

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES
PROMOTION & TENURE COMMITTEE AND POLICY

12/2016

Approved April 2017

I. THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES

We are engaged with plants, soils, and the environment. We are concerned with plants that are useful as food for humans and animals; of ornamental value; integral to the design and composition of natural and built ecosystems; sources of renewal energy; detrimental to the growth of other plants; able to recycle our natural resources; and exploitable as basic experimental tools. We are also concerned with soils from biological, plant nutrient, and environmental viewpoints, and soils are studied as to their physics, chemistry, fertility, genesis, mineralogy, and management. In addition, attention is devoted to environmental agents that affect plants and/or soils (e.g., air-, water-, and soil-pollutants, abiotic stressors, and pathogens).

Programs in teaching/educational activity, scholarly activity, and service are designed to meet these concerns at the state level and at national and international levels where such programs can be of mutual benefit.

Teaching/educational activities include classroom education, outreach, and Extension activities. Extension is intended to provide continuing research-based education to people in Delaware and the region. Extension relies upon locally-adapted research to improve the lives and the economic situation for the clientele they reach.

II. PROMOTION, TENURE AND PEER-REVIEW COMMITTEE (“P&T COMMITTEE”)

A. Rationale for establishment of the committee

The Department establishes its own Promotion, Tenure, and Peer Review Committee to conduct peer reviews related to contract renewals, promotion and/or tenure applications, and post-tenure reviews. The committee is also responsible for ensuring that the department policy is consistent with the college and university P&T policies and the faculty handbook. The committee leads revision of the departmental P&T policy, communicates those specific changes to the faculty, and leads the discussion of the revision with the faculty prior to a faculty vote to accept or reject the revisions to the policy.

The Department establishes its own promotion, tenure, and peer review procedures subject to guidelines outlined by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources,

stating as specifically as possible the criteria required. These procedures encourage candidates to demonstrate quality of performance by documenting efforts in teaching/educational activity, scholarly activity, and service.

B. Composition of the committee

All faculty members are eligible to serve on the P&T committee unless they are seeking promotion or are under review. Faculty on sabbatical leave are excused from service for the year of their leave. Tenure track (TT) members of the P&T committee can vote on all candidates at or below rank; continuing track (CT) faculty can vote on all CT candidates at or below rank. Members of the committee may be excused at the discretion of the Departmental Chair; valid reasons include service on the college P&T committee, sabbatical, or other types of approved leave. Committee members will serve a two-year term. Each year the composition of the committee will contain new members and members from the previous year's committee to retain consistency in the P&T process.

The P&T Committee's regular membership will include a minimum of seven faculty members, with a minimum of five faculty members at or above the rank of candidates for promotion and/or tenure in that year. Up to two assistant professors may also serve on the committee. In years when continuing track (CT) faculty are evaluated, a CT faculty member will be added as an additional committee member (availability pending). Membership is determined by a confidential faculty vote conducted annually by the Departmental Chairperson.

Untenured faculty are allowed, but not required, to participate as a P&T Committee member; prior to 1 December, assistant professors who wish not to serve shall communicate this to the Departmental Chair. A Committee Chair will be elected from among the tenured faculty within the committee; the Chair will hold academic rank equal to or higher than that of the highest rank for which a candidate is applying. If additional members must be added to accommodate the requirements for vote, the additional members cannot serve as Committee Chair.

If required, replacement members are selected from the most recent ballot results starting with the individual receiving the most votes making every attempt to maintain a balance in faculty rank.

Tenure track (TT) members of the P&T committee can vote on all candidates at or below rank; continuing track (CT) faculty can vote only on CT candidates at or below rank. Assistant professors are not permitted to vote on matters of tenure or promotion. Tenured associate and full professors will vote for assistant professors seeking tenure and promotion to associate rank, and full professors will vote on associate professors seeking promotion to full professor.

All other business of the P&T committee (e.g., peer review for post-tenure and contract renewal; policy revision) is conducted by all committee members. When untenured faculty serve on the committee, secret ballots must be used during

votes to protect faculty interests.

