

College of Sciences  
School of Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences  
Faculty Tenure and Promotion Review  
Criteria, Policies and Procedures

## 1. PURPOSE

The College of Sciences (COS) in accordance with UTRGV policies and UT System Rules & Regulations of the Board of Regents (particularly academic workload requirements) 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 COS tenure-track faculty are evaluated annually during their probationary period and are subjected to a comprehensive pre-tenure review in their 4<sup>th</sup> year and a comprehensive tenure and promotion review in their 6<sup>th</sup> year. Tenured Associate Professors are eligible for promotion six years after their last promotion. This schedule may be adjusted if a time-credit was granted towards tenure and/or promotion at the time of hire. 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 Provost. This document will be reviewed by SEEMS faculty every two years or as deemed necessary.

## 2. PROCEDURES

Following the University calendar for personnel actions, full-time tenure-track and tenured faculty members submit their Faculty Review Dossiers (dossier) for review in accordance with University guidelines. The material to be included and the organization of the dossier should conform to the Instructions for Preparation of Faculty Review Dossiers. The dossier will 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 review period and course syllabi,
- 4) a 3-year development plan for all three areas of faculty evaluation and
- 5) copies of approved annual workload forms including annual percent appointments in teaching, research & scholarship, and service which will be supplied by the SEEMS Director.

Faculty members may 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 (i.e. [the institutional format guide available here: http://www.utrgv.edu/files/documents/provost/faculty-resources/utrgv-format-for-faculty-review-dossier.pdf](http://www.utrgv.edu/files/documents/provost/faculty-resources/utrgv-format-for-faculty-review-dossier.pdf)).

Each faculty member is required to submit their completed dossier to the appropriate department chair/school director on the due date of each year. Faculty holding joint appointments

shall submit their dossiers to the chairs/directors of both departments/schools as per departmental/school and college policies. In such cases, 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/school chair/director and include it in the dossier.

In accordance with University policies and UT System Regent's Rules, each dossier 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 Provost. The department/school tenure and promotion committee must be composed of *all* tenured faculty with at least a 51% appointment in SEEMS 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 and COS Dean who does not serve on the departmental/school TPPTRC. The college committee on years 4 and 6 and the COS Dean for every year will conduct independent reviews. Each review level will 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, all reviews are forwarded to the Provost who conducts their own independent review followed by an independent review of the University-level Tenure and Promotion Committee.

The review/recommendation process within the College TPPTRC is as follows:

- A committee member will be assigned a faculty dossier for review and that committee member will draft content for each category- Teaching, Research & Scholarship and Service;
- The committee member will share their draft with the rest of the committee at least 2 days before a College TPPTRC meeting;
- At the College TPPTRC meeting, the faculty's materials will be discussed.
- The committee will then vote on recommending continuation of the faculty on tenure track or granting tenure and promotion.

### **3. BASIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION**

Below is the typical faculty appointment which specifies the faculty workload (Fall/Spring) for Teaching, Research & Scholarship and Service with the percentages that apply:

- Regular Appointment: 3/3 with 60% Teaching, 30% Research & Scholarship, 10% Service.
- Teaching Intensive Appointment: 4/4 with 80% Teaching, 10% Research & Scholarship and 10% Service
- Research Intensive Appointment: All appointments with less than 3/3 course load that result in more than 30% Research & Scholarship commitment either as the institutional release (e.g., like STAR faculty) or provided by the COS (applies only to Assistant Professors hired with more than two (6 LHEs) *in gratis* course releases, including STAR hires, and to all Associate Professors)

Basic performance requirements apply during the tenure review period. New faculty are given two course releases in their first year (up to 6 LHEs from the regular appointment) which are provided for laboratory establishment, preparation of teaching materials, recruiting graduate students and writing initial grants. Allowances for the start-up year will be made in the first tenure evaluation.

#### **4. TENURE AND PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT PROFESSORS**

##### **Teaching Effectiveness**

Criteria for evaluating teaching effectiveness should include, but are not limited to, 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, advising and mentoring activities and student/teacher training grant funding.

