

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES PROMOTION AND TENURE POLICY¹

A. Introduction

The objectives of the promotion policies of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources are excellence, equity, and procedural fairness. In order to preserve and enhance its reputation the College must establish and maintain high standards of teaching, scholarship, and service activity. At the same time, it must treat each faculty member with decency and respect. Thus, the policy seeks to promote the individual's welfare and professional development while at the same time fostering the College's growth toward excellence.

The process rests firmly on peer evaluations, for the faculty is best able to establish and apply promotion criteria. The promotion system recognizes the uniqueness of the several departments of the College. Departments have the major responsibility of establishing and administering guidelines and making initial promotion and tenure recommendations.

These promotion and tenure decisions affect the University as a whole, and, consequently, College and University committees together with appropriate administrators also play an important role. They ensure that policies and decisions serve the interests of the University and are comparable across its many divisions. It is important that the candidate applying for promotion and all reviewing entities are familiar with the University policies on career development and promotion, which can be found on the University web site.

B. Minimum Standards for Promotion

The mission of the College encompasses teaching, scholarship, and service. Faculty members must strive for excellence in all three areas. Scholarship, expressed in the form of research accomplishments and subsequent publications or other expressions of scholarship, is a significant part of each person's contribution to the academic community. Everyone must pursue some form of scholarly activity. In the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the opportunity to carry out scholarly research is enhanced by the presence of an organized research component, the Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station. How the results of research are made available to other scholars obviously depends upon the particular discipline, but promotion requires evidence that significant achievements have been and will continue to be made. Experiment Station bulletins are viewed as appropriate scholarly publications. For those faculty with appointments in Cooperative Extension, Extension bulletins are similarly recognized.

Teaching at all levels is given considerable importance. Faculty members with teaching responsibilities must demonstrate high-quality teaching performance. Educational programs in Cooperative Extension are viewed as a component of teaching.

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Service at all levels – department, College, University, community, professional, national or international – is also an integral part of the College’s mission and must not be neglected on the grounds that scholarship and teaching have higher priority.

These considerations suggest College-level expectations for promotion to various academic ranks. Although departments write specific criteria for achievement in teaching, scholarship, and service to fit their particular circumstances and needs, they must conform to the spirit of these standards. Unsatisfactory performance in any of the three areas, for example, precludes promotion. To provide comparability across the College, then, the following minimum achievements should be met for promotion to or hiring at the respective ranks:

Assistant Professor: Besides earning the doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree, the primary requirement is the demonstrated ability and desire to achieve excellence in scholarship and teaching and to make positive contributions in all three areas. At this rank past achievements are not so important as evidence of future growth and accomplishment.

Associate Professor: Promotion to this rank carries tenure (for tenure track faculty) – a binding commitment on the part of the University – so the qualifications must be rigorous. At a minimum the candidate shall demonstrate (a) excellence in scholarship or teaching and (b) high quality performance in all areas. Furthermore, there should be unmistakable evidence that the individual has progressed and will continue to do so. A satisfactory or adequate record as an Assistant Professor is not sufficient. There must be clear indications, based on appropriate evidence and outside peer evaluations, that the candidate has attained high levels of accomplishment.

Professor: This rank is reserved for individuals who have established excellent reputations in their fields and whose contributions to their profession and the College’s mission are excellent. There should be unmistakable evidence of significant development and achievement since the last promotion. Once again, the candidate’s claim to have met these requirements must be thoroughly documented by internal and external peer evaluations and other material.

Continuing non-tenure track faculty are eligible for promotion in academic rank under the same criteria and procedures that apply to tenure-track faculty.

- C. Faculty in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources generally hold appointments in the Agricultural Experiment Station. Some have additional appointments in Cooperative Extension. Both of these organizations have goals of assisting the people of the State of Delaware. As a consequence of these obligations, faculty are often involved in activities that impact their research programs, the form that scholarly publications may take, and the extent to which they are involved in service functions with organizations related to their profession and individuals in the public sector. The individual departmental Promotion Policy statements should address these items as appropriate.

