

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Supplemental Document: Promotion and Tenure Criteria

May 2026 – adopted by a vote of the CEE Faculty

Purpose

This document aligns with and supplements the College of Engineering (CoE) Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Toolkit and provides guidance specific to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE). Its purpose is to clarify expectations for faculty advancement and to promote consistency, fairness, and alignment with disciplinary norms. In the event of any conflict, the CoE P&T Toolkit and the University of Washington (UW) Faculty Code take precedence.

1. Excellence and Impact as the Principal Criteria

Tenure and promotion decisions in CEE are based on scholarship encompassing research, teaching and mentoring, service, and community engagement and impact. Candidates are expected to demonstrate excellence and impact appropriate to rank, discipline, and career stage, supported by multiple forms of evidence and consistent with College and University criteria.

- Research excellence is evaluated based on the quality, rigor, originality, visibility, and impact of scholarly and technical contributions, as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications, funded research, technical outputs, professional recognition, and a sustained trajectory of productive scholarship.
- Teaching excellence is evaluated based on instructional effectiveness, curricular contributions, mentoring, and demonstrable impact on student learning, as evidenced by multiple sources including student feedback, peer evaluations, instructional materials, and documented educational outcomes.
- Service excellence is evaluated based on the significance, effectiveness, and scope of professional contributions performed on behalf of the Department, College, University, or relevant professional organizations, as evidenced by leadership roles, levels of responsibility, and sustained engagement.
- Community engagement and impact are evaluated based on demonstrated contributions that enhance community well-being and advance resilience and sustainability in the built and natural environments, as evidenced by meaningful partnerships, responsive engineering practice, and documented societal benefit.

2. Evaluation Guidelines

2.1 Research

- Research excellence is evaluated based on the quality, originality, rigor, and impact of scholarly and technical contributions, as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications, conference papers, technical reports, design standards, datasets, software tools, patents, licensed technologies, field-deployed or translational innovations, and national or international visibility appropriate to the candidate's field and career stage.
- Research impact may be evidenced through commercialization, technology translation, or entrepreneurial activity when these efforts contribute to broader public, educational, or professional benefit.
- Research leadership is evaluated based on roles in funded projects, collaborative or multi-institution research efforts, and the supervision and mentoring of graduate students, undergraduate researchers, postdoctoral scholars, and other research personnel.
- Professional standing is evaluated based on recognition by professional societies, including awards, fellowships, and invited roles, as appropriate to career stage and discipline.
- External letters provide independent assessment of the significance, originality, visibility, and impact of the candidate's research contributions.

2.2 Teaching and Mentoring

- Teaching and mentoring excellence are evaluated based on effectiveness in classroom instruction and individualized instruction, including advising, independent study, theses, and dissertations.

Teaching effectiveness is evaluated using multiple forms of evidence:

- Student course evaluations are interpreted in context and considered alongside peer review, instructional materials, and course characteristics such as course level, size, required or elective status, and disciplinary norms, and are not used in isolation.
- Peer evaluations assess course content, instructional delivery, and alignment with stated learning objectives across classroom, laboratory, design, and field-based instructional settings, with attention to how complex engineering concepts are translated into effective student learning.
- Educational professional evaluations assess instructional practices, including the use of active and project-based learning approaches and the integration of contemporary engineering tools, computational methods, and discipline-relevant software into instruction.
- Reflective teaching statements document instructional development, curriculum innovation, integration of research into teaching, mentoring outcomes, participation in pedagogical development, and contributions to professional skill development relevant to CEE practice.

2.3 Service

- Departmental service is evaluated based on the quality and effectiveness of contributions to departmental governance and operations, including curriculum development, accreditation processes, laboratory and field program oversight, student admissions and advising, and coordination of degree programs or specializations.
- College and University service is evaluated based on contributions to interdisciplinary initiatives, shared governance, and committees supporting education, research infrastructure, and student success across the College and University.
- Professional service is evaluated based on leadership and participation in discipline-relevant professional organizations; organization of technical conferences or symposia; service in editorial or peer-review roles; and contributions to the development, interpretation, or maintenance of engineering standards, codes, regulatory frameworks, or related public policy that shape professional practice.

2.4 Community Engagement and Impact

Contributions consistent with the candidate's scholarly and professional role that enhance community well-being and advance resilience and sustainability in the built and natural environments are recognized as components of professional excellence.

- Engagement in teaching and mentoring is evaluated based on inclusive instructional practices, curriculum development that integrates societal, environmental, and professional considerations, student mentorship, and participation in outreach, recruitment, or pathway-building activities.
- Engagement in scholarship and professional practice is evaluated based on collaboration with communities, public agencies, or industry partners to ensure that engineering solutions are responsive to user needs, regulatory requirements, and real-world constraints.
- Evidence of community engagement and impact is evaluated as part of the candidate's overall record of scholarship, teaching, and service.