

CMS Tenure and Promotion Guidelines

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Tenure and Promotion Criteria and Procedures

College of Marine Science University of South Florida St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Introduction

The USF Tenure and Promotion Guidelines dated July 1, 2020, establish general performance standards for all academic units of the University of South Florida, including the USF College of Marine Science. These guidelines require that each academic unit of the USF defines tenure and promotion standards appropriate to the unit, with specific requirements for types and levels of achievement and how they are measured and documented. The guidelines note that academic units may specify more stringent standards than those articulated in the USF guidelines document but may not specify less stringent standards. As noted in the USF guideline document, variances can be requested in exceptional cases.

The criteria described in the CMS document below will:

1. Assist faculty members applying for tenure and promotion in the CMS to anticipate how they will be judged,
2. Assist members of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee in making well-reasoned tenure and promotion judgments, and
3. Assist the USF Provost in determining how decisions and judgments were made by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee.

The criteria in this document have been accepted by majority vote of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, which is comprised of all tenured faculty of the College. It is expected that the standards described herein will be met by CMS applicants unless (1) there are clearly stated mitigating circumstances in the applicant's file as to why certain variances should be allowed, and (2) these variances are approved by (a) a majority of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, (b) the CMS Dean and (c) the USF Provost.

In view of the requirement for consistency between the CMS and USF guidelines (as noted above), the CMS criteria for Tenure and Promotion described below are organized with the same structure as the USF Tenure and Promotion Guidelines (July 1, 2020). This CMS Tenure and Promotion document may be revised by two-thirds vote of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee. Such changes must be sent to the Provost's Office for final approval before implementation.

I. Expectations and Evaluations

A. Tenure

1. Expectations of tenured faculty

The University of South Florida expectations of tenured faculty notes that "... the granting of tenure...carries enormous responsibility..." including "...maintenance of the highest academic standards, continued scholarly productivity, sustained teaching excellence and ongoing beneficial service...". The three essential elements of the CMS mission (research, teaching and service) as a graduate research program are fully consistent with these expectations.

2. Evaluation for Tenure

A favorable recommendation for granting of tenure is considered as acknowledgment that the faculty member's record presents an unequivocal indication of continued productivity and accomplishment, with high impacts on science and society.

Each recommendation for tenure will be described in terms of consistency with the CMS mission, goals and educational expectations, as expressed in the most recent CMS strategic plan, and the applicant's past contributions, and probable future contributions, to the College's mission.

Strict attention will be given to the candidate's record of collegiality with faculty and staff, and a responsible, intellectually-nurturing attitude toward students.

a. Research. Consistent with the primary CMS mission as a graduate research program, the first component of a CMS tenure decision process is an evaluation of effectiveness in research and scholarly activity. CMS faculty members are expected to develop and maintain a research program meeting the highest scientific standards at the national and international level.

Clear demonstration of excellence in research at CMS is most convincingly exhibited in the form of peer-reviewed publication. At the Assistant Professor level, first-authored publications, or publications that are first-authored by the tenure-seeking applicant's students, are of special importance. Absence of productivity in one of these two forms can be detrimental to an applicant's ability to demonstrate the high level of accomplishment that is requisite to granting of tenure. First-authored publications by postdoctoral associates who are supervised by the tenure-seeking applicant will also be regarded as distinctive indicators of excellence in research. Additionally, publication in highly regarded journals, as indicated by high impact factors, is highly desirable.

Sustained effectiveness in research and scholarly activity requires acquisition of funding from federal, state, or local sources. Demonstration of an ability to generate funding

sufficient to maintain a robust program of research is a critically important requirement for demonstration of effectiveness in research and scholarly activity. As in the case for first-authorship in peer-reviewed publications, acquisition of funding as PI or co-PI through a critical peer-review process is essential to a demonstration of funding effectiveness.

