
GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING EVALUATION, TENURE AND PROMOTION

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The guidelines for tenure and promotion in the College of Geosciences supplement several Texas A&M University and System policies:

- (1) System Policy 12.01, Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure (<http://policies.tamus.edu/12-01.pdf>);
- (2) University Rule 12.01.99.M2, University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure, and Promotion (<http://rules.tamu.edu/PDFs/12.01.99.M2.pdf>), which supplements (1);
- (3) Appendix I to University Rule 12.01.99.M21 (<http://rules.tamu.edu/forms/12.01.99.M2AppendixI.doc>);
- (4) System Policy 12.02, Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure, (<http://policies.tamus.edu/12-02.pdf>);
- (5) University Promotion and Tenure Packages Submission Guidelines, posted at the web site of the Dean of Faculties (http://dof.tamu.edu/PT_information);
- (6) University Guidelines for Mid-Term Review (<http://dof.tamu.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/DOF%20Guidelines%20Mid-Term%20%20Review.pdf>).

In this document, the College of Geosciences augments and clarifies the procedures in University Rule 12.01.99.M2 from the perspective of the College.

The process of review begins when a prospective faculty member is being considered for employment. At that time, faculty seeking tenure and promotion should be given clear expectations regarding the process and requirements. This document should be provided to new faculty members upon arrival.

1.0 Goals and Expectations

To warrant recommendation for promotion, candidates must have shown excellence in one aspect of teaching, scholarship or service and a high level of ability in the other two. Persons who make a distinguished contribution in all aspects of their work may expect more rapid promotion than persons of more limited achievement.

The criteria for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and promotion to Full Professor differ in degree and emphasis as described in Appendix I of University Rule 12.01.99.M2, University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure, and Promotion. The criteria for the College of Geosciences are as articulated below.

1.1 Associate Professor

- Holds a Ph. D.;
- Has demonstrated an exemplary level of accomplishment as measured against the contributions of others in the field, where those accomplishments are evidenced by outcomes such as publications, grants, and, where applicable, the development of patents and the commercialization of research;

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- Has displayed professional conduct conducive to a collegial work environment and standards of professional integrity that will advance the interests of Texas A&M University;
 - Has expertise in one or more areas germane to the programs of the College of Geosciences;
 - Has shown evidence of successful graduate student supervision; and
 - Has demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the level of excellence in teaching (both undergraduate and graduate) and research expected of a tenured faculty member.

1.2 Professor

- Has demonstrated continued excellence in at least one of three domains - teaching, scholarship or service - and an appropriately high level of accomplishment in the other two;
- Has shown evidence of successful graduate student supervision, and
- Has achieved substantial international recognition in research or another form of creative activity.

How these goals are measured, and examples of exemplary activities are described more fully in Appendix A of this document.

2.0 Procedures

2.1 Types of Reviews and General Guidelines

Tenure-track faculty are reviewed annually, in the mid-term of appointment (typically in the sixth or seventh semester) and finally in the penultimate year of the probationary period when the decision for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor is made. Such reviews may be made earlier, and are in fact encouraged whenever it appears appropriate. Associate Professors are reviewed during the year in which they are put forward for promotion to Full Professor. These reviews are in addition to other procedures that departments may undertake to assess suitability for salary increases and other University requirements.

In the event of a negative tenure and/or promotion decision, the faculty member is entitled to a written statement of the reasons that contributed to that decision. If requested by the faculty member, a statement of reasons will be provided by the Department Head (or Dean).

A candidate will only be evaluated by tenured faculty of equal or greater rank to that sought by the candidate.

2.2 Committees

The committees discussed in this document are defined below.

Departmental Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Committee

The Departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee is a standing committee of tenured associate and full professors appointed by the Department Head. Terms of appointment are determined by the Department, with rotations within the committee to preserve the

continuity and high standards of the committee. Alternatively, the committee may consist of all faculty members of appropriate rank within the Department. Associate Professors can be T&P Committee members, but only for evaluation of Assistant Professors.

The committee's function is to conduct annual reviews of all faculty members below the rank of Full Professor to assess progress towards the next rank, to conduct Mid-term and Tenure reviews, and to evaluate faculty members seeking promotion to the next rank.

