Computer Science Department:
Criteria and Standards for
Tenure and Promotion

Purpose

This document is an explication of the guidelines for tenure and promotion described in Chapter VI, Section E of the *Faculty Handbook* [1]. The purpose is to delineate the process set down in the *Handbook* in the context of the discipline-specific criteria of the Department of Computer Science at Hamilton. This document will be part of the information the Committee on Appointments and the Dean of Faculty will use when determining your qualifications for tenure and promotion.

General Considerations

The qualifications for tenure and for promotion to the rank of Professor will be based solely upon teaching, scholarship, and service to the College and to the professional community. Of these, the first two will be considered to be the most important, but we expect colleagues to demonstrate commitments to and success in all three categories. We will interpret these criteria in what follows and describe what we expect of you, but you also have a right to expect the Department to adhere to certain standards and practices as well.

In the words of *Good Practices in Tenure Evaluation* [2], you have the right to expect clarity, consistency, and candor from the Department at every stage of the tenure and promotion process. We are a very collegial department: you'll get frequent feedback on what you're doing simply through day-to-day conversation. More formally, you will meet with the Chair annually for an assessment of your work as described in your annual report. The Chair will have read your annual report and gotten assessments from the rest of the Department prior to this meeting and will explain the Department's evaluation of your performance in the past year. You can expect honesty in this meeting: the Chair will neither sugar-coat the assessment in an attempt to keep you happy nor unjustly denigrate your accomplishments in an attempt to goad you on to greater effort. Also, the Department will not change expectations in mid-process—if an activity is deemed to be worthwhile one year, you have our guarantee that that activity will be similarly valued in the future.

While the outcomes of the tenure and promotion processes are never completely certain, we can promise that if you have been attentive to the advice you have been given along the way and made acceptable progress to the criteria expressed here and in the *Handbook*, then you will come to consideration for tenure or promotion with full and enthusiastic Department support.

TENURE CRITERIA

Evaluation of Teaching

The *Handbook* states that "distinguished teaching [is] the foremost requirement for tenure," and that the characteristics of effective teaching should include "commitment to teaching; knowledge and mastery of the discipline; and the ability to communicate with, stimulate, and evaluate students." At this stage, we will be looking for a record of progress to superior teaching. The Department will consider several measures of teaching quality:

1. Faculty evaluations, based on regular classroom visits, which document your effectiveness as a teacher.

2. Course materials which indicate creative and pedagogically valuable approaches to presenting information and encouraging learning.

3. Student teaching evaluations, both numeric and narrative, that show your ability to communicate effectively in the classroom, motivate students to think deeply about the course material, and to be an effective teacher.

4. Knowledge and mastery of the discipline, as evidenced by development of new courses and participation in curricular planning.

5. Engagement of students in sophisticated learning experiences, such as independent studies, Senior Thesis projects, and, when appropriate, external presentation of research projects and joint publications with faculty.

Evaluation of Scholarly Activities

The Department's assessment of scholarship will concentrate largely on work done since coming to Hamilton. In evaluating scholarly activities, both for tenure and promotion, the Department expects you to be a practicing computer scientist. In other words, the topic of your primary scholarship must be a recognizable subfield of the discipline of computer science. The scholarly record should demonstrate a *coherent and ongoing* research program and should consist of yearly activities such as (in rough order of importance)

1. Publications, including those accepted but not yet in print, in peer-reviewed conference presentations, journals, and workshops.

2. Publicly available software development related to your teaching or research.

3. Posters presented at conferences and posters or publications done jointly with students.

4. Invited talks at national or regional conferences; talks at other colleges or universities.

5. Grants received.

6. Work in progress, including any of the above items accepted but not published or submitted but not yet accepted.

The Department will give some consideration to the quality of the venue in which the candidate's publications appear. We recognize that acceptable scholarship might take many forms; a total of two or more publications that appear in top-quality conferences or journals, for example, would constitute an acceptable level of scholarship when coupled with other annual activities, but any equivalent record would be viewed as equally acceptable.

Service

Service to the college and/or to the wider academic community is expected. Such activities will include participation in Department business and any of: election to College committees, appointment to *ad hoc* or appointed committees, participation in courses in the College's general curriculum, serving as a reviewer for conferences or publications, being a reader for national exams in computer science, serving on working groups and committees of the ACM and related organizations, and other similar activities.

PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR

The *Handbook* states that "Promotion to Professor will be granted to those faculty members who have in their years at the College distinguished themselves as teacher-scholars and for whom it can be stated that high achievement is likely to continue." Our position is that the granting of tenure is a recognition of a promise of continuing excellence as a teacher and scholar and that promotion to Professor is the recognition of the fulfillment of that promise. In other words, at the time of promotion to Professor, your contributions to teaching and scholarship should be recognized by the computer science community as a significant contribution to the scholarly discourse in your research specialty.

The materials in support of promotion will be the same as those for tenure deliberations. At this stage, the Department expects evidence of continued excellence in the classroom and demonstrated scholarly activity. A successful candidate for promotion to Professor will have additional published results in their primary scholarly field that show commitment to continued excellence in scholarship. You can expect the senior members of the department to provide advice on appropriate directions for both your teaching and scholarly activities, and this advice will be part of your annual reports. The Department will also consider both College and professional service.

Citations

[1] Hamilton College, *Faculty Handbook*, Clinton, NY, August, 2006.

[2] American Council on Education, *Good Practice in Tenure Evaluation*, 2000, 15 Jan. 2007, <http://www.acenet.edu/bookstore>.