Criteria for Promotion and Tenure
Department of Computer Science & Information Systems
Texas A&M University – Commerce
Revision1, June 2010
Minor Revision2, April 2013

The minimum criteria listed in this document for promotion and tenure was established by consensus of the tenured faculty and department head in the Department of Computer Science. The Department Tenure & Promotion Committee will utilize these criteria to make recommendations for tenure and promotion. Meeting the minimal department guidelines does not guarantee a candidate will receive a recommendation for or will be awarded tenure or a promotion.

GENERAL CRITERIA
The purpose of this Tenure and Promotion Policy is to provide consistent guidance for faculty member seeking tenure and promotion in the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, Texas A&M University-Commerce. This policy identifies necessary achievements needed to gain tenure and promotion. Faculty members seeking tenure and promotion must exceed these expectations. The candidate must have a satisfactory documented record and proof of (1) teaching proficiency at the University, (2) academic scholarship, (3) contributions to University and professional service, (4) collegiality. Promotion and/or tenure should be based on achieving excellence and not just meeting the minimum requirement.

The Candidate must have held the rank of Assistant Professor for a maximum of six years for tenure and a minimum of six years for promotion, except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the department and/or discipline or having specific agreements in writing with the university when the candidate was hired. Only in extremely rare situations, the department may consider recommending tenure if warranted without promotion to associate professor.

(1) MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Tenured faculty members in the Department of Computer Science are expected to contribute to all phases of the departmental operation in an effective, productive, and constructive fashion. They are expected to behave in a professional and collegial manner to students, colleagues, and the public. The probationary period toward achieving tenure is intended to all tenure-track faculty members to demonstrate those attitudes and qualities expected of tenured faculty. Benchmark standards are listed below to guide the probationary faculty member in achieving tenure.
THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE WILL ONLY CONSIDER BUT NOT GUARANTEE RECOMMENDING FOR TENURE AND/OR PROMOTION IF THE CANDIDATE HAS FULLFILLED THE MINIMUM CRITERIA IN THE FOLLOWING SIX AREAS OF CONSIDERATION. THE CANDIDATE IS REQUIRED TO INCLUDE ALL EVIDENCES FOR PROOF OF ALL CRITERIA OF TENURE AND PROMOTION STANDARDS ELABORATED BELOW IN THEIR PORTFOLIOS TO BE SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT TENURE AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE FOR THEIR REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION.

1. EDUCATION:
The Candidate must have completed the doctorate degree in an appropriate field of study in Computer Science.

2. TIME IN RANK:
The Candidate must have held the rank of Assistant Professor for a maximum of six years for tenure and a minimum of six years for promotion, except in outstanding cases that are clearly apparent to peers within the discipline or having specific agreements in writing with the university when the candidate was hired. Only in extremely rare situations, the department may consider recommending tenure if warranted without promotion to associate professor.

3. TEACHING:
Since a major percentage of the workload for the probationary faculty member in the college is in teaching, the candidate must demonstrate proficiency in this area with no reservations from reviewers. Following are areas to elaborate in developing this area of workload. Evidence of successful teaching is demonstrated through:
   a. Organized- Well developed course syllabi with clearly articulated course goals; course delivery applied appropriate modes of instruction for course type; pacing that allows for student engagement and understanding of material; definition of skills, attitudes, and knowledge that will result from completion of the course
   b. Assessment- Frequent and timely feedback of the student work based on articulated course goals; use of grading rubrics where appropriate.
   c. Rigor- Demand and level appropriate for skill and knowledge development; consistent with departmental expectations
   d. Presentation- Clearly understandable communication in both oral and written form; welcoming attitude of students questions and feedback
   e. Currency- Demonstration of continual course development; use of appropriate technologies in promoting the learning environment
   f. Mentoring- Supervision of Theses/Dissertations and other student projects
   g. Learning- Participation in disciplinary of pedagogical workshops and conferences
The candidate must demonstrate clearly that he/she is an effective teacher while striving for teaching excellence at all level. Support documentation should generally include a list of courses taught, course syllabi and objectives, homework and testing materials, the development of new courses and course material, samples of student work, demonstration of the overall value added to student understanding, mentoring of student research projects, long-term regular, and recent evaluations by students and supervisors, course visit reports by peers, comments by former students including recent graduates, or a combination thereof, and other relevant materials. Therefore, the artifacts that should be presented to demonstrate teaching effectiveness include:

a. Course Syllabi and Materials including assessment of student work and grading rubrics
b. Artifacts of Students Work (especially those papers that result in presentations at professional meetings or are published)
c. Peer visitation reviews
d. Student feedback
   • Solicited- course evaluation (both numeric summaries and written comments)
   • Unsolicited- student letters, emails, notes
e. Theses/ Dissertation supervised
f. Chart of Courses taught by terms with enrollment figures for each course
g. Participation in teaching workshops and conferences
h. Development of existing/ new courses and existing/new curricula
i. Other evidence to support your case

