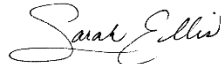




*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®  
*Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost*

**POLICY APPROVAL**  
**Environmental Studies**

**Policy Document:** Promotion Policy for Environmental Studies Renewable Term Faculty

**Approved by:** Environmental Studies Faculty  
Randy Hewes, Interim Dean, Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences  
Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty 

**Approved on:** July 29, 2024

**Effective on:** July 29, 2024

**File name:** 7-29-24 Promotion Policy for Environmental Studies Renewable Term Faculty

**Review Cycle:** Annual review; Revision as necessary prior to the next unit APR review and in the case of University or College policy changes or other precipitating factors.

## **Promotion Policy for Environmental Studies Renewable Term Faculty**

The University of Oklahoma hires renewable term faculty (RT) in support of its mission “...to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society” and its purpose—“We change lives.” Explicit in these statements is the paramount obligation of faculty to the education of our students, and by extension, to the students themselves, that is accomplished through positive impact on, ethical interactions with, and effective mentoring and instruction of students.

Lecturers (Doctoral degree required) and Instructors (Master’s degree required) who have five continuous years of full-time employment at the University will be eligible for promotion in rank to Senior Instructor or Senior Lecturer. After ten years’ experience as instructor/lecturer, a faculty member is eligible to be designated as Distinguished Lecturer or Distinguished Instructor. If recommended by the Director and approved by the dean, a faculty member could be considered for promotion earlier than the five and ten year time frames. The renewable term faculty promotion process does not require external evaluators but does require a vote of Committee A.

Full time lecturers and instructors in the Environmental Studies Program are normally expected to teach eight 3-credit courses per year (24 credit hours) per year and dedicate 20 percent of their time to university and professional service. Expectations that differ from this norm will be documented in the letter of appointment, and occasional adjustments to take account of non-3-credit courses will be made on an ad hoc basis..

Renewable Term instructors and lecturers will be evaluated annually based on their teaching and service contributions to OU following similar evaluation processes and criteria employed to evaluate Regular faculty in these areas. Annual evaluation in the Environmental Studies Program (the “Program”) is aimed primarily at ensuring that each faculty’s teaching advances the Program’s mission to prepare students for interdisciplinary efforts to solve environmental problems, by helping them learn skills and ideas from multiple academic disciplines, and giving them experience of the cross-disciplinary teamwork that generates effective environmental knowledge.

Promotion likewise is based on faculty’s advancing the Program’s mission. Promotion to Senior Lecturer/Instructor primarily requires that candidates demonstrate their accomplishment in this regard by meeting or exceeding expectations on Annual Evaluations for every year at their current rank. Promotion to Distinguished Lecturer/Instructor primarily requires, in addition, continued professional development in teaching (e.g. through substantial improvements to instructional materials, as noted in annual evaluations; demonstrated participation in training workshops), and an enhanced degree of service to the Program (e.g. taking leadership in recruitment or program development; consistent mentoring of students and/or colleagues).

## General Procedures

The Program Director will discuss with Lecturers and Instructors when it is appropriate for them to request consideration for promotion, taking into account their length of service and the results of their Annual Evaluations. On the basis of these discussions the Program Director will invite eligible Lecturers and Instructors to submit a promotion dossier.

Candidates for promotion must work with Program staff to assemble and submit the dossier to Committee A through the Tenure and Promotion System by September 15. The dossier must include:

1. Original appointment letter(s) [provided by Program]
2. Annual evaluations from each year of the period prior to being considered for promotion [provided by Program]
3. A table summarizing the courses taught, including number of students in each class [provided by Program]
4. Teaching observation reports by the Program Director from two separate semesters during the period prior to being considered for promotion [provided by Program]
5. A list of students mentored/advised outside of scheduled classes [provided by candidate]
6. A list of all teaching improvement workshops or similar experiences that demonstrate the candidate's commitment to improving their teaching.
7. A 2-3 page narrative describing how their teaching contributions and efforts throughout the period prior to promotion met the Program's evaluation criteria, listed below [provided by candidate]
8. A 1-2 page narrative describing their service contributions throughout the period prior to promotion [provided by candidate]
9. Two letters solicited by Committee A from a list of 4 names provided by the candidate of former students, colleagues, or others familiar with the candidate's teaching and service contributions
10. Up to 15 pages of additional documentation (e.g. relevant pages from representative syllabi, course materials, screen-shots of Canvas pages) providing evidence to support the narrative statements. [provided by candidate]

The promotion dossier will be reviewed and voted on by the Program's Committee A. The recommendation will be forwarded through the TPS for further consideration by the appropriate University officials.

