

Bioengineering Departmental Criteria for Appointments and Promotions

Enacted by majority vote of the UW Bioengineering Faculty: March 10, 2026

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Preamble

Individuals considered for faculty appointment or promotion within the Department of Bioengineering are evaluated on their record of, and potential for, contributions in teaching, scholarship, and service. Teaching includes classroom instruction, research mentoring, continuing education, and similar efforts, which advance the understanding of bioengineering by others. Scholarship includes the development of new knowledge and technologies. Service involves departmental and professional activities to benefit Bioengineering, the University, government agencies, professional societies, or the public through such efforts as administration, scientific review, academic governance, and professional leadership.

All faculty, regardless of rank or track, are expected to maintain high standards of professional integrity and conduct. Given the potential major implications for career progression, any instances of behavior that fall short of these standards must be fully documented by departmental leadership to be presented as relevant information in the context of promotion and/or tenure.

Evidence supporting a sustained record of teaching, scholarship, and service can also include activities or products that could be assigned to multiple categories or elude simple classification, including: Research and creative works disseminated in channels other than peer-reviewed journals; Open science and open scholarship; Teaching-related scholarship, beyond work in the classroom; Interdisciplinary collaboration; Entrepreneurship and innovation; Community engagement; Mentoring of students and colleagues; and Global engagement. A non-exhaustive list of examples of potential means of demonstrating teaching, scholarship, and service is provided in Appendix 1.

Each faculty member is expected to exhibit a record that includes teaching, research, and service. The relative emphasis on these areas will, however, vary for each individual depending on type of appointment, stage of career, and professional circumstances. An appropriate overall balance is expected together with a demonstrated ability to contribute in a collegial fashion to the academic mission of the Department of Bioengineering. In accordance with the University's expressed commitment to excellence and equity, contributions in scholarship, research, teaching, and service that address diversity and equal opportunity shall be included and considered among the professional and scholarly qualifications for appointment and promotions as outlined below.

The Department of Bioengineering recognizes that funding landscapes vary over time and across research areas, including among faculty with diverse scientific interests. Quality and impact may be demonstrated by tenure-track, tenured, and research faculty regardless of specific levels of extramural funding, though success in securing competitive support is recognized where applicable.

The guidelines in this document should serve as a starting point for discussions between individual faculty members and the Department Chair during the regular conference for assistant professors, merit reviews, or conferences for associate/full professors. A copy of this document should be sent to each faculty member when these meetings are scheduled so that they can plan and prioritize their efforts in ways that directly support both their professional growth and the university's mission. Beyond the information articulated in this policy document, UW provides links to [resources and policy for promotion and tenure](#) including [policies on extensions of the promotion and tenure clock](#).

Tenure-Track/Tenured And Research Track Positions

Appointment as Assistant Professor or Research Assistant Professor

Appointment as an assistant professor shall require demonstrated potential for scholarship. Evidence for such potential will include outstanding performance in doctoral studies and, in many cases, additional experience in post-doctoral research or industrial research and development.

Appointment as Associate Professor, Professor, Research Associate Professor, or Research Professor

New appointments at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor in either tenure-track/tenured or research track shall require the same qualifications as expected for promotion to those ranks.

Promotion to Associate Professor or Professor

In addition to excellence teaching and service, the primary requirement for promotion is evidence of excellence in scholarship. Scholarship is usually indicated by contributions of high impact and influence—see Appendix 1B for an extensive list of examples. The degree to which a faculty member has advanced their field can best be judged by impartial observers who are leaders of the candidate's field. Excellence implies a sustained commitment to high quality scholarship. Therefore, one criterion to be applied when evaluating a candidate for promotion is the assessment that they will continue to be a productive scholar even without the inducement of a promotion. This is especially important in the case of tenure, but it is to be applied to all promotion cases.

Promotion to the rank of **Associate Professor** shall be based on important scholarly contributions. An Assistant Professor eligible for promotion will have established an independent research program, demonstrated an ability to provide classroom and laboratory training for students, achieved national recognition of their contributions to the field, and demonstrated high standards of professional integrity and conduct.

Promotion to the rank of **Professor** shall be based on scholarly contributions that have significantly advanced the field, and continued demonstration of high standards of professional integrity and conduct. Whether such advancements are in research, teaching, academic leadership, or other areas, the essential evidence will be solicited from recognized national and international leaders as to the quality and impact of the candidate's contributions.