Other substantial evidence of effectiveness in research and scholarly activity can include research impact through invention (i.e., patents), development and commercialization of intellectual property, technology transfer, citation of the candidate's publications, invited presentations at national and international meetings, and evidence of the candidate's impact on policy.

b. Teaching. Effectiveness and excellence in teaching is another essential component in the tenure-decision process. Teaching in the College of Marine Science includes both (a) formal graduate classroom instruction and (b) mentoring individual graduate students and postdoctoral scientists in research design, implementation (data acquisition), interpretation of results, and scientific communication (oral and written) of outcomes. Teaching in the CMS extends not only to graduate students, but also to post-doctoral associates, visiting researchers and undergraduate interns. Although undergraduate instruction is not required, undergraduate teaching and research experiences that enhance the university mission are also considered positively. Teaching outside of the classroom at CMS includes, quite importantly, mentoring efforts during research expeditions and other field work.

The CMS expects its faculty members to teach high caliber graduate-level courses in their specialty and to participate in teaching of college core courses as appropriate. It is expected that, on average, one specialty course will be taught per year. Evaluation of formal classroom teaching is generally accomplished via the detailed instructor evaluations that CMS students fill out at the end of each formal course. As a benchmark for success, it is desirable that tenure applicants strive to match the overall CMS performance average, which is predominantly established by the more numerous and experienced, tenured members of the faculty. Such attainment would be regarded as a very strong performance by the tenure applicant.

The ultimate outcome of successful student mentoring in the CMS is a successful MS or PhD defense, and accompanying peer-reviewed, student-authored publications. It is expected that a tenure applicant will have graduated at least one student prior to the tenure-review process and have other students in progress working toward their degrees. Because peer-reviewed publication may occur subsequent to a student's graduation, the most effective evaluation of the tenure applicant's success in mentoring outside the classroom is likely to be the quality of student thesis and dissertation defenses as viewed by CMS faculty in attendance. Other cogent forms of mentoring success can be found in the form of student awards for poster and oral presentations, both within CMS and at national and international meetings.

c. Service. Substantive contributions are expected of tenure-seeking CMS faculty in the areas of professional service, university service and community service. As noted in the USF

Tenure and Promotion Guidelines, excellence in service involves consideration of both extent of service and quality of service, and activities should be consistent with the missions of CMS and USF. Professional service can consist of contributions to professional organizations on the local, regional, national and international level. National and international service contributions are especially desirable. Public and university service activities associated with good citizenship, while valued, are not considered as integral parts of the tenure and promotion evaluation processes. Service in all categories should involve a faculty member's core professional expertise. Forms of community engagement that directly support a faculty member's teaching, research and creative/scholarly work may be most appropriately considered as faculty assignments in support of teaching or research and scholarly activity.

B. Promotion

1. Evaluation for promotion

Promotion of ranked faculty, either tenured or non-tenured, is based on careful evaluation of candidate contributions in research, teaching and service. Criteria applicable to tenure evaluations also apply to promotion decisions. It is emphasized that, in addition to specific written expectations in the categories of research, teaching and service, promotion requires favorable assessments with respect to collegiality and productive university citizenship.

Standards for appointment to the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor are given below. Appointment at all ranks is contingent on a candidate's prior receipt of a PhD.

a. Assistant Professor

- i. Promise of long-term productivity in independent and collaborative research as evidenced by publications, reviews external to CMS, and candidate interviews.
- ii. Promise of continued growth as a teacher.
- iii. Promise of substantive contributions in university, professional and public service.

b. Associate Professor

As noted in the USF guidelines for faculty on tenure-track appointments, advancement to the Associate level is simultaneous with granting of tenure. The requirements for advancement to Associate Professor are thereby indistinguishable from CMS requirements for tenure.

i. Advancement to Associate Professor requires publication of high quality research products in peer-reviewed journals. A substantial portion of these publications should be first-authored by the Assistant Professor or the Assistant Professor's students. A substantial portion of the candidate's publications should appear in journals that are judged to be high impact in the candidate's discipline. Prior to advancement to the rank of Associate Professor the candidate's funding record should clearly demonstrate a capability to sustain a high quality program of research. Although patents are not a substitute for publications, generation of intellectual property can enhance a candidate's record of effectiveness in research and scholarly activity. Excellence in research is prerequisite to promotion in CMS.

