

Faculty Promotion Policy, NISER Bhubaneswar

Faculty promotion policy is an integral part of faculty development policy of any academic institution. It reflects the desired character of the Institution in all its aspects. NISER as envisaged by DAE has three basic goals; (a) Imparting high quality undergraduate education to fulfill the national needs (b) Quality doctoral education and research in science and (c) Science based development at large with a substantial post doctoral component.

The basic features of NISER at the present state of its development may be summarized as follows:

- It is a budding institute with young and largely enthusiastic faculty.
- The faculty has two fold duties as teachers and researchers with a reasonable amount of administrative and organizational work.
- Unlike the TIFR, IISc and other research organizations of repute, NISER has to run a high quality undergraduate programme and ignite the young minds to pursue science as a goal in life.
- It has also to work at par or above the institutions of national importance which have research as their only goal.
- It has to develop a strong component of post doctoral research at the frontier of knowledge in order to be able to absorb knowledge at the highest level and seek further advancement at that level.

Every policy has to take in to consideration the basic features stated above as well as the environment in which NISER has to function. Therefore, the policy cannot be static and immutable and is likely to change in a different phases of its development. At this stage of NISER's development, the primary objectives of the faculty promotion policy are (i) to harness the full potential of the young minds by freeing them from external stresses (ii) to assure them that their commitment to the organizational goals will be suitably rewarded in due time.

The following guidelines have been prepared keeping in mind that excellence in research and teaching will be major factor in the assessments. However, it has also to be recognized that NISER is a nascent institution and lacks full infrastructure for research at the moment. Besides, the faculty members have to devote a lot of their time to set up research and teaching laboratories as well as spend some of their valuable time in fulfilling certain administrative and organizational responsibilities.

It is noted that generally most of the young faculty members enter NISER at the level of Assistant Professor or Reader F. The selection criteria are already laid down by the Board of Governors. In what follows the guidelines are given for promotion of already existing working faculty members from each grade to the next higher grade.

General Procedure

For each school the Dean in consultation with the Chairperson of the school shall constitute a School Screening Committee for Promotion (SSCP) and get these approved by the Director. The term of the committee shall ordinarily be three years. However, the committee may be reconstituted to accommodate a new faculty member at a senior level following the same process and dropping one of the younger members of the (SSCP). The committee for promotion from the rank M to the next rank will consist of members holding rank $\geq M+2$. The screening committee for promotion from Associate to Professor shall be constituted by the Director possibly, including some professors/ experts from outside the Institute. The composition of the screening committee is as follows: there shall be four members from within the school and one from another school of NISER. In case adequate numbers of faculty members at the desired level are not available, experts from other academic centers as approved by BOG may be temporarily opted for.

The effective date of promotion is 1st July of the year after the completion of the stipulated residence period in the grade. Since the entire process of promotion may take about four to six months, the faculty members should submit the necessary documents to the Convener of the concerned SSCP six months in advance. The candidates can always update their documents till the date of the selection committee meeting

The SSCP shall screen the eligible candidates who have supplied their CV, on the basis of their teaching and research and reports of the referees provided by the faculty member concerned and makes a recommendation. *The referees will be requested to comment on the quality of the research pursued.*

The recommendation of SSCP will be discussed by an Institute level Committee for each school i.e. Institute Faculty Committee for Promotion (IFCP) and IFCP makes a recommendation to be

presented to the selection committee. *The selection committee will interact personally with the candidates and give the final recommendation for approval by BOG.*

The Institute Faculty Committee for Promotion (IFCP) for each school shall comprise of the Director, Chairman of the school (if he/she is a Professor), two subject professors opted from outside, if not available in the Institute, Dean (R&D), Dean (Academic Affairs) and Dean, (Faculty Affairs). The Institute promotion committee will give its recommendation based on the inputs of the screening committee and reports of independent referees available with the Director. *The independent referees will be asked to comment on the quality of research pursued.*

After all the recommendations are available, the Director will constitute a selection committee as stipulated in the bye-laws of the Institute

- A. If a faculty member is not found suitable for promotion according to the procedure outlined above, his/her case will be taken up after one year by SSCP and the candidate will be required to furnish an updated curriculum vitae (CV).
- B. In case a candidate does not succeed to get promotion in two consecutive assessments, his/her case for promotion will be considered after two years only.
- C. A faculty member however can exercise the option of not being assessed, in the second consecutive year when the due date for the second chance comes up, by giving that in writing to the chairman of the school to be forwarded to Dean.

