

PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY POLICY STATEMENT: **PROMOTION AND TENURE**

This document outlines the policy for promotion and tenure within the department of Physics and Astronomy at Appalachian State University.

Evaluation criteria are consistent with the mission of the department of Physics and Astronomy at Appalachian State University, which is to deliver nationally recognized scientific education and research to a diverse student body. Faculty and staff shall strive to secure sustainable resources for the department and remain at the cutting edge of their respective fields, in order to provide a diverse student body with scientific training through impactful research opportunities, high quality lectures, and cutting-edge experiential learning.

Sections 4.1.5 through 4.1.8 of the faculty handbook define the Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC). Of note, the PTC is composed of all tenured faculty in the department, excluding the department chair and excluding those who must recuse themselves. Section 4.4 of the faculty handbook is related to reappointment, promotion, and tenure and should be read by all faculty up for promotion or tenure.

Tenure track faculty in the department of Physics and Astronomy at Appalachian State University are expected to exhibit excellence in all teaching duties normally associated with such a position. Unless negotiated with the department's chair, faculty are expected to teach nine contact hours per semester. In parallel with their teaching activities, faculty are expected to develop an active research program that involves App State students. It is also expected that the faculty member will participate in a collegial manner in physics and/or astronomy-related activities attendant to the operation of the department, such as committee work, student advising, preparation of reports, curriculum review, and department meetings.

The chair meets individually with all faculty on an annual basis to evaluate their performance. At each annual conference, the faculty member's planned scholarly activities and allocation of work time between teaching, research, and service are discussed with the chair. For more details, please see the department's Faculty Evaluation and Merit document. At each year's annual evaluation of faculty, the chair should discuss with the faculty member their performance, and should voice concerns, if any, as to the faculty member's need to improve performance in accordance with the agreed upon work plan. The purpose of this discussion is to give each faculty member a rough idea of the probability for tenure, promotion, or both, since the PTC is also involved in the decision.

The following paragraphs and sections provide the general criteria for promotion and tenure in the department of Physics and Astronomy. In this regard, promotion and tenure decisions made by the PTC and department chair will be made primarily on the basis of contributions and achievements of the faculty member that can be directly identified with the itemized criteria outlined in this document and those described in the Departmental Faculty Evaluation and Merit Document.

However, it is understood that these departmental policy documents are not all inclusive. In addition to striving towards excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, all faculty members

are expected to behave professionally towards colleagues, staff, and students. Professionalism will therefore be considered by the chair and PTC in all decisions, and weighed equally with teaching, scholarship, and service.

A) Tenure and/or Promotion to Associate Professor: Tenure and the rank of associate professor require that the faculty member demonstrates high quality performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service as supported by the weights and criteria mentioned previously. The dossier prepared by the candidate for promotion and tenure must conform to the faculty handbook section 4.4.

Teaching/Instruction: Must be excellent as measured by materials and evidence provided by the faculty member. Evidence will include peer-evaluations and student evaluations. Peer evaluations will be conducted according to the faculty handbook (Sec 4.3.1.1) that requires peer evaluations at least once per year for pre-tenured faculty. Probationary faculty would be subject to three annual peer observations of teaching prior to each contract renewal. In addition to these evaluations of teaching, other products may be considered as detailed in the Teaching/Instructional Activities section listed below or as negotiated with the Chair and PTC. Candidates should show evidence that they have and will continue to contribute to the department's mission of excellence in teaching.

In evaluation of the provided evidence, the PTC and chair will consider the level and academic challenge and rigor of the course and the performance of the faculty member. Answers to student evaluation questions approved by the department will be considered by the chair in annual evaluations and by the PTC.

Meeting these requirements automatically satisfy the CAS Teaching Excellence Policy.

Scholarship/Research: It is expected that the faculty member will produce scholarship at a level of high quality in an established program of research. Faculty must involve Appalachian State students, graduate and/or undergraduate, in their research. This scholarship should be able to stand scrutiny beyond the immediate confines of the department via peer-reviewed publications and/or external funding; the faculty member must demonstrate potential for continued scholarly contributions in physics, applied physics, astronomy, or their associated pedagogy research and must demonstrate a clear record of active scholarship including departmental majors. In order to be approved for tenure and promotion to associate professor, the faculty member must have **at least four** scholarly products. Scholarly products automatically considered include books, book chapters, peer-reviewed papers that have been published or accepted for publication, patents, and external grant proposals as principal investigator or co-principal investigator with an average review of at least "good/very good" scores from the review process or some equivalent thereof. The guidelines for what may be considered a peer-reviewed publication are outlined in the CAS guidelines for peer-review. Other products **may** be considered **if negotiated beforehand** with the chair and PTC, and are detailed in the Scholarly/Research Activities list below. These products, however, are not weighed equally with peer-reviewed publications, books, patents, grants, etc. and so may not satisfy the requirements on a one-to-one basis.

