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Computer Science: Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Documentation

The College at Brockport

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Department of Computer Science

SUNY College at Brockport

Departmental Guidelines for Personnel Decisions

Preamble

These guidelines have been developed in response to the directive from the Vice President for Academic Affairs to revise the departmental guidelines for personnel actions to conform to the revised mission of the College and the new Faculty Roles and Rewards document approved by the President on January 6, 1999. The purpose of this document is to further clarify the guidelines provided by the Dean of Letters and Sciences, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the SUNY Board of Trustees as they apply to the field of Computer Science. The procedural aspects of all personnel decisions will be governed by the guidelines provided by the Vice President for Academic Affairs regarding Academic Policy/Practice on Department APT Committees and Procedural Requirements for Academic Personnel Decisions.

The Department of Computer Science agrees with the Faculty Roles and Rewards Final Report (December 1998) in stating that teaching should be considered the most important responsibility of SUNY Brockport's faculty. In any department, there are many service responsibilities relating to student success that are absolutely essential. Some of these duties, such as recruitment, advisement and retention, remain fairly stable from year to year. Other duties, such as curriculum revision, upgrading of teaching/laboratory facilities, program assessment and accreditation, will demand larger commitments in some years than in others. In any department with few faculty at senior levels, but with large student enrollment, even junior faculty members have to shoulder heavy service responsibilities relating to its governance. Hence, the quality and the quantity of contributions in scholarship and service will vary from person to person and, for each person, will vary from year to year over a person's career. Besides, the nature of the computer science discipline, the mostly-undergraduate nature of SUNY Brockport, and the mission of the College that places success of its students as its highest priority are all factors to be taken into account in setting realistic expectations for scholarship in guidelines for personnel decisions.

It is expected that this document will be revised periodically by the Department with the approval of the Dean. It is understood that activities at this professional level can not be judged in a completely quantified manner and that they will require the reasoned, subjective judgment of all members of the department. Each candidate is expected to be evaluated individually taking into consideration all relevant factors.

Nature of the Discipline

- In addition to the traditional venues for presenting products of scholarship such as peer-refereed journals and conferences, the discipline of computer science also allows other means of creative expression. Specifically, publication/presentation of new knowledge in Internet-based on-line journals, contribution to standards-setting organizations and technical newsgroups, creation of Internet-accessible documents that synthesize existing knowledge into new patterns, development of substantial software/hardware, utilization of discipline-based knowledge to solve problems in public or private sector (consultant work), etc., are other possibilities.
- Most products of scholarship in computer science are peer-reviewed extensively, and are often at a technical level not appropriate for incorporation in undergraduate classroom teaching. On the other hand, continued mastery of new developments in technology and revision of course material that demonstrate the use of contemporary hardware, software, programming languages, tools and applications, will lead to a higher quality of undergraduate level teaching than the more traditional “scholarship of discovery.” Thus, the Department believes that personnel guidelines should place appropriate emphasis on continued mastery of the discipline.

Assumptions

- The Computer Science Accreditation Commission (CSAC) currently accredits the Advanced Computing Track of the Computer Science major. Maintaining this accreditation is a matter of highest priority for the department. CSAC guidelines require that all full-time faculty members maintain currency in the field and make regular scholarship contributions. Their guidelines also place limits on the teaching and advisement loads.
- The appointment pattern for tenure-track faculty at Assistant Professor level with no prior experience will be 3-3-1. This implies that reviews will occur during the second, fifth, and sixth years. The review in the fifth year will be for a one-year reappointment. The review in the sixth year will conclude with either a commitment to tenure at the end of the seventh year, or a one-year final appointment for the seventh year. If promotion is combined with tenure (as will be typical), the promotion will take effect at the beginning of the seventh academic year.
- The departmental guidelines have been developed under the assumption that the regular teaching load in Computer Science is eighteen contact hours per year. Some of the courses in the Department require five contact hours (three in classroom and two in laboratory) per week, while most require only three contact hours per week. Hence it may not be possible to keep the workload for all faculty at exactly eighteen contact hours per year. It is expected that the actual workload may be eighteen plus or

minus one, and the balance will be carried over beyond the year for suitable adjustment to ensure an average workload of eighteen contact hours per year.

