

J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

Personnel Document Department of Physics

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Physics is to advance and disseminate knowledge of physics through all of its teaching, research and service activities. Consistent with this mission, our goal at the undergraduate level is to provide for all students general education courses in the principles and techniques of physics and to offer a comprehensive program for physics majors to prepare them for graduate studies or for diverse careers for which a physics background is useful. At the graduate level, the department's goal is to offer a challenging curriculum, state-of-the-art research opportunities and courses at the frontiers of knowledge in physics and other disciplines where concepts and techniques of physics are useful.

The faculty of the department of physics recognizes that individual achievements in physics research, education and service including administrative duties shall be measured against the general guidelines established by the Department, the College, the Campus, and the Board of Trustees for promotion and tenure consideration and for merit salary increase. Such achievements shall be evidenced by the publication of refereed papers and books, invited lectures, and other presentations, the development of educational materials of an innovative nature, the development and implementation of new physics programs or curricula, outstanding classroom performance, and the effective administration of local, regional or national physics programs. The physics faculty emphasizes the responsibility of its members also to provide leadership in the areas of community service, public education, and university governance. In addition to service in the scholarly activities of the department, each is to assume personal responsibility for an equitable share of the department's other responsibilities. Furthermore, the faculty recognizes that the solicitation of financial support external to the University for individual and departmental research and educational activities is a continuing obligation of each of its members.

Personnel Committee

In accordance with University policy, promotion and tenure decisions are initially referred to the departmental Personnel Committee, which also advises the Chair on the annual faculty evaluations, and may have other duties, such as mediating in conflicts, grievances, and appeals; see the rest of this document for details. The committee consists of four members, chosen by faculty vote. Three of these must be tenured and hold rank of associate professor or higher, while the fourth one should be a representative of the junior faculty, at the assistant professor rank. Only the tenured members will vote on matters of promotion and tenure, whereas all four members will vote on all other matters (including, in particular, the annual faculty evaluations). For promotion and tenure decisions, if one or more of the tenured members have a conflict of interest, the Chair, after consultation and with the explicit agreement of the faculty, will appoint a temporary substitute or substitutes. For the annual evaluations, members with a conflict of interest will simply recuse themselves when necessary, i.e., no substitutes will be appointed. A normal term of service in the committee will be two years. Appointments must be staggered, so as to ensure that at least one senior member served on the committee in the prior year.

Personnel File

The Department maintains a personnel file in the department chair's office for each member of the staff holding faculty rank. This file constitutes the official record of the faculty member's employment in the department. A faculty member may request access to his or her file by submitting a written request to the chair. The file may not be taken outside the chair's office and the chair or a designate must be present while the file is being viewed.

Work Assignments

For a faculty member who is active in research and supervising graduate students, the standard teaching load is one course per semester. This is both in recognition of the fact that graduate student advising is a form of teaching, and for the purpose of allowing faculty to devote a substantial amount of time to class preparation, in order to provide physics students with the best educational experience possible. Faculty members who, for whatever reason, are not very active in research may be given larger teaching workloads (for instance, 3 or 4 courses per year); however, in the absence of any explicit arrangement with the chair and the dean's approval, they will still be evaluated according to the standard weighting scale of 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% service.

Faculty members who are under increased research obligations or new faculty members in the early years of tenure-track appointments may be given lighter teaching loads. They also will be evaluated according to the standard 40/40/20 weighting scale in the absence of any explicit arrangements to the contrary.

Initial Appointment

A. Criteria for Initial Appointments.

Lecturer • Master's degree or equivalent post-graduate study.

- Evidence of potential for excellence in teaching.

Instructor • Master's degree or equivalent post-graduate study.

- Evidence of potential for excellence in teaching.
- Evidence of continuing professional and scholarly interest in physics.

Assistant Professor • The Ph.D. or equivalent degree in Physics or in a closely related area.

- Clear evidence of potential for excellence in teaching.
- Clear evidence of strong potential for a significant program of scholarly activity and research.

