

# Promotion and Advancement

Nate Derbinsky (Northeastern)

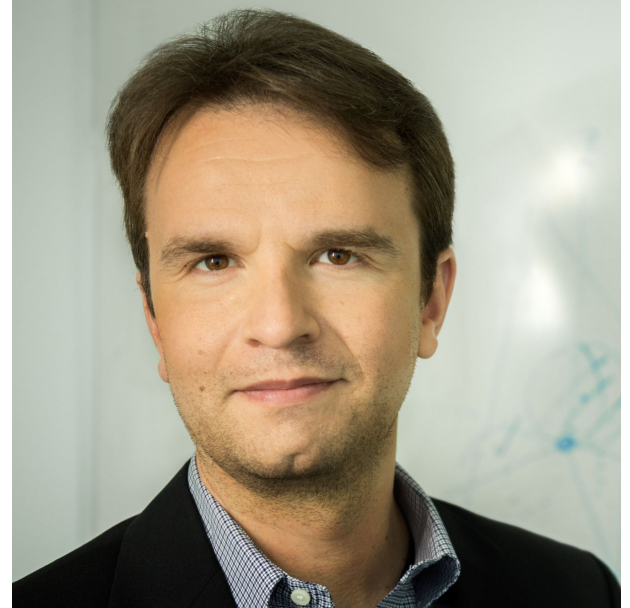
Joe Hummel (U. of Illinois, Chicago)

Sara Sood (Northwestern)

# Nate Derbinsky

Associate Teaching Professor  
Assistant Dean for Teaching Faculty  
Khoury College of Computer Sciences  
Northeastern University

- Assistant P -> Assoc TP
  - In-Process -> Full TP
- >30 TF (in Khoury, Boston)
  - Actively hiring - talk to me!



# Performance Evaluation

- Do your homework
  - Understand what is expected and valued, what is evaluated and how (particularly teaching), what is the process/timeline (and how it relates to promotion/merit)
- Prepare incrementally
  - Have a system that works for you, update throughout the year as things happen (both annual evaluation and future promotion)
  - Necessary to be specific and clear about *individual* contributions
- Get what you can out of the process
  - If you are going to spend time, might as well benefit :)
  - Take the opportunity to truly reflect (e.g., teaching, balance of teaching/service/etc), as well as stay open to receive genuine feedback
- Advocate for transparent, fair, and effective processes
  - Work with your unit/senate to adopt handbook/bylaws that cover the timeline, evaluation categories/metrics, committee composition, bidirectional communication, etc.

# Performance Evaluation: Example

## Retrospective

- Teaching (SET, TAs + co-teaching, self-reflection, observations, development)
- Service (unit/institution/professional, advising, recommendations, admin role)
- Scholarship (papers, grants, collaborations)
- Professional Development (courses, conferences, consulting)
- Advancement (awards, goals, promotion plans)

## Timeline

- December 1: information ask
- January 1: information due
- February 15: ≥30-minute in-person meeting
- March 15: written evaluation
- April 1: optional response due
- May 1: declare promotion intent
- June: merit/contract letters
- October: promotion dossier due

Evaluation depends upon rank, level of leadership/research activity.

# Sara Sood

Professor of Instruction  
Chookaszian Family Teaching Professor  
Co-Director of Undergraduate Studies in  
Computer Science  
Department of Computer Science  
Northwestern University

- Promotion
  - Assistant Professor to Associate Professor (with tenure) in 2013 at Pomona College
  - Associate Professor of Instruction -> Professor of Instruction in 2019 at Northwestern Univ.
- Dept makeup
  - 7 Faculty of Instruction in Computer Science
  - 4 Post Docs (with teaching roles)



# Promotion

- Different progressions, titles, timelines at different places
  - Assistant Teaching Professor → Associate Teaching Professor → Teaching Professor
  - Instructor → Lecturer → Senior Lecturer
  - “Titles do not come for free” (and expectations may change)
- Promotion process and expected material (“promotion package”, letters, etc).
  - May be done at department or school level
  - Like an overgrown performance evaluation
    - CV
    - Teaching evaluations
    - Summary of accomplishments
    - Letters (internal and external)
    - Teaching observations
    - Letter from your department chair
  - Some departments assemble the majority your package for you
    - Others may require you to play a more active role in preparing your package.

# Promotion

- How to prepare for promotion, particularly how to identify letter writers, and what questions to ask your chair or subcommittee.
  - Bring up promotion intention and related questions in earlier evaluation opportunities (e.g., annual performance evaluation, “major review”)
  - Are the same criteria used for both annual performance evaluations and promotion?
    - You may be very happy at associate (or equivalent) level with strong annual evaluations
    - Moving beyond associate may require more academic scholarship / external service
  - For letters: network early, build connections, maintain a relationship with schools that sought to hire you, be reasonable in your expectations about who might be willing and able to provide letters
- How to communicate with your chair when promotion policies are unclear.
  - Advocate for fair & transparent models you hear about!
  - Seek mentorship from senior faculty and mentor junior faculty as you learn

# Joe Hummel

Clinical Associate Professor  
Director of Undergraduate Studies (and  
“informal chair of the Teaching Faculty”)

Department of Computer Science  
University of Illinois Chicago

- Associate Professor @ liberal arts college
  - > Research Associate Professor
  - > Clinical Associate Professor
  - > Teaching Associate Professor (2022)
- 60 faculty total, 15 TF (no tenure yet) + 45 RF,  
we are always hiring!



# Meta/General

- ASK early (interview/new hire) about the timeline/processes/values/data
- Talk with others and “steal” best practices from other institutions :)
  - Example: UC Security of employment ~ Tenure
    - UIC: no tenure for TF, 3-year contracts after first year
    - Northeastern: no tenure for TF, Assistant/Associate/Full contracts (in years) = 1/3/5
    - Northwestern: no tenure for TF, Assistant/Associate/Full contracts (in years) = 3/5/5

# Advancement

In addition to promotion through the ranks, career advancement might involve administrative/leadership roles within unit/institution/community (e.g., CRA).

- How to promote one's achievements
  - Understand what “counts” often academic vs service
  - realize that if what “counts” is too far off your passions, you might be in the wrong job?
- Achieving national and international recognition
  - Unit culture/committee for award nominations
  - Go to SIGCSE (and/or the equivalent for your world)

# Questions and Discussion



Northeastern resources,  
including a model dossier

<https://provost.northeastern.edu/resources/faculty/>