

POLICY ON ACADEMIC PROMOTION AND TENURE

Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Ecology New Mexico State University

Revised November 1, 2018

Introduction

The mission of the Principal Unit of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology (hereafter FWCE) at New Mexico State University is to use traditional and emerging scientific methods to prepare students to become competent professionals and to understand the ecology of fish and wildlife and apply this knowledge to their conservation and management. Particular attention is placed on research issues that reflect the unique floral and faunal assemblages and ecosystems of New Mexico and the arid Southwest, but other regions, both national and international, are focused on, as well.

One of the most important responsibilities of the University is the evaluation of faculty members for promotion and tenure. Policies and procedures regarding promotion and tenure at New Mexico State University are detailed in the New Mexico State University Administrative Rules and Procedures (Chapters 9.30-9.36) hereafter referred to as NMSU P&T Policy and the ACES Criteria for Promotion and Tenure. In FWCE tenure and the advancement in academic ranks is based on the recognition of accomplishments in: 1) scholarship and creative activity, 2) teaching and mentoring, and 3) service and outreach, and represents a prediction of continued accomplishment in the future. The goal of undergoing the review process for promotion and tenure is to create a positive feedback system in which a developing faculty member thrives and succeeds at NMSU.

FWCE recognizes that each individual may have unique strengths with respect to the categories evaluated for promotion and tenure. Furthermore, the amount of time devoted to these different categories may vary between individuals and over the career of any one individual. The annual allocation of effort form (NMSU P&T Policy Sections 6.61

Faculty Assignments – General, and 9.31 as well as Appendix 2 of the ACES Criteria for Promotion and Tenure) submitted by the faculty and approved by the Principal Unit Administrator (hereafter referred to as PUA) guide the yearly assessment of progress toward promotion and tenure and establish the baseline for evaluation of performance of any faculty member applying for promotion or tenure. This form must be filled out and signed each year by faculty in consultation with the PUA at the time of the faculty member’s annual performance evaluation. Mutually agreed upon changes can be made during the year. See NMSU P&T Policy Section 9.31 part 4B1 and ACES Criteria for Promotion and Tenure for more information on the allocation of effort statement. We strive for clear and transparent evaluation processes so that expectations are clearly articulated and everyone is evaluated fairly.

I. Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

The FWCE is composed of tenured, tenure-track, college rank, and non-tenure-track faculty. College rank and non-tenure-track faculty will be evaluated for promotion using the same criteria as those used for tenured and tenure-track faculty. Hereafter, the term ‘faculty’ will include college rank and non-tenure-track faculty. The criteria and procedures established by the FWCE are described below. They are in accord with the NMSU P&T Policy (Sections 9.30-9.36), and criteria of the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences. **University policies regarding promotion and tenure supersede department and college policies. Promotion and Tenure Committee members, tenure-track faculty and faculty considering applying for promotion are responsible for reviewing all applicable documents.**

A. Overall Ratings

1. In rating applicants for appointment with tenure and/or promotion under the standards set forth in this document, the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee shall rate applicants as:

- Does not meet expectations
- Meets expectations
- Exceeds expectations

No other rating terminology will be permitted.

2. An academic faculty member being recommended for appointment with tenure and/or promotion must receive an “exceeds expectations” rating in either Teaching and Mentoring, or in Scholarship and Creative Activities and at least a “meets expectations” rating in the other.

3. An academic faculty member being recommended for appointment with tenure and/or promotion must receive at least a “meets expectations” rating in the area of Service and Outreach
4. The conditions for promotion and/or tenure may vary, depending upon the appointment of a candidate and their allocation of effort statement. Regardless of the appointment, however, the candidate must show evidence of scholarly and creative activity resulting in refereed publications and presentations at professional society meetings.
5. Faculty appointed with service credit from other organizations are expected to show evidence of sustained research at New Mexico State University. While previous research conducted during that period is considered in the tenure deliberation, emphasis is placed on research conducted while at NMSU.
6. Normally, before being considered for tenure, eligible faculty members serve six consecutive probationary years. The probationary period begins the first full year of the contract. During the sixth year, the candidate applies for tenure. Those achieving tenure are awarded a continuous contract at the end of their sixth year, while those not awarded tenure are given a one-year terminal contract for their seventh and final year of employment at NMSU. In FWCE, tenure and promotion are linked for tenure-track faculty.
7. Promotion from Associate to Full Professor will not be attained without significant efforts above those required to achieve tenure. Time in rank alone will not support a recommendation for promotion. The professor should document established disciplinary, intellectual and institutional leadership. Faculty members with the rank of Associate Professor who believe they have met the criteria for promotion to the rank of Full Professor may apply for promotion.

