

Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

Preamble:

The Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences (CIMS) at the present time (2004-2005) contains two departments, Computer Science (CS) and Mathematics (MATH). It is expected that the Center for Atmosphere Ocean Science (CAOS) will, within several years, become a third department within CIMS. Although a part of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) in its educational degree granting activities (through CAS and GSAS), CIMS is autonomous in matters of faculty appointments, in its funded research activities, and in other respects.

Because of the different histories of CS and MATH, the two departments have quite different cultures for handling faculty appointments, promotions, and tenure decisions. CS has generally adhered closely to FAS procedures, including the use of the FAS Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC) and evaluation by the Dean of FAS as steps in the process, while MATH has a much more idiosyncratic process, not involving the Dean of FAS or the PTC. The process used by MATH has a minimum of bureaucratic rules and in practice has worked exceedingly well, like that of the NYU Law School, enabling MATH to maintain and strengthen its historical excellence (ranked in the top 10 U.S. Mathematics departments overall and ranked first in Applied Mathematics). In the case of CS, the extra bureaucratic rules of the FAS procedures have not prevented it from improving (and some CS faculty believe have helped it improve) its overall quality significantly in recent years. CAOS, in its pre-departmental status, functions as a subunit of MATH, with appointments, promotions and tenure decisions first being considered by ad hoc committees of CAOS faculty (and associated MATH faculty) and then being handled by the regular MATH procedures. This has worked well with CAOS already recognized as an excellent program with a strong niche in attacking fundamental problems in the dynamics of oceans and atmospheres with modern applied mathematics and computational techniques.

This document is based on the wishes of both CS and MATH to continue the types of procedures that have been working well for them. The procedures that will cover CAOS when it becomes a separate department from MATH are not covered in this document, although preliminary indications are that CAOS prefers a process similar to that in MATH. They will be determined in discussions between CAOS, the CIMS Director, and the Provost at that time.

CS Guidelines:

CS will follow the promotion and tenure guidelines of FAS, with two exceptions noted below, until such time as it and CIMS propose changes to the Provost. The first exception is that in addition to the recommendation made by the Dean of FAS to the Provost in promotion and tenure cases, a parallel and independent recommendation is made to the Provost by the CIMS Director. The second exception is that the rigid rule against use of co-authors as evaluators will be relaxed in special cases (e.g., fields with very small membership) with permission of the CIMS Director.

MATH Guidelines:

- Stage I -- MATH Appointments Committee (AC)

The AC and its Chair are appointed before or at the beginning of each academic year by the CIMS Director for a one-year term. The Math. Chair (if not appointed as a regular member of the committee) and the CIMS Director are ex-officio non-voting members of the AC. Should the CIMS Director not be a tenured faculty member whose primary appointment is in MATH, a different procedure for choosing the members and Chair of the AC may be determined by mutual agreement between the tenured MATH faculty and the Provost -- e.g., appointment by the Math. Chair.

- Mission of AC:

The AC shall be in charge of, and make recommendations to the Director on all matters related to faculty hiring (professors, research professors, visiting professors, clinical professors, etc.), promotion, and tenure.

- Size of AC:

The AC shall have between eight (8) and twelve (12) members, all of whom shall be tenured faculty, with at most two among them being Associate Professors.

- Membership Selection:

The Director shall inform (by hardcopy or e-mail) all tenured MATH faculty of who she/he intends to appoint to the AC and request feedback from the tenured faculty before making her/his appointments final.

- Notification Procedures:

The Director shall then inform (by hardcopy or e-mail) all tenured MATH faculty of the composition of the AC and ask them to contact the Chair of the AC in writing (by hardcopy or e-mail) to make suggestions related to hiring and promotions.

- Progress Reports:

The AC Chair shall send periodic progress reports (by hardcopy or e-mail) to all tenured MATH faculty.

- Treatment of Files:

The AC builds the docket for every case and sends it to the Director along with a report justifying its decision.

- Recommendations:

Each file must contain at least 6 recommendation letters with a minimum of 5 coming from outside CIMS. Scientific collaboration is not a disqualification for a person to be a letter writer.

Any recommendation that a faculty member would like to make in regard to a specific case must be presented to the AC before making its final decision. The AC Chair shall inform (by hardcopy or e-mail) all tenured MATH faculty of the AC decision.

- Notification:

The Director shall inform the entire faculty when an appointment has been accepted.

General Courant Guidelines:

- Stage II -- Director's Recommendation

The CIMS Director evaluates each tenure and promotion docket submitted by the CS Chair or the (MATH) AC Chair and may solicit additional information. The Director will inform the CS or AC Chair of his/her pending decision. In those cases in which the Director plans a recommendation contrary to that of the CS Chair or the AC, the Director will provide the CS or AC Chair with the reasons and give an opportunity to provide further information or counter-argument before the Director's final decision. The Director shall notify the CS or AC Chair of the final decision, along with the reasons thereof if the recommendation of the CS Chair or the AC is disapproved. The Director then submits the docket together with his/her recommendation to the Provost.

- Stage III -- Provostial Review

The Provost evaluates each tenure and promotion docket submitted by the Director and may solicit additional information. The Provost will inform the Director of his/her pending decision. In those cases in which the Provost plans a recommendation contrary to that of the Director, the Provost will provide the Director with the reasons and give the Director an opportunity to provide further information or counter-argument before the Provost's final decision. The Provost shall notify the Director of the final decision, along with the reasons thereof if the Director's recommendation is disapproved. Upon notification of the Provost's decision, the Director will inform (by hardcopy or email) the candidate and the CS Chair or the AC and MATH Chairs, informing them of the decision.