ii. A clear demonstration of effectiveness in teaching is required for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Annual student evaluations of teaching outcomes should hold promise that the candidate's evaluations at the Associate Professor level would rise to or exceed the CMS average for senior faculty. It is essential that candidates for promotion to Associate Professor establish a record of excellence in mentoring MS or PhD students and guiding their research products through the peer-reviewed publication process. Prior to promotion the candidate is expected to have graduated at least one student and have other students making good progress toward graduation.

iii. Consistent with the USF tenure and promotion guidelines, candidates for promotion to Associate Professor should have "a record of substantive contribution of service to the university, profession and/or public."

c. Professor

A recommendation for promotion to the rank of Professor must include compelling evidence of significant achievement among peers in the candidate's discipline.

i. Advancement to the level of Professor requires a record of excellence in research of international visibility. For advancement to Professor, expectations of excellence in research include all of the requirements for advancement from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, but with unambiguous evidence of an improved level of performance. Indicators of excellence in research of particular importance include (a) first-authored publications or publications that are first authored by the candidate's own students and post-doctoral associates and (b) a robust funding record where, in most instances, the candidate serves as PI or co-PI. The candidate's cumulative research record should predict a sustained level of excellence throughout the candidate's career.

ii. Advancement to Professor requires a record of excellence in teaching at the graduate level. Excellence in teaching at CMS consists of a substantial record of well-received classroom teaching, and an outstanding record of mentoring through active service on

doctoral and thesis committees. Special importance is attached to

- (a) mentoring students in the process of conducting high quality, innovative research and
- (b) guiding students through the process of peer-reviewed publication. Service as the principal advisor on at least one formally-completed, high quality doctoral dissertation is prerequisite for advancement to the rank of Professor.

iii. Service contributions consistent with promotion to Professor should include contributions to the college, the university, the public, and the candidate's profession at the national and international level. For promotion to Professor, expectations for meaningful service contributions significantly exceed those expected of candidates for advancement to Associate Professor.

II. Timing of Promotion Applications and Review

Procedures regarding the timing of promotion applications and review of application materials closely follow the USF Tenure & Promotion Guidelines (effective July 1, 2020).

A. Probationary period for tenure

The College adopts a six-year probationary period. In practice this means that the application for tenure is initiated early in the sixth year of an Assistant Professor's USF employment.

B. Early applications for tenure or promotion

Following an initial period in rank, normally at least two years but after the mid-point review (see section III A), a candidate may apply for tenure earlier than the last year of the probationary period or, for promotion, earlier than the normal point in the post-tenure period if the candidate has fully met the applicable criteria. Such applications must be endorsed by CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee and the CMS Dean. Merit criteria beyond those normally used for advancement are not required.

C. Extensions to the standard tenure-probationary period

At the end of the tenure-earning probationary period, a faculty member will ordinarily either be awarded tenure or be given a one-year notice that further employment will not be offered. However, exceptions to the standard probationary period may be considered in situations covered by FMLA or ADA legislation, or in other extenuating circumstances approved by the USF or as specified in the USF Collective Bargaining Agreement. Extension requests in exceptional circumstances must be made in writing and approved by both the CMS Dean and the USF Provost. Extensions of more than two years beyond the six-year CMS probationary period will not ordinarily be permitted.

D. Tenure upon initial appointment

In rare circumstance, tenure may be awarded upon initial appointment. The guiding principle in such circumstances will be to follow the CMS Tenure and Promotion procedures in an expedited process that does not inordinately delay hiring decisions. Review of tenure eligibility is required by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee and CMS Dean, with a recommendation forwarded to the USF Provost. Prior to making an offer that includes tenure without a probationary period, approval must be obtained from the USF Office of the Provost. In support of CMS recommendations for tenure upon initial appointment, the USF Provost must receive the following information:

- Written review statements from the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee and the CMS Dean;
- Candidate's vita;
- Official proposed starting date for the position, and a draft of the letter which includes explicit description of the tenure offer pending Board of Trustees approval; and
- Compelling description of the unique achievements of the candidate that support the basis for tenure.