The following apply to the T&P Committee:

- It is strongly suggested that the Department Head seek advice from the faculty as a whole when considering appointments to the T&P Committee;
- It is the responsibility of the T&P Committee to coordinate the preparation of the candidate's dossier independent of the Department Head. This includes soliciting external review letters, collecting relevant documentation concerning teaching, and checking the dossier for completeness. Further details are explained below under each type of review. It is in the candidate's interest to consult early either with the Chair or the full Committee;
- The arguments for and against promotion developed by the T&P Committee are presented to all eligible faculty in the Department for discussion, providing those faculty the opportunity to express their opinions prior to the vote of the T&P Committee;
- Committee and faculty deliberations must be conducted in the strictest confidence;
- T&P committee votes are reported directly to the Department Head, who then informs the candidate of the results of the vote; and
- Committee procedures are based on this document, as reviewed and updated periodically.

College T&P Committee

The Dean of the College of Geosciences, in consultation with the Department Heads, appoints a College T&P Committee, consisting of two full professors from each academic department, of whom at least one shall be a member of their Departmental T&P Committee. Each member shall be appointed by the Dean for a two-year term unless a shorter term is required to maintain staggered terms for representatives of each Department. This committee will elect its own Chair who will report its recommendations in writing directly and solely to the Dean. Committee procedures are based on this document, as reviewed and updated periodically, and Committee deliberations must be conducted in the strictest confidence. The College T&P Committee reviews dossiers and Departmental recommendations for all faculty members undergoing mid-term review and promotion and/or tenure considerations.

2.3 Annual Review

The focus of the annual review process will vary depending on rank. For non-tenure track faculty of all ranks, the annual review process will serve primarily as an evaluation of performance and potential for reappointment. For tenured or tenure-track faculty, the annual review must take into account the fact that progress in a scholarly career is a long-term venture; therefore, a three-to-five year time-frame is appropriate for the accurate evaluation of scholarly progress.

Tenure-track faculty members in probationary periods are carefully evaluated each year so that they know, to the maximum extent possible, their level of progress toward tenure. Input material for such evaluations may be faculty members' curricula vitae, annual performance reports, and other sources of information. While it is recognized that College and Department priorities and faculty performance criteria will likely change over time, faculty members should be kept informed of current expectations and their evaluations conducted in a consistent manner. For tenured Associate Professors, the Annual Review should identify progress toward promotion to Full Professor.

If it becomes clear at any time during the probationary period that a person is unlikely to qualify for tenure, the person should be given a notice in writing of non-reappointment, or of intention not to reappoint (for specific instructions on when the notification must be given, see 12.01.99.M2 section 2.3).

Tenure and promotion are linked for persons hired as assistant professors. Thus, recommendation for promotion must be coupled with a recommendation for tenure. Faculty members who have been hired as Visiting Assistant Professors pending imminent receipt of a terminal degree may be promoted to Assistant Professor upon receipt of that degree, on the recommendation of the Department Head with approval from the Dean of Faculties.

With respect to each Assistant and Associate Professor, the Departmental T&P Committee shall submit its written evaluation and recommendations to the Department Head, who may suggest (but not require) changes before the evaluation is forwarded to the faculty member. The Department Head shall also provide a written and oral statement to the faculty member regarding progress and performance, including a statement on expectations for the next year in teaching, research and service. The faculty member acknowledges receipt of the written statement by signing a copy of the statement. This copy is placed in the faculty member's departmental personnel file along with any written comments that the faculty member may wish to provide. Faculty members are advised to discuss thoroughly their respective evaluations with the Committee and Department Head.

2.4 Mid-Term Review (Assistant Professors)

The goal of the Mid-Term Review of Assistant Professors is to assess the faculty member's mid-term progress toward tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. To accomplish this goal, faculty candidates compile a dossier that is nearly identical to the tenure and promotion dossier in terms of content (see Section 2.5). The two exceptions are:

- Departmental review committees do not solicit letters from external referees. Instead, committees are strongly encouraged to obtain one or more letters of recommendation from within the University, and
- The faculty candidate's dossier does not proceed beyond the College.

