

EARTH SCIENCES DEPARTMENT
PROMOTION AND TENURE GUIDELINES FOR TENURE-TRACK FACULTY
(Approved November 29, 2016)

These guidelines pertain to all tenure-track faculty members whose primary affiliation (i.e. “home unit”) is with the Department of Earth Sciences. If a candidate is affiliated with the Department but has his/her primary affiliation in another unit, the Department will provide input to the process as dictated by the guidelines set forth by the university and candidate’s home unit.

ADOPTION OF GUIDELINES

The department promotion and tenure guidelines shall conform to the relevant sections of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the USNH Board of Trustees and the UNH Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the current “Instructions for Preparing the Promotion and Tenure Statement and the Procedures and Criteria for Promotion and/or Tenure” issued annually by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). Any changes to the departmental promotion and tenure guidelines for tenure-track faculty require a simple majority vote of the tenure-track faculty in the Department. If the department promotion and tenure guidelines are updated after a candidate achieves his/her current rank and before promotion to the next rank, the candidate can choose which guidelines to use for his/her case.

PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

At the beginning of each academic year, the Department Chairperson will appoint a tenured professor to be chairperson of the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee(s).

PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Tenure-Track Faculty

Promotion and tenure of an assistant professor to an associate professor:

All department academic faculty with tenure and rank of associate professor or full professor, plus the Department Chairperson as a non-voting member.

Tenure of an associate professor:

All department academic faculty with tenure and rank of associate professor or full professor, plus the Department Chairperson as a non-voting member.

Promotion of an associate professor to full professor:

All department academic faculty with tenure and rank of full professor, plus the Department Chairperson as a non-voting member.

Tenure of a full professor:

All department academic faculty with tenure and rank of full professor, plus the Department Chairperson as a non-voting member.

All faculty members that are on leave are ineligible to serve on a P&T Committee but can provide feedback to the Chair like other faculty who are not on the committee.

PROCEDURE

Faculty wishing to be considered for promotion and/or tenure should notify the Department Chair and committee chair by September 1 of the academic year they wish to be considered (see Suggested Timeline below). There is an open invitation by the Promotion and Tenure Committee to informally review materials at any time to help faculty determine their readiness for promotion and/or tenure. Faculty wishing to be considered for promotion to Full Professor are encouraged to have undertaken at least one post-tenure review by the Promotion and Tenure Committee before seeking promotion.

Candidates are responsible for completing the non-evaluative parts of the promotion and tenure documentation (e.g. narrative sections) as well as working with the Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee to ensure that all necessary non-confidential supporting materials (e.g. CV, teaching evaluations, syllabi, research papers etc) are collected according to the timeline below. Whereas the committee has a purely evaluative role during the process, the candidate should seek to use the self-evaluation narrative and supporting documentation to advocate for his/her promotion. These sections of the Promotion and Tenure documentation also serve, in themselves, as a reflection of the candidate and should be prepared with that in mind.

The composition of the committee for each case is determined as specified above. The Promotion and Tenure Committee chair will serve as the chair of at least one committee. If more than one case is being considered in a given year, he or she may, with the approval of the Department Chair, appoint chairs of the committees for additional cases. The chair of the committee for each case will have overall responsibility for calling meetings, assembling materials, administering the voting, and summarizing the recommendation of the committee. However, it is expected that the chair will delegate responsibilities among the committee members for each case as appropriate. Each committee member is responsible for understanding the university and departmental promotion and tenure guidelines before assembling materials. The committee chair for each case is responsible for transmitting all materials and the results of the voting to the Promotion and Tenure Committee chair by the deadline outlined in the university procedures.

The committee shall be responsible for soliciting feedback from external reviewers and students for each case. In order to attain at least 5 external independent reviews of the candidate's research and scholarship, the candidate will give the committee a list of at least 6 potential outside referees (including their contact information, area of expertise, and relationship to the candidate) by September 15. Once the list is approved by the committee, the committee will solicit at least 6 external reviews from referees that have no clear conflict of interest with the candidate (e.g. former advisor or student). The candidate will select two evaluators to be contacted by the committee. The committee will select two additional evaluators from the candidate's list. At least two other evaluators can be chosen from the list or chosen independently by the committee. Factors that should inform the selection of external reviewers include rank of the nominated person (should be at or above the rank being sought), stature of the person in his/her field, reputation of the person's department/institute, and relationship to candidate. The committee will also solicit feedback from students who have completed courses taught by the candidate as well as past and current undergraduate and graduate students advised by the candidate. The committee can also solicit letters for exceptional service activities.

Each member of the committee for each case will have one vote on that case; thus, in cases involving promotion of faculty affiliated with a center, faculty affiliated with that center may vote either as a member of the center or as a member of the department. Voting for each case will be by secret ballot deposited into an envelope. Each person voting will sign a statement that she or he has voted. The envelope will be sealed by the chair of the committee for that case when voting is completed. The Promotion and Tenure Committee Chair and Department Chair will jointly record the numerical vote. The Department Chair will undertake an independent evaluation of each candidate after inviting feedback from academic and research faculty not included on the Promotion and Tenure Committee(s) and from students if deemed appropriate. Faculty not included on the Promotion and Tenure Committee(s) will be provided the candidate's full up-to-date CV and their feedback should be based on that as well as their own interactions with the candidate in the areas of teaching, research, and service. If the candidate is affiliated with a research center, the Chair will solicit an independent review from the Director of that research center. The Department Chair will notify the candidate and the department faculty of both the department Promotion and Tenure Committee's and the Chair's final recommendations.