Associate Professor • The Ph.D. or equivalent degree in Physics or in a closely related area.

- Demonstrated excellence in teaching.
- Publications or creative work of high quality to indicate the beginning of a significant scholarly research career.

Professor • The Ph.D. or equivalent degree in Physics or in a closely related area.

- Demonstrated excellence in teaching at all appropriate levels.
- Publications or creative work of high quality bringing the faculty member wide recognition in his/her specialty.

Criteria for initial appointments in other ranks are described in the Departmental by-laws

B. Procedures for Initial Appointments.

Recommendation for appointments in the regular faculty ranks (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor) will be made by the majority vote of the tenure-track and tenured faculty. While most of the initial appointments will be tenure-track appointments, on rare occasions it may be necessary to appoint a person with tenure. The recommendation for granting of tenure will be decided by a majority vote of the tenured faculty.

Recommendation for appointment of professional staff, and for non-teaching positions such as Research Assistant (or Associate) Professor will also be made by the majority vote of the tenure-track and tenured faculty.

The Chair of the Department will be responsible for reporting the recommendation to the Dean and subsequent negotiations with the candidate and the Dean.

Successive Appointments and Annual Review

A. Criteria for Performance Review and Reappointment Recommendation.

Annual evaluation of performance and recommendation for reappointment will be based on performance in research, teaching, and service. The performance in these areas will be evaluated against the Evaluative Criteria listed below under a separate heading. Satisfactory progress toward positive recommendation for tenure is required for reappointment recommendation.

B. Procedures

1. Annual Review

The performance of each tenured and tenure-track faculty member will be reviewed annually by the Chair with the assistance of the departmental personnel committee. The purpose of the review is to compare individual activities with those identified by the faculty as necessary for fulfilling the mission of the Department in the areas of teaching, research, and service. Each faculty member will present information organized to the extent possible in the form of the Professional Activities checklist (Appendix I) to the Chair for use in this review.

The Chair and the personnel committee will review the submitted materials independently. According to university policy, the final decision on a faculty member's evaluation comes from the Chair, after taking into consideration the recommendations of the personnel committee. The Chair will discuss the evaluation with each faculty member. The dates of each meeting and unresolved disagreements will be recorded.

A faculty member has the right to appeal his/her performance evaluation. The first appeal must be to the department Chair. If satisfaction cannot be obtained, the appellant may request a separate evaluation from the personnel committee, which for this purpose becomes an appeals committee. The appellant must present the appeals committee with the same information presented to the Chair in the prior appeal, neither more nor less. If new information is to be submitted, a new appeal must be made first to the Chair. The appeals committee will make a decision within five (5) working days. If the appeals committee recommends an evaluation different from the Chair's, the committee must justify its decision. The chair will make a final recommendation to the Dean; if the chair's recommendation is different from the appeals committee recommendation, then both evaluations will be forwarded to the Dean, along with any response of the faculty member to the evaluation.

Professional staff and non-tenure track faculty will be evaluated directly by the chair with the help of additional material such as student evaluations (if applicable), evaluations submitted by faculty members, or the recommendation of relevant overseeing committees (e.g., machine shop committee). Appeals, if any, for these positions will be handled in the same manner as for the faculty.

2. Reappointment

As part of their annual evaluation of non-tenured faculty, the tenured members of the personnel committee will issue a recommendation to the Chair regarding the annual reappointment of each non-tenured faculty member. If the recommendation is negative, or if the Chair separately believes a negative recommendation is called for, the matter will be discussed at a meeting of the whole tenured faculty, after which the faculty member will be notified in writing by the department Chair of his or her recommendation, taking into account the recommendation of the tenured faculty. In the event of a recommendation for non-reappointment, the person involved may appeal to the personnel committee, which may issue a separate recommendation, explaining, if necessary, its disagreement with the Chair and/or the tenured faculty body. After the personnel committee's decision, the Chair's final recommendation (and, if different, the personnel committee's recommendation) is forwarded to the Dean. If the faculty member disagrees with the Chair's recommendation, he or she can request an interview in accord with Board of Trustees Policy 405.1.IV.B.

