

**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY  
PROMOTION AND TENURE GUIDELINES**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Policy Title:	Department of Physics and Astronomy Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
Version:	4
Department Approval:	09/12/2013
College Approval:	Promotion and Tenure Review Board, 02/05/2014

Faculty members must consult the College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure Manual. In the event of a conflict between the two documents, the college manual takes precedence.

All materials, discussions, conclusions, and letters that are part of the review process will be held in strictest confidence, and no party to the process, other than the candidate, may divulge any information about it to anyone not directly involved.

1 **INTRODUCTION**

2  
3 The Department of Physics and Astronomy has formulated these promotion and tenure  
4 guidelines in conformity with the minimum general requirements set forth by the Board of Regents of  
5 the University System of Georgia and with the policies outlined in the current promotion and tenure  
6 manuals of Georgia State University and its College of Arts and Sciences. Before a candidate for  
7 promotion and/or tenure in the Department of Physics and Astronomy can be nominated by the  
8 appropriate Department Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Department of Physics and  
9 Astronomy Chair for consideration by the college area promotion and tenure committee, he/she must  
10 be judged to have met the standards and criteria given in the current promotion and tenure manual of  
11 the College of Arts and Sciences and the supplemental criteria listed in this document. Any faculty  
12 member who might be considered for promotion and/or tenure should study carefully the criteria,  
13 requirements, and procedures that are outlined in both documents and in the university manual.

14 The goal of this document is to describe the criteria for promotion and tenure in the Department  
15 of Physics and Astronomy at Georgia State University. To that end, this document is intended to be  
16 entirely consistent with university and college policies on promotion and tenure. In the event of  
17 conflict, the university and college policies shall take precedence. In many instances, wording in this  
18 document mirrors that in the University and College policies. Candidates are directed to both the  
19 Georgia State University Promotion and Tenure Manual for Tenured and Tenure-Track Professors and  
20 the College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure Manual for guidance about preparing and  
21 submitting a dossier in application for tenure and/or promotion, and for details on the university and  
22 college expectations. The candidate is responsible for providing necessary evidence and justification  
23 that their record of accomplishment meets the criteria set forth in this document.

24  
25 **OVERVIEW**

26  
27 As an academic department in a research university, the Department of Physics and Astronomy  
28 has the twin responsibilities of scholarship and teaching. In meeting these responsibilities, the  
29 department's overall goals are excellence in creating and disseminating new knowledge, in teaching at  
30 all levels, and in service to the profession, the University, and the community. The general  
31 responsibility of scholarship at a research university and the specific responsibility of effective  
32 graduate training require that faculty be engaged in research that is competitive at national and  
33 international levels. Thus, the department believes that the "teacher-scholar" is the most appropriate  
34 model for faculty in a university setting, and the promotion criteria in the areas of professional  
35 development and teaching are designed to be on a level with those at major research universities  
36 around the country. Service contributions that promote the common goals and general welfare of the  
37 department are important and expected. However, while a sound record in service is necessary for  
38 promotion or tenure, service contributions are considered to be less important to our discipline than  
39 professional development or teaching, especially at the junior level.

40  
41 As described in the university and college manuals, all candidates for promotion and/or tenure  
42 will be evaluated in three areas: Professional Development, Teaching, and Service. Professional  
43 Development includes academic achievement in research, other forms of scholarship, creative activity,  
44 and some types of professional service. Teaching includes classroom teaching and mentoring students  
45 inside and outside the classroom. Service includes departmental, college, university, some types of  
46 professional service, and some types of public service that involve professional expertise. As described  
47 later in this document, the Department values all of these areas highly and has established specific  
48 expectations for performance by its members in each one.