1. Assistant Professor to Reader F

The faculty member must have completed 5 years after Ph.D of which at least two years in the grade at NISER to be eligible for consideration. *It is expected that the faculty member must have published one research paper or should have a paper accepted for publication in a journal or should have generated external (from a non-DAE funding agency) competitive research grant. It is also expected that the faculty member has shown consistent excellence in classroom and laboratory teaching as reflected in the feedback from students and contributed to course development and innovation in teaching.* He/She must furnish his/her CV to the Dean, Faculty Affairs via Chairman of the School along with the names of at least two referees of his/her choice by a stipulated date. The Dean requests the referees to give their evaluation of the candidate's suitability for the next higher rank. The Director in consultation with the Dean, faculty Affairs shall

get two reports of independent referees for the recommendation for promotion of the candidate. *The recommended candidates will be interviewed by the selection committee, who will make the final recommendation for approval by the BoG.*

2. Reader F to Associate Professor

The faculty member must have spent at least three years at NISER in the grade to be eligible for consideration. *It is expected that the faculty member must have done good research and published at least 3-5 research papers of good quality after joining NISER. The faculty member should have guided one PhD student to degree or one Ph.D student who has submitted the thesis and guided Master's thesis projects. Generation of external (from a non-DAE funding agency) competitive research grant is expected. It is also expected that the faculty member has shown consistent excellence in classroom and laboratory teaching as reflected in the feedback from students and contributed to course development and innovation in teaching. In addition, services rendered to the Institute will be counted.*

He/She must furnish his/her CV to the Dean, Faculty Affairs through the Chairman of the School along with the names of at least three referees by a certain date fixed in advance. The Dean requests the referees to give their evaluation on the suitability of the candidates for the next higher rank. The Director in consultation with Dean shall get at least three other reports of independent referees for the consideration of the **Institute Faculty Committee for Promotion (IFCP)**.

The recommended candidates will interact with the selection committee. The members of the selection committee will be requested to assess the faculty with weightage to research work, teaching and services rendered to the Institute. The selection committee will make the final recommendation for approval by the BoG.

Direct recruits to this level requires a minimum of 8 years of teaching/research experience after the Ph.D. degree.

3. Associate Professor to Professor

The faculty member must have spent at least four-five years in the grade at NISER to be eligible for promotion to professorship. *It is expected that the faculty member must have established himself as a researcher with original research to his/her credit. The faculty member is expected to have published high quality research papers. The faculty member should have guided two*

PhD students to degree. It is expected that the faculty member will obtain external (from a non-DAE funding agency) competitive research grant. It is also expected that the faculty members have shown consistent excellence in classroom and laboratory teaching as reflected in the feedback from students and contributed to course development and innovation in teaching. In addition services rendered to the Institute will be desirable.

He/She must furnish his/her CV to the Dean faculty affairs along with names of at least four referees by a certain fixed date fixed in advance. The Dean requests the referees to give their evaluation about the candidate's suitability for the position of a Professor. The Director in consultation with the Dean/ Expert in the field must get at least four reports of independent referees of high academic standing.

The recommended candidates will interact with the selection committee. The members of the selection committee will be requested to assess the faculty with relative weightage to research work, teaching, and services rendered to the Institute. The selection committee will make the final recommendation for approval by the BoG.

4. Professor (H+)

Professors who are doing well academically are eligible for an incentive of Rs 4000/- . The Chairperson of the School, in consultation with SSCP will make a recommendation to Dean (Faculty Affairs). This will be considered in IFCP and a recommendation made for the approval of BOG.

5. Senior Professor

This is by invitation by BOG. Professors who have spent 8 years in the position and who are recognized nationally as Fellows of two academies / SS Bhatnagar awardees / or any other national recognitions / NIH, NSF, Welcome Trust Grant/ Editorship of reputed journals / Editorial membership to high impact journals / Fulbright Fellowship are eligible. Director upon an internal assessment and from reference reports of peers will make a recommendation to BOG.

6. Distinguished Professor

This is also by invitation. Director will prepare a dossier of the person after consultation with Dean (Faculty Affairs) and Chairman of the respective Schools and will make a presentation to BOG for approval.

Accelerated Promotion

Any faculty member one year prior to the minimum residency period associated with the grade may be considered for accelerated promotion to the next higher rank if the faculty member has made an outstanding contribution. Such promotions are to be undertaken for exceptionally high quality achievements and consequently, are to be more selective.

1. Two faculty members are required to prepare a document which will highlight and elaborate on the importance of the work of the faculty member. It will contain the impact of specific work/ works in the field and how it has influenced further progress in that field.
2. Then, this document goes to the Dean through the Chairperson of the School.
3. *The Director can also directly invite deserving faculty members for this promotion scheme.*
4. Then 4-6 external referees of international standing will be requested to assess the specific work.
5. The IFCP will consider these as a whole and recommend to the selection committee. The selection committee recommendation will be sent to BOG for final approval.

Epilogue

In any evaluation of academic excellence, every branch of science has its own benchmarking procedure. But all the same, scientific achievements and creativity can be recognized across boundaries. Normally, the assessment of a scientific worker takes into account various parameters such as,

- (i) High quality publication in refereed journals.
- (ii) Dissemination of knowledge through books, survey articles, lectures in seminars and symposia.
- (iii) Professional reputation, recognition by scholars in the field through editorship of professional journals, membership of scholarly organization etc.,
- (iv) Handling of administrative and organizational work for the benefit of the Institute.
- (v) Impact of research on the society through science based developmental activities.
- (vi) Any other activity which brings laurels to the Institute.
- (vii) Bringing funding for scientific and developmental work in the field of science.
- (viii) Since teaching is one of the basic activities of the Institute, commitment to teaching shall play a very important role in the evaluation of a member of the faculty. Therefore, the Institute's mechanism for teacher's evaluation must be given a weight

in any evaluation procedure. Besides routine teaching, appreciation must be accorded to faculty members for their innovation and impact on the student community in general.

- (ix) Presentation in scholarly and professional meetings.
