Department Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

A. General Policy
1. The purpose of the award of tenure is to retain outstanding scholars with a demonstrated track record of excellence in research, teaching, and service and the promise of future productivity; and to provide increased academic freedom in which to work.
2. Tenure-track faculty members and tenured faculty who are eligible for promotion shall be evaluated annually by a variety of methods (Department Chair, ad hoc review committee, faculty mentor) and the evaluated faculty member shall be informed in writing of the outcome by the Department Chair. Promotion of faculty with titles of Assistant/Associate Scientist or Assistant/Associate in Physics will follow the general principles of tenure-track faculty. In all cases assessment will be made only on those duties specified in the faculty member’s semester assignment reports.

B. Research and Scholarly Activities
1. For the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, there must be evidence of excellence in scholarship at the national and international level, with the candidate ranking in the upper echelon of their research specialty for their level of experience. The evaluation of the research, in particular its originality and international standing, is by external peer review of publications and other scholarly activities. The reviewers are asked to compare the candidate’s performance with those of the best in the relevant field for all institutions (public and private).
2. For promotion to the rank of Full Professor, there must be a clearly established national and international reputation for having made recognized major contributions to the field (e.g., important discoveries, seminal works, and major treatises). Evidence of a sustained level of high-quality work is especially important. Evaluation of the level of activity is by external peer review conducted by leading international experts in the candidate’s field.

C. Teaching
For the award of tenure and/or promotion there should be evidence of a sustained level of high-quality teaching and a commitment to the instructional mission of the University. The level of achievement is assessed by consideration of (1) student evaluations, (2) interviews with students, (3) classroom or teaching laboratory visits, and (4) review of syllabi and other class material. These will be summarized by the reports of the Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee.

D. Service
Service contributions to both the Department and to the community (University, State, national organizations, etc.) are expected for the award of tenure and/or promotion. Evidence of contributions beyond the normal obligations expected of faculty members (regular service on typically two committees per year) is taken into consideration in the overall evaluation, but it is not required for recommendation for the award of tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor. Evidence of a commitment to service to the profession is expected for promotion to Full Professor.