B. Evaluation of Scholarship and Creative Activity

The Department recognizes the four scholarships of discovery, teaching, engagement, and integration. The scholarship of discovery consists of traditional research, whether basic or applied, and the products resulting from it. The scholarship of teaching consists of exploring ways to increase the effectiveness of teaching within the discipline and disseminating the findings of those explorations. The scholarship of engagement includes, but is not limited to, activities traditionally labeled as extension, technology transfer, and technical assistance, as well as the dissemination of the products and findings of those activities. The scholarship of integration includes any activity that integrates disciplinary knowledge into a broader context, including but not limited to such activities as writing textbooks, monographs, and review papers, participation in

multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research, and exploring the implications for public policy of findings from the scholarship of discovery.

C. Evidence of scholarship and creative activity

Traditionally, scholarship is evaluated on the production of publications and other creative works. The term “publication” includes a variety of types of scholarship product. Peer-reviewed journal articles (i.e., journals listed in major peer-reviewed journal indexing services such as Thompson Reuters [e.g., Web of Science] or Scopus) are the most important of these for the purposes of promotion and tenure within the FWCE, and a substantial record of success at producing this type of publication is essential for promotion and tenure. Other forms of publication may supplement, but not substitute for indexed peer-reviewed journal articles. This applies to all four forms of scholarship mentioned above.

Other endeavors that can demonstrate scholarship include:

- funded grants
- awards received for scholarly activities
- invited or contributed presentations at national and international professional meetings
- organization of meetings or symposia
- book chapters, (co)edited or co(authored) books and monographs
- holding of professional editorships or editing of scholarly works
- lecturing in professional and other public forums
- dissemination of research or scholarship in web pages that have been externally evaluated

D. Evaluation of Teaching and Mentoring

New Mexico State University sets forth high quality teaching as a fundamental responsibility of all faculty members. As teachers, members of the faculty are responsible for effective instruction, whether at the undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral, extension or continuing education level. Effective teaching is characterized by:

- clear learning objectives

- continual improvement, effective presentation, and frequent updating of course material
- comprehensive student learning and retention
- the ability to stimulate students' interest in and awareness of the social, political, economic, and ethical implications of the material they learn in our courses

E. Evidence of Teaching and Mentoring

Successful promotion and/or tenure requires documentation of teaching effectiveness via four or more of the following types of assessment instruments:

- useful and informative syllabi
- documented course revisions/updates
- other documented teaching innovations (such as the use of new techniques and technologies or the development of new courses)
- participation in Teaching Academy events that promote teaching effectiveness
- excellent student evaluations
- peer evaluations
- letters from former students

Mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students are also important instructional roles for every faculty member and success in this realm must be demonstrated as well. Undergraduate mentoring responsibilities include helping students plan schedules and complete graduation requirements, providing research and internship opportunities to undergraduates, and advising student organizations. Evidence of effective undergraduate mentoring includes student evaluations, letters from former students, and documentation of other relevant activities such as supervising undergraduate research, publishing papers with your students, and showing that former students have obtained gainful employment in their field or begun graduate school. Graduate advising includes supervising graduate research, service on graduate advisory committees, publishing papers with your students, and service as Dean's representative on graduate committees. Evidence of effective graduate advising includes documentation of all of these activities.

F. Evaluation of service and outreach

Activities recognized as service are required of all faculty members at New Mexico State University. Service for the university may be found by contributions to committees at the Departmental, College and University level. Other forms of service include contributions that help advance the profession and the scientific community, industry, stakeholders, government entities, non-governmental organizations, the community, the state, and the nation.

G. Evidence of service and outreach

Contributions to the operation of the University can be demonstrated by service on committees at the Departmental, College and University level; service as elected representative in university organizations, e.g., Faculty Senate and Graduate Council; participation in academic and administrative recruitment; departmental, college, or university self-study documents or curriculum revisions, and activities that enhance student learning (e.g., student organizations, clubs, or teams).

Professional service is commonly demonstrated by active participation in professional and scholarly societies, participation on editorial boards, service as a reviewer of scholarly works including publications and research proposals, service on professional committees, foundation review boards, writing for newsletters and participation in other public service media activities, participation in community projects, etc.

