



Office of the Provost

Department of Biology

Promotion and Tenure Evaluation Guidelines

Approved: 2021

Office of the Provost
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BIOLOGY Department

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

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A. Overview:

Promotion and tenure applications are submitted when time in rank is achieved (*Faculty Handbook*, Section III.E.6) and are evaluated on Teaching, Professional Service, and Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications as described in the *JMU Faculty Handbook* Section

III.E. (*and see below*). To advance from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor the applicant must obtain an "Excellent" rating in one area, typically either Teaching or Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications, and at least "Satisfactory" in the others. To advance from Associate Professor to Professor, the applicant must obtain an "Excellent" rating in two categories and at least "Satisfactory" in the other.

Per *Faculty Handbook*:

III.E.6.b.(1) The faculty member may apply for promotion, or the AUPAC or AUH may nominate a faculty member for promotion. Written nomination must be made by September 1 to the AUH. The faculty member shall be informed if the AUPAC or AUH has nominated the faculty member, and shall have the option to accept or decline the nomination without prejudice. The faculty member who wishes to be considered for promotion shall submit a summary of activities and accomplishments in the areas of teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service to the AUH and AUPAC by October 1. Failure by the faculty member to submit a summary of activities and accomplishments by the October 1 deadline shall constitute a refusal of a nomination or withdrawal of an application, and no consideration of promotion is required.

B. Promotion and Tenure Guidelines:

For candidates applying for the award of promotion and tenure, the fundamental judgment of promise of future accomplishment will be coupled with a candidate's accumulated record. The expectation is that activities that lead to a positive promotion or tenure result will at least continue if not increase in the future. Promotion/tenure should not be the goal but rather something earned for a continuum of contributions during the period in rank. The candidate is not measured against a checklist. Rather the evaluators try to assess the qualities of mind and performance, which are deemed appropriate to support a recommendation for the award of promotion or tenure.

As PAC membership changes over a period of years, the PAC members cannot be familiar with the accumulated, multi-year progress and accomplishments of a candidate for promotion and/or tenure. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the candidate to submit a comprehensive summary of all materials to be considered. These should be organized according to the three areas of evaluation: Teaching, Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications, and Professional Service. The broad criteria, as specified in *Faculty Handbook* Section III.E.6 (promotion) and III.E.7 (tenure), will be applied by the PAC according to the rank for which promotion or tenure is sought, and evaluation will be indicated as Excellent, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory in each area. It is also recognized that some activities may overlap and contribute to more than one of the areas evaluated.

C. Criteria for Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-track Faculty at Rank of Assistant or Associate Professor:

I. Teaching

Faculty members should place a very high priority on teaching excellence and should demonstrate a commitment to working with students at either or both undergraduate and graduate levels. Our concept of teaching is a holistic one. Not only does it include activities that occur in lecture and laboratory settings but it also includes activities that occur outside of the above more formal interactions with students. While this student interaction may take many forms, one activity that is expected is for faculty to extend their teaching to include mentoring students in research projects.

Examples of information to be reviewed in evaluating teaching effectiveness include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Formal student evaluations (or other evidence of formative use of student feedback), from a broad spectrum of courses offered, should be presented. Evaluation forms approved by the departmental faculty (this may include questions added by faculty) should be used.
- B. Curriculum development as evidenced by such things as course re-design, embedding research into teaching, new course development, etc.
- C. Evidence submitted should indicate that new/or better methods to improve teaching are being sought, have been implemented or are used on a continuing basis. An example of such evidence would be active participation in workshops, including those sponsored by CFI. In all instances, the way in which the materials and/or methods have been integrated into courses should be explained and self-evaluated.
- D. Research is an important endeavor and plays a significant role in supporting the teaching process. It is an invaluable experience for the student. Mentoring students in research, including dissemination of the research by students through external presentations, should be part of the faculty member's teaching efforts.
- E. Academic advising is an integrated and complex process designed to facilitate student growth and development. All faculty in the Department are expected to participate in the advising process as directed.

II. Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications

The Department expects its faculty members to have a research program and to demonstrate a continuing involvement in these activities. For a research program to be supportive of the goals of the department, it will include JMU undergraduate, and possibly graduate, student participation. Submission of external grant proposals is expected, and complete information should be provided for both successful and unsuccessful applications.

Faculty members must present evidence of ongoing publication of their scholarly activities and an active research program involving students. This research must reflect activities performed at JMU. Publication should be in peer-reviewed research journals, which are recognized as standard for their particular discipline. Books, book chapters in edited volumes, and textbooks are included in this

category. Faculty are expected to present research results as posters and talks at professional meetings, conferences or workshops, or as an invited speaker. Student participation in external presentations and publications is expected.