49 During yearly, pre-tenure, and post-tenure evaluations of faculty candidates' credentials,  
50 faculty will be rated according to six levels of performance: *outstanding, excellent, very good, good,*  
51 *fair, poor.* For promotion and/or tenure, candidates will be evaluated as to whether or not they have  
52 met the expectations established by the college manual. Thus, each candidate will be evaluated relative  
53 to the standard of *excellent* in both Professional Development and Teaching and the standards of *good*  
54 and *very good* in Service appropriate for his/her rank. Note that the same activity cannot be counted in  
55 more than one category (professional development, teaching, service) for any faculty member  
56 irrespective of specialty. Candidates for promotion and/or tenure can use the annual review guidelines  
57 in the second part of this manual for examples of relevant activities in each category in addition to  
58 those given below.

59  
60 Candidates for promotion and/or tenure must submit documentation of professional  
61 development, teaching, and service organized according to the categories listed in the college manual  
62 (sections V.E. – V.G.).

## 63 **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE**

### 64 **Promotion to and/or Tenure at the Rank of Associate Professor**

65  
66 The Department of Physics and Astronomy Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Chair of  
67 the Department will independently evaluate the credentials of all candidates in the Fall Semester with  
68 all deliberations to be completed according to the College calendar.  
69

70  
71 **Professional Development:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of  
72 associate professor, a successful candidate must be deemed *excellent* in professional development and  
73 thus will have developed a substantial body of work that has contributed to the advancement of their  
74 discipline within the broad field of physics and/or astronomy as determined by the Promotion and  
75 Tenure Committee and the outside reviewers. Furthermore, as stated in the university manual, there  
76 should be evidence for an upward trajectory of continued accomplishments throughout the faculty  
77 member's career. In particular, the candidate is expected to have:

- 78 1. Developed an independent research program of national reputation as indicated, for  
79 example, in letters from external reviewers. At a minimum, the successful candidate is  
80 expected to have published (or have in press) several publications in major peer-reviewed  
81 journals based on research conducted while at Georgia State University or during time at  
82 another institution for which the candidate has received probationary credit.
- 83 2. Established a record of significant external funding to GSU at a level comparable to that of  
84 other junior faculty members in the same field at peer institutions.
- 85 3. While viewed favorably, internal grants from Georgia State University are by themselves  
86 generally not sufficient to earn promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. In the case  
87 where there is a clear upward trajectory and a candidate's research program is highly  
88 competitive, smaller external grants and/or indication of efforts to secure funding may be  
89 considered.

90  
91 **Teaching:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of associate  
92 professor, a successful candidate must be evaluated as *excellent* in the category of teaching and  
93 therefore should:

- 94 1. Provide evidence indicating that his/her performance in teaching is highly effective.  
95 Student perceptions, grade distributions, and learning outcomes will be used to assess  
96 teaching effectiveness. Course materials must show impressive preparation and the

- 97 successful candidate must demonstrate a high level of involvement in mentoring students.  
98 2. Show excellence in mentoring student research projects. It is expected that the candidate  
99 will have mentored undergraduate and/or graduate students. Effectiveness can be indicated  
100 by student accomplishments, for example. Post-doctoral mentorship will also be  
101 considered.  
102 3. Be effective in non-course related training/mentorship such as being a chair or member on  
103 student exam, thesis, and/or dissertation committees. This can include students at other  
104 institutions.  
105

106 Data to be reviewed by the Promotion and Tenure Committee include syllabi, examinations,  
107 and student evaluations. Selected classroom materials may be included as evidence of creativity or  
108 effectiveness in the classroom. Numbers and accomplishments (e.g., student publications, meeting  
109 presentations) of students directed in independent studies should be provided. Formal course numbers  
110 should be given for students registered in independent studies. Information about graduate students  
111 who have successfully completed their degrees, as well as those who show successful progress toward  
112 a degree by passing their qualifying exams and/or writing an approved thesis or dissertation proposal,  
113 will also be reviewed. The accomplishments of the students under the candidate's mentorship will be  
114 given more weight than the number of students.  
115

