

CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY EVALUATION

Oklahoma Biological Survey

University of Oklahoma

The following document is intended to provide guidance for the awarding of tenure, promotion and salary increases to the faculty of the Oklahoma Biological Survey. These guidelines are based on, and agree with, the University policy as stated in the Faculty Handbook.

I. Mission of the Oklahoma Biological Survey

The Oklahoma Biological Survey, established in 1927 by action of the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents, is an academic unit on the Norman campus in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Survey is also a state agency recognized through 1987 legislation. The Survey includes: (1) The General Biological Survey program; (2) the Oklahoma Natural Heritage Inventory; (3) the Bebb Herbarium jointly operated with the Department of Botany and Microbiology; (4) the Sutton Avian Research Center; and (5) cooperation with the Oklahoma Fisheries Research Laboratory, a program of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. The mission of the Oklahoma Biological Survey is to investigate the diversity of plants and animals in Oklahoma and associated regions and to contribute toward conservation and education concerning these important resources. To meet this mission, the faculty and staff of the Oklahoma Biological Survey have established the following major goals: (1) Acquire, archive, process and disseminate information on biological diversity, (2) Conduct research on biological diversity, (3) Maintain the Oklahoma Natural Heritage Inventory, (4) Maintain the Robert Bebb Herbarium, (5) Maintain the Sutton Avian Research Center, (6) Cooperate with the Oklahoma Fisheries Research Laboratory, (7) Represent the state in non-agricultural and non-wildlife biological resource matters, and (8) Educate the public about the above.

II. Criteria for evaluation of faculty

The faculty of the Oklahoma Biological Survey will be evaluated annually for effectiveness of research, service and teaching. The performance of a faculty member in these three categories will be the basis for recommending tenure, promotion, and merit-based salary increases. The relative weight given to each area of evaluation may be different depending on the nature of a faculty member's appointment, but typical weightings for tenured faculty in the Oklahoma Biological Survey are 45 % research, 35 % service, and 20 % teaching, reflecting the higher service expectations for faculty who are also employees of a state agency. Faculty members can request that Committee A review their distribution of effort weightings. Changes in weighting will require the approval of Committee A and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

A. Research

The Faculty Handbook (section 3.6.2) defines research thus:

“Research, which is the development and validation of new knowledge, focuses upon faculty participation in the extension of knowledge and maintenance of professional development and vitality. The term research as used here is understood to mean systematic, original investigation directed toward the enlargement of human knowledge or the solution of contemporary problems. To qualify as research ... achievement, the results of the endeavor must be disseminated and subject to critical peer evaluation in a manner appropriate to the field in question.”

All faculty members are expected to contribute to their disciplines through original research and to contribute to the department (OBS) by enhancing its research standing at the state, national, and international level. Annual evaluations of research contributions will include assessment of work in the following categories.

Publications.

Refereed publications. The quality and quantity of published research articles, books, and book chapters and the faculty member's contribution to those publications as reflected, for example, by authorship order or statements by collaborators.

Technical reports. The quality and quantity of unpublished research reports, and non-peer-reviewed publications, pamphlets, and lists. As with published and peer-reviewed articles, the quality will be evaluated on the faculty member's contribution to those documents as reflected by authorship order or statements by collaborators.

Non-traditional outlets. The quality and quantity of non-traditional publication outlets such as web pages (including text articles such as reports, lists, databases, and other reference materials). The quality of web pages will be evaluated on the faculty member's contribution to those documents as reflected by authorship order or statements by collaborators.

Surveying and inventorying. As survey and inventory are a primary mission of the Oklahoma Biological Survey, the faculty member's contribution toward surveys and inventories of the flora and fauna of Oklahoma and adjacent regions will be evaluated.

Funding. The number of grant proposals submitted, the number of proposals funded, and current external and internal funding for research. Success in obtaining external funding provides evidence of research capability. When receipt of external funding is contingent on peer-review, it also serves as an indication of an individual's ability to generate original research ideas that are of broad significance to his / her discipline and to design appropriate methods for exploring those. Moreover, renewal of such grants provides evidence that the faculty member's prior research has been of high quality, as judged by national standards.

