

Department of Biology: Tenure and Promotion Guidelines and Procedures (12 July 2010)

GOALS

1. The Department of Biology is dedicated to creating a community of scholars whose members are, and are recognized to be, leaders in their specialty areas of research. We expect our colleagues to make contributions that advance the fields of scholarship in which they work.
2. The Department is dedicated to demonstrated and recognized teaching excellence and student mentoring both at graduate and undergraduate levels.
3. The Department is dedicated to service in support of its mission and its role within the college, university, and broader science community. We expect our colleagues to participate actively in service that enhances our departmental and institutional missions.

The granting of tenure and promotion represents a prediction of future performance, as well as recognition of past achievement. Tenure and promotion will be recommended by the Department if the candidate shows strong promise of a continuing record of scholarly excellence, strong teaching performance, and serious service contributions.

DOMAINS OF EVALUATION

A favorable decision on tenure and promotion requires strong evidence of contributions, impact, and recognition in: (1) research/scholarship; (2) teaching/mentoring; and (3) service. Excellence in the three domains must be demonstrated by a distinguished body of work, not by quantity alone. With due consideration of faculty assignments, outstanding performance in one of the three domains does not necessarily compensate for weakness in the others.

Research/Scholarship

For a person to be promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, it is expected that published work will provide evidence that the faculty member is already becoming a recognized scholar with a national reputation in his/her area(s) of specialization, with clear indications of promise to become a leading scholar in the years ahead. In addition to showing evidence of scholarship and research productivity, the candidate should also have secured extramural funding or at least have attempted to do so.

Promotions of “Assistants In,” “Associates In,” “Scientists”, and “Lecturers” are based on those components of the criteria for tenure track faculty that pertain to their particular assignments.

To be promoted from Associate Professor to Full Professor a faculty member must demonstrate his/her standing as an important, internationally recognized, and influential scholar in his/her areas of specialization.

Although work accomplished prior to an appointment at UF is evidence of productive scholarly activity, in most cases it is expected that any candidate seeking tenure or promotion will demonstrate similar scholarly productivity and promise at the University of Florida.

Indicators regarding the quality and impact of the candidate's scholarly work can derive from a range of possible sources. The faculty member's published work represents the first order of evidence about scholarly contributions. Excellence in research is manifested by the quality of the research program, its scientific soundness, its creativity, the outlets in which it is published, and the impact of the work on the field. Quantity must be interpreted in the context of the nature and scope of the work, recognizing variations as a result of the nature of the research topic, the research designs, and the areas of specialization.

External letters of evaluation by leading, independent scholars in the field, help to place this body of work within its disciplinary context, and provide important indicators of the scope and impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions and recognition within the field. Another type of external evaluation is evidence of competitive research grants applied for and/or awarded, but this evidence should be evaluated within the context of the necessity of such grants to maintaining a high quality program of research in the candidate's area. Other sorts of evidence of scholarly impact, the importance of which may also differ across areas, include: conference presentations; invited presentations; appointments to editorial boards; the election to offices in professional societies; and, the receipt of scholarly awards and honors or citations in major reviews and books. These sources of information, together with others, provide indicators of current scholarly standing and future scholarly promise.

Teaching/Mentoring

The second domain of evaluation is teaching and mentoring. Both the quality and impact of teaching and mentoring, at graduate and undergraduate levels, are important considerations. It is expected that faculty will participate in the graduate program by serving on graduate student supervisory committees and, when appropriate, serving as primary research mentor for graduate students. Beyond this, a wide range of indicators may serve as sources of information in relation to a candidate's teaching and mentoring contributions. These may include, but are not limited to: advising of undergraduate research students; the quality of classroom teaching (as reflected in syllabi, examinations, other course materials, peer evaluations, and student course evaluations, among others); participation in training grants (e.g., IGERT, SPICE, etc.); contributions to the educational programs of the department (e.g., the development of new courses or course materials); efforts to improve teaching; and, teaching-related publications, workshops given, and instructional grants. The extent to which the candidate has demonstrated a sustained commitment to teaching and to fulfilling the teaching needs and missions of the Department is also an important consideration.

Evidence for the impact of teaching and mentoring can include a wide range of factors. The demonstrated accomplishments of students, as reflected in graduation and employment, or accomplishments, awards, honors or recognitions received, may serve as a source of information in this regard. Any evidence of student learning, accomplishment, or recognition provides potential information regarding the candidate's teaching/mentoring impact, as do any recognitions received by the candidate for his or her teaching or mentoring contributions within, or outside, the context of the university.

Service

The third domain of evaluation is service. Both the quality and quantity of service is considered in relation to the department, college, and university, as well as the professional and local communities. We expect active participation in service that is essential to the successful operation of the department within its institutional context and its mission. Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are expected to make contributions primarily at the departmental level and to show evidence of developing contributions at other levels. Candidates for promotion to Professor are expected to show evidence of substantial service contributions not only at the departmental level, but also at broader institutional and professional levels. In evaluating service, a range of factors are considered that include, but are not limited to: participation in department, college, and university committees; editorships of professional books or journals; reviewing for publications and granting agencies; offices in professional organizations; tenure review for other institutions; and, other activities related to biology within the broader professional, disciplinary, or community contexts that support the departmental and institutional missions.