Promotion to Research Associate Professor

Promotion to the rank of Research Associate Professor shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Evidence of independent research achievement and national reputation. There should be a clear record of substantial success and impact in scholarly and/or translational research as demonstrated by the development of new knowledge and its publication in refereed journals, and/or by inventorship and patent activity, commercialization activity (licensing, etc.), participation in company startup, etc. Although research faculty members may work within a larger research program of a senior faculty member, it is expected that they will have been provided opportunities to undertake independent projects relevant to that research program, and will have successfully taken advantage of such opportunities. It is anticipated that such independent projects will lead to some significant publications on which the research professorial faculty member is the senior, shared senior, or sole faculty author (denoted as corresponding or co corresponding author). Other scholarly contributions such as textbooks, chapters, and reviews and any teaching, administrative or other service scholarly work and impact may also contribute to qualification.
2. Development of independent research funding where appropriate. Such independent funding might take the form of service as PI or co-PI on an R01- or R21-type grant from NIH, similar grants from other extramural sources, PI on a section of a NIH Program Project grant, or PI on a faculty development grant such as a Research Career Development Award from NIH, or similar grants from other agencies. Other hallmarks may also include Investigator-type positions on the types of grants noted above. The promoted faculty member will have clear evidence of direct contribution to the writing of grants that lead to at least partial support of their position.
3. Active participation in departmental meetings and seminars and in research-related administrative service.
4. Participation in the teaching program of the Department of Bioengineering in some form is encouraged but not required for faculty in the research professorial track. Such participation might ideally include lectures in one of the formal courses that involve the Department of Bioengineering, participation in seminar courses, and research mentoring of graduate and/or undergraduate students.
5. Demonstrated high standards of professional integrity and conduct.

Promotion to Research Professor

Promotion to the rank of Research Professor shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Independent research achievement and international scholarly reputation. Promotion requires outstanding and currently active mature scholarly and/or translational research, sufficient to command an international reputation for research and related scholarly contributions, and/or translational impact. International recognition may be documented by peer evaluation, by such things as participation on editorial boards, study sections, invitations to speak at meetings, symposia or other institutions, and/or by special honors, awards or other recognitions. It is anticipated that candidates for Research Professor will have a record of multiple significant publications as senior corresponding author.
2. Evidence of independent research funding. Such independent funding should take the form of service as PI on an R01- or R21-type grant from NIH, similar grants from other extramural sources, or PI on a section of a NIH Program Project grant, or similar grants from other agencies.
3. Active participation in departmental meetings and seminars and in research-related administrative service.

4. Participation in the teaching program of the Department of Bioengineering in some form is encouraged but not required for faculty in the research professorial track. Such participation might ideally include lectures in one of the formal courses that involve the Department of Bioengineering, participation in seminar courses, and service in graduate or undergraduate research mentoring.
5. Demonstrated high standards of professional integrity and conduct.

Teaching Track Positions

Appointment as Assistant Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor and Teaching Professor

Appointment to the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor with a teaching title requires qualifications corresponding to those prescribed for that rank, with primary emphasis upon teaching. Such an appointment requires completion of professional training appropriate to the teaching, scholarship, and service requirements of the position. Appropriate degree requirements shall be determined for each position by the college, school, or campus making the appointment. Tenure is not acquired under teaching appointments.

Appointment with the title of assistant teaching professor requires a demonstration of teaching ability that evidences promise of a successful teaching career.

Appointment with the title of associate teaching professor requires a record of substantial success in teaching as evidenced by extensive training, competence, and experience in Bioengineering education.

Appointment with the title of teaching professor requires outstanding, mature scholarship as evidenced by a record of excellence in instruction, which may be demonstrated by exemplary success in curricular design and implementation, student mentoring, and service and leadership to the department, school/college, University, and field.

In Bioengineering, the effort is expected to be approximately 20% for Service and 80% for Teaching and Other Instructional Activities and Scholarly Activities combined, but will vary for each individual depending on type of appointment, stage of career, and professional circumstances and will be determined in consultation with the Chair.

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor

Promotion to associate teaching professor requires a record of substantial success in teaching as evidenced by extensive training, competence, and experience in Bioengineering education.