The goals of the peer review of teaching are to improve teaching and student learning while serving as a tool for mentoring. The outcome of the faculty peer observation process shall be a reflective summary by the faculty member describing any steps taken or changes made towards the enhancement of teaching and improvement of student learning.. The guidelines for peer review of teaching can be found at <http://www.utrgv.edu/provost/files/documents/faculty-resources/utrgv-guidelines-for-faculty-peer-observation%20of%20teaching.pdf> .

##### Regular Appointment

- Received satisfactory student evaluations (strived to achieve an average teaching evaluation score of 4.0 or greater during the tenure review period).
- Received satisfactory peer reviews of teaching on at least the 2 most recent evaluations and evidence of reflection to the review recommendations.
- If applicable, served as graduate student supervisor or graduate committee member for at least 2 graduate students pursuing thesis tracks.
- At least one graduate student successfully mentored by the faculty member through the completion of research-based thesis, otherwise at least four (4) undergraduate students or six (6) high school students successfully mentored in research as evidenced by the production of honors theses or co-authorship on posters, scientific presentations or peer-reviewed publications.

##### **Research & Scholarship**

External reviews of the research and scholarship accomplishments and capabilities of each faculty are required. Guidelines for the external review process can be found at: <http://www.utrgv.edu/provost/files/documents/faculty-resources/utrgv-guidelines-for-external-reviewers.pdf>

##### Regular Appointment

- Published or accepted at least 5 articles in refereed or peer-reviewed journals, including up to two publication equivalents. Publication equivalents include publication of teaching

pedagogical works in refereed journals (up to one), and/or funded external grants (up to one) and/or book chapters (up to one), and/or peer-reviewed conference proceedings (up to one). Publication in a top-tier journal such as Nature, Science or Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA or equivalent can merit 1 additional equivalent per publication. The majority of publications must list the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (or legacy institution) as the faculty member's affiliated institution, unless the faculty member has received credit towards promotion at the time of appointment. In such cases, publications from work done at other institutions may be considered as appropriate.

- 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 3 presentations during the review period.
- Shows evidence of seeking external support to sustain an active research/scholarship program during the review period as documented by submission of grant proposal(s) through Office of Sponsored Projects or Office of Institutional Advancement.
- Have a research program that demonstrates a sustained level of productivity that will continue to be productive post-tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

#### Research Intensive Appointment

- For research intensive appointments, research expectations change with change in teaching load. For example, for course releases totaling 12 LHEs given for research purposes raises the publication expectation by one. Thus, a workload with average 0/0 course load over the entire review period will require 12.5 publications, 1/1 will require 10 publications, 2/2 will require 7.5 publications, with numbers prorated for other workloads. Workload buyout provided by grants or contracts will not be counted as course release and will not raise the publication expectation. Similarly course releases for service and/or administrative activities will not increase publication expectations. Up to two publication equivalents (e.g., book chapters, book) can be applied. Publication in a top-tier journal such as Nature, Science or Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA or equivalent can merit 1 additional equivalent per publication. The majority of publications must list the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (or legacy institution) as the faculty member's affiliated institution, unless the faculty member has received credit towards promotion at the time of appointment. In such cases, publications from work done at other institutions may be considered as appropriate
- As PI or Co-Pi (or equivalent level co-I as funding agency guidelines dictate), and as the lead UTRGV investigator, obtain at least 3 major research grant(s), contract(s), or instrumentation, infrastructure, or programmatic grants for a course load of 0/0, 2 for 1/1, 1 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads.
- Faculty member (as author or co-author) presented at least 10 scholarly presentations for a course load of 0/0, 7 for 1/1, 5 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads.
- Successfully mentored at least 3 graduate students for a course load of 0/0, 2 for 1/1 and 1 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads. Mentoring of one post-doctoral student or two undergraduate students or four high school students could be considered equivalent to one graduate student.

## Service

Faculty must demonstrate participation in university, professional, and community events/activities.

