FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICY
Botany and Microbiology Department
The University of Oklahoma

INTRODUCTION

The following document is intended to provide guidelines for the awarding of tenure, promotion, and salary increases to the faculty of the Botany and Microbiology Department. These guidelines are based on, and agree with, the university policy as found in the Faculty Handbook and the Provost’s guide to tenure and promotion. Each faculty member should become familiar with the University’s guidelines and criteria for the awarding of tenure and promotion as stipulated in these documents. These guidelines provide the faculty and departmental administration basis for judgment in evaluating the performance of individuals and equitably rewarding meritorious performance. This document also provides the faculty with a guide for the distribution and kind of academic effort that will optimally benefit their careers, and the goals of the department and university. It is the intention of these guidelines to provide a qualitative basis for the evaluation of the performance of each faculty member. The weighting of criteria is intended to indicate the relative importance placed on various faculty functions in the Botany and Microbiology Department and should not provide a strictly quantitative basis for regarding merit or distributing academic effort. An assessment of the quality of performance of all faculty members will be made on the basis of their job descriptions, and the same documentation will be used for evaluation of all faculty members having similar job descriptions. The following guidelines define the requisite quality of achievement, assuming a 40/40/20 percent effort distribution in teaching, research, and service, respectively. Faculty with special duties will be informed of their job descriptions and unique criteria for tenure and promotion considerations by the department at the time of appointment. Changes in the effort distribution of a faculty member can occur after appointment with the approval of the Chair and the Dean in consultation with the faculty member. The Provost will be informed of any changes in a faculty member’s effort distribution.
PROMOTION

Promotion in rank in the Botany and Microbiology Department shall be based on those criteria listed below with emphasis on academic and scholarly achievement within the university community and the individual faculty member’s field(s) of research specialization. Nominations for promotion to Professor shall be made by the Promotion Committee. Promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and the award of tenure will, for most faculty, be considered concurrently. However, if the evaluations for tenure and promotion are not conducted jointly, then the Promotion Committee shall also nominate candidates for promotion to Associate Professor. Alternatively, a faculty member has the right to request that the Promotion Committee review his/her vitae for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor.

The Promotion Committee shall be appointed by the chair and consist of four members. Members of the committee will be representative of the diverse research interests of the faculty and must be either Professors or Associate Professors with at least two of the members full Professors. All members must be tenured. Members serve two-year staggered terms.

Assistant Professor

Appointment as an Assistant Professor shall be based on a candidate’s potential to teach effectively and to conduct meaningful research. Potential will typically be determined through the examination of academic vitae, letters of recommendation, and the presentation of an invited interview and seminar. Appointment will be considered only for holders of the terminal degree.

All non-tenured faculty will be evaluated annually for reappointment. This evaluation is based on the evaluation of the candidate’s satisfactory performance in research, teaching, and administrative duties using criteria listed below for promotion and tenure evaluation. Notification of whether or not reappointment has been granted will be made in writing to the candidate by the Chair and Committee A members.

Associate Professor

Promotion of candidates to Associate Professor shall be based on excellence in research and creative activities and teaching and the promise for continued achievement. Conscientious and active participation in departmental and university governance and professional service will also be considered but is less significant than either teaching or research activities.

Teaching performance of high quality will be expected of all faculty, and such performance shall be judged on the basis of student and ex-student evaluations, peer evaluations, course materials, graduate
student training, and other pertinent information. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to present relevant and current information and ideas in a manner that promotes and is conducive to learning.

Research qualifications shall be judged on the basis of an active and meaningful research program. Evidence of activity shall be based on the criteria listed below. Evidence of research quality shall be based on a thorough review of all research accomplishments. Especially important in this regard will be the recommendation of external evaluators.

The usual procedure will be to consider promotion and the awarding of tenure concurrently. In this situation, Committee A, in May of year that the candidate will be considered for promotion or tenure, shall solicit the names of approximately ten prominent scientists from the candidate as possible evaluators of his/her research qualifications. The Chair, Committee A, and the Promotion Committee have the option of providing other names. Committee A shall then solicit letters from at least four scientists in the individual’s research specialty for their evaluation of the candidate. These individuals will evaluate the candidate’s performance against national standards. Committee A will insure that letters of evaluation are solicited from individuals nominated by both the candidate and by other members of the department.

In those instances where consideration for promotion to Associate Professor is considered independently of the award of tenure, the Promotion Committee shall solicit the names of approximately ten prominent scientists from each candidate as possible evaluators of his/her research qualifications and scholarly activities. The Chair, Committee A, and the Promotion Committee have the option of providing additional names. The Promotion Committee shall then solicit letters from at least four scientists in the individual’s research specialty for their evaluation of the candidate’s research program. Promotion Committee shall then analyze the curriculum vitae and the letters of evaluation and, following consultation with the candidate, make a written and confidential recommendation to the Chair whether the candidate’s dossier warrants the review by the tenure and tenure-track faculty. The candidate has the right to be considered for promotion regardless of the recommendation of the Promotion Committee. The dossier of each candidate who wishes to be formally considered for promotion will be made available for review by the tenured and tenure-track faculty.