Teaching & Other Instructional Activities

Assistant Teaching Professors seeking promotion to Associate Teaching Professor should have demonstrated sustained success in teaching. Their contributions in educational innovation must be significant and recognized by students, colleagues, and peers. Further, they should have a sustained record of mentoring and/or advising students.

Scholarly Activities

Individuals may demonstrate their scholarship, as recognized by their peers, in a variety of ways (Faculty Code Section 24-32), including but not limited to: introduction of new knowledge or methods

into course content; creation or use of innovative pedagogical methods; development of new courses, curricula, or course materials; participation in professional conferences; evidence of student performance; receipt of grants or awards; contributions to interdisciplinary teaching; participation and leadership in professional associations; or significant outreach to professionals at other educational institutions. While they may choose to do so through publication, such publication shall not be required. See Appendix 1, Part B, which includes a detailed section on “Examples of quality and effective education-focused and pedagogical scholarship”.

Service

The University encourages faculty participation in public service. Such professional and scholarly service to schools, business and industry, and local, state, national, and international organizations is an integral part of the University's mission. Of similar importance to the University is faculty participation in University committee work and other administrative tasks and clinical duties, including the faculty member's involvement in the recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students in an effort to promote diversity and equal opportunity. Both types of service make an important contribution and should be included in the individual faculty profile.

Promotion to Teaching Professor

Promotion to Teaching Professor requires outstanding, mature scholarship as evidenced by a record of excellence in instruction, which may be demonstrated by exemplary success in curricular design and implementation, student mentoring, and service and leadership to the department, school/college, University, and field.

Teaching & Other Instructional Activities

Promotion to Teaching Professor requires sustained demonstrated success in teaching and a sustained record of contributions to the teaching mission of the UW beyond excellence in individual courses. Contributions in educational innovation should be significant as assessed by students, colleagues, and/or peers external to the candidate's home department.

Scholarly Activities

Promotion to the rank of Teaching Professor should be accompanied by a record of sustained scholarly activities in the candidate's field of expertise. The record of scholarly contributions should clearly articulate significant impacts to engineering teaching and learning that go well beyond excellence in individual classroom instruction.

Recognition by stakeholders external to UW (i.e., national and/or international) of impact on the field of Bioengineering is expected for promotion to Teaching Professor. Many scholarly achievements can be considered when assessing this criterion; specifics are expected to vary on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of recognition for faculty seeking promotion to Teaching Professor include but are not limited to:

- invitations to disseminate curriculum or pedagogical resources via peer-reviewed papers, contributions (authorship or editorship) to published textbooks, or presentations at conferences on engineering education;
- invitations to give scholarly presentations, appear on professional panels, or contribute to professional media on engineering education;
- testimonials documenting teaching excellence from program alumni who have gone on to lead distinguished careers;
- appointment to leadership positions outside of the Bioengineering department in recognition of

scholarly excellence (i.e., at the college or university levels, or via relationships with professional societies); or,

- receipt of awards, nominations, or other distinctions or accolades outside the department.

Note that international scholarship, although required for promotion to Professor, is specifically not required for promotion to Teaching Professor.

Service

Service to the department, college or university, and/or discipline may serve as evidence of a faculty member's contribution beyond the classroom. These should be substantive and distinctive contributions to service and leadership to the department, college, university, and/or discipline outside of the university. The promotion dossier should build a case for these service contributions. Service that indicates contributions at the department level may focus on curriculum development beyond individual courses, program coordination, and/or oversight or other types of issues (e.g. ABET accreditation).

Appendix 1: Definitions & Examples of Faculty Activities

This appendix lists potential faculty activities that may serve as evidence for promotion and tenure across all ranks and tracks, organized under Teaching, Scholarship, and Service. They are illustrative rather than exhaustive and should not be treated as a checklist of required items. The relative weight of specific activities will vary by rank, track, and individual career path. Candidates are encouraged to discuss the components of any promotion and/or tenure request with their mentorship team, including faculty mentors and Department leadership.

Part A: Teaching & Other Instructional Activities

Effectiveness of teaching is a fundamental criterion for promotion and tenure within the department. Examples include regularly scheduled courses in our programs, special topic courses, directed research groups, independent studies, and supervising graduate and undergraduate students in research or other educational activities. Directed research groups, independent studies, and supervising research may in some cases be better described as scholarly contributions.

