

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for the Department of Physics

Approved by the Physics department: April 2017

Every faculty member, upon consultation with the Department Chair, will choose between a research-track workload with an increased research expectation and a nine-contact hour teaching load, and a teaching-track workload with a smaller research expectation and a twelve-contact hour teaching load. The choice of workload will be reviewed every five years after discussion between the Chair and the faculty member. When circumstances dictate, the workload can be adjusted within the five-year period, if the faculty member and the chair agree.

1.0 Teaching

Candidates for tenure are expected to demonstrate noteworthy achievement in the area of teaching. The physics department expects that all candidates will demonstrate the ability to teach physics to majors and non-majors, at the lower and upper levels.

Effectiveness will be shown by peer and supervisor evaluation, honors or special recognitions for teaching accomplishments, letters from former students, successful direction of individual student work, successful development of new courses, use of effective instructional methods, and student evaluations.

For faculty on the teaching track, it is especially important that the teaching portfolio demonstrate excellence in teaching.

2.0 Professional Growth and Development

Candidates for tenure are expected to develop a research program that leads to publication in journals as well as presentations at professional meetings. The quantity and quality of publications are to be weighed in evaluation of research achievement. Additionally, candidates are expected to involve students in research, to the extent that they can successfully present at conferences, and possibly publish their research.

2.1 Research Track—nine contact hours of teaching

The physics department strongly values engaging students in undergraduate research. Research Track faculty are expected to regularly mentor students in research. A faculty member should have at least four students give presentations over a 5-year period.

All faculty members are expected to regularly present their research at professional conferences.

All faculty members are expected to regularly apply for external, as well as internal funding. Given the extremely competitive nature of grant funding, receiving an external grant is not a requirement for tenure, but receiving enough internal funding to keep a research program running is expected. Successful external grants will be given due weight.

Research Track faculty are expected to publish at least two papers in peer-reviewed journals. The length of the journal article, the quality of the publication, and quality the journal will all be taken into consideration.

In addition to the above, some combination of the following activities is expected:

Successful application(s) for time at a user facility, such as a National Lab or Observatory.

Refereeing papers for a peer-reviewed journal, reviewing textbooks, contributing chapters to books, or reviewing grants.

Development of computer programs or software to further a research agenda.

Honors and awards for research or scholarship.

Consulting work which involves application of professional expertise.

Publishing a book or textbook about a subject in physics or astronomy, or a signed contract with a publisher to write such a book.

Service to a professional society, such as serving on an organizing committee or chairing a session.

2.2 Teaching Track—twelve contact hours of teaching

The physics department strongly values engaging students in undergraduate research. Teaching Track faculty are expected to regularly mentor students in research. At least two students should be able to present their research over a 5-year period.

All faculty members are expected to regularly present their research at professional conferences.

In addition to the above, some combination of the following activities is expected:

Teaching Track faculty are expected to publish at least one paper in a peer-reviewed journal. The length of the journal article and the quality of the publication and the journal will be taken into consideration.

Teaching Track faculty are expected to apply for internal and external grants. Given the extremely competitive grant pool these days, receiving an external funding is not a requirement for tenure, but receiving enough internal funding to keep a research program running is expected.

Organizing or attending workshops related to science.

Publishing a book or textbook about a subject in physics or astronomy, or a signed contract with a publisher to write such a book.

Reviewing textbooks, contributing chapters to books, or reviewing grants.

Other professional development activities will be given appropriate weight.

3.0 Service

All faculty members are expected to serve the Department of Physics and the University through some combination of the following: effective advisement of student organizations, successful advising of students, serving on committees or boards of professional and/or community organizations, successful mentoring of colleagues, serving on departmental, college-wide, and/or university-wide committees, and supporting outreach activities such as science fairs.