

**College of Engineering  
University of South Alabama  
Tenure and Promotion  
Statement of Policies and Procedures**

Achieving tenure and promotion at the University of South Alabama is a multi-step process that begins in the department and ends with the Board of Trustees. University policies pertaining to tenure and promotion are set forth in the latest **Faculty Handbook** at <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/facultyhandbooks.html>.

This document describes the tenure and promotion procedures for the College of Engineering, and is available on the College's website at <https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/engineering/resources/egpromotiontenure.pdf>. College procedures are designed to assist in the process although policies in the Faculty Handbook supersede any College procedures. The promotion and tenure process is accomplished using electronic files and access to those files is controlled by Academic Affairs to assure confidentiality. Note that the college timeline is intended to guide candidates, college committees and administrators in preparation and review of the documents. It is not the same as the Academic Affairs timeline that specifies access to the electronic documents.

Eligibility for promotion as well as procedures, criteria, and the application of criteria are described in detail in the latest **Faculty Handbook**. Peer review is required for both promotion and tenure decisions. Departments and the College are required to indicate explicitly how recommendations are developed during the review process and must communicate these procedures to the candidates and to the administration

### **Promotion**

The parties involved in the promotion process at the Departmental, College, and University levels rely on the principles and criteria as defined in the latest **Faculty Handbook (Section 3.10: Promotion Policies and Procedures)**. These criteria involve consideration of the quality of teaching, the level of scholarship judged by national standards, and the regular performance of duties including the ability to participate in a healthy learning environment. The degree of professional achievement is thereby evaluated in three broad areas: teaching, research, and professional service to the Department, College, University, and where appropriate, to the Community.

### **Tenure**

The parties involved in the tenure process at the Departmental, College, and University levels rely on the principles and criteria as defined in the latest **Faculty Handbook (Section 3.11 Tenure)**. The criteria for tenure are the same as for promotion plus the additional important consideration of collegiality of candidates within their department. Absence of evidence and argument to the contrary will be considered evidence of the candidate's collegiality with the department.

### **Candidate's Responsibilities**

### **General Guidelines**

Candidates bear the primary responsibility for the presentation of their own materials in support of their respective tenure and/or promotion applications. The Departmental committees, Department Chair, College committees, and Dean must, in turn, provide reasons and any appropriate additional information in support of their recommendations. All materials and comments should be structured according to specific criteria.

### **Portfolio**

1. Preparation of the portfolio should be done in accordance with the instructions provided by Academic Affairs on their Promotion and Tenure Policy and Procedures webpage.

(<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/promotiontenure.html>).

2. A candidate who is applying for **tenure and promotion** should submit the same portfolio for both tenure and promotion.
3. A candidate should submit their portfolio electronically as specified by Academic Affairs.

### **Supplementary Materials**

1. A candidate must submit materials in support of teaching, research and service, which should include copies of all scholarly publications and other documents evidencing teaching and service during the years in rank or the probationary period. These supplementary materials must be electronically submitted as specified by Academic Affairs.
2. A candidate may submit hard copies of one or more books.

If the candidate is applying for **promotion only**, materials produced before and after the last promotion should be clearly distinguished.

If the candidate is applying for **promotion and tenure**, a candidate who has been given credit for service at a prior institution may include materials produced throughout their academic career.

### **Portfolio for External Review**

A candidate for promotion and/or tenure must prepare an electronic portfolio for submission to external reviewers. The portfolio should be in a format that may be easily reviewed by an external reviewer and must include:

1. Curriculum vitae using a format common for the candidate's discipline.
2. Copies of selected publications, presentations, and research activities.

### **Timeline**

Important dates associated with the tenure and/or promotion process are summarized in a separate document entitled "**Important Dates for Tenure and Promotion**". The candidate should refer to the most recent version of this document available on the College of Engineering website at <https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/engineering/resources/egpromotiontenuretimeline.pdf>.

## **Promotion and Tenure Procedures**

### **Step One: External Reviewer Selection (See Faculty Handbook 3.10.3 and 3.11.4.3)**

#### **Identification of Potential External Reviewers**

A list of names of external reviewers are to be submitted by each of, the candidate, the Committee Chair, and the tenured faculty of the department in consultation with the Department Chair. Selection of the names must consider the following:

1. External reviewers must be professionally competent to evaluate the quality, significance, and impact of the candidate's body of scholarly work.
2. External reviewers who have a conflict of interest or the appearance of one, or whose objectivity may be questioned, may not serve in this role. (Conflicts of interest include those identified by Federal agencies as precluding review of proposals.)
3. External reviewers must be external to the university and should normally be at or above the rank for which the candidate is being considered.

Each of these lists of external reviewers will be submitted to the Committee Chair.

### **Selection of External Reviewers**

1. It is the Department Chair's responsibility to ensure that these lists are submitted to department's committee chair in a timely manner.
2. The Chair of the Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee compiles a list of potential reviewers containing at least six names with one or more names from each of the three lists. This list of potential reviewers is provided to the Department Chair.