- A departmental computing laboratory – Grace Laboratory, consisting of an assortment of UNIX workstations and IBM compatible PCs was established in Spring 1995 to promote computer science research and experimentation by faculty. It is also used to provide one-on-one assistance to students who need additional help. However, the Department of Computer Science does not have any professional staff or technician to manage this laboratory as is common in science departments. Usually one of the faculty members serves as a system administrator. In recognition of this heavy service responsibility in managing the hardware, software, and the departmental Web pages, the administrator is given release time equivalent to three contact hours of teaching per year.

Policies and Procedures

- Personnel decisions relating to term renewal, continuing appointment and promotion will be based on a rigorous evaluation of the faculty member's contribution in teaching, scholarship and service as per guidelines provided later. The Calendar of Personnel Processes published every year by the Vice President for Academic Affairs will govern the schedule.
- It is the responsibility of each full-time faculty to know and understand the terms of his/her appointment and the deadlines, policies, procedures and personnel decision processes for term renewal, continuing appointment and/or promotion. It is the responsibility of the individual seeking personnel action to prepare a complete and organized package of material supporting his/her request. Faculty members must study all sections of this document, in addition to
 - the guidelines provided by the Dean of Letters and Sciences,
 - the guidelines provided by the Vice President for Academic Affairs,
 - the guidelines provided by the SUNY Board of Trustees,
 - the memorandum provided by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on Appointment and Review Timetable for Beginning Tenure Track Faculty,
 - the guidelines provided by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on Academic Policy/Practice on Department APT Committee, and
 - the guidelines provided by the Vice President for Academic Affairs on Procedural Requirements for Academic Personnel Decisions.
- To assure both academic rigor and equity in review, all personnel decisions must be made by the chair of the department and a duly formed committee of peers. The guidelines for constituting departmental APT committees are currently under review by the Faculty Senate of SUNY Brockport. Once these policies are formalized, the Department of Computer Science will formulate its own guidelines in conformance to the college-wide policies.

- The Department of Computer Science has always considered teaching the primary responsibility of the faculty, and had appointed a committee of peers for evaluating the teaching effectiveness as part of term renewal, continuing appointment and promotion decisions. This practice will be continued in future also. This committee's evaluation will be based on a *teaching portfolio*, and the final report of teaching effectiveness will be submitted to the APT Committee for further action. The ad-hoc committee for evaluation of teaching effectiveness will include :
 - one member of the APT Committee selected by the faculty member applying for term renewal, continuing appointment and/or promotion. The APT Committee member will be the Chair of the ad-hoc committee,
 - one student representative selected by the faculty member applying for term renewal, continuing appointment and/or promotion, and
 - one other faculty member with continuing appointment or on tenure-track, chosen by the Chair of the APT Committee.

- As a rating device, the APT Committee and the Chair may use a numeric scale of 0 through 4, for each of the three categories, as follows: poor (4), fair (3), good (2), very good (1), and excellent (0). 'Excellent' should be used for truly exceptional performance. Examples are: in the category of teaching, receiving SUNY Chancellor's award or a recognition at an equivalent level; in the category of scholarship, sustaining scholarship activities equivalent or close to the expectation at research institutions; in the category of service, demonstrating significant and lasting contributions to the department, college, university or to the professional community, and having received recognition on/off campus for the achievement. The rating of "Good" is assigned for performance at the level indicated as "minimum expectation" in the guidelines to follow. The other extreme, "Poor" is used for performance falling short of the minimum expectation described in the guidelines.

- Tenure-track and tenured full-time faculty members in the Department of Computer Science are *normally* expected to spend their time in the following proportion: Teaching: 60 – 65%, Scholarship: 20 – 25%, and Service: 15 – 20%.

- For personnel actions, ratings in the individual categories will be viewed in light of the above expectation to arrive at a final recommendation regarding the personnel action. It should also be recognized that simply meeting the "minimum expectation" specified in the guidelines, leading to ratings of "Good" in individual categories, is not sufficient to guarantee positive personnel actions. While "Good" rating is necessary in all three categories for positive recommendations, close to "Very Good" or higher will be expected in teaching and/or scholarship. Reiterating an earlier statement, it is understood that activities at this professional level cannot be judged in a completely quantified manner; each candidate must be evaluated individually taking into consideration all relevant factors.

