

College of Sciences
Department of Biology
Faculty Tenure and Promotion Review Criteria,
Policies and Procedures

1. PURPOSE

The Department of Biology in accordance with UTRGV policies and UT System Rules supports a system of tenure and promotion for all tenure-track and tenured faculty. The purpose of tenure is to retain the best qualified faculty to help develop and execute UTRGV's mission. All Department of Biology tenure-track faculty are evaluated annually during their probationary period and are subjected to a comprehensive pre-tenure review in their 4th year and a comprehensive tenure and promotion review in their 6th year. This schedule may be adjusted if a time-credit was granted towards tenure at the time of hire. Tenured Associate Professors may be eligible for promotion six years after their last promotion. Faculty may request consideration for early promotion but this is limited to consistent exceptional performance. Under special circumstances, such as approved leave, each of these reviews may be delayed with the approval of the EVPAA.

2. PROCEDURES

Following the University calendar for personnel actions, full-time tenure-track and tenured faculty members submit their Faculty Review Dossiers (FRD) for review in accordance with University guidelines. The FRD must include the following: 1) a self-evaluation summary that includes a statement of the significance and impact of achievements in teaching, research & scholarship, and service, 2) a current curriculum vita, 3) summaries of standard course evaluation reports for courses taught during the period under review and course syllabi, 4) a development plan for all three areas of faculty evaluation during the probation period, and 5) copies of approved annual workload forms including annual percent appointments in teaching, research & scholarship, and service. Faculty members may also include additional material in support of their application. The material to be included and the organization of the FRD should conform to the Instructions for Preparation of Faculty Review Dossiers.

Each faculty member is required to submit their completed FRD to the appropriate department chair/school director no later than the due date of each year. For faculty holding joint appointments, it is the responsibility of the chair/director of the department/school in which the faculty member holds a majority (>50%) appointment to obtain input on faculty member's performance from the minority appointment department and include it in his/her FRD.

In accordance with University policies, each FRD for tenure and promotion will be independently reviewed by the departmental/school Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review Committee (TPPTRC), the Department chair/school director, and if applicable also the College TPPTRC, the Dean, and the EVPAA. The department/school tenure and promotion committee must be composed of *all* tenured faculty above the rank being reviewed in the department/school. The chair of the departmental/school tenure and promotion committee is elected by the committee

members, and must be a full professor. The department chair/school director will submit an independent review to the college committee/Dean and does not serve on the departmental/school TPPTRC. Depending on the year of review, the college committee/Dean will conduct their own independent reviews. Each review level must include a written narrative highlighting strengths and weaknesses, as well as recommendations for tenure and promotion. Depending on the year of review, after the college committee and Dean have completed their reviews, followed by an independent review of the University-level Tenure and Promotion Committee (if applicable) then all reviews are then forwarded to the EVPAA who conducts his/her own independent review.

3. CRITERIA

Each department/school is responsible for developing separate criteria for tenure and promotion of Assistant Professors to Associate Professors, and promotion of tenured Associate Professors to full Professors, which must be reviewed and approved by the department chair/school director, the Dean, and the EVPAA to ensure consistency with current COS policies and expectations, UTRGV policies and priorities, and UT Regent's Rules.

Faculty tenure and promotion criteria must include three basic competency areas – *teaching, research & scholarship*, and *service* – which must be evaluated in accordance with the faculty member's annual assignments (% appointment in each competency area) and responsibilities within the department/school, the college, and the university during the entire review period.

All candidates will have at least 3 external reviews commenting on the candidate's record of Teaching, Research and Service.

3.1. TENURE AND PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT PROFESSORS TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

(i) Teaching

Metrics for *teaching* effectiveness should include student evaluations of teaching and course syllabi, peer-review of teaching, teaching awards and honors, curriculum and course development (including online, hybrid, and distance education classes), activities that promote student success including the use of technology and innovative pedagogy, advising and mentoring activities, and student /teacher training grant funding.

A meets expectations rating in *teaching* competency area requires that *all* the following criteria are met by the faculty member during the review period:

1. Meets classes on time. Uses all of class period; i.e. does not regularly dismiss classes more than 10 minutes early. Meets all classes or arranges for a replacement; does not arbitrarily cancel classes. Gives class syllabus not later than the end of the first week of classes. Uses tests or other quantitative evaluation procedures. Assigns grades based solely on performance of students on quantitative evaluations. Demonstrates comprehensive and current knowledge of course contents. Maintains a level of professionalism in the classroom. Maintains office hours and encourages students to use this time to get help and to resolve questions.

2. There is not a “magic number” to the overall ratings on student course evaluations as they may vary across course student population (e.g. class size, majors, undergraduate vs graduate, and grade distributions). With this in mind, faculty member is responsive to concerns expressed in student evaluations of teaching and strives to maintain a student evaluation score of at least 80% agree and/or strongly agree (average of all courses combined over probationary period). Other measures of teaching effectiveness, such as, pre-post testing of concepts or competencies, peer evaluation of teaching, student self-assessment of learning, and faculty self-assessment should also be considered to assess overall faculty performance in teaching.
3. Performance on faculty peer evaluations of teaching must be positive. (1 review per year)
4. Makes efforts to address any teaching weaknesses identified in teaching evaluations.
5. Expected to mentor undergraduate and/or graduate students in a research program.
6. Involves technology, pedagogy, and innovative teaching techniques in the classroom.
7. Typically, have at least five years of college or university full time faculty teaching experience at the Assistant Professor rank. Exceptions may be made for outstanding candidates.

