

# Guidelines and Procedures for Promotion and/or Tenure

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## I. General Guiding Principles for Promotion

Faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences will be promoted for demonstrated excellence in research or teaching with high quality performance in the other. The area in which excellence is required is the faculty member's primary area as determined by annual workload assignments. High quality service to the Department and University is also a requirement for promotion. The apportionment of accomplishment among these three areas will vary with the individual and the impact of administered workload must be considered when evaluating the balance between achievements in research, teaching and service. However, unsatisfactory performance in any of these three areas precludes promotion. Although singular achievements such as teaching awards and research grants may figure significantly in the evaluation process, continued and sustained high-quality performance must be evident along with a reasonable expectation that this level of performance will continue. The following serve as general guidelines for documenting accomplishments in teaching, research and service.

- A. TEACHING: High quality teaching includes not only effective communication of a body of knowledge in a particular course/laboratory, but can also be exemplified by directing undergraduate and graduate research, participating in colloquia, guest lecturing, and developing instructional materials (i.e., textbooks, laboratory

- manuals, laboratory exercises, computer software, videos for instruction, etc.). Teaching effectiveness should be documented for all courses and for each semester in which they are taught. Evidence of quality includes consistently positive student and peer evaluations. Additional evidence of quality in the category of instructional activities includes receipt of teaching awards, grants for improvement of instruction, peer reviews of teaching effectiveness and innovations in methods and materials of instruction.
- B. RESEARCH: Research activities may be of an independent or collaborative nature. However, it is incumbent upon faculty to demonstrate scholarly excellence, independence and the ability to direct a self-supporting research program. The candidate's research program must produce original research contributions that are published in refereed journals. Both quality and number of publications must be considered when addressing an individual's research productivity. Additional evidence in the category of research includes: receiving grants or contracts, especially from competitive sources outside of the University; publishing unrefereed materials such as review articles, monographs, chapters in books or symposium proceedings; presenting papers/posters at national and/or international meetings and presenting seminars at other institutions. The candidate's professional status in his/her discipline will be measured by letters of evaluation from external reviewers who are established investigators in the candidate's field (see Section III.C.4.h: "Letters of evaluation from external peers").
- C. SERVICE: Proper functioning of the department, college and university depends upon effective service efforts by faculty. High quality service is a requirement for promotion and includes membership/participation on committees, roles in University governing bodies and/or special activities not related to either teaching or research for which the individual is sought or volunteers. Additional service activities may include service to professional societies (i.e., organizing symposia or meetings, holding an elected office, etc.), membership in special state or national organizations that have a public service function, consulting and/or reviewing scholarly materials such as research proposals, manuscripts, and books.

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## **II. Criteria for Promotion and Granting of Tenure by Rank**

### **A. Promotion to Assistant Professor**

To be considered for promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor, the candidate must present evidence of high quality teaching, evidence that he/she has established an independent research program or that he/she has made a significant contribution to a collaborative research effort, and evidence that he/she has provided some service as outlined above. Teaching evaluations must demonstrate consistent high quality. Letters of evaluation from peers external to the department must indicate that the candidate has

made significant progress towards establishing an independent line of research and demonstrates the potential to continue such a research effort. In the case of a candidate whose research effort is collaborative, the candidate must clearly identify his/her role in the effort and letters from outside reviewers must corroborate the candidate's research contribution. The candidate will summarize his/her research program in a seminar presented to the faculty prior to the Promotion and Tenure meeting.

## **B. Promotion to Associate Professor**

Since promotion to this rank from within the University carries tenure, the qualifications must be especially rigorous. To be considered for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, the candidate must present evidence of excellent performance in teaching or research and high quality performance in the other. The area in which excellence is required is the faculty member's primary area as determined by annual workload assignments. Evidence must be presented that he/she has established an independent and self-supporting research program, and evidence that he/she has provided service as outlined above. Self-supporting in this context means a research program supported by funds other than departmental. In the majority of cases a self-supporting research program will require the receipt of grants or contracts from outside agencies.

Teaching performance as evidenced by student and peer evaluations must demonstrate consistent high quality. Candidates are also expected to attract, train and mentor graduate students to completion of advanced degrees. The major emphasis on evaluating the candidate's research program will be placed on that research initiated and completed at the University of Delaware. In cases of collaborative research efforts, the candidate must clearly identify his/her role and contribution to the effort. Even in cases of collaborative efforts, the candidate must demonstrate that he/she has developed an independent approach to research, and that independence must be supported by letters of evaluation from peers outside of the University. These letters must also address the significance of the research, the quality of the research, and the candidate's productivity relative to other academic researchers in their field at similar stages of their career. The comments of outside evaluators must provide strong evidence supporting the candidate's application for promotion. The candidate will summarize his/her research program since appointment to the University of Delaware in a seminar presented to the faculty prior to the Promotion and Tenure meeting.

Note: Probationary Period

The probationary period of six years beyond the initial appointment to Assistant Professor is the maximum time normally given to demonstrate achievement necessary to be promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. However, candidates with particularly strong records are encouraged to seek promotion before the end of the six year period.