Collaborative research with other researchers in biology or other disciplines is valued and encouraged, but such activities should complement, not replace, leadership of their own program.

Membership and participation in professional organizations is expected. Editing or reviewing papers, manuscripts or grant proposals, service on review panels, or receipt of honors or fellowships are valued, as these are evidence of acceptance by peers.

III. Professional Service

The term "service" is the application of a faculty member's scholarly and professional expertise, both on and off campus, to the enhancement of the mission of the University, the faculty member's profession, and the community, both locally and beyond. In considering the definition of service, it should be noted that, with some exceptions, service to religious, political or community organizations typically should not be considered in the evaluation process for tenure and promotion.

Examples of activities included under service are:

1. service carried out as a member or chair of a committee appointed or elected at the department, college, or university level
2. representative of the college or JMU for an external organization
3. reviewer of manuscripts, books and grants
4. service as a member of an accrediting agency
5. advice solicited by the public regarding some biological problem
6. participation in, or holding office in, professional biological or other research organizations
7. community engagement activities such as organizing workshops, training sessions, science fairs and forays
8. civic engagement as a member of an advisory committee or board
9. professional presentations to public school groups, civic organizations or radio/TV appearances which call upon expertise in the biological sciences
10. adviser to student organizations
11. special assignments such as maintaining departmental or university collections
12. writing letters of recommendation for students

To meet the satisfactory standard in service faculty must demonstrate department/university citizenship, professional activity and engagement with the community.

The PAC recognizes that certain services are more demanding than others, and the applicant should indicate the extent of effort devoted to service especially if an activity was exceptionally demanding.

IV. Professionalism

We value and expect good departmental citizenship. The behavior of any single faculty member

reflects on the entire department, college and university. Therefore, it is essential that all faculty continuously conduct themselves in accord with the highest expectations of professional behavior (*Faculty Handbook*, Section III.A.).

V. References

A list of referees who can address the candidate's teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, or professional service must be provided to the Academic Unit Head by August 15. The Academic Unit Head will contact at least 3 of these referees for letters. For each referee, a description of their relationship to the candidate should be provided. For each promotion, two of the referees may be JMU colleagues, but must be outside of the Department of Biology. At a minimum, the list should include external colleagues familiar with the applicant's specific contributions in the areas of scholarly achievement/professional qualifications and/or professional service. This list may also include former students that are currently well-established professionals (minimum time since graduation from JMU or another institution of ~ 10 years) but should not include more recent graduates or current students.

To advance from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, the applicant must provide the names of three referees. To advance from Associate Professor to Professor, the applicant must provide the names of six referees.

VI. Conclusions

Faculty members, during their period in rank, may, in any given year, vary their emphasis between teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service. Variable distribution of teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service might occur if one were given a special responsibility or if the individual had a special project on which to focus. This is based on the idea that it is difficult to maintain significant contributions in all three areas of evaluation all the time. Plans for reallocation of effort must be approved by the Academic Unit Head beforehand, either through the Faculty Anticipated Activities plan or other written documentation in the faculty member's record, in order to determine if adjustments in departmental programs are required to accommodate these changes and if the request requires higher administrative approval. However, a person recommended for tenure or promotion will have shown, during their time in rank, a substantive commitment to all three areas: teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications and professional service.

D. Early Promotion to Associate Professor and/or Tenure or Early Promotion to Full Professor:

Proposals for early promotion and tenure are considered extraordinary actions. It is not in the best interest of a candidate or of the institution to propose candidates for tenure or promotion ahead of schedule unless the case is very well justified.

Faculty typically should have completed 5 years within academic rank to apply for a promotion. When a tenure-track instructional faculty member is hired, the agreed probationary period preceding consideration for tenure is stated in the initial employment contract. Applications made prior to the

penultimate year of the probationary period (or after 5 years in rank as associate professor when applying for full professor) may be considered but will receive favorable review only upon presentation of compelling evidence of accomplishment by the faculty member (*Faculty Handbook*, Section III.E.7.b).

To present a compelling case for early promotion to Associate Professor or tenure, a faculty member must be evaluated by the Academic Unit Head and PAC as excellent in two of three categories. To present a compelling case for early promotion to full professor, a faculty member must be evaluated by the Academic Unit Head and PAC as exemplary in all three categories. A faculty member applying for early tenure or promotion to Associate or Full Professor must be recognized as a preeminent national scholar, as attested by at least three external review letters solicited by the PAC and Academic Unit Head. These criteria for early tenure and/or promotion apply to all faculty members except individuals who have an abbreviated tenure clock specified in their contract.

