

Statement of Departmental Standards for Tenure (Regents Policy on *Faculty Tenure* Section 7.12), Annual Reviews, Post-Tenure Reviews, and Promotion for Probationary and Tenured Faculty

Department of Plant Biology

Approved by the Plant Biology Faculty in April, 2008

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I. Introductory Statement

This document is the departmental statement as required by the Regents Policy on *Faculty Tenure* Section 7.12 (See Appendix A). This document describes with more specificity the indices and standards that will be used to evaluate whether candidates meet the general criteria in *Faculty Tenure* Section 7.11, effective June 8, 2007. For a complete perspective, the reader is advised to review Section 7 in its entirety (<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/FacultyTenure.pdf>).

This document has also been expanded to include the criteria for annual reviews of all faculty, promotion to Associate Professor and Professor (Section 9.2 of *Faculty Tenure*) and criteria for post-tenure review (Section 7a of *Faculty Tenure*).

II. Departmental Mission Statement

Knowledge of basic plant biology enriches our society and advances the applied sciences. The mission of the Department of Plant Biology is to increase knowledge in the basic plant sciences by engaging in fundamental research from the molecular to the ecosystem level; to educate and train undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral students; and to serve the community.

III. Criteria for Conferral of Indefinite Tenure

The criteria for the conferral of indefinite tenure for the University of Minnesota are provided in Section 7.11 of *Faculty Tenure* (See Appendix B).

To achieve tenure, a probationary faculty member must establish a distinguished record of academic achievement that is the foundation of a national reputation. As part of this foundation, accomplishment of the mission of the Department requires that a probationary faculty member be accomplished in teaching and research. A probationary faculty member should demonstrate superior performance in one area and at least satisfactory performance in the other. In addition, the pattern of performance should indicate, by its consistency, that the faculty member is likely to contribute to both activities during the remainder of a tenured career at levels no less proficient. The awarding of indefinite tenure suggests that the probationary faculty records show strong promise of her or his achieving promotion to professor.

Judgment of superior and satisfactory performance in teaching and research is based on a balance of qualitative and quantitative factors, as detailed below. Performance in research is judged especially by comparison with national standards, whereas performance in teaching is judged more in comparison with peers within the University.

In the special case of a faculty member whose appointment is less than full time, the standards for quality of performance expected for tenure are the same as for full-time appointees, but the quantity of work expected is adjusted to match the percent for appointment. In making decisions about tenure for such an individual, the faculty must take special care that judgments of quality are not biased by the reduced expectation of quantity.

A. Teaching. To aid in judging the quality of teaching, the Department requires evaluation of every course taught by each faculty member. To be considered superior, the teaching of a faculty member should be recognized using an appropriate subset of the following criteria for its high quality in several ways.

Superiority may be judged by delivery of effective courses as reflected in course syllabi; examples of student assignments and assessments and preparation of students for subsequent courses (where applicable); high scores on student evaluations of courses; a clearly articulated teaching philosophy that addresses student learning of course material and how to achieve this in a particular course; teaching award(s); testimonials by students and faculty; design of effective new courses; major contributions to the organization or improvement of curricula; leadership in the advising of students; and dedication to providing seminars, colloquia, and honors courses beyond normal teaching assignments.

Superior teaching may also be recognized at the national or international level by publications on teaching in peer-reviewed journals; authorship of one or more widely adopted textbooks; invitations to lecture, participate in symposia, or write reviews on education in biology; organization of short courses or workshops attracting national attendance; and extramural letters of recommendation with favorable mention of contributions to education of outstanding training of students. While various kinds of evidence may contribute to the documentation of superior teaching, it is expected that a significant portion of that evidence will relate to actual classroom teaching performance.

Satisfactory teaching will be judged by: competent performance of teaching duties; average to good scores on student evaluations of courses; successful mentoring of one or more students in Masters or Ph.D. training; and satisfactory preparation of students for subsequent courses.

B. Research. To be considered superior, the research of a faculty member should be recognized nationally; the faculty member should be recognized as an intellectual leader in his or her research area. National recognition may be documented by: publication in peer reviewed journals in quality and frequency typical of his or her research field; citation of work by other scientists; obtaining funding from peer-reviewed, external grant(s); extramural invitations to present lectures, participation in symposia, or invitations to write reviews; supervision of Ph.D. students who obtain attractive postdoctoral or faculty positions; attraction of postdoctoral students or visiting faculty from other universities; and letters of recommendation containing favorable comparisons with other nationally prominent scientists at similar stages in their careers. Probationary faculty are expected to annotate their curriculum vitae to indicate: a) their degree of intellectual involvement and leadership as P.I.s or Co- P.I.s on multiple investigator grants; and b) the nature and amount (percentage) of involvement in the design and performance of the research and manuscript preparation of peer reviewed papers by multiple investigators.