116 **Service:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of associate professor,  
117 a successful candidate must have demonstrated effective service to the Department of Physics and  
118 Astronomy and thus rated as *good* or better in this category. Types of service that qualify include  
119 participation in departmental committees and assistance with departmental activities or functions.  
120 Service at the college or university levels is commendable but not required.  
121  
122

### 123 **Promotion to and/or Tenure at the Rank of Professor**

124 Promotion to the rank of professor is a recognition awarded to candidates who have  
125 distinguished records of achievement and standing in both their professions and at Georgia State  
126 University.  
127

128 **Professional Development:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of  
129 professor, a successful candidate must be deemed *excellent* in professional development. Furthermore,  
130 as stated in the university manual, there should be evidence for an upward trajectory of continued  
131 accomplishments throughout the faculty member's career. In particular, there should be:

- 132 1. Evidence of international recognition of his/her research program as indicated, for example,  
133 in letters from external reviewers. Expected accomplishments must include the  
134 establishment and maintenance at Georgia State University of an independent research  
135 program that has consistently received external funds from state, national and/or  
136 international agencies, industries, or foundations.  
137 2. Significant recognition of the research program as evidenced by a history of publication in  
138 high quality, peer-reviewed international and/or national journals. Other evidence of  
139 achievement includes membership on editorial boards of significant international/national  
140 scientific journals, service as a referee for those journals, service on review boards for  
141 funding agencies, and invited presentations at national and international scientific meetings.  
142

143 **Teaching:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of professor, a  
144 successful candidate must be evaluated as *excellent* in the category of teaching and therefore should:

- 145 1. Provide evidence indicating that his/her performance in teaching is highly effective.  
146 Student perceptions, grade distributions and learning outcomes will be used to assess  
147 teaching effectiveness. Course materials must show impressive preparation and the  
148 successful candidate must demonstrate a high level of involvement in mentoring students.
- 149 2. Show excellence in mentoring student research projects. It is expected that the candidate  
150 will have mentored graduate students. Effectiveness can be indicated by student  
151 accomplishments. Post-doctoral and undergraduate mentorship will also be considered.
- 152 3. Be effective in non-course related training/mentorship such as being a chair or member on  
153 student exam, thesis, and/or dissertation committees. This can include students at other  
154 institutions.

155  
156 **Service:** To be recommended for promotion to and/or tenure at the rank of professor, a  
157 successful candidate must be evaluated as *very good* or better in the category of service, having  
158 demonstrated:

- 159 1. Effective service at the department and college level as well as in fields related to physics  
160 or astronomy. Service to the University is helpful but not required. Types of service that  
161 could be included are: oversight or training of staff at the department, college, or university;  
162 oversight of department, college, or university facilities and equipment; or substantial  
163 participation and planning of department, college, or university events.
- 164 2. A history of professional service that supports local, state, national or international  
165 professional organizations. Organization of scientific programs at conferences, membership  
166 on committees of professional organizations, and offices held in professional organizations  
167 are all considered examples of effective service to the field. Scholarly activities that result  
168 in research findings and/or teaching publications will count as Professional Development  
169 and not as Service.

## 170 171 172 **REVIEW FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION**

173  
174 The timing of the review for tenure and promotion, as well as the details of the documentation,  
175 will follow those outlined in the University and College manuals. The review will assess the  
176 candidate's Professional Development, Teaching, and Service as defined above.

### 177 178 **Department of Physics and Astronomy Promotion and Tenure Committee**

179 For promotion and/or tenure at the rank of Professor, the Department Promotion and Tenure  
180 Committee shall be composed of tenured Professors in the Department excluding the Chair and the  
181 faculty member(s) representing the area committee on Promotion and Tenure in the College. For  
182 promotion and/or tenure at the rank of Assistant or Associate Professor, the Department Promotion and  
183 Tenure Committee shall be composed of all tenured Associate Professors and Professors in the  
184 Department excluding the Chair and the faculty member(s) representing the area committee on  
185 Promotion and Tenure in the College.