Furthermore, as excellence in teaching is a key factor for promotion or tenure, teaching effectiveness should encompass:
   (1) Clear and orderly explanation of material
   (2) Effective style of presentation
   (3) Well prepared course material
   (4) Treat students with respect
   (5) Evidence that students gained knowledge from the course
   (6) Evidence of a wide breath and knowledge of the field of Computer Science and Information Systems
   (7) Evidence of student enrollment and interest in the instructor’s coursework

4. RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY:
Significant professional development as a computer scientists and educator is to be expected. Such work will be routinely subject to peer review. Peer review in part means reviewed by individuals who hold the terminal degree in the appropriate discipline, or the equivalent. Pedagogical research in computer science is valued if it involves testing of significant hypotheses, results in marked improvements in learning, and is published in peer-reviewed and SCI/Scopus indexed journals in the computer science discipline.
The candidate is required to demonstrate convincingly not only the ability to establish an independent and productive research program in computer science that leads to publications and that attracts external funding but also the promise of continuing scientific productivity after achieving tenure at Texas A&M University-Commerce.

The Candidate’s performance in research, scholarships, and creative activities is reflected through a continuous record of publications, presentations at professional forums, tutorials and workshops, seeking and obtaining external research grants and advising of student research. Among the widely accepted effective measures of the productivity of research and scholarly activities, the quality, quantity and citations of peer-reviewed publications in the field of computer science are especially important. To be recommended for tenure and/or promotions, the candidate must have published (printed or completely accepted papers) as the primary author (first author or corresponding author if the first author is a student/postdoc at TAMUC) at least five peer-reviewed research articles in reputable computer science journals based on work undertaken while a faculty member at A&M-Commerce. Significance of work can be measured in several ways, e.g. by citations and by supporting letters from internally recognized experts in the field. Citations received and the reputation of the journals in which the publications appeared will be considered in evaluating the quality, impact and importance of the articles. Hard copies of all publications and a summary report of citations by others of these publications using Web of Science or other creditable search engines should be presented to the department’s tenure and promotion committee. A letter of complete acceptance from the journal editor should be attached to manuscripts in press.

There is no denying that there are ‘top’ journals and lesser journals, but foremost, significant scholarly activity is expected. Examples of ‘top’ journals are those where the experts publish their work. Specific examples of top journals, which accept papers in all areas of computer science, include IEEE transactions, ACM transactions, and Science Direct computer science journals by Springer Verlag; and in addition specialty areas have top journals, e.g. Journal of Machine Learning, AI magazine, AI Review, Algorithmica, ACM Computing Surveys, SIAM Journal on Computing, Software Engineering Notes, International Journal of Semantic Computing, International Journal of Image and Graphics, and etc. These journals are just examples and not exclusive, but have very high publication standards, are well-cited, and generally publication in such journals is deemed to be substantial, simply by virtue of its publication in such journals. Indicators of good journals include who publishes there and how often such work is cited; the strength of the editorial board; acceptance rate; the field of specialty (computer science); etc.

Conference proceedings are generally less substantial due to various factors: there are hundreds (often too many; for certain conferences the organizers keep extending deadlines due to insufficient paper submissions; paper review process is not well defined, organizing committees keep changing, etc.) of national/international conferences held annually in the computer science and its related areas, the review processes are varied and the acceptance criteria and refereeing processes are often not clearly indicated.
leaving the quality of work in question. Hence the faculty is strongly encouraged to published work in reputed journals following the suggested guidelines above rather than conference/symposium/workshop proceedings when paper quality may be in question to demonstrate their research potential, strength, and achievement. However, there are also good number of quality papers published in symposiums and conferences that are proven to be of high quality if they are proved by such factors as acceptance rate (suggested 20-25%), number of citations (suggested 125+ times), clearly indicated paper review and acceptance criteria provided by organizing committee, post conference/symposium review, significance of work recognized by international experts and etc. With these quality factors in consideration, it is not always unambiguous to know which publications are top or first tier. Again, the indicators include who publishes there, how often such work is cited, the strength of the editorial board, acceptance rate, the field of specialty (computer science); etc. Additional evidence of scholarly activities through publication shall include monographs/books and editorship in reputable scholarly journal publications.