Satisfactory performance in research will be judged by: regular publication in peer-reviewed journals; successful mentoring of one or more students and/or post-doctoral students through graduate training involving research; success in obtaining external financing of a research program; presentation of research results at scientific meetings and other research institutions; and letters of recommendation attesting to the high quality of research contributions.

In judging the frequency of research publication, care will be taken to weight each publication by its quality, by its comprehensiveness, by the time required to obtain results in the particular area of inquiry, and by the level of funding that is potentially available to support research in that area.

C. Service. The individual's participation in the governance of the institution and other services to the University, the Department, and the College of Biological Sciences is expected and will be taken into consideration, but exceptional service is not a basis for awarding tenure.

In addition, service to professional organizations, learned societies, state and federal agencies, and to the community, when it is within the faculty member's academic expertise and the mission of the academic unit, will be taken into consideration, but such service is also not a basis for awarding tenure.

IV. Procedures for Reviewing the Annual Performance of Probationary Faculty

The Department complies with the *Procedures for Reviewing Candidates for Promotion and/or Tenure: Tenure-Track or Tenured Faculty*, issued October 15, 2007, as provided by

Section 7 of the Regulations Concerning Faculty Tenure. Several of these sections are listed below as to note the general importance of these sections in *Faculty Tenure* (FT) and in the *Procedures* (P) document:

1. Explaining the process to the tenure candidate early in the probationary period (FT 7.12; P4)
2. Holding an annual conference with the tenure candidate (FT 7.2; P 8)
3. Informing candidates of options to stop the tenure clock (FT 5.5 P 7)
4. Making the tenure decision in a timely fashion (FT 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 6.2, 7.3)
5. Departmental collection of information on a candidate's performance (FT 7.4a; P 6)
6. Annual review by the tenured faculty (FT 7.2; P 7)
7. Preparation of the promotional file for tenure decisions (FT 7.4a; P 9, 10, 12)
8. Attendance at tenure meetings (FT 7.4b; P 2)
9. Voting eligibility (FT 7.4b; P 2, 3)
10. Procedures for voting (FT 7.4c, d; P 2)
11. Reporting actions taken on tenure (FT 7.4e,f; P 2)

A. Faculty mentors. Faculty hired into the Department of Plant Biology on a tenure track will be assigned a tenured faculty member of the Department as a mentor. The mentor assigned to a probationary faculty member will be made upon the advice of the faculty shortly after arrival of a new faculty member into the Department. This arrangement will be informal and can be changed at any time if a new faculty member desires. The mentor will be expected to meet occasionally each year with the new probationary faculty member to discuss progress toward tenure.

B. Annual Reviews. As per Section 7.2 of the Tenure Code, annual reviews of probationary faculty members are expected every year. Probationary faculty members will be reviewed in the areas of teaching, research and service. Probationary faculty members with partial appointments in other programs or departments (*e.g.*, the Bell Museum) also will be evaluated by their respective program or departments. Annual reports are expected to be completed by **1 February** of each year. These reports serve two functions: a) evaluation of progress toward tenure; and b) evaluation for merit raises.

Annual reports are expected to be detailed and complete. The annual reports are not only used for the two functions as noted above, but also as a source of information for the college and other University units. For example, data might be used to satisfy requests concerning outreach or international activities, special awards and achievements, grant revenues for university or national surveys, and student credit hours generated by the department.

Submission of the annual report (called a Biographical Sketch) will follow an approved format available from the departmental office. It should be submitted as an electronic copy to the Principal Administrative Specialist (front office). Please note the following details:

- In the section on grant support, provide information on indirect AND direct costs of research grants.

- In the section on teaching, provide information about total course enrollment and the proportion of actual teaching hours accomplished if the course is team taught in order to calculate student credit hours generated by the department. When tallying the proportion taught, remember to account for the proportion taught by teaching assistants as well as colleagues.
- Quantitative data should be entered for the last **three** years.
- A statement not exceeding three single-spaced pages of type to summarize activities for the last three calendar years. The summary should report teaching, research (including international activities), service (including outreach activities), and activities associated with partial appointments in other programs (e.g. curatorial activities, etc.). This summary assists committees and the Head by highlighting notable accomplishments, new research or teaching directions, extra efforts in teaching or service, or recent awards. In addition, please end the statement with:

- a) Academic goals for the up-coming academic year; and
- b) Professional development needs.