In all cases, recommendation for promotion shall be made by secret ballot vote by the tenured and tenure-track faculty based on the candidate’s dossier and the evaluation of professional competency solicited from external referees. The outcome of the vote (favorable or unfavorable) will be shared, in writing, with the candidate. The vote of the faculty and the recommendation for promotion will be forwarded to the Dean of the College.
Professor

Procedures and criteria (listed below) for promotion to Professor shall be the same as those for promotion to Associate Professor; however, the level of attainment within these criteria will be greater for promotion to Professor. Promotion to Professor shall be based on the establishment of a national and university reputation for scholarly activity and with significant contribution to the profession and the university in service.

In exceptional cases, promotion to Professor may be based primarily on recognition of superior performance in teaching or service. Such promotion will only be made on the basis of exceptional teaching or service, which, at a minimum, has been recognized by University awards for such activities.

In April of each year, the Promotion Committee (if necessary in consultation with other faculty) will review the vitae of all Associate Professors with tenure to identify potential candidates for promotion to Professor. Alternatively, a faculty member (Assistant or Associate) has the right to request that he/she be considered for promotion. The Promotion Committee shall solicit the names of approximately ten prominent scientists from each qualified candidate as possible evaluators of his/her research qualifications. The Chair, Committee A, and the Promotion Committee have the option of providing additional names. The Promotion Committee shall then solicit letters from at least four renowned scientists in the individual’s research specialty for their evaluation of the candidate’s research program. These individuals will evaluate the candidate’s performance against national standards.

Based on analysis of the curriculum vitae and the letters of evaluation, the Promotion Committee shall make a written and confidential recommendation to the Chair as to whether the candidate should be considered for promotion. The Chair, in consultation with the Promotion Committee, will decide whether the dossier should be forwarded to the faculty. If the candidate requests, the dossier will be forwarded to the faculty regardless of the recommendation of the Promotion Committee.

In all cases, recommendation for promotion shall be made by secret ballot vote by tenured and tenure-track faculty in this department, based on the candidate’s dossier and on evaluation of professional competency solicited from external referees. The outcome of the vote (favorable or unfavorable) will be shared, in writing, with the candidate. The candidate has the option to proceed with the process regardless of the outcome of the departmental recommendation.

RENEWABLE TERM FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

The following provisions shall apply to faculty who are appointed year-to-year for a specific term of years. Such faculty shall be referred to as “term faculty.” A term faculty member may be given the title of Instructor, Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor, as appropriate to the
individual’s professional credentials and background. The length of the term will ordinarily be three to five years, except as approved by the unit, Dean, and Senior Vice President and Provost. Term faculty with the title of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor shall have all the rights and responsibilities of regular faculty with those titles, except as provided by this policy or by College and University policies. Rights and privileges restricted to term faculty by this policy include only voting on tenure decisions, which is restricted to tenured faculty of the department.

Term faculty shall be evaluated annually as part of the process applicable to all faculty, using criteria listed in this document and as specified in the Faculty Handbook. The renewal decision shall be accomplished by the same procedure employed for tenure-track faculty in their probationary period. The faculty member will be notified of the Department’s recommendation of annual renewal or non-renewal no later than March 1. During the final year of the term, and prior to notifying the faculty member whether or not he/she will be reappointed to a subsequent term, the faculty member will receive a comprehensive evaluation of his/her performance during the entire term. The faculty member will be notified of the Department’s recommendation of term renewal or non-renewal no later than March 1 of the final year of the term. Consideration of annual or term renewal shall be accomplished by the Chair, with recommendations from Committee A. Term faculty also are eligible for promotion using procedures and criteria in this document and as specified in the Faculty Handbook.
RESEARCH FACULTY

Research Professor

The Research Professor position is non-tenure track, with renewable appointments at the rank of Research Assistant, Associate, or Professor. The content of this policy is subject to the basic administrative policies and laws governing the University of Oklahoma. This track is used to recruit and/or retain top research scholars to support and enhance major research programs and initiatives in the Department of Botany and Microbiology. Candidates for these positions must demonstrate significant capability to conduct high quality research and obtain external funds. The primary responsibilities of these faculty will be research and research-related activities such as proposal writing, project management, and teaching and service specifically linked to their research programs (e.g., undergraduate and graduate student supervision and service for professional organizations). Notwithstanding the term of appointment, the existence of any Research Professor position is at all times subject to the availability of funding. These individuals are paid through grants and contracts, and salary increases are contingent upon availability of funds from their own funding (see section D for information about salary adjustments).

Research Professors may not serve on Committee A or vote on promotion/tenure decisions or on other matters related to departmental governance. They may, however, serve on search committees and other departmental committees that are directly related to their research (such as the Greenhouse or Culture committees).

A. A Research Professor position may be proposed when a research program can bring in sufficient funds to pay all costs of the program plus those of the proposed position for at least three years without additional Educational & General University Funding.