III. PERIODIC PEER REVIEW

Faculty members at all ranks are subject to periodic evaluations at reasonable intervals of time. Instructors and CT faculty are peer reviewed during their 2nd, 4th, 6th, 13th years; reviews conducted past the 13th year will be conducted in the year prior to rolling contract renewal. TT Assistant Professors are peer reviewed during their 2nd and 4th years; tenured Associate Professors, every five years; tenured full Professors, every seven years. The P&T committee will function as a review body for these periodic evaluations. Assistant professors will submit full dossiers to the committee for the 2- and 4-year reviews as outlined in this document. All candidates subject to post-tenure peer review or peer-review for contract evaluation will submit peer review dossiers to the department promotion and tenure committee and chair for evaluation. None of the periodic review documents are sent to external reviewers.

IV. PROMOTION AND TENURE

The Department establishes its own promotion and tenure procedures subject to guidelines outlined by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, stating as specifically as possible the criteria required for promotion to each rank. These procedures encourage candidates to demonstrate the quality of performance by documenting efforts in teaching/educational activity, scholarly activity, service, and administrative roles (if applicable). Candidates for promotion and/or tenure will be evaluated based on the criteria in this document, appropriately weighted for the candidate's workload for the period under review. The P&T Committee is responsible for requesting that the departmental chair and candidate confirm in writing the nature of the candidate's workload during the period under review, and to describe what, if any, implications this may have for the individual's record of accomplishments.

Faculty workload is composed of some combination of teaching/educational activity, scholarly activity, and service. It is incumbent upon the faculty being reviewed to state the proportion of his/her assignment since the last review, using the elements listed in Section V.

The rank of appointment and the workload contribution to each category of teaching /education, scholarly activity, and service must be taken into account by reviewers.

A. Procedures for promotion and/or tenure

All faculty members must be evaluated by external reviewers for promotion to Associate or Full Professor and for tenure. For CT faculty, when the predominant role is teaching or extension education, evaluations may be

performed locally, but must be external to the academic unit. The faculty member who wants to be considered for promotion and/or tenure will notify the Department Chair in writing by 30 April of his/her intention to submit a dossier. The faculty member will include a list of 5 to 10 names of professionals whom he/she recommends as external reviewers to the Chair of the P&T Committee by 15 May; addresses, titles, telephone numbers and justification must be included in the candidate list. This list should not include individuals with whom the candidate has a significant conflict of interest (e.g., advisor/advisee, close collaborator, co-author within the last four (4) years). The P&T Committee will add names of additional external reviewers. The faculty member will receive the list of potential external reviewers and the letter to be sent to them, and the faculty member will be allowed to discuss suggested modifications with the P&T Committee. If the faculty member perceives a conflict with potential reviewers, he/she should notify the Committee Chair.

The Committee Chair will add to the dossier 1) the complete list of potential reviewers, indicating whether the candidate or committee suggested each reviewer; 2) a written explanation of the process used to determine which reviewers were invited to review the candidate; and 3) a copy of the letter sent with the dossier to the reviewers

One dossier for UD reviewers and a dossier for external reviewers (optionally abbreviated) will be submitted by the candidate no later than 1 August. It is suggested the dossier format for UD Review also be used for the full dossier (see section VII - **Dossier Content**). The abbreviated version of the dossier for external review will include a curriculum vita, statement of self-evaluation, and other substantiating documents.

The P&T Committee shall strive to obtain no fewer than five letters of evaluation from professionals external to the University. The Committee will supply copies of the dossier to the external reviewers.

A favorable vote of the Committee shall be a plurality of those voting. The numerical results of the vote will be forwarded in the recommendation of the Committee.

The statement of recommendation shall be signed by all members of the Committee. A minority opinion differing from that of the Committee may be signed and forwarded as an appendix to the Committee recommendation. Likewise, any faculty in the Department with a differing opinion from that of the Committee may sign a written statement that is forwarded as an appendix to the Committee recommendation.

The Committee Chair will forward the Committee's recommendation in writing to the Department Chair and to the candidate by 1 October. The Department Chair will add his/her recommendation before forwarding the recommendation

to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee, by 15 October.