Note: Career Development of Assistant Professors

"There should be a major plan worked out with every new arrival to a unit so that there is an orderly progression to a stated goal, in this case, promotion, within a reasonable time. Participation should be offered in a number of activities, and help and assistance given as needed. A coordinated plan of development suited to the academic unit and the candidate concerned should be devised and updated annually. In units that have a considered plan for their members, this progression is worked out in great detail with allowance for an orderly development in all three categories that are concerned in promotion. Teaching functions and the setting up of courses should take priority. Then, in those units where scholarly output is heavily weighted, a research program should be mounted and, finally, some shouldering of service responsibilities should be undertaken. A new assistant professor should not be heavily laden with service commitments in the first year. The entire commitment should be under the guidance of senior people who should take an active role in career development."

[U. of Delaware Faculty Handbook - Personnel Policies for Faculty](#)

### **C. Promotion to Professor**

To be considered for promotion to the rank of Professor, the candidate must provide unmistakable evidence of significant development and achievement since the last promotion. The candidate must provide evidence of excellent performance in teaching or research and high quality performance in the other. The area in which excellence is required is the faculty member's primary area as determined by annual workload assignments. Evidence must be presented that he/she has sustained an independent and self-supporting research program and evidence that he/she has made a significant service contribution to the University. It should be evident that the candidate's success in attracting, training and mentoring graduate students to advanced degrees has and will continue. The candidate must demonstrate that he/she has established national/international reputation in his/her discipline, and that reputation must be well supported by letters of evaluation from peers outside of the University. Letters from outside evaluators must address the significance of the candidate's research, the quality of the research, and the candidate's productivity relative to other academic researchers in their field at similar stages of their career. The comments of the outside evaluators must provide strong evidence supporting the candidate's application for promotion. The candidate will summarize his/her research program in a seminar presented to the faculty prior to the Promotion and Tenure meeting.

### **D. Tenure Only Decisions**

This category applies only to those who were hired as Associate Professors without tenure and the decision to grant tenure must be reached by the end of the candidate's third year. Since the review comes this quickly, it is important for the candidate to provide evidence of continuing productivity. This does not mean that prior work by the candidate will be ignored but rather the candidate must offer clear evidence of continuing productivity made after employment at the University. Prior activity can be used to form a meaningful context against which accomplishments at the University can be judged.

Otherwise, the areas of achievement to be considered and review process are identical to those of the combined promotion and tenure decision. In addition, the candidate for a tenure only decision must satisfy any additional requirements detailed in his/her letter of hire.

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### **III. Procedures**

NOTE: The responsibility for initiating the promotion procedure lies with the candidate.

#### **A. Committees**

1. The Dossier Committee. The candidate, in consultation with the Chair of the Department, will select three (3), higher-ranking members of the Department who will serve as the Dossier Committee. One of the three will serve as the Chair of the Committee. The function of the Dossier Committee is to advise the candidate in preparing the dossier (for a description of the dossier refer to Section III.C) to solicit letters of evaluation (for description of the process refer to Section III.C.4.h), to review the completed dossier, and to prepare an objective, written evaluation of the candidate's credentials. A copy of this evaluation will be included in the dossier. A copy of the evaluation will also be provided to the candidate. The Chair of the Dossier Committee, upon completing this evaluation, will submit the candidate's application for promotion to the Department's Promotion and Tenure Committee.
2. The Promotion and Tenure Committee of the Department. The Promotion and Tenure Committee of the Department of Biological Sciences is comprised of all faculty of the Department (see Bylaws for definition of "Faculty") of the next higher rank(s): i.e., all Assistant, Associate and Full Professors comprise the Committee for promotions to the rank of Assistant Professor; all Associate and Full Professors comprise the Committee for promotions to the rank of Associate Professor; all Full Professors comprise the Committee for promotions to the rank of Full Professor. The Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be appointed by the Department Chair, will hold academic rank equal to or higher than that rank for which the candidate is applying and shall not be a member of the Dossier Committee. The candidate's dossier will be made available for all members of the Departmental Committee to read for a period of 5 (five) days prior to the announced date of the Committee's meeting. The Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee will announce in writing the date and location of the Departmental Committee's meeting. The Departmental Committee will consider the candidate's professional credentials contained in the dossier, including the letters from outside evaluators, and debate the candidate's application for promotion. Following debate, the Committee members in attendance shall, by secret ballot, vote for promotion, against promotion, or abstain from voting. Proxy (absentee) votes will only be accepted for unusual cases (e.g. sabbaticals) determined on an individual basis by the Chair of the

Promotion and Tenure Committee.

The Chair of the Committee will then draft a comprehensive report that reflects accurately the proceedings of the Departmental Committee and records the vote. The report shall not contain any direct comments or quotations from outside evaluators which might violate assurances of confidentiality. The report will be made available for all Committee members to read and sign, and the signed report will be given to the Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences for inclusion in the candidate's dossier. A copy of the report shall also be given to the candidate.