The Department Chair and Promotion and Tenure Committee Chair will ensure that all materials for each case are properly assembled and forwarded to the Dean's office by the deadline outlined in the university procedures.

Suggested Timeline

- Early September
 - Bring cases forward
 - Chair names P&T Committee chair
 - Create sub-committees for each case if there are multiple cases
 - Candidate begins to gather information and write narrative
- Mid-September
 - Candidate provides for committee review the list of at least 6 external reviewers, complete CV, and selected reprints with contact information, area of expertise, and relationship to the candidate
- Early October
 - Committee sends out solicitations for outside letters, student feedback, and any documentation of exceptional service activities.
- Mid-October
 - Candidate submits complete tenure documentation to committee
 - Committee confirms commitment from external reviewers
- Early November
 - Committee prompts for return of external and student reviews that have not yet arrived
 - Committee reviews package and begins to write evaluation
 - Department Chair seeks feedback from other departmental faculty who are not on the committee.
- Mid- November
 - Department Chair and Committee prepare separate evaluations based on package and feedback
- Late November
 - Vote is taken
 - Finalize the package (bookmarks and page numbers) for distribution to Dean
 - Department Chair notifies candidate and department faculty of the Committee recommendation and Chair recommendation.

CRITERIA

Criteria for granting of promotion and tenure will conform to those described under “Teaching”, “Scholarship”, and “Service” in the current versions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the “Instructions...” issued annually by the VPAA. More specific expectations of Earth Sciences Department faculty are given here. However, as paraphrased from the “Instructions...”

A formula for weighing those areas of activity would be completely alien to the spirit of promotion and tenure recommendations. A promotion and tenure statement is a highly personalized document. It contains an evaluation of teaching, scholarship and service; but, more importantly, it highlights the area(s) in which the faculty member genuinely excels. Faculty members are expected to pursue their own professional agendas and to excel in different ways, as they enable the University to meet its broad institutional objectives.

Periodic evaluations (e.g. annual evaluations, third year evaluations, post-tenure evaluations) are important factors in every step of the review process so candidates are encouraged to make sure these are carried out in a timely way. If one or more expected periodic evaluations are missing for some reason, an explanation should be included in the Promotion and Tenure materials.

Teaching

Exemplary classroom teaching should be demonstrated clearly and convincingly by the documentation included in the promotion package and the learning outcomes of relevant students. Mentoring of students outside of the classroom is also important and will be evaluated by the committee based on available feedback from faculty and students. Continual improvement with regard to teaching is important as is the capacity to effectively teach both undergraduate and graduate courses in accord with the department’s disciplinary expectations.

Candidates for Full Professor should have demonstrated the ability to teach across the spectrum of classes at the introductory undergraduate through graduate level, and be actively engaged in the broader teaching mission of the department by, for example, mentoring junior faculty, leading curriculum assessment and/or revision efforts, and/or initiating new courses.

Relevant information that will be assessed by the committee in evaluating teaching will typically include (but is not limited to) range of course offerings, enrollments, teaching evaluations (candidate should provide a summary table of evaluation scores in the narrative), peer evaluations, syllabi, course development, solicited student feedback, teaching innovations, and awards and recognitions of teaching activities.

Research

Every faculty member is expected to be regularly engaged in scholarly activity in the field of geosciences. This activity includes field, laboratory, or computational research designed to answer specific questions or to test hypotheses of relevance to the geosciences. Both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research is valued. Faculty are expected to regularly publish the results of this scholarly work and pursue appropriate funding for their research activities. Each faculty member is expected to involve graduate students in his or her research and have demonstrated the ability to supervise and mentor graduate students at the M.S. and Ph.D. level. Faculty members may also be engaged in scholarship activities in which they apply their expertise to address specific societal issues in the earth and environmental sciences. Engaged scholarship activities shall: 1) be aligned with and help to advance the faculty member’s area of expertise; 2) contribute to regional, national, or international goals that are commensurate with the University’s mission;

and 3) lead to improvements in the experience and/or training of undergraduate and graduate students. Evidence of impact of engaged scholarship is especially important, and candidates are responsible for documenting it.

Candidates for Full Professor should have developed an internationally recognized research program with prominence in one or more specialty fields within the Earth sciences and a sustained track record of successfully mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in their own research.

Relevant information that will be assessed by the committee in evaluating research will typically include (but is not limited to) quality of publications; number of publications; impact of publications (e.g. citation metrics); number of grant proposals submitted and funded; number and impact of presentations; contributing role in research products; evidence of successful mentoring of undergraduate and graduate student research; awards and recognitions of research activities; and letters from external referees (as outlined above).

Service

Meaningful engagement in service activities is an important part of promotion and should be documented. Typical service activities include (1) service to the department, college, and university in necessary areas of academic administration; (2) regular advising of undergraduate and graduate students; (3) service to the geosciences profession; and (4) outreach and engagement activities that further the mission of the university or professional community.

Candidates for Full Professor should have carried out substantial and sustained service activities to the department, college, university and profession, with some of them in a leadership role.

Relevant information that will be assessed by the committee in evaluating service will typically include (but is not limited to) work in support of the institutional mission (e.g. department, college, university, professional organization, community); role in development and implementation of initiatives, programs, and policies; leadership roles; awards and recognitions of service activities; and any letters submitted from service collaborators.