The candidate must be advised in writing of reasons for disapproval through the Dean's recommendation step, and be given the option of withdrawing the dossier from further consideration at any time. A candidate who receives a negative decision from the department committee may submit the dossier to the next level for consideration or may schedule a meeting with the committee to consider additional evidence that the candidate may add to the dossier to clarify or enhance the candidate's position of standing.

B. Procedures for appeals

The candidate may request that the P&T Committee reconsider its recommendation. Appeals must be based on additional information beyond what was presented in the dossier. As indicated in the faculty handbook, an intention to appeal must be given to the P&T committee within five working days of notification of their decision. An appeal includes: (1) a letter documenting the basis of the appeal, usually written by the candidate; and (2) a scheduled meeting with the P&T committee. It is strongly recommended that the candidate attends the appeal meeting. Representatives of the candidate can also attend and participate in the appeal meeting. Appeals must be handled by the P&T committee within two weeks, except under extenuating circumstances.

After the P&T Committee hears an appeal, the Chair of the P&T Committee will draft a supplemental report that reflects accurately the proceedings of the appeal meeting and records the vote. The Committee members shall sign the supplemental report, and it shall be given to the Chair of the Department for inclusion in the candidate's dossier along with the initial report. A copy of the supplemental report will also be provided to the candidate.

V. ELEMENTS OF PROMOTION AND TENURE DOCUMENTS

It is the responsibility of the candidate to document his/her teaching/educational, scholarly activity, and service. The following information is meant to provide guidance as to the range of appropriate types of information that may be included in a dossier. This list is not meant to be comprehensive.

All work in rank, even if conducted at other institutions of higher education, shall be considered for promotion and tenure.

A. Teaching/Education

1. Course and teacher evaluation questionnaire and other evidence of teaching effectiveness that may be cited:
 - a) departmental seminar and/or colloquia participation
 - b) direction of independent study projects

- c) guest lecturing for colleagues
- d) formal advisement of undergraduates
- e) instructional-improvement grants
- f) preparation of laboratory manuals or course instructional packets
- g) innovative teaching approaches or materials
- h) courses taught and developed including laboratories
- i) graduate student advisement
- j) graduate committee service
- k) teaching awards

2. Extension/Outreach Education

- a) Extension plan of work development
- b) educational meetings and field days including logistic responsibilities associated with the meeting
- c) organizing workshops
- d) written articles and newsletters
- e) consultations (agents, industry representatives, etc.)
- f) evaluations
- g) advisory board service
- h) extension awards

3. Miscellaneous

- a) informal counseling
- b) attending teaching workshops
- c) journal clubs, colloquia and the like

4. Anticipated direction of teaching/educational activity

B. Scholarly Activity

1. Publications

- a) peer-reviewed, refereed journal articles in print, in press, and submitted
- b) peer-reviewed publications, e.g., books; monographs; chapters; Experiment Station and Extension bulletins and fact sheets
- c) non-refereed publications such as newsletters, blogs, etc.
- d) synthesis and development of new course materials
- e) portfolios and designs

2. Professional activity

- a) invitational addresses
- b) public recognition for professional contributions

- c) public presentation of papers
- d) professional meetings chaired
- e) participation in professional meetings
- i) professional consulting
- j) participation in international programs
- k) leadership of educational seminars or workshops
- l) Service as editor of a refereed technical journal

3. Research Activity

- a) projects underway (including sources of support, student involvement, and collaborative work)
- b) anticipated direction of research program
- c) development of breeding lines, germplasm and varieties; websites; gene maps, portfolios and other creative works
- d) grantsmanship: awarded, pending, declined
- e) patents

C. Service

1. University

- a) department and/or college, and/or university committees, and specific assignments
- b) student affairs activities

2. Extramural functions where candidate serves as a representative of the Department, College, or University

- a) election or appointment to bodies outside the given discipline for education or research
- b) creative activities outside the given discipline which enhance the university as a community of learning
- c) advisory positions
- d) service as officer or committee member of a professional organization
- e) editorial duties
- f) review panels

3. Administrative Duties

VI. DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION

A. Minimum Requirements for Promotion to Assistant Professor

Instructors traditionally do not have a research or extension assignment. Stated minimum criteria for teaching and service for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor shall apply also to promotion from instructor to assistant professor.

