

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Department of Mechanical Engineering

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Departmental Scholarship Guidelines

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This document was developed and approved by the faculty members of the Department of Mechanical Engineering to provide guidance in applying College standards of promotion and tenure to our discipline. The guidelines are meant to be used by both faculty members eligible for promotion and the Promotion, Tenure, and Review Committee (PTR) to interpret the relative merit of various types of scholarship that are generally performed in the discipline.

The activities and accomplishments listed below represent forms of valued scholarship within the Department. The Department considers all the forms of scholarship within these lists to be beneficial to the individual faculty, any involved students, the Mechanical Engineering Department, reputation of the Engineering Division and College as a whole, and the field of mechanical engineering (and related technical and educational areas). This document hopes to clarify the relative beneficial value and merit of scholarly accomplishments typically achieved by Department faculty members.

Most Beneficial and Meritorious Scholarly Accomplishment:

- Publication, or acceptance for publication, of peer reviewed and archived journal articles on original research

Highly Beneficial and Meritorious Scholarly Accomplishment:

- Peer reviewed selective (reviewed by paper) conference proceedings
- Publication of a textbook or authorship of a book chapter
- Publication of a review article
- Successful peer reviewed competitive grant
- Patents
- Publication of a peer reviewed societal standard or specification
- Technical report resulting from consulting or subcontracting (publically available and citable)

Beneficial and Meritorious Scholarly Accomplishment:

- Conference presentation
- Less selective (reviewed by abstract) or non peer-reviewed conference proceeding
- Publication of an article for general audiences (not peer reviewed)
- Manuscripts under review and in revision in response to peer review

- Milestones of work in progress such as internal research support (e.g. ARC faculty research grants), or external support for exploratory research.

Scholarly work from all three categories above must be considered in a faculty member's evaluation. For both tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor or professor, the total body of work must show evidence of a continuous, productive research trajectory. The department feels strongly that scholarly work at the “Most Beneficial and Meritorious” level is expected in order to earn the department’s support for tenure. It is understood that faculty members may branch into new research areas during their career, and so while some work at the “Most Beneficial and Meritorious” level is expected for promotion to the rank of professor, the scholarly record may be distributed more flexibly among the levels.

The Department recognizes that the landscape of research infrastructure and support within and external to Lafayette may significantly impact an individual faculty member’s scholarly activities. These factors can include, but are not limited to, accessibility to funding, availability of data sources, participation in professional conferences, and ability to collaborate. Other impacts on a candidate’s scholarly activity may be precipitated by a number of events on many scales, including but not limited to life events or global health crises. These circumstances may require a candidate to make adaptations in the topic, method, and distribution of their research, from which delays and/or gaps in the scholarly record may result. Specific impacts can be discussed with the Department Head as they develop and should be described by the candidate in their self-evaluation, where appropriate. The Department will consider these impacts during its reviews of scholarship records.

The intent of this document is not to limit the types of scholarship in which faculty engage. The Department will work with all faculty members to help them articulate how their own scholarship may be viewed in this framework. The Department will review these guidelines annually to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate. The Department also notes that, as per the *Faculty Handbook* 4.2.2.1.2, candidates may choose any set of approved scholarship guidelines that was in effect during the probationary period.

The Mechanical Engineering Department places a very high value on the meaningful involvement of undergraduate students in faculty research. Evidence of this involvement may be seen in the advising of thesis projects, independent study, and EXCEL students, in the participation of students at academic conferences, and in the contribution of students as co-authors and co-presenters of research publications. The Department recognizes the faculty time and energy invested in the research training and meaningful engagement of undergraduates, and values this work.

While we encourage our Department faculty to be collaborative scholars, we value evidence of their development of their own research agendas. Faculty members will articulate in their self-evaluation reports their own contributions to collaborative publications. Faculty members should pursue Lafayette-based research programs that are distinct from, but may extend from, their dissertation and other prior work. (For those who choose to continue to work in collaboration with advisors, faculty members should articulate how that role has evolved to demonstrate the faculty member’s intellectual independence and leadership.)

The Mechanical Engineering Department notes that particular effort can be involved in facilitating *interdisciplinary* collaborations, and that these projects may result in publications outside the traditional mechanical engineering journal canon. We value our colleagues' contributions to such enterprises.

The Department recognizes the value of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) in engineering education. In honoring the department's commitment to providing ME students with meaningful opportunities to apply their engineering expertise in research projects, a faculty member's research portfolio should not exclusively consist of SoTL unless that is their primary research area.

The Department also appreciates that the path to "publication" involves sustained effort. We reward most highly the "end product" of published work, but also mark the milestones of manuscript submission and acceptance. We value these milestones as evidence of the sustainability of a faculty member's scholarship. We also encourage faculty members' continued development as scholars, both in terms of these milestones of work in progress *and* in the active and rigorous pursuit of new scholarly avenues.

The Department classifies service to one's research and professional communities (as conference session chair or organizer, journal reviewer or editor, etc.) as service, as we understand the PTR Committee and College do as well.