A pre-tenure review will be done in the third year as specified in the College document.

Evaluative Criteria

Teaching: *Activities pertinent to the educational mission of the department*

Does not meet expectations: Low student evaluations, no evidence of teaching effectiveness; persistent student complaints, or no materials submitted.

Minimally meets expectations: Teaches familiar courses in familiar ways, with average student evaluations and little evidence of teaching effectiveness. Very little or no advising, mentoring, etc. little or no curriculum development.

Fully meets expectations: Good student evaluations; evidence of teaching innovation, course uniqueness, other identifiable measures of effort and activity to enhance the educational process and student learning, active advising and mentoring of students, independent study, extracurricular talks, course modifications; development of new courses and/or programs.

Exceeds expectations: Recognition of teaching efforts and innovation through grants or awards; evidence of major curriculum development and improvement; technical complexity of course material; heavy supervision, advising and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate student research.

Research: *Professional, creative activity pertinent to the academic mission of the department, with a distinction between refereed work and non-refereed work.*

Does not meet expectations: Little to no evidence of research productivity (presentations, active grants, proposal submission, publications), or no materials submitted.

Minimally meets expectations: Some, but minimal evidence of professional work. Minimal participation in the research life of the department. Little engagement with student research or development.

Fully meets expectations: Active research program, engagement in the research life of the department (participating in seminars, hosting visitors, colloquia, working with student research), some development of a field of inquiry as evidenced by proposals submitted, refereed publications, presentations and invitations to other institutions and conferences, competitive external funding.

Exceeds expectations: Vigorously active research program, exceptional publications and competitive external funding record, national and international awards and other peer recognition of research significance.

Service: *Wide range of activities – building and maintaining the structure of the department, university and profession; based on real effort expended not simply being listed on an inactive committee.*

Does not meet expectation: No evidence of any significant service to Department, College, University or profession, or no materials submitted.

Minimally meets expectations: Some but minimal effort; little evidence of engagement at the departmental, college, university or professional levels. Occasional committee work or refereeing, etc.

Fully meets expectations: Active participation in the governance of the department, college or profession; demonstrated effort on departmental committees (faculty search, undergraduate and graduate admissions, colloquium, etc.) or significant evidence of professional service in one category (Editor/associate editor of journal, editorial boards, etc.); active participation in hosting departmental visitors (e.g. interviewees, colloquium speakers, potential grad students etc.) and outreach activities (high school physics day, science fair judging, etc.), Engaged in addressing structural issues facing the department, college or profession.

Exceeds expectations: Significant participation and service to the Department, College, University or profession in multiple categories; secure funds for enhancing the Department's programs and/or physical facilities, engaged in activities that bring recognition to and/or enhance the Department in measurable ways.

Promotion and Tenure

A. Criteria for Promotion

The criteria for promotion to each rank are the same as those for the initial appointment at that rank. The performance and achievements of the faculty member who is being considered for promotion will be evaluated in the areas of research, teaching and service. The Professional Activities checklist (Appendix I) provides a listing of specific items on which the faculty member will be asked to report. However, the faculty member is required to supply complete information as specified in the Faculty Review Checklist in the *Faculty Handbook*. Excellence in research and teaching is required for promotion.

B. Criteria for Tenure

Criteria for tenure are essentially the same as those for promotion (see above) except that the tenure decision will be based not only on the past performance and achievements, but also on the clear evidence that such performance and achievements will continue over the professional life of the faculty member.

C. Procedure for Promotion and Tenure Recommendation

(i) Promotion to Professor.