Examples of quality and effective teaching activities may include:

- Development and/or implementation of innovative or evidence-based teaching methods
- Successful curriculum or course design and refinement that incorporates formative assessment
- Demonstrated effectiveness in the classroom, as shown through peer reviews, student evaluations, or teaching awards
- Mentorship and advising of undergraduate and graduate students, including supervision of research, capstone, or creative projects
- Incorporation of best teaching practices that support diverse learners
- Leadership in educational initiatives, such as leading teaching workshops, chairing curriculum committees, or contributing to educational policy
- Development and dissemination of educational resources, such as textbooks, open educational materials, or digital learning tools
- Engagement in the scholarship of teaching and learning, including presentations or publications on pedagogical innovations
- Positive impact on student success, retention, and achievement, with supporting documentation or outcomes
- Incorporation of the UW's elements of effective teaching

- Creating and delivering entrepreneurship education programs, workshops, or courses for students or the broader community
- Designing and teaching courses with robust community-engaged elements
- Developing or teaching innovative courses with robust global learning elements, including study abroad courses, courses with international field work, or global classroom experiences, including Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

Part B: Scholarship & Research Activities

Scholarship is the measure of intellectual achievement in academic fields. It includes research activities of all kinds. This includes empirical research with human subjects, speculative and theoretical work, creative synthesis of previous research, and the creation of innovative systems and technologies. Scholarship may also be demonstrated by publishing articles, papers, and books; giving conference talks and other presentations; developing new courses; and other scholarly contributions as outlined in the specific promotion criteria below.

Examples of quality and effective scholarship broadly categorized as research and creative work may include:

- Authoring or co-authoring peer-reviewed journal articles, books, book chapters, monographs, or textbooks
- Publishing or presenting research, including non-peer-reviewed work, that advances the field
- Development of new theories, methodologies, frameworks, tools, processes, data sets, software, or codes that advance knowledge or practice
- Contributions to digital scholarship such as digital archives, databases, interactive media, or open-source software
- Creation of artistic works, performances, exhibitions, compositions, or design projects that are publicly presented, performed, or displayed
- Presentations at regional, national, or international conferences, symposia, or scholarly meetings
- Invited presentations, keynote lectures, plenary talks, panels, named lectureships, or consultations related to research or professional practice
- Serving as principal investigator, co-investigator, or project leader on research grants, contracts, or fellowships
- Securing competitive research funding from government agencies, foundations, industry, or other sponsors
- Editing journals, volumes, or major reference works, or serving on editorial boards
- Serving as a peer reviewer for disciplinary or scholarly journals and conferences
- Receiving awards, honors, or recognition for research or creative work
- Evidence of the impact or uptake of research or creative work, including citations, media coverage, policy adoption, or public engagement
- Invention disclosures resulting from original research

Examples of quality and effective education-focused and pedagogical scholarship may include:

- Authoring or co-authoring textbooks
- Authoring or co-authoring open-source or other educational resources for students and/or faculty to support teaching and learning
- Publishing or presenting research on pedagogy or the scholarship of teaching and learning at the department, college, university, or field level
- Presentation at national or international meetings of teaching in a specialty area
- Invited presentations or panels on pedagogy

- Writing professional journal articles or columns on pedagogical scholarship
- Serving as principal investigator or co-investigator on grants focused on education in a specialty or area of expertise
- Development, substantial revision, or re-envisioning of courses integrating new pedagogical methods or evidence into objectives, content, or evaluation
- Development or re-envisioning of curriculum within the faculty member's unit or in collaboration with other academic units
- Creation of curricular materials adopted by instructional units outside the University of Washington
- Participation in education-related task forces, accreditation teams, or conference planning committees

Examples of quality and effective scholarship in entrepreneurship, innovation, and translation may include:

- Participation in entrepreneurship, innovation, or commercialization programming and competitions, including CoMotion Gap Fund activities, Buerk Center Innovation Challenges, Engineering Innovation in Health, and hackathons
- Obtaining translational funding or investment, including SBIR/STTR grants, translational awards, angel or venture capital, or philanthropic support
- Founding or co-founding startups, spin-off companies, or social enterprises based on research discoveries
- Leading or contributing to commercialization efforts, including technology transfer, product development, or market traction
- Securing collaborative agreements with industry or demonstrating market traction for university-developed technologies or creative works
- Developing new methods, tools, or processes adopted by industry, government, or academic partners
- Consulting for industry, government, or nonprofit organizations on the translation and application of scholarly or creative expertise
- Receiving innovation-related awards, honors, or recognition

