Departmental Criteria for Promotion

Department of Geosciences
East Tennessee State University

This document discusses the process by which tenured members of the Department of Geosciences evaluate tenure-track or tenured candidates for promotion. It is intended to provide guidelines for the pursuit of promotion, and to present the metric used by the Department to evaluate applications. The Department recognizes that, as with tenure, a universal metric for decisions on granting or denying promotion is difficult to develop and apply. Consequently, candidates seeking promotion should work diligently to fulfill the requirements of their contract and to meet the Department’s demands for contributions to the three principle areas for which they are evaluated— teaching, research, and service. Statements about the purpose of promotion and an overview of the promotion process are provided below; followed by more detailed descriptions of these three categories for which promotion is evaluated.

What is Promotion?

From ETSU Faculty Handbook, on Employment, Promotion:

*Promotion in rank is recognition of past achievement of the individual being considered for promotion. In addition, the advancement in rank is recognition of future potential and a sign of confidence that the individual is capable of even greater accomplishments and of assuming greater responsibilities. The policy of the Tennessee Board of Regents is to make promotions strictly on consideration of merit tempered by university and fiscal considerations.*

Overview

There are two levels of promotion available: Associate Professor and Professor. Promotion is not given based on years of service but is based on performance beyond the regular job duties. To be considered for promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate must excel in Research and meet all regular duties outlined in the job description. To be considered for promotion to Professor, the Associate Professor must excel in at least two of the three principal areas and meet all the regular duties outlined in the job description.

The Department has basically four job descriptors related to the typical tenure-track lines: Teaching Faculty, Teaching Researcher, Research Faculty, and Research Extensive Faculty. These four can be abridged to two major job tracks: teaching and research. Most non-tenured faculty will be aligned with a Teaching Researcher job. The table provided below summaries the job descriptor in relation to duties to be accomplished, including the research deliverables which are divided into two Tiers. The general ratio of teaching to research will be determined by the Department Chair.

Evaluation for promotion will be in the principal areas of teaching, research, and service. It is clear that these areas are not entirely separable. Teaching often includes discussing the importance and limitations of research in the general fields of geology and geography and their sub-disciplines represented in the Department of Geosciences. Faculty-guided research at the undergraduate level involves instruction in principles specific to the programs in the Department and research techniques. The Department considers that research is one of the best forms of
instruction available, so it is important that candidates for promotion demonstrate effective teaching and produce quality research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>General Teaching Load Fall:Spr</th>
<th>% Time Allotted Teaching* Per semester</th>
<th>Research: Scholarly deliverables Expected at minimum 3-year average</th>
<th>Service %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer/Instructor</td>
<td>4:3 4:4</td>
<td>~92</td>
<td>Research: 0%</td>
<td>≥10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Faculty Tenure-track</td>
<td>3:3 3:2</td>
<td>~72</td>
<td>Research: 0-15%; None to some activity</td>
<td>≥10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Researcher Tenure-track</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>~45</td>
<td>Produce: one from each of Tier 1 and 2, or three from Tier 2. Plus some activity as mentor with graduate or undergraduate research</td>
<td>≥10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Faculty Tenure-track</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>~35</td>
<td>Produce: two from the Tier 1, and one from Tier 2, and active with graduate/undergraduate research, attends national and international meetings annually to present new research</td>
<td>≥10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Extensive Faculty Tenure-track</td>
<td>1:1.5</td>
<td>12 + Co-teach</td>
<td>Produce: three from Tier 1 and one from Tier 2 and active labs with graduates and undergraduates conducting research, short-time (2-3 yrs) graduation of MS, attends national and international meetings annually to present new research</td>
<td>≥10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator Tenure-track</td>
<td>1:1-1:1.5</td>
<td>~15</td>
<td>Produce: at least one from Tier 2.</td>
<td>~80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tier 1 Activity:** sole or within first 3 authorship on a manuscript to a well-respected peer-reviewed journal/monograph of national or international reputation; sole or co-author or editor to a peer-reviewed book/textbook; sole or within first 3 authorship on a major map production; sole or co- PI on a grant/contract proposal to a leading/significant external agency.