These latter two points will be discussed with the Head at annual spring meetings.

- Reprints of recent publications should be appended to the statement for inclusion in the permanent file of each faculty member.
- Teaching evaluations for the year will be photocopied by the office staff for review by review committees and the Head.

C. Rating of Progress Toward Tenure. The following rating system is used by the Documentation, Promotion and Tenure Committee for progress toward tenure (approved by tenured faculty on 4 March 2004):

Exceptional: Truly superlative progress; a candidate for an early tenure decision if an exceptional rating is given in multiple years.

Very good: Strong progress. The candidate is on track, with no deficiencies.

Satisfactory: Adequate progress, although there are some areas that the candidate should give particular attention to improving in the next year.

Marginal: The candidate has made progress in some areas, but without improvement would be in danger of a negative tenure decision

Unsatisfactory: The candidate is deficient in multiple areas, and early dismissal is a possible consideration.

The departmental Documentation, Promotion and Tenure Committee will draft the evaluation of probationary faculty toward progress for tenure. In late February, the tenured faculty will be presented with the progress report and discuss the case before the final report is written. The Department Head will meet with individual junior faculty in early March prior to the transmission of final reports to the College in mid- to late-March.

The departmental Consultative Committee will evaluate annual reports for merit raises prior to spring break. The Department Head will make salary recommendations to the Dean based on Consultative Committee evaluations prior to the end of the semester. Probationary faculty will be notified of merit ratings late in the spring semester. A letter will be sent by the Head at a later time alerting faculty of salary adjustments after approval by the Dean.

V. *Extending the Probationary Period*

Probationary faculty may make a request to the Head to extend the probationary period or “stop the tenure clock” for childbirth, adoption, caregiver responsibilities, or faculty illness or injury in accordance with Section 5.5 of *Faculty Tenure* (See Appendix C.).

When reviewing probationary faculty who have elected to stop the tenure clock, criteria for promotion and tenure **are no different** than criteria for those who do not have an extension on their tenure clock.

VI. *Preparation of Tenure/Promotion Documentation*

A. Preparation of documentation. The faculty mentor, the Head, and the Documentation, Promotion and Tenure Committee will assist in preparing the documentation for tenure/promotion according to the standards set by the College of Biological Sciences. Voting faculty are expected to review these documents prior to voting on tenure/promotion. The candidate is given the opportunity to review and/or provide written comment on the documentation before the faculty vote is taken, and again before the documentation is forwarded to the Dean and the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. All additions to the documentation after it leaves the department are to be shared with the candidate.

B. Letters of evaluation for tenure/promotion. Ten letters of external evaluation are included as part of the tenure/promotion documentation in the Department of Plant Biology. The Documentation, Promotion and Tenure Committee in conjunction with the Head will ask the candidate for suggestions for letter writers, and will independently add their own suggestions (and be the final authority in choosing letter writers), in support of the candidate for tenure/promotion. Additionally, four letters of evaluation can be requested from faculty members at the University of Minnesota. The majority of the letters will be requested from respected peers outside of the University who do *not* have a special connection to the candidate (such as past former advisors or advisees) but who can independently evaluate the candidate’s growing national or international intellectual reputation. A maximum of 14 letters (external and internal), selected by the P & T Committee upon approval of the faculty will be forwarded to the College and may include positive as well as negative letters concerning tenure/promotion. (See Section 12 of the *Procedures for Reviewing Candidates for Promotion and/or Tenure: Tenure-Track or Tenured Faculty.*)

C. Other letters of evaluation. In addition to the letters noted above, two other letters will accompany the documentation for promotion before transmittal to the Dean. These are: a) the Documentation, Promotion and Tenure Committee will write a letter to the Dean supporting the candidate’s application after presentation of the application to the full tenured faculty; and b) the Head will write a letter reporting the vote of the faculty, the nature of the discussion at the faculty tenure meeting, and his/her independent evaluation of the candidate’s case for tenure.

VII. Statement of Goals and Expectations for Tenured Faculty

Tenured faculty in the Department of Plant Biology are expected to conduct research, educate students, and to contribute service to the University and the public. Most faculty are expected to devote approximately 45% of their efforts to research, 40% to teaching, and 15% to service and administration. However, given that faculty roles may change over time, effort devoted to these specific areas may change substantially from year to year. These changes are to be discussed with the Head at their annual meeting.