Meeting departmental requirements for scholarship and research will also automatically satisfy the CAS Reassigned Time Guidelines.

Service: Evidence of service and leadership potential in the department, college, university, professional community, and community at large will all be considered for promotion. Activities that are automatically considered as service include: administrative appointments (such as Chair, Graduate Program Director, Undergraduate Program Director, Secondary Educational Program Director, etc.), academic advising, educational outreach, and service on departmental, college, or university committees. A minimum amount of service on departmental, college, or university committees is required of each faculty member, and is detailed in the department's Faculty Evaluation and Merit document. Other Service Activities are detailed in the list below, or may be negotiated with the Chair and PTC.

B) Promotion to Professor: The rank of professor requires that the faculty member continues to demonstrate all of the attributes associated with the rank of an associate professor and demonstrate evidence of leadership of value to the department. The dossier prepared by the candidate for promotion and tenure must conform to the guidelines of the College of Arts and Sciences, https://cas.appstate.edu/sites/cas.appstate.edu/files/cas_checksheets_for_promotion_and_tenure_0.pdf

The rank of professor assumes that the individual has taken and will continue to take a leadership role. It is understood that leadership can take many forms that could fit into any one of the three categories: teaching, scholarship, or service. Some examples for each category are detailed below, however evidence of leadership not included here can be negotiated with the chair and the PTC.

Teaching/Instruction: Must be excellent as measured by materials and evidence provided by the faculty member. Evidence will include peer-evaluations and student evaluations. In addition to these evaluations of teaching, other products may be considered as detailed in the Teaching/Instructional Activities section listed below or as negotiated with the Chair and PTC. Candidates should show evidence that they have and will continue to contribute to the department's mission of excellence in teaching.

In evaluation of the provided evidence the PTC and chair will consider the level and academic challenge and rigor of the course and the performance of the faculty member. Answers to student evaluation questions approved by the department will be considered by the chair in annual evaluations and by the PTC.

Evidence of leadership in teaching could include development of pedagogical resources that will be used by the broader community, curriculum development, or organizing and conducting pedagogical workshops.

Meeting these requirements will also automatically satisfy the CAS Teaching Excellence Policy.

Scholarship/Research: Continued evidence of high quality in publications and in scholarly paper presentations including our students and demonstrated ability to attract extramural funding as principal investigator on scholarly grant applications. Faculty must involve Appalachian State students, graduate and/or undergraduate, in their research. The faculty member must have at least

two scholarly products every three years which automatically include books, book chapters, patents, peer-reviewed papers that have been published or accepted for publication, external grant proposals as principal investigator or co-principal investigator with at least “good/very good” scores from the review process or some equivalent thereof. The guidelines for what may be considered a peer-reviewed manuscript are outlined in the CAS guidelines for peer-review. Other products **may** be considered **if negotiated beforehand** with the chair and PTC, and are detailed in the Scholarly/Research Activities list below. These products, however, are not weighed equally with peer-reviewed publications, books, patents, etc. and so may not satisfy the requirements on a one-to-one basis.

Meeting departmental requirements for research and scholarship will also automatically satisfy the CAS Reassigned Time Guidelines.

Leadership in scholarship could include evidence of the faculty member’s stature as a scholar and mentor within the discipline, or their ability to represent the department and university externally and to enhance its reputation. This could be evidenced by organizing sessions at national meetings, receiving awards for scholarship, authoring textbooks adopted by the external community, or other examples as negotiated with the chair and the PTC.

Service: Evidence of service and leadership potential in the department, college, university, professional community, and community at large will all be considered for promotion. Activities that are automatically considered as service include: administrative appointments (such as Chair, Graduate Program Director, Undergraduate Program Director, Secondary Educational Program Director, etc.), academic advising, educational outreach, and service on departmental, college, or university committees. A minimum amount of service on departmental, college, or university committees is required of each faculty member, and is detailed in the department’s Faculty Evaluation and Merit document. Other Service Activities are detailed in the list below, or may be negotiated with the Chair and PTC.

C. LIST of ACHIEVEMENT ITEMS for PROMOTION & TENURE DECISIONS:

Evidence and activities not on these lists are also allowed, as long as they are approved by the chair and the PTC. To gain approval of the PTC for any request for promotion and tenure decisions, the faculty member should bring their request to the chair for negotiation. If the chair believes the request reasonable, they will then present the request to the PTC for their approval. This discussion should take place, annually, at a minimum, so that the faculty will know whether or not they are making adequate progress towards promotion.

Teaching/Instructional Activities

1. Writing or revision of laboratory manuals.
2. Development of new demonstrations, experiments, and related equipment and lab exercises.
3. Development or implementation of high impact learning activities. High impact activities may have one or more of the following characteristics: they are used by other faculty, they are published in articles, talks, or on the web and available to faculty outside Appalachian State, or they have

undergone assessment and been shown to be a superior teaching technique.