186 The Chair of the Department shall appoint one of the members of the Committee as Chair of the  
187 Committee. The Department Chair may appoint a subcommittee that includes the chair of the full  
188 committee for initial evaluation of the candidate. The full Committee shall review all credentials of the  
189 candidate and make a recommendation to the Chair of the Department using the promotion and tenure  
190 procedures adopted by the Department in accord with the Promotion and Tenure Manual of the  
191 College of Arts and Sciences. All actions of the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee shall be  
192 approved by majority vote. Minority reports are allowed as specified in the College Manual.

- 193 Duties of the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee include the following:
- 194 **1.** Ensure that all Departmental, College, and University required processes, procedures, and reports  
195 are properly executed.
  - 196 **2.** Provide a list of outside reviewer names to the Chair of the Department.
  - 197 **3.** Review and evaluate the record of each candidate using the promotion and tenure procedures  
198 adopted by the Department.
  - 199 **4.** Provide written recommended evaluations and supporting analyses based on its review and  
200 evaluation of each candidate to the Chair.
  - 201 **5.** By majority vote approve an overall recommendation for each candidate.
  - 202 **6.** Provide appropriate analyses and justifications for its evaluations and recommendations.
  - 203 **7.** The written statement of the evaluations and recommendation by the Committee that is provided to  
204 the Chair of the Department must be signed by the Chair of the Committee and by all members of  
205 the Committee who agree with the overall recommendation.
  - 206 **8.** Committee members who do not sign the written statement are encouraged (but not required) to  
207 provide signed separate letters (minority reports) indicating their recommendations and the reasons  
208 for these recommendations.
  - 209 **9.** The written statement and all separate letters from the Committee must be sent to the Chair of the  
210 Department and then to the College Area Committee as required by the Promotion and Tenure  
211 Manual of the College of Arts and Sciences.

212 **APPENDIX I:**  
213 **Ratings Guidelines for Pre-Tenure Review**

214  
215  
216 **A. Professional Development**

217  
218 **Poor:** The faculty member has no significant research program, with no publications<sup>1</sup> or presentations.  
219

220 **Fair:** The faculty member has a limited research program with only occasional publications or meeting  
221 presentations.  
222

223 **Good:** The faculty member has a moderate research program with a few publications, meeting  
224 presentations, and one or more internal grants.  
225

226 **Very Good:** The faculty member has a well-established research program with high quality papers in  
227 major peer reviewed journals, small external grants or evidence for submission of major grant  
228 proposals, and at least some professional service.  
229

230 **Excellent:** The faculty member has an emerging nationally recognized research program with several  
231 high quality refereed publications, significant external funding, and significant professional service.  
232 Impact factor and acceptance rates (indicative of journal quality) and citation rates or other factors  
233 supplied by the candidate will be used to determine if a publication is considered 'high quality'. Grants  
234 from external sources should be comparable to those of other junior faculty members at peer  
235 institutions. Professional service considered under the Professional Development category includes  
236 peer review for scholarly journals, grant review for granting agencies, membership on evaluation  
237 panels, or service as critic, juror, and /or consultant for professional organizations.  
238

239 **Outstanding:** The faculty member has an emerging internationally recognized research program with  
240 highly significant publications and funding, prestigious national or international invitations, and  
241 significant professional service. Prestigious invitations include those for invited speaker at major  
242 national or international conferences or important national or international professional workshops, or  
243 invited seminar speaker at other universities.

244 **B. Teaching**  
245

246 **Poor:** The faculty member displays an unacceptable record of teaching as evidenced by low student  
247 evaluations and limited or ineffective individual teaching or mentoring. A pattern of complaints or  
248 evidence of unprofessional activity may also be considered.

249 **Fair:** The faculty member displays an ineffective record of teaching as evidenced by student  
250 evaluations that are well below average and/or ineffective teaching or mentoring of individual students.

