Promotion and Advancement

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Nate Derbinsky

Associate Teaching Professor
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Khoury College of Computer Sciences
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- 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
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● 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/