POLICY ON TENURE AND PROMOTION

Guidelines for the

Department of Nutrition and Food Science

Texas A&M University

2009
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I. Introduction

This document drawn up on February 9, 2009 represents the policies and procedures of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science (NFSC) in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (COALS) for all decisions regarding tenure and promotion within the department. Its purpose is to establish criteria for awarding tenure and/or advancement in academic rank. The policy so formulated, interfaces and avoids conflict with the policy for tenure and promotion of College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as well as the by-laws of the NFSC Department. The document specifies the role of the Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC), the Department Head, and the candidate. It is recognized that the TPC can function only in an advisory capacity to the Department Head and the Dean of COALS who will render final decisions. It is the responsibility of the TPC to evaluate the credentials of candidates for tenure and promotion and to forward recommendations based on the dossier and supporting materials of the candidates. This document, in part, puts forward the protocol the TPC will adhere to in directing committee actions.

II. Individual Faculty Mentoring Program

The department will have in place a Faculty Mentoring Program for all new hires entering the department at the level of Assistant Professor. The operations of a mentoring program will be as follows.

(1) Each candidate will be assigned to two senior-level professors within the department or one within the department and one from outside the department, preferably in a closely related scientific field, who will work closely with the candidate in strictly an advisory capacity. The mentoring professors will meet with the candidate biannually to review progress towards achieving tenure. At the meeting the candidate will submit material for review which will include, but not be limited to the following:

   a. Syllabus(i) of course(s) that the candidate has taught or is teaching
b. Graded work of students, viz., exams and assignments if available

c. Reprints of manuscripts and articles published

d. Manuscripts for pending publications listing the journal for submission

e. List of proposals funded or submitted for funding

f. List of service activities and the candidate’s role

g. Current CV formatted according to college guidelines

(2) Support by the mentoring committee will be mainly verbal taking the form of open discussions that center on the department’s expectations in research, teaching and the candidate’s progress in meeting these goals. Advice will also be given towards avoiding pitfalls or overcoming problems the candidate has or may encounter.

(3) A major concern of the mentoring committee will be the candidate’s progress in research (if applicable), focusing specifically on the candidate’s attempts (and successes) in obtaining grant support for his/her research program. The latter will include a careful evaluation of the candidate’s efforts in effective proposal writing, research objectives and strategy, professional meetings attended and pending and actual publications.

III. Tenure and Promotion Clock

The departmental policy for a “tenure clock” will adhere to the university guidelines specified in (http://dof.tamu.edu/admin/faculty/annual-midtermguidelines.pdf). The candidate must submit documents for a mid-term review the timing of which will be in accordance with the tenure-clock formula: [calendar year hired + probationary period – 2 years = year of mandatory review]. A candidate hired as an Assistant Professor will have a probationary period of 7 years from the calendar date of hire. A mid-term review (University Rule 12.01.99. M2) will occur between March and December in the third year and a mandatory review in the 5th or 6th year. The
probationary period for a candidate failing to meet the qualifications for tenure and promotion will be at the end of the 7th year.

IV. Qualifications of the Candidates and Evaluation Protocol

(1) To receive tenure in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science, a faculty member must hold the academic rank as instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor or distinguished professor. Temporary or part-time faculty, e.g., lecturers, visiting professors of any rank, graduate students serving as teaching assistants, postdoctoral fellows, full-time research associates and faculty who hold joint appointments with state, federal and private agencies are not eligible.

(2) A candidate for tenure must have served a probationary period not to exceed 7 years from the initial date of employment (see item III). The candidate must have taken part in teaching, research and service activities or those activities put forth in the position description during the probationary period.

(3) The candidate must provide compelling evidence for excellence in teaching, research and service. Simply performing one’s duties specified in the position description will not suffice to meet this requirement for tenure or promotion and may be grounds for rejecting the request.

A. Protocol for Evaluating Candidates for Tenure and Tenure with Promotion

(1) In the 4th or 5th year the candidate will put together a T&P packet for consideration in the 5th or 6th year.

(2) Tenure and promotion decisions will fall under the following headings: [1] tenure with promotion, [2] promotion-only, and [3] tenure only.