### **Contacting External Reviewers**

1. The Department Chair should contact the reviewers and, without prejudice, determine their willingness to perform the external review.
2. The Department Chair will then send a copy of the candidate's **Portfolio for External Review**, together with a standard letter, to the selected external reviewers, requesting a review of the candidate's research activity credentials.
3. The external reviewers' comments will be returned to the Department Chair and will be made available to the Department Tenure and/or Promotion Committee.
4. The external reviewers' comments are confidential and are not shown to the candidate. These comments, along with other materials, are incorporated in the candidate's portfolio by the Department Chair. "At the conclusion of the entire promotion and tenure process, the candidate will be informed of the names of those persons who were selected to serve as referees.

**Caution:** External reviewers must provide an original signature on their letter/memorandum, or must provide a scanned copy of a cover letter with an original signature.

### **Step Two: The Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee Responsibilities**

The members of the Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee are responsible for the strictest professionalism and confidentiality during and after the review process. Any breach of confidentiality is regarded as a serious disciplinary offense. All responsibilities outlined in the following section supplement the ***Faculty Handbook, (Sections 3.10. and 3.11)***.

### **Committee Deliberations**

1. The Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee will review all material with the realization that evidence of continuing scholarly/creative productivity and teaching effectiveness are typically the essence of all tenure and promotion recommendations. In addition, collegiality is considered in the tenure evaluation.
2. The Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee should include an assessment of the quality of the journals in which papers have been published and identify refereed and non-refereed journals. The discipline's and/or journal's practice in listing co-authored articles should also be clarified by the College Promotion and/or Tenure Committee.
3. The Department Committee's recommendation(s) must also consider evaluations of the candidate's work expressed by the external reviewers.
4. A vote by secret paper ballot, concerning the candidate, is taken after the Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee has discussed the candidate.

## **Committee Recommendations**

1. The Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee recommendations, which are written in narrative form, must communicate the sense of their deliberations and decisions and should address teaching, research, service, and in the case of tenure, collegiality.
2. In departments that have a written policy on expected standards of performance for tenure and promotion, the committee should include this information in their recommendation.
3. In the case of split decisions, the Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee recommendations must clearly represent both the majority and minority viewpoints.

## **Reporting Committee Recommendations**

1. The Department Promotion Committee and the Department Tenure Committee are separate committees (even if there is overlapping membership); hence the recommendations from each committee (even about the same candidate) must be kept separate.
2. The Chairs of the Department Promotion and Tenure Committees must each submit to the Department Chair a written recommendation, in the form of a narrative, for each candidate, together with all supporting materials.
3. Each member of the Department Promotion Committee and/or Tenure Committee, including the Committee Chair, must personally sign the Department Tenure Recommendation and/or Department Promotion Recommendation. This signature affirms that the written recommendation accurately includes that member's view whether expressed as the majority or minority position.

## **Step Three: The Department Chair's Responsibilities**

The Department Chair must ensure the following:

1. The Chair must request the curriculum vitae of each external reviewer and place this information, as well as the External Reviewer's evaluations, in the appropriate section of the portfolio.
2. The Chair must develop a written recommendation for or against promotion and/or tenure, along with a justification for the recommended action. This should be a carefully documented and considered statement assessing the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in teaching, research, service, and (for tenure) collegiality. The statement, which must take into account the Departmental Committee's report and external reviewers' comments, should address all relevant criteria and assess the extent to which the candidate meets them.
  - a. The Department Chair is responsible for writing a letter informing a candidate, who has applied for promotion only, tenure only or for promotion and tenure, the recommendations of the Department Chair and the Department Promotion and/or Tenure Committee. The chair must meet with the candidate and provide a copy of the committee recommendation and the chair's recommendation. This copy should NOT include the approval/non-approval votes of the Promotion and/or Tenure Committee and must omit the names of external reviewers.
  - b. If the candidate wishes to include additional materials supporting candidacy for promotion or tenure (including but not limited to a rebuttal statement and/or summary argument), these materials must be submitted to the Dean as electronic files within one week of receiving the Departmental recommendation. This evidence will be added to the portfolio for review at the College level, where it must be clearly indicated in an extra section of the candidate's portfolio.
  - c. The Department Chair must inform any candidates who have received a negative decision by both the Department Chair and the Department Promotion Committee that they must make a written request that their materials be forwarded to the Dean within one week after

learning of the outcomes. The Department Chair must report to the Dean if any candidates make such a written request that their materials be forwarded to the Dean.

4. The Department Chair is responsible for organizing and electronically submitting each candidate's portfolio and supplementary materials to the Dean of Engineering.

#### **Appeal Procedures**

Any challenge of promotion and/or tenure decisions must proceed according to the University's Grievance Procedure, which is found in the latest ***Faculty Handbook, Section 4.2 Faculty Grievance Procedures***.