Contributions to society at large are most often demonstrated when faculty members apply their professional skill towards the solution of public problems. This can be the result of service for the public good on governmental and other special committees, boards, agencies, civic groups and commissions; service as a professional consultant either formally or informally; service through the use of the faculty member's academic expertise and particular professional skills to the solution of international, national, state, county and local problems.

Outreach encompasses professional activities by a faculty member which involve linkages between private- and public-sector entities outside of NMSU and the academic community in general. These activities may or may not take place in the context of programmatic Cooperative Extension Service activities. Outreach activities result in the generation and application of knowledge to address community needs.

Some level of involvement in outreach activities is required for all regular faculty within the Department. The nature and extent of those activities needs to be established through extensive consultation between the faculty member and the PUA during the preparation of the faculty member's yearly allocation of effort statements. Documentation of specific

outreach activities by means of written statements from off-campus partners, technical publications, or other independent documentation (e.g., press releases) is encouraged wherever possible. The distinction between service and outreach is often not clear; specific faculty activities can be assigned to only one of the two categories. The details of this assignment of activities to categories need to be determined by the faculty member and the PUA during the preparation of the faculty member's yearly allocation of effort statements.

II. Application of Criteria for Tenure and Promotion

A. Introduction

Faculty members who have made important contributions to the Profession and the University and who have performed their duties with distinction will be considered for reappointment or promotion.

Similarly, initial appointments will only be made for individuals who have either demonstrated these qualities elsewhere or who show promise for doing so at NMSU. Continued growth and contributions to areas including teaching, scholarship, outreach and/or service and leadership are required for all ranks. Advancement to a higher rank is not automatic, but must be earned through continuous accomplishments across the full spectrum of expected activities and assigned duties. All faculty, including non-tenure-track faculty will be held to the standards presented in this document. For the purposes of promotion, the New Mexico Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit are considered non-tenure-track faculty.

B. Promotion to Associate Professor

Promotion to the rank of Associate Professor is of particular importance because academic tenure (i.e., continuous contract) is conferred simultaneously. In granting tenure, the University abandons its freedom in regard to retention of the individual in an effort to assure academic freedom. The University, instead, places its trust in the judgment of peer evaluators to determine the likelihood of continued success and productivity of the candidate. For this reason, individuals promoted to the rank of Associate Professor must demonstrate qualities that provide a strong indication of the kind of continuing professional development that will assure sustained productivity throughout a career.

The Department considers scholarship as the primary criterion for tenure. Excellence in scholarship, as defined in the University and College policy statements, is necessary to

achieve tenure. Effective teaching and significant levels of service and/or outreach activity are necessary but not sufficient for the granting of tenure. Such accomplishments are expected of a member in the profession, but cannot replace excellence in scholarship as a justification for tenure.

To be considered for tenure and promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor, a faculty member in the FWCE with a typical 33% teaching and 67% research appointment must have at least 10 publications (average 2 publications per year) indexed in a major peer-reviewed journal indexing service such as Thompson Reuters (e.g., Web of Science) or Scopus. Further, the sum of the journal impact factors for those publications must total > 8.0.

C. Promotion to Professor

Promotion to Professor represents advancement to the highest academic rank. It is based on continued professional development well beyond that achieved at the rank of Associate Professor. To be considered for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor the faculty member must show continuous productivity with an average of at least 2 publications per year in peer-reviewed journals, and must have no less than 10 new publications since promotion to Associate Professor. Rigorous standards are applied in considering the promotion of an individual to the rank of Professor. This individual is expected to have achieved significant stature in their disciplinary area, and clearly demonstrated leadership in their field at the institutional level and beyond. Professors are expected to be actively engaged in multiple forms of scholarship including research. They should have an active and well-funded research program that supports undergraduate, graduate and/or post-doctoral scholars. No specific time interval is required for the promotion to Professor, given that a faculty member is able to demonstrate the level of scholarship and leadership required for advancement to this rank.

III. General Procedures for the Promotion/Reappointment Processes

A. Responsibilities of the Candidate

The candidate is responsible for following the timeline for preparation and submission of promotion and tenure materials as described in Section 9.35 Part 10 of the NMSU P&T Policy. A candidate may temporarily suspend the promotion and/or tenure timeline by

requesting an extension of the probationary period as described in NMSU P&T Policy Section 9.35 Part 2B.