Mid-Term Reviews are conducted in the spring semester. According to University guidelines, departmental review cannot begin before March. Ideally, the entire process should be completed by the end of the spring semester.

The Departmental T&P Committee and Department head should produce written reports that mimic those that are required for tenure and promotion dossiers. Prior to the Committee vote, it is desirable that the dossier be discussed by the Department's tenured faculty so that opinions regarding progress toward tenure be shared with the Committee. The Committee's vote consists of a yes/no vote on whether the voter feels that the faculty member is making adequate progress toward promotion and/or tenure.

The College T&P Committee reviews the dossier and prepares its own report and vote. The report results and vote are added to the dossier and forwarded to the Dean, who in turn provides a written evaluation and recommendation. At this point, the contents of the dossier are returned to the Department Head for distribution to the faculty member.

2.5 Tenure with Promotion (Assistant Professors)

2.5.1 Timing

The review for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor must take place by the time frame mandated by University regulations. Specifically, the review will be conducted during the year determined as follows:

Calendar year hired + probationary period - 2 years = Tenure consideration year (which is first semester of academic year)

It is important to note that the probationary review is determined by the calendar year of hire, not the academic year. Thus, if a new faculty member with the maximum 7-year probationary period were to begin employment in November, 2007, that person's tenure consideration year would be $2007 + 7 - 2 = 2012$. If the same candidate instead began in January, 2008, the tenure consideration year would be 2013 ($2008 + 7 - 2 = 2013$). An early review for tenure can be conducted when requested by the tenure-track faculty member. If the early review is not favorable, the review can be repeated again in the mandatory year. While the candidate can choose to withdraw from the review process, doing so during the mandatory review also requires the submission of a written resignation.

In special circumstances, extension to the probationary period may be granted upon petition by the faculty member, recommendation by the Department Head and Dean, and approval by the Dean of Faculties. Such circumstances may include part-time status, serious illness, primary care responsibilities, and other serious disruptions beyond the faculty member's control. For further details, see the University Guidelines for Mid-Term Review.

2.5.2 The Faculty Candidate

The faculty candidate is responsible for preparing several documents for inclusion in the dossier, as listed in the *University Promotion and Tenure Packet Submission Guidelines*. These include the candidate's personal statements, CV, various charts and tables, and other materials and documentation that the candidate deems pertinent but are not included elsewhere. Normally this information is provided in late spring so that it may be included with requests for outside letters.

It is essential that the university requirements for each document in the dossier be followed scrupulously. Included here are some *Submission Guidelines* recommendations for the candidate's CV as well as recommendations specific to the College of Geosciences. In the event of a conflict, the University-level guidelines prevail. Candidates may provide a draft CV or other materials to the Departmental T&P Committee for feedback and advice.

- *Avoid padding.* The candidate is being evaluated on significant achievements, so inclusion of insignificant achievements may be harmful to the cause.
- List courses taught by semester and year, including enrollment. Clearly identify new courses designed or significantly revised, development of new teaching methodologies and other innovations in teaching.

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- *List graduate students supervised, level (MS or PhD) and dates of graduation;*
 - *List refereed and non-refereed publications under separate headings.* Complete, standard, journal citations are absolutely necessary. It is helpful but not required to separate abstracts from longer publications. Unpublished reports and references to citations in the popular press may be included if relevant, but must be listed separately. Do not list items not yet accepted for publication. Clearly identify any coauthors who are the candidate's past or present undergraduate or graduate students.
 - *List at least the following information for grants and contracts:* project title, funding agency, role (PI, co-PI, co-I, etc.), name and affiliation of PI (if not the candidate), total funded amount, amount attributable to candidate's activities and mentorship (if different), and start and finish dates.
 - *List Department, College and University service* (e.g., committees, administrative duties, activities with student organizations, minority recruiting activities, etc.).
 - *List outside service* (e.g., professional societies, committees and panels, consulting, reviewing proposals and papers, lecturing, editorships, etc.).
 - *Indicate the number of courses for which teaching release was granted.*

The candidate also provides a list of names of possible reviewers (and, optionally, a list of names of those who should not be reviewers). The list of reviewers should include contact information and short (no more than half a page) biographies. Ideally, most reviewers will be full professors at leading and/or peer institutions; for other reviewers, the biographies should make clear the preeminence of the reviewer or the reviewer's affiliation in the particular field of study of the candidate.