(3) Following the mandatory review in the 4th or 5th year of the probationary period, the Department Head will advise the chair of the TPC as to the candidate’s qualifications for tenure with promotion and evoke the TPC to go forward with the recommendation. This action will take place at
least one year before the candidate becomes eligible for a promotion-tenure decision or earlier if the candidate so chooses. The candidate’s mentoring committee will meet with the TPC prior to the meeting with the Department Head to discuss the candidate’s qualifications and progress towards a decision.

(4) After reviewing the candidate’s dossier, the TPC will hold an open discussion by all members regarding the qualification of the candidate in the essential areas applicable to the evaluation. The committee will vote on the candidate at the end of the discussion. Voting will take place by secret, sealed ballots that will be distributed at the meeting. Ballots will differentiate tenured vs non-tenured votes of the committee members. Only committee members who were present for the discussion of the candidate will be allowed to vote. A minimum of 5 votes must be cast. All ballots must be returned to the committee chair by noon the day following the meeting. Sixty percent or more of all votes cast is required for a positive recommendation.

(5) Following the vote, the chair of the TPC will assign individual members to prepare separate one-paragraph summaries evaluating the candidate’s teaching, research and service components. The chair of the TPC will use these evaluations to prepare an overall summary of the committee’s evaluation and voting results in a report to the Department Head. If members who voted against the candidate so desire, they may submit a minority report with the majority report.

(6) It is deemed that the vote of the TPC represents the vote of the faculty. In the event the majority vote of the TPC is unfavorable, the chair of the TPC will advise the Department Head as to whether the TPC considers a renewal of the faculty member’s appointment for an additional probationary year is justified. Such a request for extension will meet any of the following criteria:

a. serious illness or injury

b. primary care of an infant or small child

c. primary care of a relative or disabled person
d. a serious and unexpected disruption of the probationary period

(7) The Department Head after completing an independent review of the faculty member’s record and reviewing the letter from the TPC and the interdisciplinary faculty (if applicable) will prepare his/her own letter and include the committee’s letter in a correspondence to the Dean of College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The letter to the Dean will follow guidelines specified in the University College regulations and state with evidence a recommendation as to whether the faculty member should or should not be granted tenure or if the appointment be renewed for an additional probationary year. In the event of divergence in opinion between the TPC and Department Head, the head may request a meeting with the chair of the TPC prior to submitting a letter to the Dean. If the differences cannot be reconciled, the head must state the reasons for the impasse in a letter to the Dean that clearly delineates the differences of interpretation and a sound rationale for denying or granting of tenure.

B. Protocol for Voting on Promotion only

(1) Advancement of a faculty member in academic rank will fall under the following headings:

a. Assistant Professor to Associate Professor
b. Associate Professor to Full Professor
c. Research Assistant Professor to Research Associate Professor
d. Research Associate Professor to Research Professor
e. Lecturer to Senior Lecturer
f. Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer
g. Assistant Professor Extension Specialist to Associate Professor Extension Specialist
h. Associate Professor Extension Specialist to Professor Extension Specialist
It is recognized that Assistant Professor to Associate Professor for non-extension candidates will fall under the protocol for “tenure with promotion”. Further, that Lecturer, a non-tenure-track position, will have time in this position count toward tenure.

(2) For each Associate Professor, Professor, or Extension Specialist a request for advancement in academic rank will be made in a letter addressed to the chair of the TPC by the Department Head or, for Extension candidates, by the Associate Department Head for Extension. The TPC will meet with the candidate in a preliminary package review prior to submitting the final package. If so desired, the candidate has the option of presenting a seminar before the faculty. This option will be open to all candidates for promotion.

(3) The timing of the request may coincide with the annual review of the faculty member and must fall within the T&P calendar of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The annual review will cover a faculty member’s performance over the previous academic year in relation to teaching, research, and service as set forth in the position description that covers Faculty Duties and Responsibilities. The evaluation will also be based on any additional assignments and goals specific to the individual and progress towards meeting those goals.

(4) Promotion to full Professor will require a career review of the candidate.

(5) Voting will be by sealed ballots that will be distributed at the meeting with only those TPC members who were present throughout the discussions allowed to vote. Sixty percent or more of all votes cast is required for a positive recommendation.

(6) The outcome of the vote and the notification letter sent to the Department Head will follow procedures outlined in section IV.