Examples of quality and effective community-engaged and public-facing scholarship broadly may include:

- Documentation of mutually beneficial, reciprocal partnerships with community organizations or stakeholders
- Co-authored publications or presentations with community partners
- Grants, contracts, or funding awarded for community-engaged or community-based scholarly projects
- Demonstrated scholarly impact on community-identified needs or priorities
- Outcomes showing positive social, economic, environmental, or health impacts arising from the research
- Public dissemination of scholarly work to community or non-academic audiences, including reports, workshops, or media coverage
- Letters of support or testimonials from community collaborators with no conflict of interest
- Recognition or awards from community organizations or professional bodies
- Engagement in tribal or community-based scholarship activities

Examples of quality and effective scholarship in global and international engagement may include:

- Leading or participating in international research collaborations, consortia, or multi-country

- projects
- Publishing scholarly work with international collaborators or in journals or outlets with global reach
- Presenting research or creative work at international conferences, workshops, or exhibitions
- Securing grants, fellowships, or funding for projects with significant international components or global impact
- Developing and leading study abroad or other internationally focused scholarly programs for UW students
- International engagement activities related to scholarship

Part C: Service Activities

Professional service is valued as a significant contribution to the department, the college, the university, and to the field at large. It includes mentoring students and faculty; serving on committees (within and outside of the university); service to local, national, and international professional organizations (e.g., guiding conferences, meetings, forums); teaching professional development seminars and workshops; consulting activities, etc.

Examples of impactful service activities may include:

- Leadership roles within the department, college, or university, including serving as chair, program director, or in leadership roles on strategic planning or major institutional committees
- Active participation or leadership in faculty governance, admissions, accreditation processes, or major institutional initiatives
- Service in professional societies, including holding elected office, organizing conferences, or chairing committees
- Editorial service for academic journals, including serving as an editor, editorial board member, peer reviewer, or grant reviewer
- Organizing academic symposia, workshops, public lectures, or events that enhance the institution's reputation or scholarly community
- Outreach activities connecting the university to external communities, including K–12 partnerships, public lectures, or service on community advisory boards
- Advancing diversity, access, equity, and inclusion through committee service, program development, advocacy, or climate-building activities
- Mentoring and supporting faculty colleagues through professional development, onboarding, or peer support activities
- Organizing innovation challenges, hackathons, or business plan competitions
- Building or leading interdisciplinary teams to address real-world problems with creative or scalable solutions
- Providing mentorship or support for student or faculty entrepreneurship ventures
- Mentoring undergraduate or graduate students in public, community-engaged, or applied scholarship and research
- Participation in structured mentoring programs for students or colleagues
- Documented mentoring outcomes, including mentee achievements, letters from mentees, or other evidence of impact
- Evidence of effective mentoring, including undergraduate or graduate student feedback on mentorship experiences
- Contributions to a positive, inclusive academic environment that fosters growth and success for students, staff, or faculty
- Service on national or international boards, panels, advisory groups, or review committees relevant to one's field
- University representation in attracting philanthropic interest, partnerships, or external funding

- Documented impact or outcomes resulting from service activities, including policy changes, new programs, or improved organizational processes
- Mentoring students in globally engaged scholarship and research
- Establishing or sustaining partnerships with universities, research institutes, or organizations outside the United States, including serving as a faculty champion for such partnerships
- Hosting visiting scholars from international institutions and engaging in reciprocal academic exchanges
- Engaging in policy development, advisory roles, or consultancy for international agencies, non-governmental organizations, or governments
- Serving in leadership roles for international professional societies, networks, or editorial boards
- Organizing or co-organizing international conferences, symposia, or workshops
- Contributing to capacity-building initiatives or training programs in other countries
- Demonstrating service-related impact on global issues, such as health, sustainability, human rights, or education
- Receiving awards, honors, or recognition for service, mentoring, or global engagement from institutional, national, or international organizations