Guidelines for Faculty Serving on College Committees for Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure for Assistant Professors and Associate/Full Professors

College of Engineering
Georgia Institute of Technology

An Overview of the RPT Process

Thank you for agreeing to serve on either the College of Engineering Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee/Assistant Professors or the College of Engineering Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee/Associate & Full Professors. The following guidelines are intended to give you an overview of the Institute RPT process and to aid you in your contributions.

These committees are a part of a faculty evaluation process that parallels a similar and independent administrative evaluation process. The faculty evaluation process includes the Area Committees, School Committees, College Committees, and the Institute Committee. The administrative evaluation process includes the School Chair, Dean, Provost, and the President. A brief summary of the role and order of both processes is as follows.

The faculty evaluation process begins at the School level and consists of an Area Committee and a School Committee. The Area Committee's role is to provide a letter summarizing their assessment of a candidate's scholarly contributions as determined from an evaluation of five intellectual products provided by the candidate. The products can be refereed publications, other publications or proceedings, hardware or software, etc.; anything that can be judged for its quality and impact. For persons working in cross-disciplinary areas, the Area Committee should reflect a distribution of persons from appropriate disciplines who are capable of assessing the individual's work. The Area Committee should not vote nor express its judgment on the issue of reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure; their role is only to assess the quality and impact of the scholarly contributions.

The School Committee's role is to provide a letter summarizing their assessment of the overall qualifications of the candidate based on their evaluation of the Area Committee's letter, the candidate's CV, letters of reference, and any other material that may accompany the RPT package, and to vote on the question of reappointment, promotion and/or tenure. The letter should include a discussion of the candidate's contributions in creativity, teaching and service. The materials are then forwarded to the School Chair, who provides a letter of assessment and votes for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure.

The College Committees are comprised of one member from each School plus three at-large members from the College of Engineering faculty. College Committee members are appointed after soliciting nominations from the School Chairs, with the committee composition developed to broadly represent the diversity of Georgia Tech's College of Engineering's faculty and their diverse contributions in scholarship and creativity, teaching, and service. The College Committee's role is similar to that of the School Committee: to provide a letter summarizing their assessment of the candidate's overall qualifications and to vote on the question of reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure. **Members of the committees are required to abstain from voting on the candidates from their School.**

Committee members do not fully participate in the discussion of cases from their own school, but instead are available to answer general questions about journal quality, teaching workload for the school, and other aspects of the case that may be specific for their school. Even though the committee is comprised of members from the Schools of the College, everyone is to represent the views of the College and not their particular School when deliberating on a candidate's case.

The College Committee's letters are added to the RPT packages and forwarded to both the Dean and the School Chairs. Before the Dean votes, it is typical for the Dean to convene a meeting of the School Chairs. The purpose of the meeting is twofold: 1) to review the packages and provide an opportunity for School Chairs to make any remarks or clarification, if needed, and 2) to provide an opportunity for School Chairs to review the RPT packages from other Schools to assure that consistent procedures and comparable standards are being used among the Schools. The Dean provides a letter of assessment, and votes on the question of reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure. The materials are then forwarded to the Institute Committee also known as the Provost Advisory Committee.

The Institute Committee includes the Deans of the six Colleges: two representatives from the Colleges of Engineering and Sciences, and one representative from Design, Computing, Business, and the Ivan Allen College, respectively. It is convened by the Vice Provost for of Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs (who moderates, but does not vote). The Vice Provost prepares a summary of the Institute Committee's evaluation and forwards the materials to the Provost and to the President for their votes. As a reminder, all votes at the multiple review levels are advisory votes to the President. The President's vote is the final vote that determines the overall outcome of a case.

Committee Deliberations and Votes

It is important that your deliberations and votes remain confidential. Some members of the faculty, or even some candidates, may inquire about your committee's work. As well-intended as these inquiries may be, it is not appropriate to share the results of the committee's deliberations, including any veiled references as to "how things are looking." A breach of confidentiality could either raise false hopes or create needless anxiety. It is important to remember that the final decision will be based on the comments and votes of everyone in the RPT process, including those at the upper levels who will not have yet had their opportunity to provide their input.

It is important that everyone vote either "yes" or "no" on every candidate and to avoid abstaining. Although some decisions may be difficult, it is important to the candidate and to subsequent committees and administrators to have a decision. You must abstain from voting on candidates from your unit or if you have other conflicts of interest (e.g., you have already voted earlier in the RPT process, the candidate is a spouse or advisee or business partner, or any other connection of concern to you). Any potential conflicts of interest must I be made known to the committee before the discussion begins. In some cases, committee members may be asked to leave the room until the discussion is finished and the vote taken.