4. Development of facilities for instructional use (development of labs, work areas, observatory facilities, acquisition of surplus or donated equipment, etc.).
5. Directing or advising a student research or thesis project.
6. Mentoring of directed research/independent study/internship courses
7. Participating in or directing/leading pedagogical workshops
8. Development of new courses or significant effort on the part of the faculty to improve an existing course.
9. Demonstrated improvement on pre/post scores on standardized or specialized student assessment tools (such as E-CLASS.) It has been shown in pedagogical literature that as assessment pre/post scores improve, student evaluation scores go down. These pre/post scores can then serve as a balance for student evaluations.
10. Organization of a lecture series, such as our graduate colloquium course. This may also be counted as service at the faculty member's discretion, but the organization of the same lecture series cannot be counted in both teaching and service.

Scholarly/Research Activities

1. As described above, major products include publications in peer-reviewed journals, patents, books or book chapters, and external grant proposals with average scores between good and very good from reviewers.
2. Publication of non-peer-reviewed works, such as conference proceedings that are not peer-reviewed, professional society bulletins, magazines that are not peer-reviewed, web publishing, and others can be considered, but is weighed less than those listed in item 1.
3. The presentation of work by the faculty member or their research student (with faculty member as a co-author) at international, national, state, or regional professional society meetings. Presentation of work at departmental, college, university or local affiliate meetings will be considered but weighed less than larger conferences. Invited talks or presentations will carry more weight than contributed talks or presentations.
4. Recognition of scholarly activity by others, including acknowledgements in peer-reviewed journal articles or other scholarly publications, awards, and citations.
5. Writing and submission of external grants related to research projects that do not receive priority scores will be considered, but will be weighed less than a funded grant or a grant with high scores.
6. Writing, submitting, and receiving external grants for student research will be considered. Examples include NC Space Grants, among others.
7. Writing, submitting, and receiving internal grants for research or student research will be considered, but weighed less than external grants. Examples include OSR Research or Travel Grants, RIEEE Concert Grants, URC Grants, Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) grants, SAFE grants, etc.
8. Administration and research related to existing, funded grants.
9. Direction of research or thesis projects carried out by either undergraduate or graduate students, unless those projects are counted by the faculty member as a teaching activity. Service on a graduate or honors thesis committee also can count, however is weighed less than being the primary adviser.
10. Publication of novel processes, apparatus, methods, designs, etc., in a patent disclosure. (A

patent disclosure should be considered equivalent to conference paper, and a patent equivalent to a refereed publication).

11. Development and management of facilities for use in research (development of labs, work areas, observatory facilities, acquisition of surplus or donated equipment, etc.). These activities could also be considered as service at the discretion of the faculty member if the facilities receive general use, but the management of the same facility cannot count as both research and service.

12. Reviewing, refereeing, or editing of research-oriented publications, grant proposals, or draft manuscripts of these. This work can also be counted as service, but the same work cannot be counted as both research and service.

13. Providing consultation services, with or without charge, on areas of professional expertise in physics, astronomy, or pedagogy. This may count towards either scholarship or service, but not both for the same project.

Service Activities

1. Providing services to the public, where those services are related to the disciplines of physics, astronomy, or pedagogy, and are rendered without personal profit.

2. Serving on committees of, chairing sessions of, or serving as an officer of international, national, or regional academic or professional societies.

3. The writing, submission, and administration of grants related to service, unless that grant/project has already been counted by the faculty member as scholarship.

4. Presentation of physics, astronomy, or pedagogical seminars or talks to campus, local, regional or larger groups, which are not composed of members of one's own profession.

5. Mentoring new faculty members, tenure or non-tenure track.

6. Providing consultation services, without charge, on areas of professional expertise in physics, astronomy, or pedagogy. This may count towards either scholarship or service, but not both for the same project.

7. Providing support for K-12 schools, home-school groups, or community colleges, in the form of teacher workshops, science fair judging, coordination of equipment loans, giving presentations and demonstrations, or other as negotiated with the chair and PTC.

8. Coordination of speakers, colloquial workshops, or major regional, local or national meetings of departmental relevance, unless those activities have already been counted by the faculty member as teaching.

9. Sponsorship of student organizations or clubs.

10. Development and management of facilities for use in teaching, service, or for use outside of the faculty member's own research group (development of labs, work areas, observatory facilities, acquisition of surplus or donated equipment, etc.). Note that management of the same facility cannot count as both research and service.

11. Reviewing or refereeing of non-research oriented publications, grant proposals, or draft manuscripts. Examples include but are not limited to NC Space Grant student proposals, internal proposals such as the URC, OSR Research and Travel Grants, GRAM, etc.

12. Reviewing, refereeing, or editing of research-oriented publications, grant proposals, or draft manuscripts of these. This work can also be counted as research, but the same work cannot be counted as both research and service.