Demystifying the Promotion and Tenure Process

Manuel A. Pérez-Quiñones
Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies
Department of Computer Science
College of Engineering
Virginia Tech
Career Path

• Computer Scientist, Naval Research Lab (6 yrs) - HCl research 1990-96
• PhD at GWU, 1987-96
• Assistant/Associate Prof, ECE@UPRM, 1996-2000 (NSF Career award ’98)
• Assistant Prof, CS@VT, 2000-06
• Associate Prof, CS@VT, 2006-today
• Assoc. Dean Graduate School@VT, 2008-10
• Assoc. Dept. Head@CS, 2012-today
The Academic “Ladder”

Distinguished Professor

Chaired Professor

Professorship

President/Chancellor
Provost/EVC
Dean

Department Head/Chair

Assoc Dean VT

Assoc Prof UPRM

Asst Prof UPRM

Assoc Prof

Assoc Prof VT (tenure)

Asst Prof VT

Visiting Prof USNA

GWU Student

Manuels Path
Tenure portfolio at VT

- Service - no service in yrs 1, 2; lite service till tenure.

- Teaching: 2 classes per yr for 2 yrs, 2.5 per yr., teaching evals, peer eval.

- Research: publications, citations, funding, funded students, phd graduated, placing of phds, letters.

- Annual review - annual FARs, review by Personnel Cmte, letter by DH, salary increase at DH discretion. Two year formal review.
Pitfalls...

• **Too much service** - say no to requests; you will get more requests than your peers (minority tax). Wait till after tenure.

• **Color of Money** - not all grants are of the same color (e.g., BPC, CE21 might not be seen as research)

• **Publish or perish** is not enough… seek advice from senior members of department as to where to publish

• The bulk of the decision is in the Department (for better or worse)
Consider what is at stake

• What does tenure mean?

• Job security (unlike anything else)

• Academic Freedom - teaching, research, scholarly publications

• Service becomes more important (after tenure), both to department and to profession

• So, why not work like crazy for 5 years to get that?