

Department of Mathematics Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
Adopted by a vote of the faculty on October 16, 2020
Amended November 2023

Regents, UNL, and College Guidelines

The department guidelines and procedures are in accordance with the University of Nebraska *Bylaws of the Board of Regents*, as described in the following documents:

- The UNL EVC *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure*: <https://executivevc.unl.edu/faculty/evaluation-recognition/guidelines>
- The College of Arts and Sciences *Tenure and Promotion Process*:
https://cas.unl.edu/docs/CAS_PT_Processes_July2022_v2.pdf
- The *College of Arts and Sciences Handbook*:
https://cas.unl.edu/docs/College_Handbook_012023_v2.pdf

Department of Mathematics Guidelines

Criteria for tenure and promotion to associate professor

The primary criteria for tenure and promotion to associate professor (for assistant professors in tenure lines, assistant professors of practice, or research professors) are evidence of:

- a strong, independent, nationally recognized research program
- a record of high-quality teaching, including classroom teaching and in some cases also in the areas of advising and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students
- significant amount of high-quality service

according to faculty apportionment and keeping up with the individual's responsibilities.

The following are important factors in evaluating the strength of the candidate's research program:

- Quality, productivity, and venue of peer-reviewed publications.
- Number of invited talks, especially those given at high profile conferences.
- Successes and efforts in obtaining external funding for scholarly activities.
- Other indicators, such as external awards including best paper awards, research visitors hosted or invited research visits, number of citations, may also be considered.

Productivity as a researcher is assessed by quality and quantity of creative work, funding, and other scholarly contributions. Creative work may include journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, popular essays, or other dissemination within the mathematical sciences, including mathematics education, though this is not to be considered an exhaustive list. Significance of creative work is assessed by its potential to influence members of mathematical sciences including mathematics education, and its potential for visibility within and across fields. Significance of funding is determined by competitiveness, prestige, and funding amount. Internal funding is viewed favorably, though successes and efforts in obtaining external funding are weighted more heavily. Overall, significant weight is given to the assessments

offered by external reviewers selected in collaboration between the chair and the candidate (see below section on External Reviewer Selection).

In assessing the quality of the candidate's teaching, the following are considered:

- Peer review of teaching.
- Engagement in pedagogical development. (E.g., participation in Project NExT, the university's Peer Review of Teaching project, or teaching-related workshops or conferences.)
- Evidence of curricular development, including efforts to design new courses or improve existing courses.
- Supervising undergraduate research.
- Mentoring of graduate students, including service on supervisory committees, not as chair.
- Efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom.
- Efforts at engagement with the mathematical sciences community, either locally, regionally or nationally.
- Student evaluations

It should be noted that a candidate is not required to have supervised Ph.D students to be considered for tenure, although having done so may be considered as evidence of teaching quality.

Contributions to teaching are evaluated on quality and effort, both in classroom teaching and non-classroom teaching activity. Evaluations for classroom teaching are determined through a review of combination of a letter or letters reporting on a peer review of teaching, course or instructional innovation and reflectiveness, candidate teaching evaluations, any awards won, and contribution to the departmental instructional mission.

Evaluations for non-classroom teaching activity are determined through a holistic review of the candidate's mentorship and supervision of graduate and undergraduate students, teaching mentorship, contribution to graduate student opportunities and assessment, and educational leadership in mathematical science communities.

In assessing the quality of the candidate's service, the following are considered: service to the profession; service to the community in ways related to the departmental mission; and service to the University and Colleges or Departments within the University. Quality of service is determined by its impact within the department, college, university, or other levels such as city, state, or national. Evaluation of the quality and quantity of service is determined relative to peers within the department.

Diversity-related efforts of the candidate are described here within teaching, but may be evaluated in whichever area of apportionment is most appropriate. Such efforts could include service on committees and organization of events that focus diversity-related issues, efforts to reduce equity gaps in success rates and retention in the classroom.

The department strives to keep the service load to a level appropriate to the faculty member's rank. The department does look for evidence of high quality in the service that is assigned to candidates. The department also encourages pre-tenure faculty to contribute to professional

service, such as conference organization, refereeing articles, and writing reviews.

Criteria for promotion to full professor

The primary criteria for promotion to full professor is the expectation that the candidate will have achieved a level of national or international stature in their field commensurate with this highest rank. The level of research, in terms of all the considerations listed above in the promotion to associate professor guidelines, should have continued and further developed since the last promotion. There should be clear evidence of significant national and international impact in their field.

With regard to teaching, it is expected that the candidate has continued to develop as an instructor and mentor with regard to the considerations mentioned above in the promotion to associate professor guidelines. In particular, contributions in the areas of curricular development (including convening of multisection courses, teaching a course for teachers, teaching Math in the City, or developing a new course at the undergraduate or 800-level that is part of the standard rotation), and mentorship of graduate students, postdocs, or junior faculty (such as serving as a teaching mentor or research mentor) is expected.

With regard to service, it is expected that the candidate will have taken on a significant level of service at the department level and/or university level, including taking on leadership roles on some committees.