Pedagogical research in computer science education is much valued if it involves testing of significant hypotheses and results in substantial external funding. Candidates are required to have sought in earnest external research grants. It is generally required for the candidate to have obtained significant external research grant(s) at a competent level to demonstrate the effectiveness, practicality, and continued future contribution of research productivity. For example, the external funding in the neighborhood of $150-200K before applying for tenure/promotion at a PI level on an individual base is considered competent and is deemed necessary for tenure/promotion consideration. Involving both undergraduate and graduate students in research is considered a norm and strongly encouraged for all faculty members.

5. SERVICE:
The candidate for tenure must present evidence of active university, college, and departmental service work, professional and community work, and other activities that enhance the image of the department within the university, state, and professional communities that it serves. Departmental service, as needed, is vital to the survival, growth and reputation of the computer science department. Full participation in these activities is expected to all faculty members as assigned by the departmental development. Fewer, but more significant activities may count more than numerous activities with little commitment made. University and community professional service is desirable and encouraged. Service may include activities of a leader nature, student advisement, support advisement, support of student growth outside the classroom by involvement with student professional organizations and activities, and career counseling. Service to professional organizations, such as acting as officers or serving on committees for the IEEE, ACM, and/or other international academic society, organization and conferences is also highly valued. All faculty are also expected to be collegial members of the department, College, and University community.
Applied research, including work done on grant-related projects or consulting, can be considered service, or scholarly and creative activity, depending on factors as addressed above. Some grant-related work can be considered service to the community. The key distinction is how much computer science depth the work has to do with it, and how much creativity, originating from the domain of the discipline, was instilled in the work. For consideration as scholarly work, culmination of grant-related and consulting work in peer-reviewed scholarly journal publications should remain the goal.

6. COLLEGIALITY:
The faculty candidate for promotion or tenure is expected to understand the importance and nature of “collegiality”. Colleagues are expected to be united in a common purpose, respecting different opinions, ideas, and abilities as faculty members work toward a common purpose. Collegiality recognizes the necessity for mutual respect, cooperation, and harmony among faculty in that it contributes to the productivity, creativeness, effectiveness and mission of the department. It is a necessity that collegiality should be fostered in an educational environment for the benefit of faculty and students alike. In order to qualify for tenure or promotion, a faculty member must make an obvious contribution toward collegiality. Failure to do so may be considered serious drawbacks and reason for denial for tenure and promotion consideration.

(2) MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

Besides being an excellent teacher and researcher and performing satisfying service work continuously, as for achieving tenure and promotion to associate professor outlined above, to be recommended for promotion to full professor requires outstanding scholar/creative activities of greater quality and quantity. The candidate must have established successfully an independent and productive research program at Texas A&M University-Commerce. The candidate, during his/her tenure at Texas A&M University-Commerce and subsequent to his/her promotion to Associate Professor, must have published five to seven peer-reviewed articles or its equivalence in reputable computer science journals per guidelines set above for tenure consideration since promotion to associate professor. The candidate must have made serious attempts in securing external research grants. Obtaining one to two significant external research grants since joining the computer science department tenured faculty is generally expected before applying for promotion to professor. Supervising undergraduate and/or graduate students in research is considered a norm for all faculty members. Hard copies of all publications and a summary report of citations by others of these publications using Web of Science or other creditable search engines should be presented to the department’s tenure and promotion committee. A letter of complete acceptance from the journal editor should be attached to manuscripts in press.
For promotion to professor, the candidate shall demonstrate continuous activity and currency in development of courses, course activities, and pedagogical skills. These can be demonstrated in the same manner as stated above in expectations for tenure.

For promotions to professor, more expectation is for significant service to the department in the form of student advising, chairs of committees, leadership in recruitment efforts, and leadership in program planning and direction. Additionally significant service to the university and/or profession is required. Examples of university services are participation in university committees, faculty senate, task forces, and other appropriate campus activities. Examples of service to the profession include leadership roles in professional academic organizations, reviewer or referee for academic publications, editorships of academic publications, among others.