External letter writers will be asked to comment confidentially on the specific rationale for an early promotion. The Academic Unit Head and the PAC must also specifically address this issue in their letters accompanying the application. All external references will be confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

E. Promotion of Renewable Term Appointment Faculty at Rank of Assistant Professor

Promotion guidelines will follow those for tenure/tenure track faculty, taking into consideration the greater teaching loads assigned for these faculty when evaluating scholarly achievement/professional qualifications and professional service. To advance from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor the applicant must obtain an "Excellent" rating in teaching and at least "Satisfactory" in scholarly achievement/professional qualifications and professional service.

I. Teaching

Faculty members should place a very high priority on teaching excellence and should demonstrate a commitment to working with students at either, or both, the undergraduate and graduate levels. Our concept of teaching is a holistic one. Not only does it include activities that occur in lecture and laboratory settings but it also includes activities that occur outside of these more formal interactions with students. Faculty are expected to extend their teaching to include mentoring or co-mentoring of students in scholarly activity. For coordinators, this could include mentoring of undergraduate lab assistants.

Examples of information to be reviewed in evaluating teaching effectiveness include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Formal student evaluations (or other evidence of formative use of student input) of course(s) offered should be presented. Evaluation forms approved by the departmental faculty (this may include questions added by faculty) should be used.
- B. Descriptions of course re-design, new course development or substantial improvement to existing courses.
- C. Evidence that indicates that new/or better methods to improve teaching are being sought, have been implemented or are used on a continuing basis. An example of such evidence would be active participation in workshops, including those sponsored by CFI. In all instances, the way in which the materials and/or methods have been integrated into courses should be explained and self-evaluated.
- D. Evidence of mentoring students in research either independently or in collaboration with other faculty members, including dissemination of the research by students through external presentations.
- E. Participation in academic advising. Academic advising is an integrated and complex process designed to facilitate student growth and development. All faculty in the Department are expected to participate in the advising process as directed.

II. Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications

Faculty members will need to present evidence of publication (with or without student co- authors) of their scholarly activities at JMU involving students. This could be in collaboration with faculty members within the biology department, with faculty from other departments at JMU or with faculty from other universities or institutions. This could include scholarship of teaching and learning.

Publications (primary as author or co-author) should be in peer-reviewed journals. Books, book chapters in edited volumes and textbooks could be included in this category.

Presentations of results as posters and talks at conferences are expected (either by faculty, students, or faculty with students).

III. Professional Service

The term "service," is the application of a faculty member's scholarly and professional expertise, both on and off campus, to the enhancement of the mission of the University, the faculty member's profession and the community, both locally and beyond. In considering the definition of service, it should be noted that, with some exceptions, service to religious, political or community organizations typically should not be considered in the evaluation process for promotion.

Examples of activities included under service are:

1. service carried out as a member or chair of a committee at the department, college or university level
2. representative of the college or JMU for an external organization
3. reviewer of manuscripts, books and grants
4. service as a member of an accrediting agency
5. advice solicited by the public regarding some biological problem
6. participation in, or holding office in, professional biological or other research organizations
7. community engagement activities such as organizing workshops, training sessions, science fairs and forays
8. civic engagement as a member of an advisory committee or board
9. professional presentations to public school groups, civic organizations or radio/TV appearances which call upon expertise in the biological sciences
10. adviser to student organizations
11. special assignments such as maintaining departmental or university collections
12. writing letters of recommendation for students

IV. Professionalism

We value and expect good departmental citizenship. The behavior of any single faculty member reflects on the entire department, college, and university. Therefore, it is essential that all faculty continuously conduct themselves in accord with the highest expectations of professional behavior (*Faculty Handbook*, Section III.A.).

V. Conclusions

Faculty members, during their period in rank, may, in any given year, vary their emphasis between teaching, scholarly achievement/professional qualifications and professional service. Variable distribution of teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service might occur if one were given a special responsibility or if the individual had a special project on which to focus. This is based on the idea that it is difficult to maintain significant contributions in all three areas of evaluation all the time. Plans must be approved by the Academic Unit Head beforehand in order to determine if adjustments in departmental programs are required to accommodate these changes and if the request requires higher administrative approval.