---

<sup>1</sup> Publications are defined throughout as high quality papers published through major peer reviewed journals, invited chapters, and/or books appropriate to physics and astronomy.

251  
252  
253  
254  
255  
256  
257  
258  
259  
260  
261  
262  
263  
264  
265

**Good:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for adequate teaching in the classroom and mentorship of individual students based on the criteria listed for *excellent*.

**Very Good:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for effective teaching in the classroom and in individual teaching and mentorship based on the criteria listed for *excellent*.

**Excellent:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for highly effective teaching in the classroom and in individual teaching and mentorship, which includes: (a) strong, positive student perceptions and evidence of teaching effectiveness from student evaluations, grade distributions, course materials, and/or learning outcome assessments, (b) highly effective mentoring of students' research and independent study projects at the graduate and/or undergraduate level as evidenced by student accomplishments, and (c) effective non-course related training/mentoring including serving on and/or chairing exam, thesis, or dissertation committees.

266  
267  
268  
269

**Outstanding:** In addition to the criteria for *excellent*, the record shows additional evidence for exceptional teaching performance such as (a) development of new courses or educational programs, (b) teaching grants, (c) publications in teaching journals, (d) strong evidence of teaching creativity supported by material in the teaching portfolio, or (e) honors or special recognitions for teaching.

270  
271  
272  
273  
274  
275

### C. Service

**Poor:** The faculty member does not meet Department of Physics and Astronomy obligations.

**Fair:** The faculty member meets Department obligations and requests, but not in a timely manner.

276  
277  
278  
279

**Good:** The faculty member meets Department obligations and requests effectively. Types of service that qualify include participation in departmental committees and assistance with other departmental activities or functions.

280  
281  
282  
283  
284  
285  
286

**Very Good:** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty member has a major effective role in the Department, or in a professional organization. The former includes taking a major role in department committees, oversight or training of staff, oversight of department facilities or equipment, substantial participation and planning of department events, or heavy involvement in student recruitment efforts. The latter includes memberships on advisory boards or service as a consultant, organization of scientific programs at conferences, membership on committees of professional organizations, convening symposia/workshops, or public outreach.

287  
288  
289  
290  
291  
292  
293  
294

**Excellent:** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty member has a major effective role in the Department, and in the College or University or in a professional organization. The former includes membership in college or university committees, oversight or training of department, college, or university staff, oversight of department, college, or university facilities and equipment, substantial participation and planning of department, college, or university events, or heavy involvement in student recruitment efforts. The latter includes memberships on advisory boards or service as a consultant, organization of scientific programs at conferences, membership on committees of professional organizations, convening symposia/workshops, and public



295 outreach.

296 ***Outstanding:*** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty  
297 member has a major effective role in the Department, and in the College or University and/or in a  
298 professional organization. In addition, the faculty member has a leading effective role in one of the  
299 above as evidenced, for example, by exceptional service as a graduate or undergraduate director, or as  
300 a scientific editor for a major peer-reviewed journal.

301

## APPENDIX II:

## Ratings Guidelines for Post-Tenure Review

### A. Professional Development

**Poor:** The faculty member has no significant research program, with no publications<sup>2</sup> or presentations.

**Fair:** The faculty member has a limited research program with only occasional publications or meeting presentations.

**Good:** The faculty member has a moderate research program with a few publications, meeting presentations, and one or more internal grants.

**Very Good:** The faculty member may have high quality papers in major peer reviewed journals, small external grants, and significant professional service, but lacks significant external funding.

**Excellent:** The faculty member has continued to maintain and advance a nationally recognized research program with several high quality refereed publications, a sustained level of significant external funding, and significant professional service. Impact factor and acceptance rates (indicative of journal quality) and citation rates or other factors supplied by the candidate will be used to determine if a publication is considered 'high quality'. Expected accomplishments include the establishment and maintenance of an independent research program that has consistently received external funds from state, national and/or international agencies, industries, or foundations. Professional service considered under the Professional Development category includes peer review for scholarly journals, grant review for granting agencies, membership on evaluation panels, or service as critic, juror, and /or consultant for professional organizations.