C. Protocol for Voting on Tenure only

Should the condition arise where a faculty member of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science requests a tenure only decision, the following policy action will be taken:
(1) New faculty who currently hold tenure in another department within Texas A&M University or the Texas A&M University system will automatically be granted tenure in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science.

(2) Faculty with tenure from a university outside of Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M University System who requests tenure in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science will be subject to an evaluation process specified in section VI.

V. Composition of the Tenure and Promotion Committee

A. Eligibility of Members

(1) Faculty members of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science who are eligible for membership on the TPC must hold one of the following academic titles:

Professor
Associate Professor
Professor and Extension Specialist
Associate Professor and Extension Specialist
Research Professor
Research Associate Professor

(2) There will be only one TPC to evaluate all candidates for tenure and promotion decisions.

(3) The makeup of the TPC will consist of members whose administration location (ad-loc) is the Department of Nutrition and Food Science. For an Extension candidate at least one member of the committee must be from Extension. Only tenured members with an academic rank equal to or above the rank being sought by the candidate will be allowed to vote on candidates for tenure.

(4) In accordance with the by-laws of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science, the chair of the TPC will be elected by the body of faculty eligible for TPC membership. Once elected, the chair will preside at all meetings of all candidates until requested to step down by the Department Head.
(5) In the event that the number of eligible or qualified members falls below a critical mass, the Department Head may appoint non ad-loc members to the committee on an ad hoc basis provided that their academic rank is equal to or above the rank being sought. Non-ad-loc members will be restricted to an advisory role only, but will be allowed to cast a vote if the critical mass of eligible TPC members falls below 5.

(6) The Head of the Department of NFSC can be neither a member of the TPC nor take part in any of the committee’s discussions and evaluations of candidates.

(7) Decisions made by the TPC will constitute decisions of the faculty of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science.

VI. Requirements, Rights and Privileges of the Candidate

A. Interaction with the Committee

(1) A candidate for a tenure and/or promotion decisions is required to provide the TPC with a draft of the dossier prior to its inclusion in the final packet. The draft must contain the following information:

a. A statement on teaching, research, service and, if appropriate, extension activity

b. An up-to-date curriculum vitae

c. A signed and dated statement verifying the contents in the dossier

(2) The candidate is expected to cooperate with the TPC in providing additional materials and information when requested to do so. Information so-provided is for committee use only and will not be forwarded with the dossier.

(3) Only those materials provided by the candidate will be used in final deliberations by the TPC.
(4) Only the Department Head may solicit outside reviewers for comments and has the option of seeking assistance from the TPC on whom to contact. The candidate has the right to advise the Department Head on persons not to be contacted for reference decisions.

**B. Developing a Dossier**

Items requested in Part IVA fall under the heading of a dossier. Its contents must have the items specified below. The candidate should avoid including personal information such as social security numbers, etc in the dossier.

(1) A written statement, not to exceed three pages, of the candidate’s philosophy on teaching, research, and service. Candidates in Extension should include statements on their plan of work and how they value outreach programs. Each area must be addressed individually. The statements should focus on ideals or approaches espoused by the candidate as opposed to self-aggrandizement of the candidate’s accomplishments in these areas.

(2) A curriculum vitae (CV) that provides an overview of the candidate’s accomplishments in the three areas with most of the attention directed at research. A suggested CV outline is given by the College and it is strongly recommended that the candidate follow the outline in order to be in sync with the protocol that will be used by reviewers on the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the College. The CV should be concise and reflect the candidate’s career as a teacher and scholar. To be effective the curriculum vitae prepared by the candidate should contain only essential information and be carefully scrutinized for errors in grammar and spelling. It should be of reasonable length (less than 100 pages) with the understanding that it will be evaluated by a faculty panel that will be seeking only facts and may not be familiar with the candidate or the candidate’s accomplishments. The organization should aspire to rapid location of key information with cogent use of bulleted lists and highlights of major accomplishments. If possible it should include evidence
that supports the candidate’s own personal philosophy statements in teaching, research and service.

Items to include in the CV are:

a. A list of refereed publications (or other creative work) with dates and inclusive
   pages that detail research accomplishments.  Refereed publications should be listed separately from
   non-refereed publications with captions listed clearly.  The latter include book chapters, review
   articles, letters to journal editors and abstracts.  Original reprints or copies of published articles
   should not be included in the CV, but rather appended to the dossier as “Other Materials and
   Documentations.”  These items will not be forwarded by the College.

b. Publications accepted but not yet in print may be included but must be
   accompanied by an acceptance letter from the publisher.  Items submitted with acceptance pending
   may be listed separately.

c. Papers with collaborating authors and graduate students should be so-noted with a
   brief explanation clearly spelling out the candidate’s contribution to the work.

