in various specializations, the faculty must play a role that includes the vigorous pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of humanity. Detailed information about scholarship expectations is described in Section 5.

c) Service
Service activities comprise both service to the university and service to the profession. The internal service efforts of faculty are often essential to the success of the institution but should not be overemphasized to the point in which teaching and scholarship expectations cannot be maintained. Teaching and scholarship must be a priority with all tenure-track faculty. Examples of service include academic advising (which is mandatory for Lawrence Tech faculty), active participation in committee structures, attendance at student recruitment events, advising of on-campus groups (such as the IEEE or ASME student chapters), and even the routine composition of graduate school and employment recommendation letters. In contrast, service to the profession typically entails providing active support to external organizations. Examples might include presentation at workshops, service on committees of professional organizations (local, regional, national, or international), and participation in peer review processes for various types of publications (conference papers, journal papers, book series). These activities promote both the health of one’s profession and Lawrence Tech’s reputation in the larger community. More detailed discussion of faculty service expectations is offered in Section 6.

4. Teaching

a) Teaching Effectiveness
Lawrence Tech implements a regular course evaluation process for every course taught at the university; students are asked to rate the course content, instructor performance, and other parameters, and the responses are tabulated for review by the instructor and university
administrators. Special weight is placed on instructor evaluation scores, and the tabulated results will occupy a prominent place in the tenure portfolio. Tenure-track faculty are expected to earn consistently high instructional ratings from students in their courses.

Other indications of teaching effectiveness are permissible for inclusion in the portfolio as well. The long-term successes of one’s former students, for example, may be demonstrated through the inclusion of formal or informal recommendation letters from those students. Such inclusions are encouraged as a way of showing your teaching effectiveness to the greatest advantage.

b) Teaching Variety
Teaching effectiveness should be demonstrated in multiple courses though the curriculum. It should be demonstrated at the undergraduate level and, if applicable, at the graduate level in one’s area of expertise. However, a tenure-track faculty is encouraged to speak with department chairs if the amount of course preps (individual course development per semester) becomes too cumbersome. Although it is anticipated that extra emphasis needs to be placed on new course preps in the first year of teaching, subsequent years should be limited and faculty should not be required to perform more than three course preps in a semester (as stated in the Faculty Handbook).

c) Curriculum Development
It is necessary to continue developing and strengthening the curriculum in various fields of engineering. Curriculum development could include the development of new courses in unique skills, enhancement and modification of existing courses, development of software or use of software to promote technology in the classroom, and development of other materials that can assist in instruction. Curriculum development should be documented over the years of employment.

d) Innovative Pedagogies
Innovative pedagogies represent newer teaching approaches that should be used to improve student learning. They may help an instructor engage students more effectively while encouraging the development of critical thinking, innovation, teamwork, and leadership skills. Many involve application of engineering knowledge to real-life situations. The techniques are meant to depart from traditional lecture practices and may delve heavily into the use of current technologies.

New tenure-track faculty are encouraged to participate in training workshops, especially in the areas of Active Collaborative Learning (ACL), Project Based Learning (PBL), and Entrepreneurial Mindset Learning (EML), to become aware and well-versed in the latest pedagogies and methods of classroom delivery. Each new tenure-track faculty member should seek guidance and direction from their respective department chair regarding these proven and successful teaching methods as
soon as possible after joining Lawrence Tech to assure they incorporate them into their teaching approach.

e) Research Sections
The rapid evolution of engineering knowledge naturally creates demands for intensive research activity in higher education. Graduate students must learn to carry out investigations in new and innovative topics meant to enhance the capabilities of the profession. The term “research sections” commonly refers to independent study and directed study courses at all levels along with graduate-level thesis and dissertation sections. Full-time faculty members will have periodic responsibilities with such sections. However, this activity should remain limited as the time commitment required to support an individual student is often overlooked.