Persons considered for administrative CMS appointments accompanied by academic appointment will be interviewed by the tenured CMS faculty and the CMS Dean. The CMS Dean will then report the judgment of the faculty and make a recommendation on tenure to the Provost.

III. REVIEWS

A. Review of progress toward tenure

During the probationary period for tenure, the CMS Dean, and a review committee appointed by the CMS Dean, will produce an annual progress-toward-tenure report as part of the annual evaluation for all faculty. The annual review will reference written CMS criteria that have been made available to candidates. At the approximate mid-point of the probationary period, a more rigorous and extensive pre-tenure review will be conducted by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee and the CMS Dean. A summary review of progress toward tenure will be forwarded to the Provost.

Mid-point reviews must address the candidate's performance during the preceding tenure-earning years of employment with respect to the candidate's annual assignments in research, teaching and service. All such reviews must critically assess overall performance in light of mid-point expectations. The mid-point review will be based on performance documentation, including (a) a current CV, (b) annual evaluations, (c) student/peer evaluations of teaching and mentoring, (d) publications, grants and patents, (e) service commitments and accomplishments and (f), as described below, external review evaluations. The summary review sent to the Provost will

include a CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee evaluation of collegiality and a brief self-evaluation by the faculty member.

The mid-point review is intended to be (a) informative and encouraging to faculty who are making solid progress toward tenure, (b) instructional to faculty who may need to improve certain areas of performance, and (c) bluntly cautionary in cases where performance and progress is significantly lacking.

B. Review of progress toward promotion

The annual performance review for faculty members below the rank of Professor should include evaluations of progress toward promotion. At approximately the midpoint of the typical interval between appointment to Associate Professor and advancement to Professor, CMS faculty members will ordinarily be given a more comprehensive review of progress toward promotion. Such a review can be initiated by the faculty member after two full years at the rank of Associate Professor. The review will include assessment by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee. Mid-point reviews are intended to be informative: encouraging to faculty who are making solid progress toward promotion, and instructional to faculty who may need to improve in certain areas of performance.

C. External letters for tenure and promotion applications

The tenure and promotion packet will include between four and six evaluations from external reviewers who are recognized experts in the candidate's field or closely related field. Some of these external reviewers should hold senior tenured appointments at respected peer institutions. The candidate and the CMS Dean will suggest reviewers, and the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee can suggest additional reviewers. These reviewers should have no significant relationship with the candidate (e.g., co-authors, former academic advisors, etc.) unless there are well-defined mitigating circumstances. In the case of mitigating circumstances, a written requested exception must be submitted by the candidate and approved by the CMS Dean. The candidate and CMS Dean will select four to six reviewers from the approved list of potential reviewers. In the event of disagreements, the candidate and the CMS Dean will each select equal numbers of potential reviewers from their respective lists. The content of all solicited letters that are received from external reviewers should be in the candidate's file prior to final recommendations by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee.

In the interest of improving the level of candor in external reviews, procedures may be adopted to protect reviewer privacy, while also ensuring candidates' access to the summary assessments of the external reviews. Accordingly, reviewers may be advised that their names and other identifying information will be held confidentially and that candidates will have access only to the narrative content of their review letters. The redactions required to assure confidentiality will be performed by the Chair of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee with the assistance of the CMS HR Administrator.

IV. Committees

A. Number & type of committees

Full-time CMS faculty will determine the role of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee in developing recommendations for tenure and promotion. Procedures specified in CMS governance documents will be updated as needed. The CMS review process will consist of review by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee followed by review by the CMS Dean.

