

# **The College of Information Studies: Maryland's iSchool**

## **Criteria for Review, Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty**

Approved on October 9, 2020

### **Scope**

This document specifies criteria for the following reviews for tenure-track and tenured faculty members who have a paid iSchool<sup>1</sup> appointment:

- 1) Annual progress reviews for tenure-track Assistant Professors and for Associate Professors without tenure.
- 2) Pre-tenure contract renewal reviews for Assistant Professors.
- 3) Reviews for appointment at or promotion to Associate Professor with tenure, or for the award of tenure to untenured Associate Professors.
- 4) Reviews for appointment at or promotion to Professor.
- 5) Periodic and comprehensive post-tenure reviews.
- 6) Annual merit pay reviews.

Procedures for those reviews, and for the iSchool's faculty mentoring program that (among other things) helps faculty to prepare for these reviews, can be found in other documents that reference these criteria.

### **Background**

The University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Faculty states: "Each college, school, and department shall develop brief, general, written Criteria for Tenure and/or Promotion. The criteria to be considered in appointments and promotions fall into three general categories: (1) performance in teaching, advising, and mentoring of students; (2) performance in research, scholarship, and creative activity; (3) performance of professional service to the university, the profession, or the community." For conciseness, those categories are referred to as *teaching*, *research* and *service* in this document.

### **Applying the Criteria**

The iSchool aspires to excellence in research, effectiveness in teaching, and professional impact through service. In the iSchool's multidisciplinary environment, evaluation of faculty accomplishment is a highly individualized activity, which recognizes that faculty members contribute to realizing the iSchool's aspirations in complementary ways that will evolve over the course of a career. The criteria listed in this document indicate our general expectations for tenure-track and tenured faculty members, but it is not expected all criteria will be applicable in each case. Rather, these criteria must be applied holistically, recognizing the ways in which individual faculty members excel, recognizing the differences in norms across of the broad range

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, iSchool refers to the College of Information Studies, University of Maryland, College Park.

of communities in which our faculty members work, and recognizing unique individual circumstances (e.g., administrative appointments). Said another way, these criteria provide a framework for assessment; actually conducting an assessment calls for the exercise of judgment regarding the degree to which a faculty member has achieved success. The following general points must be considered when evaluating individual accomplishments:

- Faculty members are judged on the overall quality and impact of their body of work.
- Evaluation of faculty members takes account of the standards set in peer institutions for comparison.
- The criteria do not all have equal importance. In particular, excellence in research is required, and teaching must be effective. Service typically receives less emphasis early in an academic career. With increasing seniority, the emphasis on (and time devoted to) service typically increases. For some senior faculty, most notably academic administrators, service commitments can grow to become the largest part of their responsibilities.
- The division of criteria into research, teaching and service is for convenience of presentation. Faculty members are encouraged to engage in activities that result in synergies within and across those broad areas.
- The examples given in this document are intended to be illustrative, and do not constitute either an exhaustive list or specific requirements.
- Criteria are specified explicitly in this document for two promotion flow points (to Associate Professor with tenure, and to Professor). Details on the application of those criteria to faculty at other career stages are specified in each section.

## **Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure**

The criteria in this section apply as written to review for promotion to (or appointment as) Associate Professor with tenure. All other reviews for tenure-track Assistant Professors and for Associate Professors without tenure (i.e., annual progress reviews, annual merit pay reviews, and pre-tenure contract renewal reviews), and initial appointments as Associate Professor without tenure, will be based on progress towards meeting these criteria.

### **Research Criteria:**

- Established an active research program with demonstrated excellence and a clearly articulated focus.
- Demonstrated progress towards making a significant research impact on one or more research communities.
- Demonstrated impact through scholarly communication activities that are appropriate to the faculty member's research community or communities.
- Demonstrated ability to acquire and manage resources needed to support their research program(s).

### **Teaching Criteria:**

- Demonstrated a high level of effectiveness in teaching assigned courses and effective research mentoring for Ph.D. students or Masters thesis students.
- Demonstrated diversity of instructional ability, with a portfolio of courses of sufficient breadth and diversity to meet the needs of the iSchool's instructional programs and

contributed to curriculum development and innovation, (e.g., through development of a new course, contributions to revising a specialization, or innovation in teaching methods).

- Contributed to the professional development of students (e.g., by serving as faculty advisor for a student organization, organizing reading groups, or by working with independent study students).
- Regularly participated in dissertation, thesis and review committees for research students.

#### **Service Criteria:**

- Regularly made effective, collegial and consistent contributions to shared governance within the iSchool or to the University (e.g., through service on standing or *ad hoc* committees, or through involvement in planning for programs or specializations).
- Made effective contributions through professional service activities that have potential to positively impact one or more of: scholarly associations, professional practice, or society.

### **Criteria for Promotion to Professor**

These criteria apply as written to review for promotion to (or appointment as) Professor. All other reviews for Associate Professors with tenure (i.e., periodic and comprehensive post-tenure reviews, and annual merit pay reviews) will be based on progress towards meeting these criteria. Periodic and comprehensive post-tenure reviews for full Professors will be based on the application of these criteria, as modified by any agreement regarding allocation of effort to research, teaching, and service that may be negotiated between the faculty member and the Dean and documented in writing.

#### **Cross-Cutting Criteria:**

- Achieved significant impact on one or more external communities through research, teaching or service.

#### **Research Criteria:**

- Earned an international reputation for excellence and maintained an active research program with demonstrated excellence and a clearly articulated focus.
- Achieved continuing and consistent impact through scholarly communication activities that are appropriate to the faculty member's research communities.
- Consistently demonstrated ability to acquire and manage resources needed to support their research program(s).

#### **Teaching Criteria:**

- Demonstrated a high level of effectiveness in teaching, advising and mentoring students and in mentoring faculty members and (as appropriate) postdoctoral scholars.
- Developed and maintained a portfolio of courses of sufficient breadth and diversity to meet the needs of the iSchool's instructional programs, and made substantial contributions to curriculum development and innovation.
- Advised Ph.D. students, and regularly participated in dissertation, thesis and review committees for research students in the iSchool's Ph.D. and Masters programs, in other units within the University, and at other universities.
- Regularly contributed to the professional development of students.

**Service Criteria:**

- Demonstrated leadership in professional service that positively impacts one or more of: scholarly associations, scholarly publishing, professional practice, or society.
- Regularly demonstrated effective and collegial leadership contributions to shared governance in the iSchool (e.g., through service as a program director, chairing standing or *ad hoc* committees, or through administrative service).
- Maintained active and consistent involvement in university service.