RPT PROCEDURES IN THE SOM: 
PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE AND TENURE

The School of Mathematics follows certain procedures in matters of reappointment, promotion, and tenure (abbreviated as RPT). This document outlines the procedures (not standards) currently employed in the School of Mathematics (SoM) when considering assistant professors for promotion to associate professor and for tenure. Normally, candidates apply for promotion and for tenure at the same time, and these applications are considered simultaneously. However, there can be circumstances where only one is applied for, or circumstances where both are applied for but the outcomes differ\(^1\). In any case, although there may be two decisions to be made, there is a single process.

The School follows the required procedures of the College of Science (CoS), which are detailed at the web site:

http://www.cos.gatech.edu/facultyres/promotion-tenure.

This document presents both the CoS procedures and those additional procedures which are followed by the SoM.

1. Overview

The application for promotion and tenure requires a comprehensive review of the candidate’s accomplishments in research, teaching, and service. Outside letters of recommendation are solicited from experts in the candidate’s field.

1.1. Process. The review is a multi-level process, with each level making an advisory recommendation to the next level, in the following order:

- Junior Promotion and Tenure (JP&T) committee in the SoM
- Chair of the SoM
- College of Sciences Dean’s RPT committee
- Dean of the College of Science
- Provost’s RPT committee
- Provost
- President of the Institute
- Board of Regents.

Date: November 26, 2012.

\(^1\)Section 18.1 of the Georgia Tech faculty handbook states: “Promotion and tenure decisions are made separately, and guidelines for evaluation relative to each of these decisions are required. The philosophy underlying the two decisions differs, although the criteria used as a basis for each decision are similar. The performance of a faculty member may justify promotion but not the awarding of tenure. The converse can occur, although it is not likely. Promotion is based on the intrinsic merit of the individual’s work. It recognizes the faculty member for meeting the criteria of the next higher level in the professional hierarchy. The decision is based on an evaluation of the individual’s scholarly activity including instruction, creativity, and service. The decision to promote or not to promote should not be tied in any way to questions of tenure. Tenure, on the other hand, relates to the individual’s value to the Institute. The decision is based on an assessment of the compatibility of the individual’s performance and interest with the needs and objectives of the Institute, the college and the individual instructional unit. To be considered for tenure, a faculty member’s performance must be judged to be at or above the level appropriate to his or her professional rank. Assuming an appropriate performance level, the individual’s professorial activity is evaluated relative to its compatibility with stated objectives.”
Each level makes a recommendation for or against promotion, and for or against tenure. The final decision on both questions is made by the Board of Regents.

This document only deals with procedures that occur within the SoM.

1.2. **Coordination.** The application for promotion and tenure requires coordination among the following persons and committees in the SoM:

- the candidate
- the Chair
- the Associate Chair
- the DOTE (director of teaching effectiveness)
- the school’s Junior P&T committee.

Ms. Joanne Cook provides secretarial support and distributes materials among these groups.

1.3. **Contents of the Promotion and Tenure Package.** The tenure package delivered to the Dean’s office contains the following items:

1. completed cover sheet signed by the Chair
2. letter from the Chair
3. letter from the JP&T committee to the Chair
4. candidate’s “Statement of Accomplishments in Research, Teaching, and Service” (6 pages maximum)
5. candidate’s CV (in Georgia Tech format)
6. reference letters from external reviewers (a minimum five letters)
7. biosketches of the external reviewers (indicating which were suggested by the candidate)
8. sample of solicitation letter sent to external reviewers
9. summary of teaching evaluations (CIOS scores) for all courses taught at Georgia Tech (prepared by Ms. Cook)
10. report from the DOTE
11. statement from the candidate affirming that the package is complete.

The completed package is normally due in the Dean’s office during the month of October.

1.4. **Makeup of the Junior Promotion and Tenure Committee.** In recent years, the JP&T committee in the SoM has consisted of three elected members and two members appointed by the Chair, each serving a two-year term. Members must be tenured faculty in the SoM, at the rank of associate professor or professor.

2. **Timing**

Each year, the Dean’s office supplies the SoM with a document that indicates which faculty members are eligible to apply for promotion and tenure in that academic year. A faculty member must have undergone a critical review in a prior academic year before he or she can apply for tenure.

2.1. **Instigation.** Faculty who wish to apply for tenure normally discuss their wishes with the Chair. If they decide to proceed with the application, they inform the Chair, who disseminates this information to others involved in the process.

The Associate Chair is responsible for informing candidates of the materials that they are required to submit for the application.