Typically, additional items will also be requested from the candidate by the Departmental T&P Committee, such as sample articles for inclusion in requests for outside letters and course materials and coursework for the Committee's use in evaluation of teaching excellence.

2.5.3 Departmental Review

The candidate's dossier is to be assembled carefully following the *Submission Guidelines*. The initial responsibility for ensuring that the dossier is correctly assembled lies with the Departmental T&P Committee.

When reviewing the dossier, the T&P committee will evaluate the candidate following the criteria outlined in the Appendix A of this document, following the goals outlined in the first section. To highlight a point in the Teaching section of Appendix A, incorporation of classroom visits to evaluate teaching performance is strongly encouraged, at least for the case of relatively large classes where such visits will not affect classroom dynamics. This will provide additional support for the evaluation of teaching in borderline cases where other measures such as student reviews are ambiguous.

When the Departmental T&P committee is ready for final review, the candidate should be given the opportunity to update their information for the dossier. At this time, the candidate also provides the verification of contents statement.

Prior to the vote by the T&P committee, Department faculty of appropriate rank are asked to meet in executive session to discuss the candidate's qualifications for tenure and promotion and express their advisory opinion to the T&P Committee. The T&P Committee

will vote and forward its vote to the Department Head. The Department Head will notify the candidate on receipt of the recommendation from the Departmental T&P Committee.

The Department Head then prepares and submits a recommendation to the Dean, again notifying the candidate of this step when forwarding the recommendation to the College. The Department Head should consult with the Departmental T&P Committee before finalizing a recommendation contrary to the Committee's vote.

If a person is under final review for tenure (and promotion in the case of an Assistant Professor), that person's dossier must be forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Provost and the President for their review after the College review and action regardless of whether the recommendation is positive or negative, unless the candidate submits a letter of resignation.

If a tenured person is considered for promotion, or an untenured person is considered for early tenure and promotion, even if the Department Head and the Departmental T&P Committee do not recommend promotion, that person's dossier must be forwarded to the Dean for further consideration unless the candidate requests in writing to stop the process.

2.5.4 College Review

Soon after the Dean receives the dossier, the dossier should be reviewed by the Dean or the Dean's designee to ensure that all necessary documents are present. In addition, the content of the dossier should be reviewed by the Chair of the College T&P Committee or the Chair's designee to ensure that the content within each document complies with the Dean of Faculties guidelines regarding evaluation criteria. If deficiencies are found, for example if the Departmental T&P Committee's teaching report did not include explicit consideration of the necessary spectrum of evaluation information, the dossier is returned to the Department Head for further action. If the omission is merely clerical in nature, provision of the necessary documents may suffice. If instead the Committee or Department Head evaluation was not based on the appropriate body of information, a proper re-evaluation should be conducted at the appropriate level(s).

Once the dossiers are in order, the College T&P Committee prepares a recommendation and submits it to the Dean. The Dean informs the Department Head of the vote of the College T&P Committee, who informs the candidate. The Dean in turn prepares a recommendation to the Executive Vice President and Provost.

When the Dean does not concur with the Department Head's recommendation, the Dean should inform the Department Head and the candidate of the reasons for that decision. The Department Head, in consultation with the Departmental T&P Committee, shall then have the opportunity to ensure that all appropriate materials have been properly enclosed with the dossier, and that all relevant arguments have been put forward. In the event that germane new evidence is introduced, or new, quite different arguments are applied, the Department Head may submit a newly organized case for reconsideration, and that case shall be reviewed by the College T&P Committee and the Dean before a final recommendation concerning tenure and/or promotion is forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Provost.

When the Dean's recommendation is finalized, a summary of this recommendation is reported to the Department Head, who informs the candidate. The Department Head should continue serving as the point of contact for the candidate regarding further updates on the status of the dossier.