   (3). The candidate must present a signed statement affirming that the CV submitted is
   current as of the date of signature.  The statement should appear at the end of the CV document.

   (4) The departmental review will require a summary letter listing the materials that have
   been assembled for consideration by the candidate (philosophical statements, CV, articles, books,
   portfolios, student evaluations and others).  In addition, on a separate cover page, the candidate must
   provide a signed statement verifying the contents.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

In evaluating the candidate's qualifications in teaching, scholarship, and service, reasonable
flexibility will be exercised in balancing heavier commitments and responsibilities in one area
against lighter commitments and responsibilities in another.  In all instances superior intellectual
attainment is an essential qualification for rendering favorable decisions on tenure and promotion.
A. Decision on Tenure with Promotion

(1) Only faculty members who hold the professorial rank of an Associate Professor or higher may be granted tenure. As specified in item IV, those with temporary, part-time or short term appointments or hold joint appointments with state, federal or private agencies are not entitled to tenure.

(2) Advancement in teaching, research and service will be weighed in accordance with the position description for the position held by the candidate during the probationary period. A new Assistant Professor will be held to high standards of excellence in the areas central to their responsibilities since being employed at Texas A&M University.

(3) Excellence in teaching, research, and service are moreover defined to include professional ethical conduct in each area of responsibility, consistent with University policy and the American Association of University Professors' Statement on Professional Ethics.

(4) Criteria for awarding tenure to new faculty members will be based on convincing evidence that the candidate has achieved excellence as a teacher, research scholar, and has provided effective leadership service to the department or university with assurances that such achievements can be expected to continue.

B. Decision on Promotion to Professor

(1) Promotion to the rank of professor must be based on convincing evidence both since the last promotion and in a career evaluation that the candidate has a continuous record of excellence in teaching, leadership in service, and grantsmanship in research funding and has gained national and international prominence by contributing substantial new knowledge to the candidate’s research field.

(2) The candidate for promotion is expected to be a role model for junior and senior faculty, for students, and for the profession with exemplary performance in these responsibilities required.
The specific criteria in teaching, research, and service for promotion to Professor are similar to those for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure, with the added expectation that the faculty member has a clear record of productivity over a substantial period of time and since receiving an appointment at the rank of Associate Professor.

(3) In the evaluation of untenured professors for tenure, the same criteria apply.

C. Criteria for Evaluating Teaching

The teaching mission of Texas A&M University is to provide the highest quality educational programs for its graduate and undergraduate students. This mandates that candidates for advancement in academic rank and/or tenure must show evidence of having performed at the highest skill level in teaching. Teaching includes classroom and laboratory instruction, development of new courses, curricula, and teaching methods, as well as procurement of funding and other resources for teaching. A report on teaching will clearly indicate the type of course and the evidence on which an appraisal of teaching excellence is measured. Evaluation will be based on multiple criteria and include the following:

(1) Evidence that the candidate is able to communicate knowledge effectively and stimulate learning and creativity in students. Data included are on the courses taught each term and figures for enrollment as documented in the teaching portfolio of the candidate.

(2) Also included in the portfolio is a self-analysis that specifically states the candidate’s teaching philosophy regarding teaching methods, their strengths and weaknesses, the candidate’s teaching goals and other information essential to evaluating the candidate’s insight on teaching. The candidate should be free to discuss current methods employed and personal improvements that developed over time and with experience. Included in the self-analysis will be a statement regarding the candidate’s ability to maintain a challenging course content, evaluate a student learning performance and the candidate’s responses to student feedback.
(3) Student evaluations: Attention will be directed at the student’s appraisal of the candidate’s ability to communicate and inspire interest in the subject, to demonstrate outward enthusiasm and respect for students, and to show care and concern in pre-class preparation.