D. Candidate Responsibilities

Procedures detailing faculty members' rights and responsibilities relevant to promotion and tenure are those approved by the University Faculty Senate Committee on Promotion and Tenure and by the Provost for each department. Candidates are responsible for following the procedures and guidelines presented in the University Faculty Handbook.

E. College Committee on Promotion and Tenure

This committee reviews all applications for promotion and tenure and appertaining department policy statements. Just as the departmental committees work in concert with chairs, the College Committee works with the Dean to oversee the promotion process from a faculty point of view. The committee also, together with the Dean, assists departments in developing or revising their criteria for promotion and tenure. Changes in department promotion and tenure policies must be signed and dated by the College Committee as well as the Dean, signifying approval, before being sent to the University Committee on Promotions and Tenure and Provost for final approval. Submitted policies should have changes clearly highlighted.

1. Selection

In order to assure that both candidates and the University are well served, each College or division is required to establish and maintain a promotion and tenure committee. The Promotion and Tenure Committee of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources shall consist of six regular members: three tenured professors and three tenured associate professors. Each department will be represented by at least one faculty member. The committee shall elect its' own chair.

Two alternate committee members will also be elected. The alternates will be two tenured faculty members. No more than two members of the committee, including alternates, may be from one department. The function of the alternates will be to vote when a committee member is being considered for promotion or when a regular committee member cannot be present because of extenuating circumstances.

The full-time faculty members, including non-tenure track faculty, with academic rank will elect committee members and alternates for a two-year term. One-half of the members shall be elected each year. The term of the committee will be from September 1 to August 31. No member or alternate can serve two consecutive terms. Department chairpersons and deans are not eligible to serve on the committee.

The committee will conduct an election on March 16 or shortly thereafter to elect three new committee members and one alternate. All eligible full-time faculty of the appropriate ranks and departments shall be placed on the ballot in groups by rank. The voting shall be by secret ballot, with one vote being cast for each regular member vacancy within a given rank. After the initial ballot, the names of the persons in each appropriate rank (3 persons for each vacancy) that receive the largest number of votes,

and that qualify by meeting the required composition and distribution of the committee, shall be placed on a second ballot. After this vote, the person with the largest number of votes will be elected to the regular committee. After the two-year vacancies on the regular committee are filled, then any replacement needed for term completion is filled by the person remaining on the ballot with the largest number of votes who meets the required composition and distribution of the committee. After all replacement positions are filled, the alternate committee member vacancy is filled by the person remaining on the ballot with the largest number of votes and who meets the required composition and distribution of the committee. A simple plurality is required to elect persons to the committee.

If a regular or alternate committee member is unable to complete his or her term, a replacement will be elected following the above procedures. The replacement shall be at the same rank and shall serve until the end of the term of the original committee member.

A faculty member serving on the College Promotion and Tenure Committee as a regular member cannot vote at the department level on candidates from his or her own department. However, this person can vote on such candidates at the College level. It is permissible for an alternate committee member to vote on a candidate at the department level. If an alternate committee member votes at the department level, he or she cannot vote on that candidate at the College level. Members of the College Promotion and Tenure Committee are permitted to participate in discussion at both the department and College levels on candidates from their own department.

2. Responsibilities: The responsibilities of the College Committee on Promotion and Tenure shall be:
 - a. To review all appraisals and recommendations for promotion and tenure in the College for compliance with published and approved procedures and standards and for proper application of criteria. The committee has a substantive role in promotion, tenure, and evaluation; that is, it shall pass on the merits of any evaluation and compliance with and proper application of established procedures and procedural appurtenances. Where approved procedures have not been followed, the committee is encouraged to work out problems, if possible; if not, the subject material will be so noted and forwarded to the Dean;
 - b. To advise the department chair and department committees on procedures that are appropriate, uniform among departments, equitable, and consonant with University requirements in the areas of evaluation, promotion, and tenure;
 - c. To advise the department chairs and department committees on the use of standards to be used in evaluation and in recommending promotion and tenure and to ensure that standards are consistent with University requirements;
 - d. To advise department chairs and department committees on criteria for determining compliance with established standards;