The Dean forwards his/her recommendation to the Executive Vice President and Provost through the Associate Provost and Dean of Faculties. All Departmental and College level recommendations should be forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Provost as clearly reasoned recommendations for or against tenure and/or promotion.

2.5.5 University Review

The President has responsibility for the ultimate recommendations regarding tenure and/or promotion. The President's positive recommendations for tenure and/or promotion are forwarded to the Chancellor for approval of promotions, who forwards the tenure cases to the Board of Regents for final action.

The official decision by the Board of Regents regarding the granting of tenure, and of the Chancellor granting promotion of a faculty member will be conveyed in writing to the faculty member as soon as possible after the Board of Regents has officially acted on the President's tenure recommendation.

At any point in the process, candidates for promotion may elect by written request to withdraw their names from further consideration.

2.6 Promotion to Full Professor

The procedures for promotion to Full Professor are exactly the same as for the promotion and tenure review to Associate Professor. However, the review committee composition may be different in the case where the Department T&P Committee includes members who are Associate Professors. Associate Professors may not participate in a review for promotion to Full Professor. When selecting potential sources for outside letters, the candidate and Departmental T&P Committee should ensure that at least some of the sources will be able to comment credibly on the candidate's international reputation.

2.7 Tenure of Associate and Full Professors

Faculty may be hired at the rank of Associate Professor or Full Professor without tenure. Tenure-seeking Associate Professors are evaluated using the same criteria and process as Assistant Professors being reviewed for tenure and promotion as outlined in Section 2.5. Full Professors under review for tenure are evaluated using the same criteria and process as Associate Professors being reviewed for promotion to Full Professor as outlined in section 2.6.

3.0 Appeals

Except for the College appeal procedure discussed above, official policy states that persons reviewed but not recommended for tenure may appeal only if the process is in violation of Rule 12.01.99.M2.5.1 of the University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure, and Promotion (<http://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/12.01.99.M2.pdf>):

Decisions to deny the granting of tenure to a non-tenured faculty member shall be based on the individual's professional performance and shall not be made in violation of academic freedom or as a form of illegal discrimination.

If the faculty member alleges such a violation, he/she should discuss the matter with the Department Head and, if necessary, the Dean. If the matter cannot be resolved, the faculty member may seek a hearing by the Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure.

APPENDIX A: Tenure and Promotion Measures and Information Sources

The criteria for promotion and tenure were stated at the outset of the College of Geosciences Tenure and Promotion Guidelines. To clarify these criteria, we offer the following guidance.

- **Teaching.** Essential qualifications for promotion are the ability to teach at a sustained level of excellence, whether at the undergraduate or the graduate level. Some of the elements to be evaluated are knowledge of subject matter, skill in presentation, respect for students, ability to stimulate youthful minds, capacity for cooperation, and enthusiastic devotion to teaching. It also involves initiating and improving educational methods. A candidate for promotion to Full Professor is expected to have demonstrated a sustained level of competence in teaching and mentoring of students.
- **Research.** All tenured faculty must be persons of scholarly ability and accomplishment. Their qualifications are to be evaluated on the quality and impact of their published and other creative work, the range and variety of their intellectual interests, their success in training graduate students, and their participation and leadership in professional groups. While promotion to Associate Professor involves developing a sustained research program post-Ph.D., candidates for Full Professor are expected to be respected and active members of the scholarly community and to have taken an intellectual leadership role at the national or, preferably, international level.
- **Service.** The scope of the College's activities makes it appropriate for faculty members to engage in many activities outside of the fields of teaching and research. These may include participation in committee work and other administrative tasks, counseling, and special training programs. The College also expects many of its faculty members to render extramural services to schools, industry, local, state, and national agencies, and to the public at large. Candidates for Associate Professor are expected to be good department citizens, executing administrative tasks with competence and thoughtfulness. Full Professors are expected to provide leadership in the Department, College and/or the scholarly community at large.

For evaluating teaching, service, collegiality, and appropriateness, the Department and College are the reference groups. For evaluating scholarship, peer review by nationally and/or internationally recognized outside referees is the benchmark.