B. Tenure and Promotion committee membership and procedures

CMS tenure and review processes must adhere to the following criteria:

1. Membership on the Tenure and Promotion Committee is limited to tenured faculty who have been appointed within CMS for at least two years. The Dean of the CMS appoints the Chair of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee. Discussion of committee business requires the presence of a majority of the entire committee. Any motions presented during CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee meetings with respect to committee procedures must pass with majority approval *of those present*.
2. Committees considering candidates for promotion to Professor will comprise tenured faculty holding the rank of Professor who have been appointed within CMS for at least two years. If CMS lacks at least ten Professors, the CMS Dean may appoint one or more qualified Professors from the College of Arts and Sciences.
3. Only CMS faculty who have received tenure at USF will be eligible to review and make recommendations on tenure applications.
4. Review of applications from faculty with joint appointments should have appropriate participation by the USF units to which faculty have been appointed. As such, chairs/deans from secondary units should have proportional input on review and recommendations, and the composition of reviewing-committees for faculty with joint appointments should have representation that is based on the faculty member's distribution of assignment.
5. The CMS Dean will neither vote nor participate on any tenure and promotion committee. This exclusion applies, as well, to assistant and associate CMS deans.
6. Participation in tenure and promotion processes is expected of all tenured CMS faculty who have been appointed within CMS for at least two years.
7. Faculty mentors should be chosen for all untenured faculty through

consultation between candidates for tenure and the CMS Dean. Within the first 6 months from the faculty appointment date, the Dean of CMS will appoint a member of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee to act as a faculty mentor for Assistant and Associate professors. The mentor's duties are to interact periodically with the candidate to provide advice, encouragement, and honest assessment on how the candidate is progressing toward tenure and promotion. The candidate's mentor and the CMS Dean should discuss the progress of the candidate toward tenure after each annual CMS review.

8. Candidates for promotion and/or tenure prepare appropriate application files under CMS and USF guidelines in conjunction with the CMS Dean. Once a candidate's file is complete, the Chair of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, and the candidate's mentor, review the file for completeness and notify the CMS Dean and the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee that the file is ready for review. Members of the Committee must read the entire file and affirm completion of their review with a paper or digital signature. Committee members should neither vote nor participate in discussions if they have not read the applicant's file. All members of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee are expected to review application files prior to discussion, or voting.
9. Subsequent to review of the application files by members of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, the Committee Chair requests a meeting of the Committee. The Committee Chair invites a Committee member, normally the candidate's mentor, to act as an advocate for the candidate. The advocate will prepare an oral summary of the applicant's achievements. Prior to deliberations that include only members of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, perspectives on the applicant's achievements can be presented by ranked faculty members in the college who are not members of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee. Faculty members who wish to make such a statement must be approved by the candidate and the Chair of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee, and a written summary of their comments must be provided by the faculty member and placed in the candidate's file. The candidate will have the opportunity to review the written comments. The applicant's files will be discussed by the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee after (a) the Committee Chair reviews relevant committee procedures, and (b) the candidate's advocate describes the applicant's file. CMS Tenure and Promotion guidelines and the candidate's application files should be available at the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee meeting. Committee members should be mindful of the confidential nature of these discussions.
10. The CMS Dean will ensure participation by all CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee members at all levels of review.
11. Following a discussion of the applicant's file by the CMS Tenure and Promotion

Committee, all committee members present will vote by secret ballot. The ballots are counted immediately in the presence of committee members, and the tally is recorded by the Chair of the CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee and a faculty assistant designated by the Chair of the Committee. Absentee voting is permitted if the absent faculty member is able to effectively participate in CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee deliberations from a remote location. Secret ballots received from remote locations will be made in conference with only the CMS Committee Chair and the designated faculty assistant. Each committee member's vote will consist solely of either a positive or a negative recommendation for advancement to higher academic rank. Written narratives from majority and dissenting minorities, if any, may be included with the record. The CMS Tenure and Promotion Committee Chair will prepare a summary of the committee's assessment of the candidate that reflects both majority and minority perspectives. This statement is then given to the USF Regional Chancellor for a formal review, then to the CMS Dean for recommendation to the USF Provost.