**Outstanding:** The faculty member has achieved an internationally recognized research program with highly significant publications and funding, prestigious national or international invitations, and very significant professional service. Prestigious invitations include those for invited speaker at major national or international conferences or important national or international professional workshops, or invited seminar speaker at other universities.

### B. Teaching

**Poor:** The faculty member displays an unacceptable record of teaching as evidenced by low student evaluations and limited or ineffective individual teaching or mentoring. A pattern of complaints or evidence of unprofessional activity may also be considered.

**Fair:** The faculty member displays an ineffective record of teaching as evidenced by student evaluations that are well below average and/or ineffective teaching or mentoring of individual students.

---

<sup>2</sup> Publications are defined throughout as high quality papers published through major peer reviewed journals, invited chapters, and/or books appropriate to physics and astronomy.

340  
341  
342  
343  
344  
345  
346  
347  
348  
349  
350  
351  
352  
353  
354

**Good:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for adequate teaching in the classroom and mentorship of individual students based on the criteria listed for *excellent*.

**Very Good:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for effective teaching in the classroom and in individual teaching and mentorship based on the criteria listed for *excellent*.

**Excellent:** The faculty member's record shows evidence for highly effective teaching in the classroom and in individual teaching and mentorship, which includes: (a) strong, positive student perceptions and evidence of teaching effectiveness from student evaluations, grade distributions, course materials, and/or learning outcome assessments, (b) highly effective mentoring of students' research and independent study projects at the graduate and/or undergraduate level as evidenced by student accomplishments, and (c) highly effective non-course related training/mentoring including serving on and/or chairing exam, thesis, or dissertation committees.

355  
356  
357  
358

**Outstanding:** In addition to the criteria for *excellent*, the record shows additional evidence for exceptional teaching performance such as (a) development of new courses or educational programs, (b) teaching grants, (c) publications in teaching journals, (d) strong evidence of teaching creativity supported by material in the teaching portfolio, or (e) honors or special recognitions for teaching.

359  
360  
361  
362  
363  
364

### C. Service

**Poor:** The faculty member does not meet Department of Physics and Astronomy obligations.

**Fair:** The faculty member meets Department obligations and requests, but not in a timely manner.

365  
366  
367  
368

**Good:** The faculty member meets Department obligations and requests effectively. Types of service that qualify include participation in departmental committees and assistance with other departmental activities or functions.

369  
370  
371  
372  
373  
374  
375

**Very Good:** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty member has a major effective role in the Department and in a professional organization. The former includes taking a major role in department committees, oversight or training of staff, oversight of department facilities or equipment, substantial participation and planning of department events, or heavy involvement in student recruitment efforts. The latter includes memberships on advisory boards or service as a consultant, organization of scientific programs at conferences, membership on committees of professional organizations, convening symposia/workshops, or public outreach.

376  
377  
378  
379  
380  
381  
382  
383

**Excellent:** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty member has a major effective role in the Department, and in the College or University or in a professional organization. The former includes membership in college or university committees, oversight or training of department, college, or university staff, oversight of department, college, or university facilities and equipment, substantial participation and planning of department, college, or university events, or heavy involvement in student recruitment efforts. The latter includes memberships on advisory boards or service as a consultant, organization of scientific programs at conferences, membership on committees of professional organizations, convening symposia/workshops; and public

384 outreach.

385 ***Outstanding:*** In addition to meeting Department obligations and requests effectively, the faculty  
386 member has a major effective role in the Department, and in the College or University and/or in a  
387 professional organization. In addition, the faculty member has a leading effective role in one of the  
388 above as evidenced, for example, by exceptional service as a graduate or undergraduate director, or as  
389 a scientific editor for a major peer-reviewed journal.