The Department strongly recommends that all candidates for promotion to Associate Professor should elect to have a mid-probationary review. As the name implies, this review will take place midway through the candidate's probationary period. Faculty who choose to have a mid-probationary review must submit their portfolio to the PUA by mid-January of the year in which the review is to be conducted. The portfolio shall be prepared in accordance with Section 9.35 Part 6 of the NMSU P&T Policy and will be reviewed by the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee, the PUA, and the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. The College Promotion and Tenure Committee will provide to the PUA and the candidate a written evaluation of progress toward promotion and tenure. The review is to be conducted according to the guidelines set out in this policy. See Section 9.35 Part 10 of the NMSU P&T Policy for additional information.

A candidate either for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, or from Associate Professor to Professor must prepare a portfolio including comprehensive documentation of the candidate's accomplishments in the performance of assigned duties. The portfolio format is specified in Section 9.35 Part 6 of the NMSU P&T Policy; further details of the format are provided in Appendix 6 of the College's Promotion and Tenure Policy. The candidate may request sample portfolios from the PUA; if portfolios of actual persons are used, the PUA will obtain written permission from the owners of those portfolios before they are provided to the candidate. Between the time that the candidate's portfolio is submitted to the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee for review and 48 hours before the committee meets to review the candidate's portfolio, the candidate may change, add, or delete materials from the portfolio only if such changes are described in writing by the candidate and made available to the entire committee; the exception to this is that letters of recommendation may not be removed from the portfolio. During this time, the portfolio will be stored securely in the office of the Chair of the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee; if the chair loans out the candidate's portfolio to other committee members for review, they also are obligated to store the portfolio securely and treat all materials as confidential. After the departmental committee has met, no changes may be made to the portfolio. However, the candidate has the right to review all items included in the portfolio at any time prior to review by the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee, the PUA, or the College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

At any time in the process of promotion and tenure review, a candidate may withdraw from further consideration in accordance with Section 9.35, Part 7 of the NMSU P&T Policy. The appeals process applicable to promotion and tenure decisions is described in Sections 9.35 Part 9 and Section 10.60, of the NMSU P&T Policy.

B. Responsibilities of the Principal Unit Administrator (PUA)

The roles and responsibilities of the Principal Unit Administrator PUA are described in Section 9.35 Part 5 of the NMSU P&T Policy.

The PUA annually evaluates members of the FWCE in the fall of each year and reports these evaluations to individual faculty members and the College Administration. The goal is to assure that all faculty members are provided adequate supervision and direction. Documentation for the annual performance evaluation is to be transmitted via Digital Measures. This annual review also serves to promote the effectiveness of the Department, College, and University by assuring that every faculty member has a clear understanding of expectations. Each faculty member will, in consultation with the PUA, prepare an allocation of effort statement as part of the annual performance evaluation process; the allocation of effort statement is described in detail in Section 6.61 and 9.31 of the NMSU P&T Policy and Appendix 2 of the College's Criteria for Promotion and Tenure. These annual performance evaluations will include each faculty member's allocation of effort statement, current position description, the Digital Measures documentation provided by the faculty member, and the PUA's written review. All annual performance evaluations and allocation of effort statements will be provided to the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. The PUA will certify in writing to the Dean that s/he has met with each faculty member being reviewed; a copy of this certification will be provided to each faculty member being reviewed. The faculty member shall be allowed to submit a written response to the performance evaluation. These duties are required of PUAs, therefore junior members of the faculty should not hesitate at any time to discuss with the PUA specific expectations in regard to their position, the quality of their own services and the outlook for their future.

The PUA is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all records related to faculty performance evaluations and allocations of effort, and for ensuring the secure storage of those records and of candidate portfolios until those portfolios are transmitted to the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee. The PUA is also responsible for making sure that all members of the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee are familiar with the provisions of the University's Conflict of Interest Policy, particularly as it pertains to the promotion and tenure process.

At least every three years, the PUA will charge the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee to review the Department's promotion and tenure policies and update them if necessary or desirable. The PUA will consult with the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee regarding any proposed revisions. If the departmental policy should change during a faculty member's pre-tenure or pre-promotion period, the faculty member may choose one of the policies for evaluation purposes by notifying the PUA in writing.

During the promotion and tenure process, the PUA manages the process of soliciting and compiling internal and external reviews, and the addition of any materials to the candidate's portfolio. The PUA will keep each candidate for tenure and/or promotion informed as to the progress of the candidate's portfolio through the system, and will notify the candidate in writing of negative decisions on tenure and/or promotion.

The PUA is also responsible for conducting post-tenure reviews of faculty members as described in Section 9.36 of the NMSU P&T policy.