(ii) Research & Scholarship

Metrics for *research & scholarship* effectiveness must include peer-reviewed research publications (including pedagogy research) and other acceptable forms of scholarly output such as book chapters and books, patents, invited and contributed presentations at professional meetings/conferences, seminars, research grant funding, numbers and performances of high-school, undergraduate, and graduate students mentored, and relevant awards and honors received.

All Tenure Track faculty are assumed to have a 2/2 teaching load in their first year due to new faculty teaching release for research.

A *meets expectations* rating in *research & scholarship* category requires that *all* the following conditions are met.

1. A candidate with an average 3/3 teaching load during years 2-5 of the review period will have at least **FIVE** publication equivalents based on research at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley during the review period, unless credit towards tenure was granted at the time of hire, at least **THREE** of which must be refereed original research publications in good quality journals (1 equivalent each) and a combination of **TWO** other equivalents of the following, such as, but not limited to: Obtained external competitive research funding (1 equivalent each), additional peer reviewed publication in excess of the **THREE** required (1 equivalent each), publication in a top journal such as: Science, Nature, The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences or equivalent level. (1 additional equivalent per publication). Any teaching load reduction due to research activities will alter the required publication equivalents. Each course reduction awarded during the entire review period will increase the required publication equivalents by 1 (for example, an average 3/2 teaching load during years 2-5 of the review period would require a total of **SIX** publication equivalents, 2/2 **SEVEN** publication equivalents, etc.). Teaching reduction for service activities will not affect the number of expected publication equivalents.

2. Presents papers, based on work done while at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, at professional meetings (State, National or International level). The candidate will have at least **THREE** presentations during the review period.
3. Shows evidence of seeking external support to sustain an active research program during the entire review period. If the candidate has current external support, this is only valid for years with no current external support.
4. Have a research program that demonstrates a sustained level of productivity that will continue to be productive post-tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

Note: Teaching Release for non-research related activities such as release for administrative duties (i.e Department Chair) or committee duties (i.e. chair of a university committee) does not count toward the teaching load calculation for research and scholarship.

(iii) Service

Metrics for *service* effectiveness should include both the quantitative and qualitative assessments of faculty member's contributions to student, staff, faculty, department, college, university, profession, and community success. Quantitative metrics of service activities may include numbers of committees, student recruitment events, judging events, community outreach and engagement events, journal articles reviewed, grants reviewed, editorships of journals, etc. Qualitative metrics of service effectiveness should describe the faculty member's initiatives, leadership roles, mentorships and development of junior faculty, vision and commitment, impact, and relevant recognitions and awards received.

A *meets expectations* rating in *service* requires that the faculty member with a 10% Service appointment meets *all* the following annually over the last four-years of the review period:

1. Attends departmental, school, and university meetings.
2. It is expected that a tenure track faculty will serve on average on one committee per semester at either the department, college or university level.
3. Provides service to their profession such as, but not limited to: serving on committees within professional societies, reviewing grants and scientific manuscripts, etc.
4. Provides service to the community such as, but not limited to, high school student mentoring, providing seminars to lay persons, and volunteerism in the local community.

3.2. ELIGIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION OF TENURE AND PROMOTION OF AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

According to UTRGV HOP ADM 06-505 meeting the above basic evaluation requirements/criteria does not ensure tenure or promotion; however, failure to meet these basic evaluation standards/criteria will result in ineligibility for tenure or promotion consideration. According to UT System Policy on Tenure, the granting of tenure is not solely a reward for performance during the probationary period, rather it is a deliberate act that takes into consideration both the past and potential for future performance of the faculty member. In addition to meritorious accomplishments, successful applicants for tenure and promotion must demonstrate a high potential for continued excellence and commitment to the profession and to the UTRGV's mission.

33. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS TO PROFESSOR

(i) Teaching

Metrics for *teaching* effectiveness should include student evaluations of teaching, peer-review of teaching, teaching awards and honors, curriculum and course development (including online, hybrid, and distance education classes), activities that promote student success including the use of technology and innovative pedagogy, advising and mentoring activities, and student /teacher training grant funding.