## Consideration of Teaching

The evaluation criteria for promotion, like the criteria for annual evaluation, are based on the Program's mission. Lecturers and Instructors advance the Program's mission primarily through their teaching. Thus, candidates for promotion should demonstrate in their teaching narrative and through their selection of additional documentation that, across their courses for the period under consideration,

- the learning goals of the courses, as articulated in the syllabi, are consistent with the Program's mission, and that the courses fulfill their role in the curriculum (e.g. their respective elective categories).
- the design of the courses are appropriate to their respective learning goals, taking account of: the semester plan; readings and other materials, including Canvas sites; written or other submitted work; classroom activities; and other relevant factors.
- students have been engaged with the courses, both in the classroom and assignments, as indicated by Course Reflection Survey results, the candidate's own observations, letters from students, and teaching observations by the Program Director
- students have met course learning objectives, as indicated by Course Reflection Survey results, as well as the candidate's own observations of student work.

(Note, the results of the Course Reflection Surveys for the period under consideration are reflected in the Annual Evaluations as well as in the candidate's teaching narrative.)

Additional factors related to teaching that strengthen a candidate's case for promotion include

- incorporation of high-impact teaching practices (e.g. dynamic lectures, team-based learning, service-learning, writing enriched methods, alternative assessments, field trips, etc.).
- on-going evidence of efforts to improve teaching, in particular in response to comments on annual evaluations.
- evidence of individualized support of students (e.g. formal or informal mentorship, writing letters of recommendation).
- willingness to take on high enrollment courses.
- attendance at workshops and conferences on teaching within and outside the University.

Committee A will use this rubric (which is consistent with the rubric used in Annual Evaluations) to evaluate candidates' overall teaching performance, and will normally recommend for promotion candidates who, on balance, have tended to exceed expectations for the period under consideration.

**Evaluation Rubric**

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
1. Goals consistent with mission [E,N,D]			
2. Appropriateness of materials [E,O,N,L,D]			
3. Success at meeting goals [E,O,N,L,D]			
4. Student engagement [E,O,N,L,D]			
5. Other activities [E,N,D]			

Main sources of the information from the dossier used, are:

- E = Annual evaluations

- O = Teaching observation reports
- N = 2-3 page teaching narrative by candidate
- L = Letters from students/colleagues
- D = Additional documentation

Indicative standards (consistent with the standards for Annual Evaluation) for exceeding, meeting and falling below expectations for each criterion.

1. Consistency of course goals, as articulated in syllabi, with the Program's mission [E,N,D]
  - Exceed: course goals further program's mission; course goals include wider pedagogical goals of the university
  - Meet: course goals are mainly consistent with program's mission; if not, candidate has identified the gap as something to address in the future
  - Fall below: course goals not consistent with program's mission; no recognition of this gap
2. Appropriateness of course designs to meet their goals—taking account of: semester plans; readings and other materials; written or other submitted work; classroom activities; and other relevant factors. [E,O,N,L,D]
  - Exceed: course plan and materials are excellent; course incorporates innovative elements, including high impact pedagogy
  - Meet: course plan and materials are coherent, and generally advance course goals; course design is appropriate for anticipated students
  - Fall below: course plan and materials not well organized, not fitting to course goals, or course design not at appropriate student level
3. Success of the course at meeting its goals [E,O,N,L,D]
  - Exceed: the course did an excellent job of meeting its goals
  - Meet: the course had moderate success at meeting its goals
  - Fall below: course had little success at meeting its goals
4. General engagement of students with the course [E,O,N,L,D]
  - Exceed: virtually all students were committed to making good faith efforts to work toward the objectives of the course
  - Meet: many students were committed to making good faith efforts to work toward the objectives of the course
  - Fall below: very few students were committed to making good faith efforts to work toward the objectives of the course
5. Other considerations (as applicable)—e.g. if a course was taught for the first time; if a course was revised by adding new elements, or perhaps in light of past evaluations; or other relevant factors; if candidate incorporated ideas from workshops or other teaching resources [E,N,D]
  - Exceed: several new courses; candidate substantially revised course goals and materials to foreground the program's mission
  - Meet: candidate adjusted course goals to align better with program's mission; candidate adjusted course materials in response to past iterations, and/or previous feedback

Fall below: candidate simply repeated courses after feedback regarding their goals, or other areas for improvement

### Consideration of Service

Because Lecturers and Instructors advance the mission of the Program primarily through their teaching, their service activities have less priority in the case for promotion. They are expected to participate in the normal non-teaching activities such as meetings and student events, and to complete appropriate tasks assigned to them by the Program Director. Their performance in this respect will be registered in their Annual Evaluations. When considering them for promotion, Committee A will review the candidates' service narrative and the set of Annual Evaluations for the appropriate period, and determine whether they have met the expectations for service. As noted above, expectations for accomplishment in service are greater for promotion to Distinguished Lecturer/Instructor than for the Senior level.