5. Scholarship
An obligation of every tenure-track faculty member is to undertake, demonstrate, and document scholarly activities. After teaching, this is the next highest priority of any tenure-track faculty member. Scholarship reflects the passion and innovativeness of a faculty member with respect to their areas of expertise, and provides one of the best ways for a faculty member to broaden their own knowledge base while simultaneously and expanding the reputation of the university.

a) Research Grants/Contracts
A primary method of engineering faculty demonstrating scholarship is to create new knowledge in their discipline and area of expertise. In engineering, this predominately involves the need to conduct exploratory research and design of new technologies. Such work often requires funding to cover the costs of equipment, materials, and personnel. Hence, tenure-track faculty are expected to seek, apply for, and secure adequate independent external funding with a strong emphasis and expectation to obtain “competitive grants”. These external sources many include professional societies, foundations (e.g. NSF), corporations, or governmental agencies, but funding sources that are not independent funding sources might not be included in total funding calculations during tenure review. Tenure-track faculty should secure some level of funding in the form of a competitive grant by at least their third year, and thereafter through the sixth and final year of the tenure cycle. Funding need not be from one continuous source, but can be from various sources over various time durations.

b) Dissemination of Knowledge
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Tenure-track faculty are expected to successfully disseminate knowledge they have gained from their research efforts. Successful dissemination is often a required component of secured research grants or contracts. The particulars, however, can depend upon the nature of the funding. Funds from professional societies, foundations, or governmental agencies usually permit and sometimes require peer-reviewed publications or conference proceedings.

A faculty member should publish substantial, peer-reviewed papers while on tenure-track. Journal publications are expected and additional conference proceedings are encouraged. Faculty members with conference papers are expected to attend the conferences at which papers are presented. While pedagogical papers are encouraged, the candidate is expected to publish technical papers as well.

Funding from corporations, or agencies such as the US military, may carry confidentiality requirements that render publication impossible. Nonetheless, faculty with such involvements must still document their work for confidential internal review by university tenure and promotion committees.

Tenure-track faculty are also strongly encouraged to publicly disseminate non-funded work that they may have undertaken on their own, as such publication can often lead to the eventual securing of external funds.

c) Research Laboratory Development

The development, organization, and operation of a research laboratory is highly desirable and strongly encouraged. The faculty member is obligated to identify all needed equipment, secure funding, and acquire and maintain such equipment. Research equipment may not be appropriate for course-related usage, but faculty developing research laboratories should at least consider multiple usage when feasible. All teaching-related application of research laboratory equipment and any resulting benefits to the university should be documented for inclusion in the tenure portfolio.

d) Textbooks and Reference Books

Authorship of monographs, textbooks, and reference books is a desirable form of scholarship and creative activity.

e) Patents

Patents are desirable and considered original work. There is no set number of patents recommended but they are encouraged.
f) **Media Contributions**

On occasion, faculty members are called upon to communicate directly with the public through media outlets. This can represent a valuable opportunity to inform the general public and represent the university in a positive light. All such interactions should be documented for inclusion in the tenure application package.


g) **Professional Licensure**

For some engineering disciplines, professional licensure is expected. This requirement should be discussed with the department chair.


6. **Service**

As stated in Section 1, service activities are not considered as prominent as the other two spheres of activities in the College of Engineering, but are often unavoidable at the same time. It is expected that a faculty member at LTU spends approximately 4 hours a week on average performing service activities which is equivalent to approximately 10% of the faculty workload. These activities are mentioned in order to illustrate two important points: (1) faculty service can greatly enrich both the campus environment and the faculty member's professional life, and (2) service is a broad category encompassing many possibilities. There is no implication, nor is it expected, that a given faculty member should become involved in all of them. Ideally, your own service profile will consist of a sustainable selection of activities that satisfy both your individual interests and the needs of Lawrence Tech. A faculty member will volunteer for certain things and be asked to do others. Various administrative groups of our institution often see faculty as a valuable source of support for successfully forwarding of those group’s missions, but such activity may not necessarily be for the betterment of the tenure-track faculty member. As a result, faculty are always encouraged to introspect before accepting new service responsibilities. Tenure-track faculty are strongly advised to monitor and control their service levels while focusing on especially robust research and teaching efforts. If such service requests conflict with teaching or scholarship, then the tenure-track faculty member should decline, or seek to reschedule, such service requests.