A *meets expectations* rating in *teaching* for an Associate Professor to be eligible for promotion requires that *all* the following criteria are met over the review period:

1. Meets classes on time. Uses all of class period; i.e. does not regularly dismiss classes more than 10 minutes early. Meets all classes or arranges for a replacement; does not arbitrarily cancel classes. Gives class syllabus not later than the end of the first week of classes. Uses tests or other quantitative evaluation procedures. Assigns grades based solely on performance of students on quantitative evaluations. Demonstrates comprehensive and current knowledge of course contents. Maintains a level of professionalism in the classroom. Maintains office hours and encourages students to use this time to get help and to resolve questions.
2. There is not a “magic number” to the overall ratings on student course evaluations as they may vary across course student population (e.g. class size, majors, undergraduate vs graduate, and grade distributions). With this in mind, faculty member is responsive to concerns expressed in student evaluations of teaching and strives to maintain a student evaluation score of at least 80% agree and/or strongly agree (average of all courses combined over probationary period). Other measures of teaching effectiveness, such as, pre-post testing of concepts or competencies, peer evaluation of teaching, student self-assessment of learning, and faculty self-assessment should also be considered to assess overall faculty performance in teaching.
3. Performance on faculty peer evaluations of teaching must be positive. (1 review per 3 years)
4. Makes efforts to address any teaching weaknesses identified in teaching evaluations.
5. Expected to mentor undergraduate and/or graduate students in a research program.
6. Involves technology, pedagogy, and innovative teaching techniques in the classroom.
7. Typically, have at least five years of college or university full time faculty teaching experience at the Associate Professor rank. Exceptions may be made for outstanding candidates.

(ii) Research & Scholarship

Metrics for *research & scholarship* effectiveness must include peer-reviewed research publications including those on pedagogy research and other acceptable forms of scholarly output such as book chapters and books, patents, invited and contributed presentations at professional meetings/conferences and seminars, research grant funding, numbers and performance of undergraduate and graduate students mentored, and relevant awards and honors received.

A meets expectations rating in *research & scholarship* requires that *all* the following conditions are met.

1. A candidate with an average 3/3 teaching load during the review period will have at least **SIX** publication equivalents based on research done while at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley during the review period, unless credit is negotiated at the time of hire, at least **FOUR** of which must be refereed publications in good quality journals (1 equivalent each) and a combination of **TWO** other equivalents of the following, such as, but not limited to: Obtained external competitive research funding (1 equivalent each), additional peer reviewed publication in excess of the **FOUR** required (1 equivalent each), publication in a top journal such as: Science, Nature, The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences or equivalent level. (1 additional equivalent per publication). Any teaching load reduction due to research activities will alter the required publication equivalents. Each course reduction awarded during the entire review period will increase the required publication equivalents by 1 (for example, an average 3/2 teaching load during the review period would require a total of **SEVEN** publication equivalents, 2/2 **EIGHT** publication equivalents, etc.). Teaching reduction for service activities will not affect the expected number of publication equivalents.
2. Presents papers, based on work done while at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, at professional meetings (State, National or International level). The candidate will have at least **THREE** presentations during the review period.
3. Shows evidence of seeking external support to sustain an active research program during the entire review period. If the candidate has current external support this is only valid for years with no current external support.
4. Have a research program that demonstrates a sustained level of productivity that will continue to be productive post-promotion to Professor.

Note: Teaching Release for non-research related activities such as release for administrative duties (i.e Department Chair) or committee duties (i.e. chair of a university committee) does not count toward the teaching load calculation for research and scholarship.

(iii) Service

Metrics for *service* effectiveness should include both the quantitative and qualitative assessments of faculty member's contributions to student, staff, faculty, department, college, university, profession, and community success. Quantitative metrics of service activities may include numbers of committees, student recruitment events, judging events, community outreach and engagement events, journal articles reviewed, grants reviewed, editorships of journals, etc. Qualitative metrics of service effectiveness should describe the faculty member's initiatives, leadership roles, mentorships and development of junior faculty, vision and commitment, impact, and relevant recognitions and awards received.

A meets expectations rating in *service* requires that the faculty member with a 10% Service appointment meets *all* the following annually over the review period:

1. Attends departmental, school, and university meetings.
2. It is expected that Associate Professor faculty will serve on average on one committee per semester at either the department, college or university level.
3. Assists with student support such as, but not limited to, informal student advising and writing letters of recommendation for students.
4. Assists with departmental duties such as, but not limited, to coordinating laboratories, supervising teaching assistants, maintaining instrumentation, and taking inventory.
5. Provides service to their profession such as, but not limited to: serving on committees within professional societies, reviewing grants and scientific manuscripts, etc.
6. Provides service to the community such as, but not limited to, high school student mentoring, providing seminars to lay persons, and volunteering in the local community.

3.4. ELIGIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION OF PROMOTION OF AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TO FULL PROFESSOR

According to UTRGV HOP ADM 06-505 meeting the above basic evaluation requirements/criteria does not ensure promotion to full professor; however, failure to meet these basic evaluation standards/criteria will result in ineligibility for consideration of promotion at the time of review. In addition, a consistent record of research and scholarly productivity which may include but is not limited to grant funding, successful mentoring of graduate students, national and international recognition of faculty member's scholarly contributions, citations of publications, and impact on the profession. If the promotion is granted then the post tenure review clock starts immediately and a comprehensive post-tenure review occurs after 6 years at the new rank. However, the faculty member may request consideration for promotion any time during this period following the annual UTRGV personal action timetable.

4. APPEALS

All faculty have the right to appeal decisions involving tenure and promotion recommendations at any level by filing a written request for reconsideration within ten (10) working days of receiving a written copy of the evaluation from that level.