A.1 Teaching Measures

The bases for evaluation of teaching performance are *(i)* coverage of appropriate material in a rigorous manner, *(ii)* effective classroom presentation, and *(iii)* reasonable evaluation of the student's performance. Items *(i)* and *(iii)* are generally handled by peer evaluation of appropriate materials, such as class syllabi, notes, and examinations. Some information on these two items may also be obtained from student evaluation. Item *(ii)* may be evaluated by student evaluations, classroom assessments by senior faculty and alumni surveys.

Indicators of Outstanding Merit

- Outstanding teaching performance as evidenced by such measures as peer-evaluation, student satisfaction, and student outcomes.

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- Outstanding direction of graduate research as indicated by performance, placement and subsequent development of graduate students
 - Placement of graduate students or post-doctoral fellows into significant academic, scholarly or professional positions:
 - Chair of successful doctoral research committees
 - Receipt of awards for research or academic performance by the faculty member's students.
 - Selection for a University or professional society outstanding teacher award.
 - Evidence of courses taught at a rigorous and challenging level, with recognized excellence.
 - Publication of widely adopted or acclaimed instructional materials.
 - Developing a new course that fills an identified need in the curriculum.
 - Receiving external grant support for teaching/learning projects.

Possible Measures/Sources of Information

- Reflective response to student ratings and comments and to peer review.
- Analysis of strengths/weaknesses of course materials and delivery.
- Analysis of student achievement of course objectives.
- Statement of goals for improvement.
- Participation in teaching workshops or other improvement activities.
- Peer critique of course materials.
- Peer critique of classroom teaching. Incorporation of classroom visits to evaluate teaching performance is strongly encouraged, at least for the case of relatively large classes where such visits will not affect classroom dynamics. This will provide additional support for the evaluation of teaching in borderline cases where other measures such as student reviews are ambiguous.
- End-of-semester student ratings of instruction.
- Mid-semester questionnaires.
- Exit interviews.
- Evidence of student growth over the semester.
- Student performance in current and/or subsequent courses.
- Employer reports of student performance.

A.2 Scholarly Activities Measures

Active production of scholarly work is expected and necessary for promotion and tenure. In addition, scholarly work should be appropriate in the context of supporting the mission of the Department. Pursuit of scholarship can be accomplished in teaching, research, or professional activities. A shared characteristic of each of these areas is the production of peer-evaluated work. Scholarly activities are those that result in publications. Publications in highly-ranked refereed journals carry the greatest weight. Publications in proceedings of international or national conferences (refereed) rank second, and presentations and publications in regional conferences rank last. In evaluation of publications, emphasis is placed upon the quality of the work.

Indicators of Outstanding Merit

- Publications in leading refereed journals.
- Receiving major fellowship or research award.
- Frequent citation of publications.
- Publication of scholarly book(s) by reputable publisher(s).
- Awards for, or publication of, peer reviewed creative activities.
- Presentation of invited papers at international and national meetings.
- Receiving significant external peer-reviewed funding for research.
- Significant publication and/or funding resulting from collaborative efforts with researchers in other fields where the faculty member occupies a substantial role in research.
- Patents and/or commercialization of research.

A.3 Service Measures

Service includes service to the Department, the University, and the profession, and must be appropriate in the context of the mission of the Department. Serving as chair of major committees represents a leadership role and contributes to the stature of the Department and College. Typical service activities may include organizing national or international symposia or workshops; serving as a member of boards of international or national symposia, an officer in professional societies, referee or reviewer for funding agencies, professional journals, or text book publishers; and participating in editorial boards of journals or text books and grant review panels.

Indicators of Outstanding Merit

- Being an officer in a national or international professional organization;
- Serving on a major governmental commission, task force, or board;
- Serving an administrative leadership role at Texas A&M University;
- Serving as program chair or in a similar position at a national or international meeting;
- Serving as editor or member of editorial board of a major journal;
- Serving as a member of review panel for national research organization;
- Chairing a major standing or ad hoc Texas A&M University committee;
- Evidence of excellence in professional service to the local community and public at large;
- Organizing national or international symposia or workshops;
- Serving as a referee or reviewer for funding agencies, highly ranked professional journals, or text book publishers, and
- Serving on editorial boards of journals or textbooks and grant review panels.