### Required University Service

- Routinely attends school or College of Sciences, or university, or UT System meetings during the 9-month academic year
- Active membership in at least 1 school (including non-thesis committees), college, or university committee(s) per semester
- Participates on average once per year in a community event, university public outreach event or high school student recruitment/mentoring event

### Other Required Service

Demonstrates service effectiveness through at least 1 or more of the following:

- Provides student support activities, such as advising, mentoring, or letters of recommendation
- Serves on editorial or professional societal boards
- Review of grants or manuscripts

## **5. 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. Therefore, to be eligible for consideration of tenure (and promotion), a faculty member must receive at least a *meets expectations* rating in each of the three competency areas. According to UT System Regent's Rules 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. In addition to a consistent record of research and scholarly productivity including grant funding and successful mentoring of graduate students, an associate professor must demonstrate a high level of intellectual maturity and commitment to scholarly activities to warrant promotion to full professor. National and international recognition of faculty member's scholarly contributions, citations of publications, and impact on the profession are important considerations for promotion to full professor.

## **6. PROMOTION OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS**

### **Teaching Effectiveness**

Criteria for evaluating teaching effectiveness should include, but are not limited to, 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, advising and mentoring activities and student/teacher training grant funding.

The goals of the peer review of teaching are to improve teaching and student learning while serving as a tool for mentoring. The outcome of the faculty peer observation process shall be a reflective summary by the faculty member describing any steps taken or changes made towards the enhancement of teaching and improvement of student learning.. The guidelines for peer review of teaching can be found at <http://www.utrgv.edu/provost/files/documents/faculty-resources/utrgv-guidelines-for-faculty-peer-observation%20of%20teaching.pdf> .

### Teaching Intensive Appointment

- Received satisfactory student evaluations (strived to achieve an average teaching evaluation score of 4.0 or greater during the review period).
- Received satisfactory peer reviews of teaching on at least the 3 most recent evaluations and evidence of reflection to the review recommendations. (one required every year)
- If applicable, served as graduate committee member for at least 1 graduate students pursuing thesis tracks.
- Developed pedagogical improvements to teaching approaches, innovative teaching or received a teaching related grant (i.e., student/teacher training, etc.)

### Regular Appointment

- Received satisfactory student evaluations (strived to achieve an average teaching evaluation score of 4.0 or greater during the review period).
- Received satisfactory peer-reviews of teaching on at least the 2 most recent evaluations and evidence of reflection to the review recommendations.
- If applicable, served as graduate student supervisor or graduate committee member for at least 2 graduate students pursuing thesis tracks.
- If applicable, at least one graduate student successfully mentored by the faculty member through the completion of research-based thesis, otherwise at least four (4) undergraduate students or six (6) high school students successfully mentored in research as evidenced by the production of honors theses or co-authorship on posters, scientific presentations or peer-reviewed publications.

### Research Intensive Appointment

- Received satisfactory student evaluations (strived to achieve an average teaching evaluation score of 4.0 or greater during the review period).

- Received satisfactory peer-reviews of teaching on at least the 2 most recent evaluations and evidence of reflection to the review recommendations.
- Served as graduate supervisor or graduate committee advisor for at least 4 graduate students pursuing thesis tracks.
- Successful mentoring of at least 2 graduate students as demonstrated by completion of research-based thesis.

## **Research & Scholarship**

In addition to the criteria described below, external reviews of the research and scholarship accomplishments and capabilities of each faculty are required. Guidelines for the external review process can be found at: <http://www.utrgv.edu/provost/files/documents/faculty-resources/utrgv-guidelines-for-external-reviewers.pdf>

### **Teaching Intensive Appointment**

- Published or accepted at least 2 articles in refereed journals related to research or teaching, including up to one publication equivalent. Publication equivalents include publication of teaching pedagogical works in refereed journals, funded external grant, book chapter, or peer-reviewed conference proceeding.
- Presented 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 1 presentation during the review period.
- Showed evidence of seeking external support during the review period as documented by submission of grant proposal(s) through Office of Sponsored Projects or Office of Institutional Advancement.