Faculty holding partial appointments in the Department are expected to perform comparable work in proportion to their percentage appointment. Special allowances may need to be considered for faculty who hold substantial partial appointments in other units of the University.

The goal of faculty research is discovery of new information. Documentation of discovery generally occurs by publication in peer reviewed scientific journals but may occur in other forms such as formal reports to governmental funding agencies. The criteria used to evaluate faculty research efforts are outlined in section III.B of this document.

The Department expects that all faculty will teach classroom-based undergraduate and/or graduate courses each year. The total number of semester credit hours taught should average 3 or more hours, and be comparable to other departments in the College of Biological Sciences. Faculty may be involved in mentoring undergraduate and graduate students as part of their teaching duties. The quality of classroom teaching will be evaluated by peer review and student evaluations. Additional methods for evaluating teaching are outlined in section III.A of this document.

Service activity may include public outreach and work with state, national or international scientific and governmental organizations. Administration includes membership in Departmental, Collegiate, Graduate Program and University governance committees or other administrative responsibilities within the University. All faculty must contribute in the area of faculty governance because the University is largely governed and run by the faculty.

The effort devoted by individual faculty members to research, teaching, service and administration may deviate from the norms described above. Significant changes in an individual's efforts should be undertaken when doing so will benefit the welfare of the individual and the Department.

VIII. Promotion to Associate Professor or Professor

Note: Hiring of regular faculty in the Department of Plant Biology is at the level of Assistant Professor or higher.

A. Promotion to Associate Professor. The recommendation to promote to this rank is concomitant with a decision to grant tenure. Standards for tenure are set forth in Section III above.

B. Promotion to Professor.

The criteria for promotion to Professor for the University of Minnesota are provided in Section 9.2 of *Faculty Tenure*. (See Appendix D). For promotion to Professor, in addition to criteria used for appointments to Assistant and Associate Professor, evidence is sought for:

1. A recognized international reputation as shown, for example, by invitations to international symposia, election to prestigious scientific organizations, editorships, or holding of offices in international societies.
2. Letters from authorities in the candidate's field assessing the candidate's scientific contributions, particularly to determine whether the candidate is among the intellectual leaders in his/her field.
3. Establishment of a research program for pre- and post-doctoral trainees that has resulted in placing trainees in academic and other positions in their fields.

IX. Procedures for the Annual Review of Tenured Faculty (Post-tenure Reviews)

Annual reviews of tenured faculty do not differ substantially from reviews of probationary faculty as outlined above in Section V, B., *i.e.*, they will submit a Biographical Sketch to the Consultative Committee as do probationary faculty for the last three years of their work.

Annual reviews of tenured faculty will be conducted by the Departmental Consultative Committee, a committee composed of three tenured and elected members of the faculty who serve staggered three-year terms. The review will normally be conducted in the spring during its annual deliberations on faculty accomplishments and compensation. If, during these deliberations, both the Department Head and a majority of the Consultative Committee find that a faculty member's performance is substantially below the goals and expectations outlined above, the Committee and the Head will send a letter to the faculty member, stating that finding. The letter will be signed by the Head and by the chair of the Committee, it will specify the deficiencies, and will set a time period (usually by the next annual review) during which the faculty member should address the identified problems. Both the Department Head and the elected committee will work with the faculty member to improve performance during that time.

If the tenured faculty member has not improved performance to meet the goals and expectations of the department as specified in the letter cited above in the time period designated, the Head and the elected committee, the Head and the elected committee may jointly request that the Dean of the College of Biological Sciences assemble a special review committee according to Section 7a.3 of *Faculty Tenure*.

Appendix A

7.12 Departmental Statement. [6] Each department or equivalent academic unit must have a document that specifies (1) the indices and standards that will be used to determine whether candidates meet the threshold criteria of subsection 7.11 (“General Criteria” for the awarding of indefinite tenure) and (2) the indices and standards that will be used to determine whether candidates meet the threshold criteria of subsection 9.2 (“Criteria for Promotion to Professor”). The document must contain as an appendix the text and footnotes of subsections 7.11 and 9.2, and must be consistent with the criteria given there but may exceed them. Each departmental statement must be approved by a faculty vote (including both tenured and probationary members), the dean, and other appropriate academic administrators, including the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The chair or head of each academic unit must provide each probationary faculty member with a copy of the Departmental Statement at the beginning of the probationary service.