Criteria shall not apply to persons hired on a contingency contract, such as completion of Ph.D. degree.

B. Minimum Requirements for Promotion to Associate Professor with tenure

As a hallmark of TT faculty, the TT candidate shall strive for excellence in all areas and demonstrate (at a minimum) (a) excellence in scholarly activity and (b) high quality in teaching/education and service. Furthermore, there should be unmistakable evidence that the individual has progressed and will continue to do so. A merely satisfactory record as an Assistant Professor is not sufficient; there must be very clear indications, based on hard evidence and on outside peer evaluations, that the candidate has attained high levels of accomplishment.

C. Minimum Requirements for Promotion to Associate Professor without Tenure (Continuing-track Faculty)

The CT candidate shall demonstrate (at a minimum) (a) excellence in their major activity (scholarly activity or teaching/education or extension) and (b) at least high quality in their secondary activities. Furthermore, there should be unmistakable evidence that the individual has progressed and will continue to do so. A merely satisfactory record as an Assistant Professor is not sufficient; there must be very clear indications, based on hard evidence and on outside peer evaluations, that the candidate has attained high levels of accomplishment.

D. Minimum Requirements for Promotion to Professor

This rank is reserved for both TT and CT faculty who have established reputations in their disciplines and whose contributions to the University's mission are unquestioned. The TT candidate shall demonstrate (a) excellence in scholarly activity and teaching/education and (b) at least high quality in service. The CT candidate shall demonstrate (a) excellence in his/her major area of responsibility (i.e., scholarly activities, teaching/education, extension) and (b) at least high quality in the secondary areas.

There should be unmistakable evidence of significant development and achievement since the last promotion (e.g., recognition in their discipline at the regional, national, and/or international level as appropriate). Once again, the candidate's claim to have met these requirements must be thoroughly and completely documented by outside peer evaluations and other material.

E. Criteria for Promotion as Defined by The Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

Excellent - Achieves at a level that is recognized as noteworthy and significant at the regional, national, or international level and at a level that makes significant contributions to the College goals, considering both the workload percentage and rank.

High Quality - Achieves at a level that is recognized as valuable and reliable at the regional, national, or international level, and at a level that makes significant contributions to the College goals, considering both the workload percentage and rank.

Below Criteria - Performs at a level below the minimum requirements of his/her assignments.

VII. DOSSIER CONTENT

The format of a promotion and tenure dossier follows:

- A. Table of Contents
- B. University of Delaware, Recommendation for Promotion Form
- C. Department Promotion Policy and Procedures Document
- D. Candidate's Curriculum Vitae
- E. Dossier Review; Letters of Recommendation from the 1) PLSC Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee; 2) PLSC Chair; 3) CANR Promotion and Tenure Committee 4) CANR Dean; 5) University Committee and 6) External Letters of Evaluation (to be added by committee)
- F. Peer Evaluation(s) Solicited by the Candidate
- G. Candidate's Statement of Self-evaluation
- H. Evidential Materials
 - 1. Teaching/Educational/Extension Activities (including course evaluations)
 - 2. Scholarly, Creative, and/or Professional Development
 - 3. Service

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES

DEADLINES FOR PROMOTION, TENURE, AND PEER REVIEW

- 30 April Faculty member who wants to be considered for promotion and/or tenure during the next academic year notifies the Department Chair in writing.
- 15 May Candidate for promotion and tenure submits a list of potential peer evaluators to the Chair of the P&T Committee with a copy to the Department Chair.
- 1 July P&T Committee begins preparing its list of peer evaluators for candidates for promotion.

Committee begins contacting peer evaluators from its lists and that of the candidates for promotion.
- 1 August Faculty members being considered for promotion during the current year will submit their dossiers to the P&T Committee.
- 1 October P&T Committee forwards the dossier of a candidate for promotion and a letter of recommendation to the Department Chair; a copy of the letter is given to the candidate.
- 15 October Department Chair forwards dossier and letter of recommendation of a candidate for promotion to the College Committee and to the Dean and a copy of the letter to the candidate.