### **Regular Appointment**

- Published or accepted at least 5 articles in refereed or peer-reviewed journals, including up to two publication equivalents. Publication equivalents include publication of teaching pedagogical works (up to one), and/or funded external grants (up to one) and/or book chapters (up to one), and/or peer-reviewed conference proceedings (up to one). Publication in a top-tier journal such as Nature, Science or Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA or equivalent can merit 1 additional equivalent per publication. The majority of publications must list the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (or legacy institution) as the faculty member's affiliated institution, unless the faculty member has received credit towards promotion at the time of appointment. In later cases, publications from work done at other institutions may be considered as appropriate.
- Presented 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 3 presentations during the review period.
- Showed evidence of seeking external support to sustain an active research/scholarship program during the review period. Has obtained at least one grant or contract as PI, co-PI, or co-I

- Have a research program that demonstrates a sustained level of productivity that will continue to be productive post-tenure and promotion to Professor.

### Research Intensive Appointment

- For research intensive appointments, research expectations change with change in teaching load. For example, for course releases totaling 12 LHEs given for research purposes raises the publication expectation by one. Thus, a workload with average 0/0 course load over the entire review period will require 12.5 publications, 1/1 will require 10 publications, 2/2 will require 7.5 publications, with numbers prorated for other workloads. Workload buyout provided by grants or contracts will not be counted as course release and will not raise the publication expectation. Similarly course releases for service and/or administrative activities will not increase publication expectations. Up to two publication equivalents (e.g., book chapters, book) can be applied. Publication in a top-tier journal such as Nature, Science or Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA or equivalent can merit 1 additional equivalent per publication. The majority of publications must list the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (or legacy institution) as the faculty member's affiliated institution, unless the faculty member has received credit towards promotion at the time of appointment. In such cases, publications from work done at other institutions may be considered as appropriate
- As PI or Co-Pi (or equivalent level co-I as funding agency guidelines dictate), and as the lead UTRGV investigator, obtain at least 4 major research grant(s), contract(s), or instrumentation, infrastructure, or programmatic grants for a course load of 0/0, 3 for 1/1, 2 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads.
- Faculty member (as author or co-author) presented at least 12 scholarly presentations for a course load of 0/0, 9 for 1/1, 6 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads.
- Successfully mentored at least 4 graduate students for a course load of 0/0, 3 for 1/1 and 2 for 2/2, and prorated for other course loads. Mentoring of one post-doctoral student or two undergraduate students or four high school students could be considered equivalent to one graduate student.

### **Service**

Faculty must demonstrate participation in university, professional, and community events/activities. These criteria apply to all appointments.

### Required University Service (at least 3 out of the following)

- Routinely attends school or College of Sciences, or university, or UT System meetings during the 9-month academic year
- Active membership in at least 1 school (including non-thesis committees), college, or university committee(s) per semester
- Demonstrates leadership through serving as committee chair where qualified or contributing to the strategic planning, searches, curriculum development, or tenure and promotion/annual evaluation of the school/department
- Participates on average once per year in a community event, university public outreach event or high school student mentoring event.



### Other Required Service

Demonstrates service effectiveness through at least 1 or more of the following:

- Provides student support activities, such as advising, mentoring, or letters of recommendation
- Serves on editorial or professional societal boards
- Review of grants or manuscripts
- Organizes a professional event, meeting, conference, symposium, or workshop.

## **7. 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 to a consistent record of research and scholarly productivity including grant funding and successful mentoring of graduate students, an associate professor must demonstrate a high level of intellectual maturity and commitment to scholarly activities to warrant promotion to full professor. National and international recognition of faculty member's scholarly contributions, citations of publications, and impact on the profession and the university are important considerations for promotion to full professor. In case a promotion is denied post-tenure review clock starts immediately and a comprehensive post-tenure review occurs after 6 years.

## **8. 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 at that level.