RPT Packages

We have not read the original materials in detail. If you find any errors in any of the candidates' materials, please call them to the attention of the Dean's Office. We would like to have the Schools correct any errors of format or fact, omissions of data, even misspelled words before forwarding to the Institute Committee. It is important that candidates receive a fair evaluation; errors can be distracting at the least and inadvertently misleading at worst.

Committee Letters

Please use a consistent format for all the committee letters. The letters should be of similar length. If some are but a couple of sentences and others are several detailed paragraphs, subsequent readers may think that the committee is either trying to send a "message" or that some members of the committee didn't take their work very seriously. Similarly, be specific, direct, and balanced in your comments. Vague expressions may have subsequent readers trying to "read between the lines." It is very important that the narrative be consistent with the votes. Any "split" vote should be explained, as well as any abstentions.

The first paragraph of each letter should: 1) identify the candidate under consideration, 2) identify the members of the committee, including name and academic rank, present at the time of the vote, and 3) indicate the votes of the committee as a whole. The letter should be signed on behalf of the committee by the faculty member that led the discussion of the case for the committee, all members of the committee should review the letter.

Be aware that some of the candidates may be "early promotions." The Board of Regents requires "strong justification" for such candidates. The Board of Regents considers promotion to Associate Professor with less than four years of service as an Assistant Professor at Georgia Tech as an early promotion, and promotion to Professor with less than five years of service as an Associate Professor at Georgia Tech as an early promotion. For more information about what is considered an early case, you can refer to the CoE document "Guidance for CoE Early Promotion/Tenure Cases."

Deadlines

Each committee member will be assigned a draft letter to complete prior to the College RPT committee meeting. Please adhere to deadline date for draft letters. Missing a deadline can cause considerable disruption of the process and significant inconvenience to your fellow colleagues.

Board of Regents and Institute Criteria for Evaluation

Please review the Board of Regents and Institute guidelines for qualifications and criteria for tenure and promotion. They may be found in the *Georgia Tech Faculty Handbook* in the Policy Library at: http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/faculty_handbook .

Questions

Do not hesitate to ask questions of clarification about School, College, Institute, or BOR policies, procedures, or any other matter during the course of your committee's work. Direct them to either the School Chair or the Dean's Office, as deemed appropriate.

Example COE College Committee Letters

Sample for Tenure and/or Promotion   COE RPT 1

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steven W. McLaughlin Dean

FROM: College of Engineering Committee for Reappointment, Tenure and
             Promotion of Assistant-to-Associate Professors: George P. Burdell
             (Professor – AE), Mickey Mouse (Associate Professor – BME),
             Georgia P. Burdell (Professor – CEE), and Buzz Tech (Associate
             Professor – ME)

DATE: October 23, 2019

RE: Promotion/Tenure of *(faculty candidate) (rank) (school)*

The College of Engineering Committee for Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure of
Assistant-to-Associate Professors met on October 23, 2019 to consider the tenure
and/or promotion of *(faculty candidate)*. Present at the meeting were: *(names of
members present)*. The committee voted as follows:

Tenure:_____		Promotion_____:	
⌋	Yes	☐	Yes
⌋	No	☐	No
⌋	Abstain	☐	Abstain
⌋	Absent	☐	Absent

*(Paragraphs to follow should be specific, direct and balanced. In this sample, the split
votes should be explained.)*

Submitted on behalf of the committee,

_____
(Committee Member,
 Title,
 School)
NOTE: Only one member need sign on behalf of everyone.

Sample for Tenure and/or Promotion   COE RPT 2

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steven W. McLaughlin, Dean

FROM: College of Engineering Committee for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion of Associate-to-Full Professors: George P. Burdell (Professor – AE), Mickey Mouse (Associate Professor – BME), Georgia P. Burdell (Professor – CEE), and Buzz Tech (Associate Professor – ME)

DATE: October 24, 2019

RE: Promotion and/or Tenure of *(faculty candidate) (rank) (school)*

The College of Engineering Committee for Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure of Associate-to-Full Professors met on October 24, 2019 to consider the promotion of *(faculty candidate)*. Present at the meeting were: *(names of members present).* The committee voted as follows:

Tenure:		Promotion:	
⌋	Yes	☐	Yes
⌋	No	☐	No
⌋	Abstain	☐	Abstain
⌋	Absent	☐	Absent

(Paragraphs to follow should be specific, direct and balanced. Had there been a split vote, the voting should be explained.)

Submitted on behalf of the committee,

_____

(Committee Member,
 Title,
 School)

NOTE: Only one member need sign on behalf of everyone.