Appendix B

7.11 General Criteria. What the University of Minnesota seeks above all in its faculty members is intellectual distinction and academic integrity. The basis for awarding indefinite tenure to the candidates possessing these qualities is the determination that each has established and is likely to continue to develop a distinguished record of academic achievement that is the foundation for a national or international reputation or both [3] This determination is reached through a qualitative evaluation of the candidate's record of scholarly research or other creative work, teaching, and service [4]. The relative importance of these criteria may vary in different academic units, but each of the criteria must be considered in every decision [5]. Demonstrated scholarly or other creative achievement and teaching effectiveness must be given primary emphasis; service alone cannot qualify the candidate for tenure. Interdisciplinary work, public engagement, international activities and initiatives, attention to questions of diversity, technology transfer, and other special kinds of professional activity by the candidate should be considered when applicable. The awarding of indefinite tenure presupposes that the candidate's record shows strong promise of his or her achieving promotion to professor.

[3] "Academic achievement" includes teaching as well as scholarly research and other creative work. The definition and relative weight of the factors may vary with the mission of the individual campus.

[4] The persons responsible and the process for making this determination are described in subsections 7.3 through 7.6.

"Scholarly research" must include significant publications and, as appropriate, the development and dissemination by other means of new knowledge, technology, or scientific procedures resulting in innovative products, practices, and ideas of significance and value to society.

"Other creative work" refers to all forms of creative production across a wide range of disciplines, including, but not limited to, visual and performing arts, design, architecture of structures and environments, writing, media, and other modes of expression.

"Teaching" is not limited to classroom instruction. It includes extension and outreach education, and other forms of communicating knowledge to both registered University students and persons in the extended community, as well as supervising, mentoring, and advising students.

"Service" may be professional or institutional. Professional service, based on one's academic expertise, is that provided to the profession, to the University, or to the local, state, national, or international community. Institutional service may be administrative, committee, and related contributions to one's department or college, or the University. All faculty members are expected to engage in service activities, but only modest institutional service should be expected of probationary faculty.

[5] Indefinite tenure may be granted at any time the candidate has satisfied the requirements. A probationary appointment must be terminated when the appointee fails to satisfy the criteria in the last year of probationary service and may be terminated earlier if the appointee is not making satisfactory progress within that period toward meeting the criteria.

Appendix C

5.5 Exception For New Parent Or Caregiver, Or for Personal Medical Reasons. The maximum period of probationary service will be extended by one year at the request of a probationary faculty member:

1. On the occasion of the birth of that faculty member's child or adoptive/foster placement of a child with that faculty member; or
2. When the faculty member is a major caregiver for a family member[2] who has an extended serious illness, injury, or debilitating condition. A faculty member may use this provision no more than two times; or
3. When the faculty member has an extended serious illness, injury, or debilitating condition.

The request for extension must be made in writing within one year of the events giving rise to the claim and no later than June 30 preceding the year a final decision would otherwise be made on an appointment with indefinite tenure for that faculty member.

Appendix D

9.2 Criteria for Promotion to Professor. The basis for promotion to the rank of professor is the determination that each candidate has (1) demonstrated the intellectual distinction and academic integrity expected of all faculty members, (2) added substantially to an already distinguished record of academic achievement, and (3) established the national or international reputation (or both) ordinarily resulting from such distinction and achievement [8]. This determination is reached through a qualitative evaluation of the candidate's record of scholarly research or other creative work, teaching, and service [9]. The relative importance of these criteria may vary in different academic units, but each of the criteria must be considered in every decision. Interdisciplinary work, public engagement, international activities and initiatives, attention to questions of diversity, technology transfer, and other special kinds of professional activity by the candidate should be considered when applicable. But the primary emphasis must be on demonstrated scholarly or other creative achievement and on teaching effectiveness, and service alone cannot qualify the candidate for promotion.

[8] "Academic achievement" includes teaching as well as scholarly research and other creative work. The definition and relative weight of the factors may vary with the mission of the individual campus. Not being promoted to the rank of professor will not in itself result in special post-tenure review of a tenured associate professor.

[9] The persons responsible for this determination are the full professors in the unit who are eligible to vote. The outcome of the vote is either promotion to the rank of professor or continuation in rank as an associate professor. The procedures for voting are identical to those outlined in Section 7.4 for the granting of indefinite tenure, the nondisclosure of grounds for the decision (Section 7.5), and the review of recommendations (Section 7.6). In addition, a petition to the Judicial Committee for review of a recommendation of continuation in rank as an associate professor follows the procedures specified in Section 7.7 for decisions about promotion to associate professor and conferral of indefinite tenure.