The Associate Chair is also responsible for informing any candidates of their last year of eligibility.
2.2. **Timetable.** The following table gives the approximate deadlines for the application for promotion and tenure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late spring</td>
<td>Candidates wishing to apply for tenure review discuss this option with the Chair and prepare a list of suggestions for external reviewers. Candidate submits CV and Research/Teaching/Service statement to Ms. Cook, who distributes them to the JP&amp;T committee, DOTE, Chair, and Associate Chair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early summer</td>
<td>Chair and JP&amp;T committee establish a list of reviewers. Chair solicits letters, which are due in mid-September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>DOTE submits teaching report to Ms. Cook, who distributes it to the JP&amp;T committee, Associate Chair, and Chair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>JP&amp;T committee submits its report to the Chair. Chair prepares his or her recommendation. Package is delivered to the Dean’s office. The candidate may update his or her CV before the package is submitted to the Dean’s office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

3. **Materials in the Application**

3.1. **Materials prepared by the candidate.** The candidate must submit the following materials:

- Names of suggested external reviewers. The candidate should note that *at most half* of the actual external reviewers will be selected from the names that appear on the candidate’s list. Therefore candidates are advised not to include every suitable reviewer on their list. In order to allow sufficient time for the external reviewers to complete their letters, it is advisable that the candidate submit this list as early as possible.

- Current CV, in Georgia Tech format. Assistance in preparing the vita is available from Ms. Cook.

- Summary of research, teaching, and service activities (at most six pages).

The candidate submits these materials to Ms. Cook.

3.2. **DOTE Report.** The DOTE prepares a report on the candidate’s teaching record. This report is based on information that the DOTE has collected since the candidate joined the SoM. The DOTE report typically discusses items such as the following, but any issues relevant to the candidate’s teaching may be included.

- Reports from the candidate’s teaching mentor, including visits by the mentor to the candidate’s classroom.
- Courses taught at Georgia Tech, course loads.
- Grade distributions.
- Course materials.
- CIOS reports.
- Non-classroom teaching efforts, such as supervising REUs or Ph.D. students.
- Indications of improvement or deterioration in performance since the DOTE’s critical review report.
3.3. **External Reviewers.** The Chair, in consultation with the JP&T committee, decides which external reviewers will be asked to report on the candidate. A minimum of five reviews is required for the application package, but since not all reviewers may agree to prepare a report, often more than five reviews are solicited. All reviews received must be included in the package. At most half of the names of the external reviewers whose reports are included in the application package can appear on the candidate’s list of suggestions.

The following statements regarding external reviewers are taken directly from the CoS promotion and tenure guidelines:

- Generally, the referees should not have personal or professional relationships with the candidate (i.e., collaborators, mentors, or co-workers). If letters from such persons are included, they must be justified by the school Chair and identified as such. Candidates should provide the names of Ph.D. and postdoctoral mentors on their CV.
- The candidate will be asked to sign a statement indicating that he or she will not ask to see external reference letters or the identity of the external referees. Referees are asked to sign a separate note indicating that they expect their identities and remarks to be confidential.
- The candidate will be asked if there are potential outside referees who they would not want to review their work. Such requests are normally honored.

3.4. **JP&T Committee Letter.** The Junior Promotion and Tenure committee prepares a report on the candidate’s record in research, teaching, and service, and makes recommendations for or against promotion and the awarding of tenure.

The committee bases its report on items such as the following.

- Letters from external reviewers.
- Candidate’s CV and Research/Teaching/Service statement.
- DOTE report.
- Examination of papers and other publications of the candidate.
- Discussions with committees on which the candidate has served.
- Other evidence of accomplishments in research, teaching, and service.

The JP&T committee votes on its recommendations. The final report, including the vote count, is submitted to Ms. Cook, who forwards them to the Chair.

3.5. **Chair’s Letter.** The Chair prepares his or her own report on the candidate’s record in research, teaching, and service. The Chair’s report is based on the same types of input that is used by the JP&T committee, as well as on the letter and recommendation of the JP&T committee. The Chair’s report makes recommendations to the Dean on the questions of promotion and tenure.

The College of Sciences requires that the Chair’s letter consist of the following sections:

- Overview
- Impact and Productivity
- Discussion of External Reviews
- Teaching effectiveness
- Summary

The Chair’s letter is usually prepared in consultation with the Associate Chair, and the Associate Chair may prepare a first draft of the Chair’s letter. The final version of the letter is the responsibility of the Chair.

3.6. **Review by the Candidate.** The candidate is required to review the application package, with the exception that the candidate will not view the letters from the external reviewers nor the identity of the referees. (In other words, the candidate reviews all items mentioned in Section 1.3
except (6) and (7).) The candidate will be required to sign a statement affirming that the package is complete before it is submitted to the Dean’s office.

If during the review of these reports the candidate identifies any gaps in the package, the candidate will discuss these issues with the Chair, and the Chair will take steps to complete the package.

4. Outcomes and Feedback

4.1. Feedback. After the final decision is received from the Board of Regents, the Chair will meet with the candidate and discuss the decision. The possible outcomes are discussed below.

4.2. Decision to Promote and Award Tenure. Congratulations! You will be appointed as a tenured associate professor at the beginning of the following academic year.

4.3. Recommendation against Promotion or Tenure. In this case, the candidate will be reappointed for another year and may ask to be reconsidered for promotion and/or tenure during that year. No reconsideration is possible after the seventh year of service.