Professional presentations. The number of papers presented at professional meetings, number of talks given at invited symposia, and number of invited seminars given at other universities.

Presenting papers or posters at scientific meetings is an indication of recent / current research activity. Invitations to present research seminars at other universities, to participate in special symposia, or to give plenary talks at scientific meetings are often indications of the significance of the faculty member's previous research contributions.

Recognition of research achievement. The number and nature of awards / honors and professional appointments or elections to office. To the extent that these are based on the prior research accomplishments of an individual, they represent strong evidence of the faculty member's stature within his / her field. While the professional activities that accompany either election to office in a professional society or appointment to panels, editorial boards, and so forth, are viewed as contributions falling within the "Professional Service" category, the appointment / election *per se* constitutes, in many cases, peer recognition of research excellence.

B. Service

The Faculty Handbook (section 3.6.3) defines service thus:

"Service is work done or duties performed by a faculty member to advance the interests and capabilities of various communities either inside our outside the University."

Service is a vital component to the mission of the Oklahoma Biological Survey. Three forms of service contribute to the goals of the Oklahoma Biological Survey and will be used in evaluating faculty.

State, regional, and national service. Active participation of Oklahoma Biological Survey faculty in state, regional, and national efforts and organizations related to understanding and conserving biological resources is vitally important to the mission of the Oklahoma Biological Survey. OBS faculty are required to show their effectiveness in this service component in order to qualify for tenure and promotion. Activities considered under State, Regional, and National Service include membership on or participation in state, regional, or national level committees, boards, or groups related to understanding and/or conserving biological resources, interactions with state and federal agencies, and public outreach. Awards for service to state, regional, or national organizations will be considered.

University service. The nature of the academic enterprise is such that the faculty shares in the formulation of University policies and in making and carrying out decisions affecting the educational and scholarly life of the University. Accordingly, faculty members have a responsibility to contribute to the government and leadership of the University through timely participation on committees, councils, or other advisory groups at the department, college, and University level. (Faculty Handbook, 3.6.3). Activities for which OBS faculty are expected to participate under University service include

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membership on departmental, college, or university-level committees and task forces, and sponsorship of student organizations. Awards for service to the University will be considered.

Professional service. Professional service refers to activities directly related to the faculty member's discipline or profession. Activities for which OBS faculty members are expected to participate under Professional service include service to professional societies as an officer, committee member, editorial board member, and/or meeting organizer and evaluation of manuscripts and proposals for professional journals and funding agencies. Awards for service to professional societies will be considered.

C. Teaching

The Faculty Handbook (section 3.6.1) defines teaching thus:

“Teaching, which is the transmission of knowledge and cultural values, focuses upon helping students learn. As a part of its mission, the University is dedicated to undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education. The term teaching as used here includes, but is not restricted to, giving regularly scheduled instruction, directing graduate work, and counseling and advising. This includes the direction or supervision of students in reading, research, internships, or fellowships. Faculty supervision or guidance of students in recognized academic pursuits that confer no university credit should also be considered as teaching.”

Although courses are not offered directly through the OBS, all jointly appointed faculty have teaching obligations within their respective academic departments. In addition, research assistantships and internships, which are a recognized vehicle of instruction, often directly involve OBS funding and facilities. Therefore, it is incumbent upon committee A to review the teaching performance of faculty.

Annual evaluations of teaching performance and contributions will include assessment of work in the following categories:

Courses taught. Faculty will provide semester(s) courses were offered, course number, name and department, credit hours, syllabi, and number of students. Faculty members also are encouraged to submit teaching evaluations, exams, and related material.

Graduate advising. Graduate advising comes in two forms; committee membership or committee chair. When serving as a graduate committee member, faculty will provide the names and home department of the graduate student (s). As committee chair, faculty should provide the name of graduate student advisees and which students have completed there degrees in the evaluation period. Supervision of graduate research assistants will also be considered in this category.

Special projects . These include directed readings, independent studies and internships. Faculty will provide names of students, topic, credit hours, and project evaluation

Undergraduate advising. Faculty will provide number of advisees, and the nature and extent of advisement.

Other teaching activities. This includes activities such as attendance at colloquia and workshops in order to improve teaching performance.

