Tenure and Promotion Procedures
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
Revised Spring 2009

I. Educating Faculty Regarding Procedures

A. Each Assistant Professor and tenured Associate Professor, and faculty holding the ranks of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor with AgriLife Extension and AgriLife Research, will be provided with a copy of the current University, AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and Departmental guidelines for tenure and promotion decisions. All faculty are encouraged to review these guidelines and discuss any questions with the T&P Committee Chair (which has the broad role of evaluating COALS, AgriLife Research, and AgriLife Extension faculty, and that all faculty, as eligible, participate in the committee).

II. Selection of Faculty Mentors

A. Each new Assistant Professor is asked to select a minimum of one senior faculty mentor who can provide career management guidance throughout the period prior to a formal tenure decision and/or promotion to Associate Professor for non-tenure track faculty. Associate Professors may have mentors if they so choose. The mentor is considered a friend, colleague, and confidant, but is not necessarily an advocate. The mentor provides a third source of advice and guidance, in addition to the Department Head and T&P Committee Chair. The mentor provides an annual review of the faculty members CV, assists in and signs off on the annual report to the T&P Committee, and conducts at least one face-to-face annual meeting to discuss the person’s career progress.

III. Annual Reviews

A. Subsequent to submission of the Annual Faculty Achievement Report and Annual Plan of Work, the T&P Committee meets to provide an evaluation of all Assistant and Associate Professors. This meeting focuses on the primary areas teaching, research, and service, and/or Extension, as appropriate.

B. At least one week prior to the T&P Committee meeting, the Annual Faculty Achievement Report, Annual Plan of Work, and Curriculum Vita of all faculty being evaluated are made available to members of the T&P Committee. These documents are confidential. T&P Committee members are required to sign out a copy of these files to review the contents, or they may be accessed on a secure web site via an assigned password.

C. At the T&P Committee meeting, Assistant Professors are evaluated first by the Associate and Full Professors. During the review process, a summary of relevant statistics regarding the faculty member’s activities, prepared by the T&P Chair, are used as a point of discussion for each faculty member being evaluated.
Comments and concerns are discussed, and in the following weeks, all faculty under review are provided a detailed letter that outlines the issues discussed in the T&P meeting. The philosophy of the T&P Committee is to provide feedback about a faculty member’s performance in an effort to provide positive guidance towards eventual promotion and/or tenure. After evaluation of Assistant Professors, Associate Professors leave the room, and they are then evaluated by the Full Professors. Members of the T&P Committee are surveyed regarding the faculty member’s performance as being either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

D. All faculty members being reviewed are encouraged to discuss their T&P Committee evaluation letters with the chairperson of the T&P Committee, the Department Head and/or their mentor(s). Copies of the letters are provided to the Department Head, and if appropriate, the Extension Program Leader and/or off-campus Resident Director.

IV. Membership of the T&P Committee

A. All Associate and Full Professors (including AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension faculty) participate in the annual evaluation of Assistant Professors.

B. Only Full Professors evaluate Associate Professors (including AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension faculty).

C. Discussion is open, and voting is conducted by secret ballot. Written comments provided by T&P members who are not present are read as part of the discussion. Only eligible faculty who acknowledge in writing that they have reviewed a T&P packet will be allowed to vote; this becomes the committee for a particular candidate (University rules require that you have read the material before voting). The packet of a candidate is strengthened when the committee report states that all votes were from faculty that read the material.

- On campus faculty will be asked to sign a list acknowledging that they reviewed the material; off campus faculty may submit an email acknowledging that they reviewed the material (this includes AgriLife Research / AgriLife Extension)
- Votes in absentia by people acknowledging that they read the material are allowed.

D. The names of all members present are recorded at each meeting. Only members who acknowledge in writing that they have reviewed the applicant’s material are eligible to attend and vote.

E. The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the Department Head.

F. The Department Head may not attend or vote (the Head has a separate evaluation and vote).

G. Committee report: The T&P Committee Chair will prepare a report of all
meetings and circulate it to all eligible faculty for review. The University does not want minority reports, but rather want a single report that discusses both positive and negative votes. Thus, the report that goes forward reflects the sense of the committee.
-If faculty insists on preparing a minority report, the University requires that the report be signed.

V. **Issues Related to Teaching**

A. All new Assistant Professors with teaching College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (COALS) appointments are required to develop a Teaching Portfolio through the Center for Teaching Excellence.