3. Since the department chairperson's evaluation of the candidate is independent, he/she may offer council but should not participate in or be present at the final deliberations of the Promotion & Tenure Committee nor vote on its recommendations.

## **B. Appeals**

The candidate, through the Chair of the Dossier Committee, may request that the Promotion and Tenure Committee reconsider its recommendation. Appeals must be based on additional information. After the Promotion and Tenure Committee hears an appeal, the Chair of the Promotion and Tenure 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 given to the candidate.

## **C. Format for the Dossier**

The format of the dossier shall follow that published in The Faculty Handbook, to which the candidate should refer. The following is a brief description of the information that should be included in the dossier.

1. A table noting for each semester the percent effort in each of the three categories: teaching, research and service. This information shall be taken from the annual activity reports.
2. A copy of the letter of hire minus any confidential information about salary.
3. Under the category of teaching activities.
  - a. A list of all courses taught, including course titles, dates and the number of students. Include undergraduate special problems.
  - b. Student evaluations. Evaluations of all courses taught for each semester should be presented in a summary format similar to that supplied during annual evaluations. A sample evaluation form, indicating the "percentage" of the students responding to each question/response, might be used for each course. A summary of written comments for each course should also be included. A table or graph summary to document consistent performance should be included.

- c. Letters from students and faculty evaluating course content and classroom performance.
  - d. A list of all graduate students and post-doctoral students (past and present) along with the title of their dissertation and date of receipt of the Ph.D. degree.
  - e. Other supportive documents related to demonstrating quality of teaching activities: teaching awards, improvement of instruction grants, published textbooks and manuals, etc.
4. Under the category of research activities.
- a. List of publications in refereed journals. Give full citations. Articles "in press" and manuscripts "submitted" should be included. Do not include materials "in preparation."
  - b. List of other publications (i.e., review articles, book chapters, monographs, and abstracts).
  - c. A copy of each publication.
  - d. Commentary on the nature of each of the journals in which articles were published.
  - e. Commentary on the candidate's contribution to collaborative research efforts and publications.
  - f. A list of professional meetings attended. Note meetings where papers were presented and cross reference the abstracts of these papers in the publication list to the meeting list.
  - g. A list of evaluators from whom outside letters were sought. Each respondent should be identified. A commentary about each responding evaluator's academic credentials that documents his/her competence to evaluate the candidate's research. A short form curriculum vitae (mini-vitae) for each evaluator should also be included. The commentary must also clearly describe the relationship, if any, between the candidate and the responding evaluator.
  - h. Letters of evaluation from external peers.
- Procedure: The candidate and the Dossier Committee shall prepare separate lists of appropriate individuals. The candidate will be allowed to comment on the appropriateness of any names on the Committee's list and may request exclusion of reviewers. The Dossier Committee will select individuals from the two lists and solicit letters of peer evaluation. Those individuals chosen will each receive an identical letter from the Chair of the Dossier Committee requesting an evaluation of the candidate. The form and content of the letter may vary somewhat according to the individual candidates but should be approved by the Department Chair. Appended to each letter will be a copy of the promotion policies (Sections I and II of this document), a curriculum vitae and copies of publications. The Chair of the Dossier Committee shall receive all replies to this request directly and each reply must be included in the dossier. At least four (4) letters must be obtained. In the event that a candidate withdraws his/her application for promotion, all letters from outside evaluators will be held on file in the office of the Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences.

If the candidate reapplies for promotion, the new Dossier Committee will decide whether the original evaluators will be asked to reevaluate the candidate. None of the original letters may, however, be used. If any of the original evaluators are chosen, then all must be chosen; additional evaluators may be identified at this time from lists compiled by the candidate and the Dossier Committee.

- i. A list of all research funding obtained. Include the title, duration, source and amount of funding.
  - j. Other materials documenting research achievements: research awards, copies of chapters from textbooks describing the candidate's work, letters from referees of journal articles and grant proposals, etc.
5. Under the category of service activities.
- a. A list of all Departmental, College and University Committees, including graduate student thesis committees. Include the dates of service and the level of service (i.e., member, chair)
  - b. A list of other profession-related service: published book reviews, manuscripts and grant proposals reviewed, organization of symposia, lectures to outside groups, student recruiting trips, etc.
  - c. A list of non-profession-related service.

#### **D. Timetable**

15 March - Candidate notifies chair in writing of intention to apply for promotion. Dossier committee begins the process of soliciting peer evaluations.

1 September - Dossier to Department's Promotion and Tenure Committee and Chair, Department of Biological Sciences.

1 October - Department's recommendation to the Chair, Department of Biological Sciences.

15 October - Department's and Chair's recommendations to the College's Committee and Dean, College of Arts and Science.

2 January - College Committee's and Dean's recommendations to the University Faculty Senate's Promotion and Tenure Committee.

15 February - University's Promotion and Tenure Committee's recommendation to the Provost.

25 February - Provost's recommendation.