C. Peer Review

Evaluation of a faculty member's accomplishments can best be made through the informed judgments of qualified colleagues in the profession. Although such evaluations are necessarily subjective, this approach holds the best opportunity to protect the interests of the candidate faculty as well as the academic institution and its students. In matters of promotion the FWCE will always seek external evaluators of the highest caliber who have no direct personal or professional relationship to the faculty member.

The peer review process for candidates for tenure and/or promotion is managed by the PUA in consultation with the candidate. Each evaluator will receive the candidate's complete CV and reprints of the candidate's publications, but will not necessarily receive all supporting documents. The College and departmental promotion and tenure policies will be provided to all external reviewers. If evaluators request additional information in writing from the PUA, the PUA will inform the candidate of the request and discuss the request with the candidate. If the PUA and the candidate agree to send the requested information, the PUA will manage this task.

Each candidate's documentation will include at least five external letters from academic faculty members at or above the candidate's own rank and within the candidate's disciplinary specialty, as well as at least three letters from colleagues within NMSU, with at least one of these from outside the College. Letters from former graduate and undergraduate students will also be obtained. For some candidates, letters from governmental agencies or non-governmental organizations may also be appropriate. The PUA will request a list of suggested reviewers from the candidate; although the PUA may also invite reviewers not suggested by the candidate, at least half of the letters included in the documentation file will be from reviewers suggested by the candidate. It is recommended that the PUA send requests for letters to the reviewers by early July so that letters may be received by early September. Unsolicited letters will be submitted to the candidate for review and will only be incorporated into the documentation file with written approval of the candidate.

The PUA will provide specific instructions to each reviewer. These will include the following:

- A request for a brief statement regarding the individual's qualifications for serving as a reviewer.
- A request that the reviewer indicate the nature of any relationship between the candidate and the reviewer.
- Notification that the candidate will have the opportunity to read the letter of evaluation.
- Notification that third parties may have an opportunity to review letters as well. This includes the departmental and college promotion and tenure committees, and may also include other parties in the event of an EEOC or other appeal or investigation of a promotion and tenure decision.

D. The FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee

The FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee shall be composed of no fewer than three tenure-track members. In instances of tenure, all voting members must be tenured. In instances of promotion, all voting members must hold a rank at least equal to the rank for which the candidate is applying. If there are fewer than three eligible members, the committee is composed of all eligible members of the Department's faculty. If there are not enough eligible faculty members within the FWCE to constitute a committee, the PUA will, in consultation with the existing committee and the candidate, select a member or members from outside the FWCE.

If there are more than three eligible faculty members, a member may serve on the committee for a maximum of three consecutive years, after which that individual must rotate off the committee for at least one year. Each year, the members of the committee will elect a committee chair. The chair calls meetings and conducts the business of the committee. The chair of the FWCE committee will supervise the election of the department's representative on the College promotion and tenure committee, if the department has a representative on the College committee that year (see ACES criteria for promotion and tenure for details).

At least every three years, the PUA will charge the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee to review the Department's promotion and tenure policies and update them if necessary or desirable. The PUA will consult with the FWCE Promotion and Tenure

Committee regarding any proposed revisions. Proposed new policies will be discussed and voted on by the entire faculty.

In its consideration of candidates for tenure and/or promotion, the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee will maintain confidentiality of records, documentation, and deliberations at all times. The Dean of the College or his/her representative, as well as the PUA, may meet with the FWCE promotion and tenure committee to discuss procedural matters only. The deliberations and voting of the promotion and tenure committee will be conducted in closed session only among committee members. The recommendations of the promotion and tenure committee regarding each candidate will be surveyed via secret written ballot. Voting must be in person; absentia and proxy votes are not permitted. All vote counts must be recorded in writing.

The FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee will submit, for each candidate considered, a memorandum summarizing its recommendations and the vote counts to the PUA and the Dean. The recommendation will reflect the majority view of the committee. It will contain specific commendations, concerns, and recommendations addressing the Department's criteria in each of the areas required for tenure and/or promotion. It will also allow for and include any dissenting opinions concerning specific commendations, concerns, and/or recommendations not reflected in the majority view. Each candidate will be informed in writing of the FWCE Promotion and Tenure Committee's recommendation and vote count, and shall receive a copy of the memoranda sent to the PUA and the Dean.

E. Time Line for the Promotion/Tenure Processes

The timeline for promotion and tenure is specified in Section 9.35 Part 10 of the NMSU P&T Policy. A current timeline with specific deadlines and target dates for each year is distributed annually by the Provost's office and forwarded to faculty by the Dean's office.