Personnel Decision Process

- Requests by full-time faculty, to be considered for term renewal, continuing appointment and/or promotion, are to be made in writing to the Chair of the Department, with a copy to the Chair of the APT Committee, in accordance with the deadlines published by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- In order to ease the burden on those reviewing the candidate's request, it is suggested that the candidate prepare one three-ring application binder containing the most essential items as outlined below. In addition, the candidate must prepare and submit one or more three-ring binders containing annual reports, including chair's comments and signature page, for all years of service under review, and documentation relating to teaching, scholarship and service contributions as outlined in the next three sections. The three-ring application binder must contain:
 - the request for personnel action,
 - names of the APT Committee member and the student representative to serve in the ad-hoc committee for evaluation of teaching effectiveness,
 - names of at least 15-20 students who may be contacted for assessment of teaching effectiveness. It is suggested that the list include some students who are currently enrolled and some that have graduated,
 - a comprehensive bio-data,
 - a two-page summary of highlights of teaching, research and service,
 - a statement of teaching philosophy,
 - a tabular summary of Student Reaction to Instruction (SRI) scores, in the global questions for all years available,
 - a statement of scholarship focus and summary, and
 - a year-by-year listing of service contributions.

The three-ring application binder may also include:

- names of internal/external faculty/staff/experts who can be contacted for an assessment of teaching, scholarship and service contributions, and
- testimonials and letters of support obtained by the candidate.
- The Chair of APT Committee will constitute the Ad-hoc Committee for Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness. The Chair of the APT Committee may also contact internal/external faculty/staff/experts suggested by the candidate for an assessment of teaching, scholarship and service contributions of the candidate. The Chair of the ad-hoc committee will contact students whose names were suggested by the candidate for letters of assessment regarding teaching effectiveness. The ad-hoc committee will perform a rigorous evaluation of the teaching effectiveness of the candidate and submit its report at least a week ahead of the deadline for the APT Committee to make its recommendation.

- The APT Committee will provide the candidate a copy of its written recommendation as per the Calendar of Personnel Processes before forwarding the same to the Chair of the Department. The primary purpose is to allow the candidate to provide additional clarification, if necessary, or use his/her option to withdraw the request for personnel action.
- The Chair of the Department will perform an independent assessment of the candidate and write his/her own recommendation. He/she will also provide the candidate a copy of his/her recommendation as per the Calendar of Personnel Processes before forwarding the same to the Dean of the School of Letters and Sciences. Again, the primary purpose is to allow the candidate to provide additional clarification, if necessary, or use his/her option to withdraw the request for personnel action.

Evaluation of Teaching

The Department of Computer Science has always considered teaching the primary responsibility of the faculty, and will appoint a committee of peers for evaluating the teaching effectiveness as part of term renewal, continuing appointment and promotion decisions. This committee's evaluation, the measurement of quality in teaching, will be based on a *teaching portfolio*. The final report of teaching effectiveness will be submitted to the APT Committee for further action. For the ad-hoc committee to perform a rigorous evaluation, the candidate is expected to provide the following documentation:

- list of courses taught, their variety and nature,
- course material such as first day handouts (including course outlines and syllabi), classroom handouts, programming and non-programming assignments, laboratory assignments, mid-term and final examinations, etc., at least for the last five years or length of service at SUNY Brockport,
- samples of graded student work in assignments, written reports, and tests, which include some excellent, some average and some poor work, at least for the last two or three semesters,
- course enrollment and grade distribution statistics,
- written statement of teaching philosophy,
- Student Reaction to Instruction (SRI) summary ratings, and
- students' written comments in the departmental supplement to the SRI.

The candidate may also optionally provide the following:

- course material, samples of graded student work, course enrollment and grade distribution statistics, etc., related to teaching in summer/winter sessions,
- work accomplished with students in independent and directed studies, and
- solicited/unsolicited written comments from students and others addressing teaching effectiveness.

The evaluation of the committee will take into consideration all the documentation provided by the candidate. In addition, it will include:

- classroom observation reports by committee members,
- interview with the candidate regarding his/her teaching philosophy,
- written letters of assessment of teaching effectiveness sought from students whose names were provided by the candidate as part of this assessment, and
- written letters of assessment of teaching effectiveness sought from internal/external faculty/staff/experts whose names were provided by the candidate.

It is suggested that faculty members routinely maintain a three-ring binder for each course they teach, containing the material listed above for the most recent semester of teaching, and submit the same for personnel actions. It is recognized that collecting graded student work requires considerable preplanning. Hence, it is acceptable if graded student work is provided for just the courses taught in the last two or three semesters.