B. Teaching performance is carefully evaluated each year through tracking student evaluations and comments solicited from peers.

C. Potential problems related to teaching performance are addressed by the end of the second full year in the faculty member’s career. If necessary, the faculty mentors or other peers are requested to provide helpful comments regarding ways to improve overall teaching quality. All teaching faculty are encouraged to attend teaching workshops, such as the Wakonse conferences.

D. The department will require mentors to attend at least one class per year taught by pre-tenure faculty and provide a written evaluation, so that the teaching evaluation will be more than a quantitative score based solely on student evaluations. These evaluations will become part of the T&P dossier.

VI. **Issues Related to Research and Extension**

A. Faculty members will establish a productive research and/or Extension program that has a support base from extramural sources.

B. Evidence of sustained productivity in terms of peer-reviewed publications is used as a primary indicator of a successful research program.

C. AgriLife Extension faculty are evaluated on the basis of their education programs, applied research, peer-reviewed and popular outreach publications, and service activities.

D. Off-campus AgriLife Research faculty are evaluated on the basis of their research, outreach, and service activities.

E. All faculty, including AgriLife Extension and AgriLife Research faculty, are expected to demonstrate grantsmanship and the ability to perform creative, scholarly activities.
VII. Issues Related to Service

A. As a rule, the department attempts to minimize committee service during the early years of an Assistant Professor’s career. Nevertheless, the faculty member is encouraged to participate in service outside the university, especially service related to the faculty member’s discipline.

B. Associate Professors are expected to demonstrate a broader range of service both within the university and in his or her discipline. This is considered essential for the development of a well-recognized program.

C. COALS, AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension faculty are expected to serve on committees within the department as well as to participate in their respective scientific societies.

D. Service activities include serving on departmental, college, university, and agency committees, reviewing journal articles or research proposals, editorships, state or national advisory panels, or serving as an officer or symposium chair for a scientific society. Service activities for those with AgriLife Extension appointments include serving on departmental, college, center, university and agency committees, serving on commodity/non-governmental organization committees and participating in their respective scientific societies. Extension activities (i.e. outreach education) can be service activities for those without AgriLife Extension appointments.

VIII. Tenure and Promotion Decisions

A. The department follows the basic guidelines provided by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Texas A&M University. For AgriLife Extension and AgriLife Research faculty, the agencies provide additional guidance.

B. Each faculty member under review for promotion and/or tenure is requested to provide a Tenure and Promotion Package that follows the guidelines outlined at http://dof.tamu.edu/admin/tp/tenure_guide.doc. The dossiers submitted to the WFSC T&P Committee must contain the following: 1) an updated CV; 2) copies of at least 3 papers that are considered most representative of his or her program; 3) a list of at least 3 names of potential external reviewers who do not have a long-term association with the faculty member. The member may present a list of individuals the member does not want as reviewers. The reasons need not be given for the names on this list. In addition, the faculty member will provide a statement of research, teaching, service and/or Extension philosophy and any other materials considered important. With the help of the department the member also provides materials related to student evaluation and the Teaching Portfolio.

C. Peer reviewers will consist of an equal number of individuals recommended by
the faculty member and those recommended by the T&P Committee and/or Department Head. Prior to receiving an official packet, each reviewer will be contacted and asked if he or she can provide a review in a given amount of time. If they agree, the packet will be sent to the reviewer along with a detailed statement regarding the areas to be addressed.

D. Peer reviewers are required to be representative of the faculty member’s discipline and should be senior faculty members or department heads of similar departments at peer institutions. In some instances, reviewers may be nationally-recognized individuals within the field of study at non-peer institutions.

E. After receiving and reviewing the peer reviews, the T&P Committee meets to solicit comments and vote on the recommendation for tenure and/or promotion. The results of this vote and the discussion are forwarded in writing to the department head. All T&P Committee members of the appropriate rank are allowed to vote, but the votes of tenured and non-tenured faculty are recorded separately. T&P Committee members may vote only after they have verified that they have reviewed the candidate’s dossier.

F. Evaluations: The University expects that a vote is based on standards set for departmental faculty, and is not based relative to the performance of other faculty. The university will not set standards, but is interested in the impact that a candidate has on research and teaching.

G. The remainder of the process is according to the explicit guidelines of COALS and TAMU, and where appropriate, AgriLife Extension and AgriLife Research.