(4) Peer Review: The candidate’s skill in teaching will be assessed by faculty who have reviewed course material and are prepared to comment on the quality of the syllabi, the manner in which grades were assigned, the scale of rigor for the material taught, and demands for learning placed on the student by the candidate. If appropriate, meaningful peer reviews will also be sought from instructors who have taught the same course or a similar course in the candidate’s department. Peer review for candidates engaged in research will weigh the skills in teaching students the fundamentals of research as evidenced by the student’s authorship or co-authorship on original research articles, poster and oral presentations at meetings both local and national or departmental seminars by the student.

(5) Student learning: For undergraduates, student learning can be assessed by achievements of former students in subsequent classes, graduate study or post-baccalaureate programs that can be attributed in part to the information taught by the candidate in specific classes. In graduate education this will be seen in theses and dissertations for advanced degrees, awards and recognition earned by the student and career moves the student is able to attain.

(6) Recognition for teaching excellence from the department, college, university, professional society, or other organization will also be weighed in the evaluation.

D. Evaluation of Research

(1) Fulfilling its mission of achieving world class status, Texas A&M University places a very high value on acquisition of new discoveries and dissemination of new knowledge that is vital to the citizens of Texas, the nation and the world. Candidates for promotion must provide compelling evidence that they espouse the spirit of creative discovery. These can come from a
recognized and well-funded research program, high quality publications in noted peer-reviewed journals with high impact factors in research and extension, invitations extended to the candidate to speak at national and international conferences, membership on government and private review panels, and awards bestowed specifically for research accomplishments.

(2) Evaluating the research component of a candidate for tenure with promotion or promotion alone will rest strongly on the candidate’s impact on the candidate’s field.

(3) Specific criteria that must be documented include the following:

a. Record of grants applied for and agencies applied to as well as outcomes. Included should be titles of proposals, dollar amounts and sources of competitive grant research support obtained. The tabulation should be divided into “internal” and “external” competitive funding.

b. Record of all publications by the candidate since the last promotion. Publications are to be listed separately as peer reviewed, review articles, book chapters and abstracts.

c. Meetings attended by the candidate and the role of the candidate at these meetings: attendee, speaker, chair, co-chair, etc.

d. Graduate students and postdoctoral associates who have achieved advanced degrees or training while being supervised by the candidate,

e. A minimum of three letters written on behalf of the candidate by acknowledged leaders in the candidate’s research field. The letters will be used only by the TPC in the departmental review and will not be forwarded with the nomination packet.

f. Honors, awards, or recognitions the candidate and the candidate’s undergraduate/graduate students have received as a result of his/her research and extension.
E. Evaluation of Service

(1) A candidate’s record during the probationary period and subsequent promotion period will be expected to show increasing evidence of leadership and effective contributions to furthering the goals of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science and the mission of Texas A&M University. Merely serving on a committee is not an example of exemplary service; there must be evidence of a leadership role by the candidate. Examples of leadership at the department level include developing new ideas for teaching and research programs, addressing and proposing solutions regarding undergraduate/graduate student recruiting, developing new course offerings, inviting and hosting seminar speakers and advising student organizations. At the College and University level the candidate can show participation on university committees or faculty senate, involvement with programs such as the University Distinguished Lecture Series, scholarship committees and honors programs.

(2) Service for Extension is especially appropriate for candidates from Extension. Service and participation in outreach programs are viewed as synonymous and will be weighed together in making evaluations of the service-extension component. Also to be included for Extension will be evaluation statements from clients who have been served by programs of the candidate and can provide candid comments (to be included as “Other Materials”) as to their impact.

F. Role of Department Head

(1) The Department Head may not attend meetings of the TPC during which there are discussions and recommendations of candidates. This rule may be rescinded if the committee members vote to have the Department Head attend. This invitation must apply to discussions on all candidates.
VIII. Notification and Appeal

(1) Decision regarding the granting of tenure and/or promotion of the candidate will be conveyed in a letter from the Department Head to the candidate as soon as possible after the Board of Regents has officially acted on the President’s recommendation. The notification follows the outline shown below:

Department Committee
  Department Head
College Committee
  Dean
  Provost
  President
Board of Regents

(2) The candidate will be advised by the Department Head of the recommendation of the TPC for or against tenure at the department committee level of review.

(3) In the event the recommendation for promotion and/or tenure is negative, the candidate will receive a written statement from the TPC chair stating the reasons that contributed to the decision. The candidate may also request a letter from the Department Head.