

Guidelines and Criteria for Academic Promotion

Introduction

Academic promotions at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev are based on three fundamental criteria: research accomplishments, quality of teaching, and service to the university and the community. Collegiality, ethical integrity, and general respect for the institution and the members of its community are the foundations on which all procedures rest. While research, teaching and service are all important, a large variability in the relative involvement of the faculty members in these different aspects of university life is to be expected.

Research

Members of the academic community at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev are expected to strive for research excellence. While accomplishments in different disciplines may differ, and the ways these accomplishments are assessed may vary across fields, the general criteria for assessing excellence fall into similar categories. These include originality and independence; quality and rigor; the establishment of research programs and deep expertise; obtaining the means to support research; and establishing continuity of research, including the training of new generations of students and scholars. Active participation in the research community, as reflected in national and international collaborations and recognition, is expected as well, concomitant with an active research program.

The evaluation of research achievements inherently varies across disciplines, and should be conducted using the internationally accepted tools of that field, but is generally based on publications, presentations in professional forums, training of research students and international collaborations. Specific assessment tools may include quality of the journals (which may be but are not necessarily based on journal rankings, rejection rates, impact factors, assessments by referees), quality of publishers (in the case of books), number of publications, number of citations (as may be but are not necessarily reflected in various indices such as the h-index, the i-5 index, the g-index, etc., as per the discipline), quality and selectivity of conferences and symposia, invited participation in symposia and publications, plenary talks, obtaining research funding (competitiveness of the granting bodies, number of grants awarded, amount of money raised). Strong and reasoned letters of reference from established leaders in a field carry great importance in promotion procedures. International recognition may also be reflected in joint publications with international colleagues, participation in professional reviews (journals, books, grants, editorial boards and editorships), refereeing of theses, membership in national and international committees, and the organization of international conferences.

Teaching

Teaching is an essential component of academic life and affects future generations of scholars, and thereby society as a whole. At Ben-Gurion University of the

Negev great value is placed on ever improving the quality of teaching and advising and mentoring research students. Faculty members are expected to participate fully in teaching, to provide students the benefit of their experience and expertise, and to transmit the skills, and knowledge and methodologies of their field to future generations of students and researchers.

The assessment of teaching is difficult, and no single criterion is adequate. Use may be made of the teaching statement, teaching surveys and course evaluations, various statistics reflecting student achievements, teaching awards, advising and mentoring post-graduate students through the completion of their theses and dissertations, and teaching evaluations made by peers.

Service

Service to the university and its surrounding communities is the third essential component to be considered in any promotion proceeding. Members of the academic community are expected to take on responsibilities beyond their personal goals and contribute to the well-being of the community in general. Service may be defined at several levels, including the departmental level, the faculty level, the university level, or service to students, general faculty, etc. It may be expressed in taking on administrative responsibilities, committee work, or individual initiatives.

Service to the local community, either in exposing the community to the university through various initiatives and activities, or offering the university's expertise to the community, comprises a crucial tool for offering the benefits of university's resources, knowledge, and values to its neighbors. Such service may be reflected in voluntary activities such as lectures, committee work, or other forms of community involvement.

Service to the larger community, the State, and even at international levels, confers benefit, recognition and honor upon the university. It may be reflected in involvement in national and international committees, organizations and initiatives.

Expectations for Different Ranks

The expectations for hiring and promotion to different ranks vary considerably among faculties, and among disciplines. The above general criteria hold for all ranks, and as a research institution, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev demands research excellence for all promotions. With this, high quality teaching and service are required and different disciplines and individuals may combine the three criteria in different ways to achieve the various ranks. Similarly, there are no set measures across all fields for determining what constitutes excellence and quality in research, teaching and service.

A candidate for Lecturer should:

1. Show high potential for independent research excellence.
2. Show high potential for integration into the academic community, including both teaching and service.
3. Have international post-doctoral experience.
4. Have professional experience and evidence of an established research record.

A candidate for Senior Lecturer should have:

1. Established an independent research program.
2. A record of publications in leading venues and media.
3. Research accomplishments reflected by participation in national and international conferences.
4. Appropriate support for research and research students including winning competitive grants.
5. Evidence of high quality teaching.
6. Begun to supervise post-graduate students.
7. Collaboration with international colleagues and integration of students into research projects.
8. Demonstrated collegiality and integration into the functions of the department, faculty and university.

A candidate for Associate Professor should have:

1. Initiated an internationally recognized research program.
2. Made a significant contribution in his/her field of research.
3. Demonstrated scientific creativity that is reflected in high quality independent publications.
4. Evidence of potential for leadership in her/his field.
5. Evidence of high quality teaching.
6. Contributions to his/her field: international collaborations, invitation(s) to international conferences, symposia, and participation in edited volumes, invited review papers, participation in scholarly reviewing (grants, editorial boards, ad hoc journal reviews, etc.)
7. A record of achieving support for students and research including winning competitive grants.
8. A record of advising research students to the completion of their degrees.
9. Demonstrated collegiality and integration into the functions of the department, faculty and university.

Candidates for Professor should have:

1. Clear and internationally recognized contributions in her/his field.
2. Be identified with his/her field of research and her/his contributions to it.
3. An appropriate number of high quality publications in leading venues.
4. Evidence of international impact on his/her field in various forms, for example: international collaborations, keynote and invited lectures in international conferences, citations, and participation in the various forms of peer review (e.g., promotions proceedings, grant and paper reviews, editorial boards, etc.).
5. A record of guiding colleagues of all ranks, including students.
6. Evidence of high quality teaching.
7. Attained senior positions in professional societies, and been awarded a significant number of competitive research grants.
8. Participated in various professional committees.
9. Taken a senior role in university service.

Tenure Considerations

Tenure will normally be granted after either an academic promotion or after hiring procedures which have positively evaluated research achievements in order to justify a tenure position.

The candidate will need to have demonstrated teaching excellence, service and collegiality.

If a candidate has not been recently promoted and has been in an academic position for 5-6 years, there is a possibility for tenure without academic promotion, but these cases will be extraordinary and not the norm.

If tenure has not been achieved after 5-6 years, it is likely that the candidate will not be able to continue working at the university.