The procedure for recommending individuals for promotion is as follows. The department Chair will require each Associate Professor being considered for promotion to Professor to submit information following the Faculty Review Checklist. Evaluation letters from at least three outside distinguished scholars will be solicited by the Chair. The procedure used to select the evaluators will conform to that described in the Fulbright College and University guidelines for promotion and tenure. The candidate's self-prepared review form, letters of evaluation, and any other supporting documents submitted on behalf of the candidacy by the candidate or physics faculty shall constitute the candidate's promotion

file. The tenured members of the personnel committee will review the promotion file of each candidate following the criteria for promotion (Sec. A above), and issue a recommendation to the Chair. The tenured faculty in the department will then meet as an ad hoc committee to consider the recommendation of the personnel committee. When an individual is recommended for promotion by a simple majority vote, a member of the committee will be appointed to prepare, in consultation with the rest of the committee, a recommendation memorandum to the Dean signed by those approving the recommendation. The memorandum will be sent to the Chair to transmit to the Dean along with the promotion file and a letter of evaluation from the Chair. The department Chair will give the candidate a copy of the committee's report as well as the Chair's own evaluation.

(ii) Promotion to Other Ranks, Tenure Procedures

The procedure for recommendation for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, or for the granting of tenure will be the same as above.

(iii) Appeals

A faculty member has the right to appeal a decision on promotion and/or tenure recommendation to the faculty body within the department that made the original recommendation. This appeal must be made within two working days of the receipt of the decision by the candidate. The faculty body then has two working days to act on the appeal.

D. Recommendation for Appointments to the Positions of University Professor, Distinguished Professor, and Award of Emeritus Status.

The criteria and procedures for appointments to the positions of University Professor and Distinguished Professor are contained in Academic Policy Series 1405.13, available through the Provost's Office Web Site. See also Board Policy 470.1.

The procedure for recommendation for appointment to the position of University Professor is initiated by the Chair or by receipt of a letter of nomination to the Chair from a Physics faculty member. The nominating faculty member with the assistance of the nominee will prepare a file for presentation to the whole physics faculty for its consideration and recommendation. If the faculty approves this recommendation, the Chair will forward this recommendation to the Dean.

The procedure for recommendation for appointment to the position of Distinguished Professor is initiated by the Chair or by receipt of a letter of nomination to the Chair. This nomination will be presented to the entire physics faculty along with supporting documents for its consideration and recommendation. If the faculty approves, the Chair will forward the recommendation to the Dean.

The criteria for award of Emeritus status are described in the Board Policy 475.1

The procedure for recommendation for awarding Emeritus status is initiated by the recommendation of an ad hoc committee composed of the whole faculty. If the recommendation is positive, the Chair will forward it to the Dean.

APPENDIX I
PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

(To be used in conjunction with Faculty Review Checklist in the *Faculty Handbook*.) Professional activities that are considered relevant in evaluation of performance, and recommendation for reappointment, promotion, and tenure include the following:

I. Teaching Activities

- A. Courses taught, including evidence of high standards in course content and assessment of student learning, and student and peer evaluations
- B. Direction of M.A. projects, M.S. theses, Ph.D. dissertations, and post-doctoral fellows
- C. Direction of undergraduate research projects, honors projects, etc.
- D. Development of new courses, laboratories or programs or classroom materials
- E. Student advising
- F. Outside recognition*

II. Research and Scholarly Activities†

- A. Journal article publications.
- B. Book publications.
- C. Presentation of lectures and papers.
- D. Research in progress.
- E. Proposal submissions.
- F. Grant/contract reception.
- G. Outside recognition*.

III. Service Activities

- A. University of Arkansas committee work and other service activities (University, College, Departmental).
- B. Professionally related Community or other Public Service (e.g., journal or proposal refereeing, book reviews, conference program committees, etc.).
- C. Outside recognition*.

* (1) Awards and Honors Received (2) Memberships and Office in Professional and Honorary Organizations and Committees (3) Adjunct appointments, lectureships, editorial posts, etc.

† Scholarly activity is to be interpreted broadly to include nationally recognized educational research