F. Criteria for Promotion of Administrative and Professional Faculty at Rank of Assistant Professor:

A PAC evaluation of an applicant's portfolio based on these guidelines would be used to inform the Academic Unit Head's decision to promote the applicant in rank with associated promotion-based salary adjustment. The promotion application can be submitted at any time after time in rank is achieved. They will typically be evaluated on Teaching, Professional Service, and Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications while taking into consideration the lower teaching loads and varying administrative and professional responsibilities assigned to these faculty. To advance from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor the applicant must obtain at least one "Excellent" rating in Teaching, Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications, or Service, and typically at least "Satisfactory" in the others. Examples of evidence for activities listed below can be found in comparable tenure track/tenure sections of this document but may also include activities specific to the individual position.

I. Teaching

Faculty members should place a very high priority on teaching excellence and should demonstrate a commitment to working with students at either, or both, undergraduate and graduate levels. Our concept of teaching is a holistic one. Not only does it include activities that occur in lecture and laboratory settings but it also includes activities that occur outside of the above more formal interactions with students. While this student interaction may take many forms, one activity that is expected is for faculty to extend their teaching to include mentoring students in research projects, or training students to use instruments and/or to obtain and manage data within the context of a facility or center.

Examples of information to be reviewed in evaluating teaching effectiveness include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. Formal student evaluations (or other evidence of formative use of student input) from courses offered should be presented. Evaluation forms approved by the departmental faculty (this may include questions added by faculty) should be used.

B. Curriculum development as evidenced by such things as course re-design, embedding research into teaching, new course development, etc.

C. Evidence submitted should indicate that new/or better methods to improve teaching are being sought, have been implemented or are used on a continuing basis. An example of such evidence would be active participation in workshops, including those sponsored by CFI. In all instances, the way in which the materials and/or methods have been integrated into courses should be explained and self-evaluated.

D. Research is an important endeavor and plays a significant role in supporting the teaching process. It is an invaluable experience for the student. Mentoring students in research, including dissemination of the research by students through external presentations, should be part of the faculty member's teaching efforts.

E. Academic advising is an integrated and complex process designed to facilitate student growth and development. All faculty in the Department are expected to participate in the advising process as directed.

II. Scholarly Achievement and Professional Qualifications

The Department expects its faculty members to have a research program and to demonstrate a continuing involvement in these activities. For a research program to be supportive of the goals of the department, it will include JMU undergraduate, and possibly graduate, student participation. Submission of external grant proposals (either as principal investigator or as a collaborator) is expected. Complete information should be provided for both successful and unsuccessful applications.

Faculty members must present evidence of publication of their scholarly activities, not necessarily as first author. Publication should be in peer-reviewed research journals, which are recognized as standard for their particular discipline. Books, book chapters in edited volumes, and textbooks are included in this category. This research must reflect activities performed at JMU. Collaborative research with other researchers and/or JMU faculty, including research associated within the context of a facility/center, is valued and encouraged.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to be authors/co-authors on posters and/or talks at professional meetings, conferences or workshops. Student participation in external presentations and publications is encouraged.

Membership and participation in professional organizations is expected. Editing or reviewing papers, manuscripts or grant proposals, service on review panels, or receipt of honors or fellowships are valued, as these are evidence of acceptance by peers.

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6. community engagement activities such as organizing workshops, training sessions, science fairs and forays
7. civic engagement as a member of an advisory committee or board
8. professional presentations to public school groups, civic organizations or radio/TV appearances which call upon expertise in the biological sciences
9. adviser to student organizations
10. special assignments such as maintaining departmental or university collections
11. writing letters of recommendation for students
12. service carried out as a member or chair of a committee appointed or elected at the department,

college, or university level

To meet the satisfactory standard in service faculty must demonstrate department/university citizenship, professional activity and engagement with the community.

The PAC recognizes that certain services are more demanding than others, and the applicant should indicate the extent of effort devoted to service especially if an activity was exceptionally demanding.

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We value and expect good departmental citizenship. The behavior of any single faculty member reflects on the entire department, college and university. Therefore, it is essential that all faculty continuously conduct themselves in accord with the highest expectations of professional behavior (*Faculty Handbook*, Section III.A.).

V. References

To advance from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor the applicant must provide the names of three referees from outside of the department who are familiar with the applicant's specific contributions in teaching, scholarly achievement or professional qualifications. Referee names must be provided to the Academic Unit Head by August 15. The Academic Unit Head will contact at least 3 of these referees for letters. For each referee, a description of the individual's relationship to the candidate should be provided.

Approved by the faculty of the Department of Biology: May 2019

Approved by the Dean of CSM: September 18, 2021

Approved by the Provost: September 20, 2021