A candidate will be judged a competent and successful teacher, if the documentation provided demonstrates the following:

- he/she has taught a number of different fundamental courses and/or courses in subject areas of his/her specialty,
- for each course taught, the course syllabi, outline, objectives, texts, and reading lists are current and appropriate,
- for each course taught the assignments, tests and graded work are at the appropriate level, demonstrate student learning, and meet the expectation and the mission of the department,
- the syllabi specify meaningful grading standards and the enrollment, retention and grade distributions suggest adherence to those stated standards, and
- the SRI scores, written students' comments and the classroom observations of teaching evaluation committee members show satisfactory levels of classroom performance and interaction.

Evaluation of Scholarship

It will be measured in terms of peer-reviewed products reflecting discovery, integration and application. Examples of peer-reviewed products include:

- published (or accepted for publication) technical papers in respected, refereed, widely circulated Computer Science (or in a closely related discipline) journals,
- publication of a scholarly book or monograph, which may or may not contain original contributions to the field,
- publication of a full paper in the proceedings of a refereed conference,

- creation of significant, innovative, and widely available new software/hardware that has been subject to peer review,
- publication of a textbook,
- successful patents,
- products developed as an outcome of application of discipline-based knowledge to solve problems in public or private sector (consultant work); the products must be subject to peer review (see Faculty Roles and Rewards document), and
- substantially large successful grants obtained from off campus sources.

Note that a thesis or a dissertation submitted for a degree/diploma will not be considered as one of the products. Also, scholarship of teaching will be evaluated as part of teaching. The APT Committee members and the Chair of the Department cannot be expected to be experts in the candidate's areas of expertise. Therefore, candidates are required to provide a written **scholarship focus and summary**. The candidates must also provide as much additional documentation as possible to justify their claims of importance and quality of their scholarship activities. These may include:

- citations in literature,
- acceptance rate for journals/conferences,
- comments from referees,
- awards, grants, and contracts,
- solicited/unsolicited letters from experts on/off campus,
- invitations to referee/review books and conference/journal articles,
- invitations to chair or present papers at conferences, invitations to write journal papers, book chapters, etc.

Evaluation of Service

It will be measured in terms of activities that encompass governance of the department, the school, the college or the university, and discipline-based or college mission oriented contributions to the profession or community. Suggested documentation include:

- description and evaluation of academic advisement,
- work on behalf of student recruitment/admission/retention,
- description of committee activities,
- specific contributions of the individual,
- copies of products or outcomes of service activities, and
- letters of evaluation addressing service contributions.

Academic advisement and activities related to student recruitment, admission, retention, and success are vital to the functioning of the department. The evaluation of academic advisement will be based on the availability for advisement and the number of advisees. That is, each faculty member is expected to advise their fraction of total number of students handled by the department (majors, minors, second-degree

candidates, etc). Also, each faculty member is expected to be available for in-person advisement in their offices, and in advisement sessions such as open and final registration, etc., in addition to advisement through email, fax, phone, etc. For contribution to the profession or service, a statement indicating the relationship of activities to one's area of professional competence and the mission of the college will be appropriate.

Guidelines for Renewal of Term Appointment -- First Renewal

For beginning tenure track faculty, this evaluation will take place in early part of the Fall Semester of the second year of appointment. The review shall include all activities up to the time of the evaluation, though it is understood that activities since the time of appointment to Brockport will be given primary consideration over earlier activities. The candidate should show evidence of steady progress towards satisfying the criteria for receiving continuing appointment (tenure) in each of the three areas of evaluation. There must be evidence that the candidate will in all likelihood be able to satisfy the criteria for tenure within the remaining available time.

Guidelines for Renewal of Term Appointment -- Second Renewal

For beginning tenure track faculty, this evaluation will take place in the Fall Semester of the fifth year of appointment. The review shall include all activities up to the time of the evaluation, though it is understood that activities since the time of appointment to Brockport will be given primary consideration over earlier activities. The candidate is expected to make substantial contributions since coming to Brockport.

The minimum expectation for each of the three main areas of evaluation (teaching, scholarship, and service) is given below.

Teaching:

The candidate is expected to have demonstrated his/her ability as a competent teacher. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated that his/her teaching remains current with the field. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated an ability to teach a range of different courses in the field.