**Tier 2 Activity:** authorship is fourth or greater to a well-respected journal/monograph of national or international reputation; sole or co-author to a chapter in a published book/monograph; authorship is fourth or greater on a major map production; contributor PI (subcontractor) to an external grant proposal; PI on a continuation of an existing external grant; PI on an internal grant proposal.

Candidates for promotion must supply documentation supporting their levels of accomplishment in all areas of teaching, research, and service. In teaching, this would include high student and peer evaluations, development of new teaching methods and/or materials, or publications in education journals. In research this would include a number of papers published in peer reviewed journals, government and industry whitepapers, books, book chapters, conference presentations, and grant proposals (other options as approved by Chair). In service, this would include involvement in areas to the extent that they do not negatively impact on the
expected performance in the areas of teaching and research. Here one is looking for a continuing program of accomplishments.

**Teaching**
The candidate is required to submit an application demonstrating that he/she is an effective teacher. Effectiveness must be documented using standard metrics common in academia, especially at ETSU; specifically Student Assessment of Instruction (SAI) reports. The university also requires annual peer reviews of instructors by tenured ETSU faculty. In this case, faculty will attend candidate’s lectures, and provide written evaluations the candidate and chair. These evaluations must be included in any application for promotion. Those performing the peer reviews should focus on classroom presentation style, communication skills, teaching methodology, and student-faculty interaction.

**Research**
The Department provides release time for research-intense faculty, regardless of rank, and therefore expects the candidates to demonstrate productive research agendas. The primary outlet will be peer-reviewed journals. Publications as government and industry whitepapers can be of value. The Department further recognizes that research in pedagogy is important, so articles in educational journals are encouraged, though they may be considered “Teaching”. While the Department does not attempt to quantify the value of publications in different journals, it does expect faculty to publish in journals germane to their discipline. Faculty seeking promotion to higher rank are expected to publish in a greater diversity of venues.

In addition, the Department places an emphasis on the need to seek external funding to support the candidate’s research and that of undergraduate and graduate students. The Department looks favorably upon candidates developing creative ways to fund research, such as cost-leveraging with government agencies or public-private entities. Candidates are also strongly encouraged to pursue internal funding available at ETSU.

**Service**
The Department encourages service in the categories of:

- Department: serving on Departmental and academic committees, administrative duties, recruiting efforts, interacting with students and participating in field trips.
- College: serving on and participating in College level committees and functions, developing and exploring collaborative teaching and research opportunities across departments.
- University: serving on and participating in campus-wide committees and functions and exploring and developing multidisciplinary research and teaching opportunities.
- Discipline: includes reviewing grant proposals and papers for peer-reviewed journals, convening or otherwise participating in panel discussions, workshops, conferences, field camps, etc., giving lectures to similar academic departments at different universities.
- Community: interviews with news media, public speaking engagements outside mainstream academic settings— in civic club meetings, schools, etc.
- The advisement of undergraduate and graduate students is also within this category.
Additional Criteria

Here we discuss the criteria used to evaluate promotion that do not fit neatly in the categories of research, teaching and service. The Department reserves the right to augment its guidelines with those of the ETSU Faculty Handbook, Section 2.0 Employment, subsection 2.4 Policy on Promotion. The Committee may, for example, choose to consider candidate’s professional degrees, awards, certifications, and achievements. It may also consider staffing needs and the Candidate’s contribution to the objectives of the Department, the College of Arts and Science and ETSU. Additionally, it will weigh the candidate’s demonstrated willingness and ability to work effectively with colleagues to support the mission of the Department, the College of Arts and Sciences and the Institution.

1 see http://www.etsu.edu/senate/facultyhandbook/section2.aspx#facPromotion