External reviewer selection

The department process for selecting external reviewers is as follows: The Chair asks the candidate to submit a list of 10-15 qualified and independent potential reviewers, as defined by College and EVC policies. The candidate may use this opportunity to express objections to any potential reviewers and should also bring to the attention of the department any conflicts of interest involving major figures in the field who might reasonably be approached as reviewers. Separately, the chair asks two members of the tenured faculty, typically those closest to the candidate's research area, to develop a department list of 10-15 proposed reviewers. The Chair, in consultation with the candidate, determines the two members to ask. The candidate may determine that there are no faculty or limited faculty close to the candidate's research area, and name external experts for the chair to ask for assistance in determining the department list. These external experts may be mentors or senior collaborators of the candidate. It is expected that these external experts will not be external reviewers.

Depending upon the candidate's choices in waiver of rights, the candidate may have the opportunity to review the department list and can request the removal of any reviewers for any reason (and does not need to disclose the reason). Assuming the union of the two lists (after any removals) results in at least 15 names, the Chair then selects at least 6-8 reviewers from the combined list, making sure that at least three names from each list are chosen. (If the union of the lists is smaller than the required 15, the chair can request additional reviewers for the department list.)

Departmental processes for promotion and tenure

The Chair coordinates the introduction of material into the candidate files for anything submitted by someone other than the candidate. The material coordinated by the Chair includes:

For Tenure & Promotion to Associate, as well as for Promotion to Full:

- Departmental Promotion and Tenure Guidelines (this document)
- Documentation of Annual Evaluation and Reappointments
 - Offer letter and any MOUs associated with the appointment
 - Annual evaluation letters since hiring or promotion
 - Reappointment letters and responses to reappointment letters (e.g., from the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences)
- Documentation of External Reviewer Communication
 - Sample solicitation for external reviews
 - Candidate's waiver form
 - External Review letters
- Course Listing and Evaluation Section
 - Summary of courses taught
 - Compilation of evaluations of teaching

All members of the relevant departmental Faculty Review Committee review the promotion portfolio. The departmental Faculty Review Committee consists of all faculty at or above the level of promotion sought. That is, those at the associate and full rank vote on the promotion of those who seek promotion to associate. Those at the full rank vote on the promotion of those who seek promotion to full. For example, this means that the set of all Associate and Full rank tenure-line faculty, professors of practice, and research professors whose academic home is in the mathematics vote on the set of all promotion cases of current Assistant rank tenure-line faculty, professors of practice, and research professors.

The Faculty Review Committee meets to discuss the candidate's achievements and contributions in each area of apportionment. The discussion will typically be led by faculty members closely acquainted with the record. Two faculty lead the discussion of the research record. Two faculty lead the discussion of the teaching record. The chair in consultation with the candidate assigns these lead roles. The typical case is that the research leads are drawn from faculty members who have been formal or informal research mentors to the candidate, and that teaching mentors of the candidate lead the discussion on teaching. The service discussion is led by the chair, unless the candidate requests otherwise. It should be noted that research mentors and teaching mentors are always selected with the input of the mentee, as specified in the Departmental Mentoring Plan.

The discussion opens with a statement of the candidate's apportionment (e.g., 45% research, 45% teaching, 10% service) and concludes in a vote in each of the following categories, with these options:

Tenure: In Favor, Against, Abstain

Promotion: In Favor, Against, Abstain

Research: Outstanding, Superior, Good, Adequate, Not Adequate

Teaching: Outstanding, Superior, Good, Adequate, Not Adequate

Service: Outstanding, Superior, Good, Adequate, Not Adequate

Faculty Review Committee members are asked to vote for one option, or for a combination of two adjacent options in each category.

During the discussion, all members of the Faculty Review Committee are offered the opportunity to offer comments verbally and in writing, on written or electronic ballots. The intent of the comments is to provide context for votes.

In addition to the roles listed above, the chair asks two faculty members to summarize the results and context of the votes. Context is given by a combination of external reviews, the promotion portfolio, points highlighted verbally during discussion, and comments on ballots. One faculty is lead writer and the other is co-lead writer. The two faculty members are chosen in consultation with the candidate and may overlap with research or teaching leads. The faculty members share drafts of the letter with the entire Faculty Review Committee for comments. A redacted version of the draft letter is also shared with the candidate for comments. The redacted version omits identifying information of external reviewers, such as their names.

The Chair writes a separate letter which summarizes their assessment of the candidate. This letter may consider the discussion and evaluation of the faculty review committee. The letter may include comments from the external reviewers, as such it will be redacted according to the waiver signed by the candidate before sharing it with the candidate. The candidate has 5 business days to respond to the Faculty Letter and the Chair Letter before they are sent to the College as part of the candidate's package.

If at any point in the process, the candidate is not recommended for promotion by either the appropriate faculty committee or the responsible administrator, the candidate may request reasons for the adverse recommendation (in writing if desired), as well as reconsideration of the decision. Such requests shall be granted as expeditiously as possible. The reconsideration process must be completed so as to comply with submission deadlines to the next level of consideration. The purpose of a statement of reasons is to give an unsuccessful candidate an opportunity to prepare a rebuttal argument. No negative recommendation shall be forwarded until the-reconsideration is complete.