Scholarship:

The candidate should have at least two peer-reviewed products of which he or she is the sole or senior author of at least one. At least one of these products must have been completed while in residence at SUNY Brockport.

Service:

The candidate is expected to actively participate in assigned departmental duties. Usually this will consist of: advising the standard number of students, participating in the college-wide advisement sessions such as final registration, Saturday Information Session, etc., participation in college-wide functions such as Academic Convocation, Fall/Spring Honors and Awards Ceremony, Commencement, etc., serving as a member of the curriculum committee and one or two other committees, and various other activities as assigned by the Chair. Untenured faculty members are not expected to get involved in school or college level service responsibilities. However, participation in professional societies is highly desirable.

Guidelines for Continuing Appointment (Tenure) and Promotion to Associate Professor

For beginning tenure track faculty, this evaluation will take place in the Fall Semester of the sixth year of appointment. The review shall include all activities up to the time of the evaluation, though it is understood that activities since the time of appointment to Brockport will be given primary consideration over earlier activities. The candidate is expected to make substantial contributions since coming to Brockport.

The minimum expectation for each of the three main areas of evaluation (scholarship, teaching, and service) is given below.

Teaching:

The candidate is expected to have demonstrated his/her ability as a competent and successful teacher. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated that his/her teaching is in a continuous state of improvement, and remains current with the field. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated mastery of the discipline and an ability to teach a range of different courses in the field at both the upper and lower levels.

Scholarship:

The candidate should have three peer-reviewed products on at least two of which the candidate was sole or senior author. The quality of the scholarly activity, the reputation of the journal/conference/publisher, the degree of innovation, etc., will be considered, allowing appropriate trade-off between scholarship quality and quantity. But at least two of these products should have been authored while the candidate was in residence at SUNY Brockport. A minimum of one technical journal paper demonstrating an original contribution to the field is required. Other scholarly activities will NOT be considered as equivalent substitutes in fulfilling this journal paper expectation. The expectation for scholarship for an Associate Professor also includes the evidence of scholarly activity beyond the research done for the doctoral dissertation and in new areas of investigation.

Service:

The candidate is expected to actively participate in assigned departmental duties. Usually this will consist of: advising the standard number of students, participating in the college-wide advisement sessions such as final registration, Saturday Information Session, etc., participation in college-wide functions such as Academic Convocation, Fall/Spring Honors and Awards Ceremony, Commencement, etc., serving as a member of the curriculum committee and one or two other committees, and various other activities as assigned by the Chair. Some participation in school or college level committees, and in professional societies is highly desirable.

Guidelines for Promotion to Professor

The review shall include all activities up to the time of the evaluation, though it is understood that activities since the time of appointment to Brockport will be given primary consideration over earlier activities. The candidate is expected to make substantial, continuous contributions since coming to Brockport.

The minimum expectation for each of the three main areas of evaluation (teaching, scholarship, and service) is given below.

Teaching:

The candidate is expected to have demonstrated his/her ability as a competent and successful teacher. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated that his/her teaching is in a continuous state of improvement, and remains current with the field. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated an ability to teach a range of different courses in the field at both the upper and lower levels. In addition, the candidate should have provided leadership with the introduction of new courses or similar activity, such as the establishment of new and improved environments and equipment for student use.

Scholarship:

The candidate should have sufficient number of peer-reviewed products considered as equivalent to seven refereed journal publications. The quality of the scholarly activity, the reputation of the journal/conference/publisher, the degree of innovation, etc., will be considered, allowing appropriate trade-off between scholarship quality and quantity. The candidate is expected to show continuous scholarly activity. Therefore, at least four products must have appeared since the time of the previous promotion (or appointment), and the candidate must have been sole or senior author of at least two. Furthermore, at least one of these two products must be a technical journal paper demonstrating an original contribution to the field. Other scholarly activities will NOT be considered as equivalent substitutes in fulfilling this journal paper expectation. The expectation for scholarship for a Professor also includes the evidence of scholarly activity beyond the research done for the doctoral dissertation and in new areas of investigation.

Service:

The candidate is expected to have undertaken an increased complexity of duties and have undertaken successful leadership roles at any of these levels: departmental, college, university, and/or in service to the profession/community. The candidate is expected to have demonstrated leadership and successful contributions as a representative of the department.

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