H. Request for reclassification and appointment from a non-tenure track to a tenure-track position results in review of the candidate’s dossier and a vote for or against consideration for reclassification and appointment by the departmental tenure and promotion committee. A favorable vote by the departmental tenure and promotion committee signifies the department’s desire to expand the number of tenured and tenure-track FTEs in the department in such a way as to enhance or expand the expertise of the department’s faculty in a discipline in which the candidate has expertise. Following a favorable vote by the departmental tenure and promotion committee, the procedure for reclassification and appointment of the internal applicant from non-tenure track to tenure track in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences will be the same as that followed during a normal position search. That is, a position description will be developed, approved and advertised. As a minimum, advertisement will be on the jobs boards of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at TAMU. A full search and evaluation of the applicants, which will include the candidate requesting to be reclassified and appointed, will be conducted. Only the top applicants will be interviewed, which may or may not include the candidate seeking reclassification and appointment. The position will be offered to the best applicant if that individual is deemed
acceptable, a process that will consider input from the faculty, staff and students of the department, and the department head. Department members who are seeking a reclassification and appointment to a tenure-track position from a non tenure-track position should be advised that support for their current position may be withdrawn should they not be considered the best applicant for the new tenure-track position.

IX. Additional Considerations

A. All faculty will receive an annual face-to-face review and written evaluation by the Department Head. The Department Head will also review the position description of each faculty member as posted on Great Jobs and revise if necessary. The written evaluation, signed by the faculty member and the department head will be posted to Great Jobs. The Extension Program Leader or off-campus Resident Director will be involved in reviews of AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension faculty, as appropriate.

B. For faculty with joint appointments, the Department Head will insure that the Department Head of the unit with the minority appointment receives copies of documents and has the opportunity to comment on annual reviews.

C. All tenure-track faculty will have a “mid-term” review as per COALS and TAMU guidelines.

D. Should a faculty member receive 3 consecutive unsatisfactory reviews from either the T&P Committee or the Department Head, or in any combination, the University Post-Tenure Review process will begin.

E. Productivity: The University expects that the committee will consider the productivity for a candidate across their career, and not just during their time at TAMU; the committee need only decide what applies to a particular position. Thus, the university wants to look at the cumulative record.

F. Extensions of probation period: The University will consider but only if the request is made prior to the committee vote.

G. If it is a candidate’s mandatory year to move forward, the packet must complete the entire process. It cannot be stopped at any level for any reason, other than if a written letter of resignation from the candidate is received. The date of resignation does not have to be immediate.

H. If a candidate is moving forward early, the candidate does have the right to stop the process at any level. The candidate is not penalized by the university if the packet is denied at any level.

I. The University strongly recommends that a candidate for tenure or promotion
seek and follow the advice of peers before initiating an early request for tenure or any promotion.

X. Promotion and Evaluation Time Tables and Required Documents

1. Annual Evaluation Documents Required by All Faculty
   Tenure Track Faculty / AgriLife Research Faculty:
   Faculty Achievements Reports for previous fiscal year, Plan of Work for coming fiscal year, current position description, and updated C.V. due January 31 annually.

   AgriLife Extension Faculty
   Faculty Achievement Report for previous calendar year, Plan of Work for coming calendar year, and updated C.V. due January 15 annually.

Timing of Annual Faculty Evaluations
Spring Semester: DH reviews all COALS / AgriLife Research / faculty. T&P Committee reviews all COALS/AgriLife Research Assistant and Associate Professors.
Spring Semester: DH reviews all AgriLife Extension faculty. T&P Committee reviews all AgriLife Extension Assistant and Associate Professors.

T&P Committee Chair:
Spring Semester: Writes summary annual evaluation of each COALS/AgriLife Research faculty member reviewed by the T&P Committee. Delivers to reviewed faculty members (cc: Department Head) by May 15.
Spring Semester: Writes summary annual evaluation of each AgriLife Extension faculty member reviewed by the T&P Committee. Delivers to reviewed faculty member (cc: Department Head) by June 1.

2. Promotions
   Promotion Applicants: Turn in all materials by April 1; earlier submissions are encouraged.
   T&P Chair: Schedules meeting of T&P Committee to review promotion and tenure applications and, with T&P Committee, candidate, and Department Head, selects external reviewers by May 1.

   Collects review letters and candidate’s revised promotion packets by August 15. Schedules T&P Committee meeting for discussion and vote by first week in September.