Instruction outside the University. This includes development and/or instruction in training workshops for Federal and State agencies or the public.

Development of teaching aids. This includes educational software or internet course material.

Honors and awards for teaching performance.

III. Evaluation procedures

A. Annual evaluations. The Director, Committee A and the faculty member will work together to ensure that all of the appropriate evaluations for research, service and teaching are done as they are needed.

Faculty Activity Reports. Annual evaluations are completed by Committee A early in the spring semester. Information is provided to Committee A in the Oklahoma Biological Survey Annual Activity Report which is due the last day of January. Using this report and other material as described above, Committee A and the Director will evaluate and rank faculty members as required by the Dean.

Committee A Statements. Committee A and the Director will prepare brief evaluative statements about each faculty member that summarizes his/her performance during the preceding year. The statement and the ranking of the faculty member will be made available to the faculty member, and the faculty member will read and sign the statement. The faculty member also will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the statement. In addition, Committee A will meet individually with any faculty member who desires to discuss his or her evaluation.

Committee A will meet individually with each tenure-track faculty member during the spring to discuss his/her progress towards tenure. The Director, with recommendations from Committee A, will prepare an annual letter of evaluation of progress towards tenure for each tenure-track faculty member. These letters will strive to recognize both the areas of notable accomplishment and the areas in need of improvement to meet OBS expectations.

B. Tenure and promotion

Criteria

Tenure and promotion decisions will be based on the faculty members contributions to the University and the Oklahoma Biological Survey in research, service and teaching. A faculty member granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in the Oklahoma Biological Survey must have demonstrated a level of research proficiency that equals or exceeds that expected of newly-tenured individuals at comparable institutions. The faculty member must demonstrate that he/she has established an independent research program during the probationary years and show evidence of sustained research productivity. For promotion to Professor, an individual will be expected to have attained recognizable stature at the national/international level. Service and teaching expectations of faculty in the Oklahoma Biological Survey will vary with different job descriptions, but all faculty awarded tenure and/or promotion must have excellent service and teaching records.

Evaluation

Mid-tenure Review. A mid-tenure review will be carried out in the spring of the third year of a six-year probationary period. For faculty with a reduced probationary period, Committee A will identify an appropriate date for the review. A minimum of the following materials will be made available to the tenured faculty for review: complete curriculum vitae, annual letters on progress towards tenure, annual faculty evaluation forms, publications, abstracts of submitted grant applications, documentation of service activities, and course syllabi and teaching evaluations. At the request of either the faculty member being evaluated or Committee A, external letters of evaluation can also be solicited, but external letters will not be routinely required. Committee A will solicit external letters if a majority of faculty vote to request this information to assist their evaluation of the candidate's research and service contributions. The results of the mid-tenure review discussion will be transmitted to the candidate in writing by the Director, and this letter will become part of the evaluation documentation included in the tenure dossier.

Tenure and Promotion Dossier. Preparation of dossiers for tenure in promotion should begin in the spring semester. The candidate will review and update his/her curriculum vitae and prepare written narratives on research, service and teaching to elaborate on data presented in the vita. The candidate will be asked to recommend names of individuals who could serve as external reviewers, and additional recommendations will be solicited from faculty members in the candidate's field. The candidate will also have the opportunity to identify individuals who should not be asked for an evaluation letter due to potential conflicts of interest or other professional concerns. External evaluators must be individuals without close personal association with the candidate as research collaborators, members of dissertation advisory committees, or other especially close interactions. Committee A will review all recommendations and will select those to whom the curriculum vitae, narrative, and representative publications will be sent.

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Materials will be sent to external reviewers before the beginning of the fall semester. The dossiers will be completed early in the fall semester and will be available for review by the faculty according to the timetable established by the Provost and the Dean.

Voting. The vote on tenure is limited by the Faculty Handbook to tenured faculty members. Promotion to Professor is based on the recommendation of all regular members of the faculty.

Notification. The Director will notify each candidate for tenure and promotion of the recommendation made at each step of the evaluation process in accordance with the Faculty Handbook. As soon as feasible after delivery of official salary notifications from the President's Office, each faculty member may request from the Director the reasons for the salary recommendation that was made.