Appointment to this title will, in most cases, follow the formal search procedure outlined on the Provost’s web page and requires approval of both the Provost and the VPR. In addition, appointment requires approval by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and other deans or equivalent administrators relevant to split appointments.

Research Professor positions are temporary, renewable appointments not subject to the seven-year probationary period applicable to tenure-track faculty.

B. Annual Evaluation of Research Professors
  i. Procedures and Criteria
Research Professors will be evaluated as part of the annual faculty evaluation process, using procedures given in the Departmental Policy document for regular faculty. The period for annual evaluation purposes is 1 January to 31 December. Because of their special appointment, Research faculty will be evaluated mostly on the basis of their ability to obtain funding for their research program, the evidence related to their research productivity, including refereed publications and formal research presentations, and their professional service to their discipline.

C. Promotion
   i. Procedures and Criteria
      To the extent reasonable for this type of appointment, procedures for promotion will follow those for tenure-track and tenured faculty. The criteria used will focus on the research productivity of the Research faculty member and on the evaluations of external scientific peers.

D. Salary Adjustments
   Salary adjustments must be approved by the head of the unit(s) to which the Research Professor is appointed and will be based upon the annual evaluation of the performance of the research professor’s research and funding productivity. Salary increases will be recommended according to criteria and procedures described elsewhere in this document and are subject to approval by the relevant Dean(s) or equivalent administrators as well as by the Vice President for Research and the Provost.
TENURE

The award of tenure should always be consistent with the long-range goals of the department. The criteria for tenure evaluation are essentially the same as those used to evaluate candidates for promotion to Associate Professor. Although service will be considered in tenure evaluation, the award of tenure will be primarily based on demonstrated excellence in teaching and research and the promise for continued achievement in these two areas. New faculty members will be advised by the Chair of this fact upon accepting a position in the Department and service assignments will be made judiciously so as not to impede development of the candidate’s teaching and research programs.

All tenure-track faculty members will be evaluated for tenure according to those criteria listed below, unless the tenure-track faculty member is hired to perform some special task, which would include duties outside usual faculty responsibilities. In all cases, recommendation for the award of tenure shall be made by a secret ballot vote of the tenured faculty, based in part on evaluation of professional competency solicited from external referees. The candidate will receive a letter notifying him/her of the outcome of the department’s vote to support or deny tenure.

At the beginning of the third year of probation, each non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member will assemble his/her dossier for review by two external evaluators chosen by Committee A from a list of names submitted by the faculty member and Committee A members. These external evaluators will provide written and confidential reports of the candidate’s research program, focusing on progress and potential for future success. All tenured faculty members will review the candidate’s dossier, including the external letters of evaluation. All tenured faculty members of the department will vote, by secret ballot, on whether there has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress towards tenure. The outcome of the vote will be shared, in writing, with the candidate and the Dean of the College.
SALARY INCREASE

The annual award of salary increases in the Botany and Microbiology Department will be consistent with the guidelines specified in the Faculty Handbook. Merit increases in salary shall be awarded for superior academic performance of faculty members during the preceding academic year. Because yearly qualification of faculty effort may be difficult to evaluate, it is incumbent on the departmental administration to maintain an awareness of the academic activity of all faculty. The criteria used for salary increase are the same as for the granting of tenure and promotion. Recommendations for salary increase shall be sent forward by the Chair.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROMOTION, TENURE, AND SALARY INCREASE

The criteria for evaluation are teaching, research, and university and professional service. Teaching and research are considered equally significant while service is considered less important than teaching and research.

Criteria
A. Teaching (40%)
   1. Classroom teaching, evidence based on student evaluations, peer evaluation, and course materials may be included
   2. Advising
   3. Direction of postdoctoral associates, graduate students, and undergraduate research students
   4. Service on graduate student committees
   5. Teaching awards
   6. Laboratory manuals written
   7. Direction of multi-section courses
   8. Development of new and/or innovative courses
   9. Other, web-based teaching materials

B. Research (40%)
   1. Publications in refereed scientific journals
   2. Books published
   3. Invited chapters published
   4. Research papers at professional meetings
5. Research funded by external funding agencies, including federal, state, and/or non-governmental sources
6. Abstracts
7. Research internally funded
8. Non-refereed publications
9. Other research projects in progress
10. Research proposals submitted to external funding agencies and not funded
11. Seminars and symposia
12. Research associated with curatorial duties
13. Consultation, development, or participation in cooperative research projects
14. Awards for meritorious research
15. Other

C. Professional and University Service (20%)
1. Reviewing papers for professional journals
2. Reviews of research proposals for funding agencies
3. Service on advisory committees
4. Offices in professional societies
5. Public lectures in professional area (e.g., Sigma Xi, Visiting Lecturer)
6. Service on local, state, or national committees concerned with professional area
7. Sessions chaired at professional meetings
8. Department committees
9. University committees and councils
10. Sponsoring of recognized university societies
11. Professional consulting
12. Awards for meritorious service
13. Other