- e. To advise the Dean of the College on the adequacy and equity of departmental procedures, standards, and criteria;
 - f. To report to the faculty of the College periodically on department evaluation, promotion, and tenure practices;
 - g. The College Committee on Promotion and Tenure is expected to rank, arbitrate, referee or otherwise rule on any substantive matter; that is, any matter relating to the merits of candidates for promotion or tenure.
3. Recording of Results and Related Procedures
- a. Dossiers should be in the College committee's hand by October 15 of the year prior to the year of promotion.
 - b. The College committee defines its decision, if contrary to that of the departmental committee, as being in disagreement with that committee and not as being a reversal of the departmental committee's recommendation. The decision is reached by individual balloting recorded by the chair.
 - c. A written report by the College committee of the decision to endorse or not endorse will be made to the candidate, the departmental committee, and the department chair. At this time, the candidate may request a meeting or file an appeal with the College committee to discuss its decision. New supporting evidence to strengthen the candidacy may be introduced by the candidate or requested by the committee. Before reaching a final decision the committee may consult with the candidate or department regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier. The committee should allow a reasonable amount of time for this purpose.
 - d. The final written recommendation of the College committee will be added to the candidate's dossier. The dossier will be sent to the Dean by December 1 and copies of the committee report will be sent to the candidate, the departmental committee, and the department chair. If the College committee recommendation is in disagreement with the reviewers at other levels, the candidate may still advance his/her dossier to the next higher promotion review body, following the policies and procedures established by the University Senate.
 - e. The College committee suggests that persons to be recommended for promotion and/or tenure during a given academic year forfeit their eligibility for serving on this committee in that year. If a committee member is being considered for promotion, he/she shall be excluded from consideration of his/her application for promotion.

F. Dean's Responsibilities and Procedures

The Dean will review the departmental criteria for promotion and tenure and the College criteria and judge the candidate's dossier against those criteria. Before reaching a decision, the Dean may solicit additional information from the candidate, the department promotion and tenure committee, the department chair, and the College promotion and tenure committee regarding additional evidence that might clarify the promotion dossier. Based on his/her academic judgment, the Dean will either endorse or recommend against the promotion in a written notification to the candidate, department committee, and College committee. The Dean will forward the dossier and written statements to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and to the Provost by January 2.

G. Appeals Procedure

As noted in the several approved departmental promotion documents, a candidate may advance his/her dossier to the next evaluative step irrespective of a negative decision by the reviewing entity (department, department chair, College committee, or Dean). Appeals are possible at every level, but must be made to the committee or administrator whose decision is being appealed. If a candidate wishes to formally appeal a negative decision by the College committee or the Dean, he or she must notify the chair of the College committee or the Dean (as appropriate) within five working days of notification of the 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 appropriate person or committee. It is strongly recommended that the candidate attend the appeal meeting. Representatives of the candidate can also attend and participate in the meeting. The reviewing entity must handle appeals within two weeks following notification for appeal by the candidate, except under extenuating circumstances.

H. Schedule

The time schedule for the promotion process is shown below. Whenever possible, these deadlines should be anticipated and dossiers forwarded (with recommendations) at an earlier date.

March 15	Candidate notifies chair in writing of intention to apply for promotion. Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee begins the process of soliciting peer evaluations.
September 1	Dossier to department committee and chair.
October 1	Department's recommendation to the chair.
October 15	Chair's recommendation to the College committee and Dean.
December 1	College committee's recommendation to the Dean.
January 2	Dean's recommendation to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee.

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

February 28 Provost's Recommendation.

I. Amendment of the Promotion and Tenure Policy:

As stated in the College By-laws, the College Promotion and Tenure Policy can be changed by two-thirds that cast votes as long as a quorum of the full-time faculty members of the College, including non-tenure track faculty, with academic rank, has submitted votes as determined through a secret mail ballot, conducted by the elected College senators. Petitions for such changes must be placed on the announced agenda and discussed at a faculty meeting, which precedes the mail balloting by not less than two weeks.

Any proposed change to the College Promotion and Tenure policy must also be approved by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and by the University Provost. To be effective by September 1st of any year, the proposed changes must be submitted to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and Provost by March 1st of that year. The Chair of the College Promotion and Tenure committee is responsible for submitting proposed changes in the policy to the University Promotion and Tenure committee and Provost.