Department chairs are pivotal in determining overall service loads for their units and distributing tasks among their faculty in a fair, workable, and sustainable fashion. All faculty should maintain open, two-way communication with their chairs regarding the suitability of their personal service loads. If conflict resolution becomes necessary, the Engineering Dean is available for consultation.
a) **Advising**

Lawrence Tech faculty are expected to regularly advise undergraduate and graduate students according to the needs of their home departments. Advising performance is typically gauged by department chairs as well as by the advisees themselves.

b) **University Committees**

Candidates for tenure should demonstrate service on committees at the department, and college or university levels. Strategically, preference should be given to the kinds of committees that provide exposure to significant issues as well as opportunities to demonstrate professional commitment and capabilities to the wider university community.

c) **Recruitment Events**

Lawrence Tech faculty are expected to participate in recruitment events. Examples include Exploration Days, Blue Devil Days, and open houses. Evidence of attending these events should be documented. It is not expected to attend all such events. Freshman Convocation and Graduating Student Commencement are required for faculty to attend.

d) **Student Activities/Competitions**

Lawrence Tech students are often involved in national/regional competitions for organizations within the discipline. Examples include the SAE Competition teams in mechanical engineering or the AISC/ASCE Steel Bridge team in civil engineering. Faculty who serve as advisors for competition teams should balance these and other service activities and should thoroughly document them in the tenure application.

e) **Student Research Defense Committees**

Acting as a thesis/dissertation advisor, or as a member of a graduate student’s committee, constitutes a significant service contribution that should be documented in the tenure application package. There are often limited specialists in particular subject areas within the College and participation in such activities not only supports the individual students but peer-faculty members chairing the committees as well.

f) **Professional Affiliation and Involvement**

Candidates should be affiliated with professional organizations at the local, national or international level, especially within their department’s discipline (e.g. ASME, IEEE, ASEE, SAE, ASCE, TRB, ACI, etc.). Membership on national/regional committees in the profession is an ideal representation of professional service.
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g) Peer Review Activity

Peer reviewing for academic and professional journals and conference publications is regarded as an important form of service at the professional level. As with other service activities, you are advised to keep a running list of your activities as a reviewer.

h) Other Service Activities

Service is a broad category that could encompass activities other than those listed above. Other examples may include recommendation letters, scholarship competitions, and other activities as requested by students, faculty, and administration. The applicant is encouraged to record all service contributions for inclusion in the tenure application package.

i) Community Service

Although community service might not directly influence the reputation or success of the university, it is encouraged. Community service builds character and shows that a candidate has strong interest in the needs of people. The number of potential activities is vast; examples might include literacy outreach efforts, environmental clean-up efforts, coaching local sports teams, and many other forms of assisting those in need. All such activities should be documented over the tenure-track period.

7. Consulting

Consulting activities related to their professional field that facilitates faculty development may be considered in the evaluation of performance and should be documented in the annual performance plan. For more information, faculty should refer to the Lawrence Tech Faculty Handbook.

8. Closing Remarks

It bears repeated emphasis that this document has been initiated by tenured faculty for faculty with collaborative input and discussions with the college level and university level administration. It was written based on individual faculty experience and tenure and promotion success of other individuals within the College. Tenured faculty want you to become tenured and have developed these guidelines with you in mind to accomplish this achievement. The faculty at Lawrence Tech encourage strong efforts from all faculty and applaud each individual’s successes. Therefore, any effort to show that you are contributing to the strength, prestige, and reputation of the university will be seen as positive. This document does not dictate whether an individual will or will not get tenure. However, it establishes individual goals that are hopefully often exceeded. If you are currently engaged in a tenure-track
position, your faculty colleagues support you, have your success in mind, and wish you well in achieving an important step in your career.