

Department of Biological Sciences**Criteria for promotion of tenure-track and tenured faculty****Preamble**

Consideration of faculty promotion is among the most important responsibilities of tenured faculty members. The decisions that the primary promotions committee makes regarding promotion and tenure affects the quality and activities of the faculty, and the reputation of the department, for many years into the future.

General Guidelines for Promotion

A successful candidate must demonstrate a strong record of accomplishment in three categories: Discovery, Learning, and Engagement. In the Department of Biological Sciences, our primary emphasis is on Discovery, or in other words, novel and high quality scientific output from an ongoing, externally-funded scientific research program. However, even those who excel in Discovery must also adequately address Learning and Engagement. Professorial conduct is considered relevant in the areas of Discovery, Learning, and Engagement, as described by the University Policy Office, Academic Tenure and Promotion (I.B.2):

Professorial Conduct

Purdue is committed to maintaining an inclusive environment that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding and mutual respect; and encourages its members to strive to reach their fullest potential. To this end, all faculty members are encouraged to embody collegiality and good citizenship, treating all members of the University community (faculty, staff, students) with respect, and being entitled to respectful treatment by these others. Such conduct contributes to the University's core mission of discovery, learning and engagement. Faculty members are afforded the right to academic freedom. At the same time, the right of faculty to express dissent and to enjoy academic freedom must not be interpreted to allow professional misconduct or malfeasance nor should it be read as allowing faculty to obstruct the ability of colleagues to carry out their normal functions or to violate ethical standards. Criticism of and opposition to others' ideas or extant policy or proposals is not evidence of a lack of collegiality, and may in itself be important evidence of engagement and good citizenship in the University community. The expectation for collegiality and good citizenship by faculty does not constitute a separate criterion for promotion, rather it is one aspect of meeting minimum thresholds in discovery, learning and engagement.

<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/academic-research-affairs/ib2.html>

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DISCOVERY**Research output and productivity**

There should be a **consistent and continuous record of peer-reviewed publications** with the promise of future publication. The publications should be commensurate with the years in rank. There should be strong evidence of independent research and a record of accomplishment in research performed at Purdue. There is an expectation that such

publications are routinely found in journals judged to be within the top 25th percentile in the candidate's field of study (based on the Mentoring Subcommittee and expert reviewer evaluations). Publications for which the candidate is the primary author should be designated by an asterisk. "In preparation" or "submitted" papers are not to be listed or used to support promotion. "In revision" papers may be listed but in such cases editorial decision letters should be provided to the primary committee. Typically, peer-reviewed publications that are independent of a prior mentor are expected in order to distinguish the individual from the work performed in the mentor's lab. In cases where the prior mentor is a co-author, and for other papers in which the candidate is not the primary (or senior) author, the dossier should describe the specific contributions of the candidate and their lab (even if described in the paper). Publication of books or major review articles in the scientific discipline may likewise reflect positively on the candidate's reputation in their field.

Faculty efforts in innovation and entrepreneurship should be recognized in the promotion process, supporting the mission of Purdue as a public and land grant university and the ideal of converting knowledge for the betterment of society. Examples include **patents, development and dissemination of proprietary knowledge, software or instrumentation, product development and successful entrepreneurial activities**. These outflows of scholarly research and accomplishments are **additional evidence for a successfully executed research program**. The information provided in the promotion document should be sufficiently detailed so as to allow for a reasonable assessment of scope and significance (e.g., degree to which the translational activity is incremental or disruptive, start-up funds raised, patent licensing details, number of external software users, or extent of consultancies). The Department also acknowledges that the research output items noted above, such as awarding of patents and development of technologies, are uncommon in many subdisciplines of biology and thus these are not an expectation for promotion in our department.

Funding

It is expected that the candidate has a consistent track record of external funding appropriate for their field of study and the award(s) should be sufficient to support their research program, including personnel. If the candidate is involved in collaborative research, the role of the candidate's lab in the research, as well as the proportion of each award that is allocated to the candidate's lab, must be clearly described.

Invited talks

The candidate should demonstrate recognition within his or her field of expertise through invitations to speak about their scholarly activities from high-ranking programs or meetings in their field. Short podium presentations or poster presentations at conferences, when selection is based on open abstract submissions, can be included in the dossier as proof of engagement, but these are considered distinct from an invited talk.

External Letters

External letters represent an important component used to judge the scientific reputation of the candidate. Referee letters should come from top scholars in the field, preferably from individuals at top-tier research institutes and universities (Research Level 1). At least half of these letters should come from individuals not recommended by the candidate.

Expectations for Promotion to associate professor with tenure

For promotion to associate professor with tenure, the candidate should have earned at least a national reputation in the field of study as documented by multiple publications in high-ranking journals, funding, invited talks, and external letters. There should be high potential for sufficient continued funding to conduct their research program for the foreseeable future. Extramural awards as a principal investigator are expected.

Expectations for Promotion to full professor

Promotion to full professor should show clear evidence that the candidate is an international leader in their field. Candidates are expected to have independent funding, typically as the principal investigator on a major grant. Collaborative grants are also viewed positively. Promotion implies that there is little concern that the individual has the ability to acquire independent funding for many years in the future. Keynote and symposium presentations at major conferences are expected, and external reviewers should themselves have outstanding credentials and will include international colleagues, distinguished or named professors, National Academy members, institute directors, etc.

LEARNING

Teaching

The candidate must demonstrate commitment to the delivery of high-quality instruction in service and/or core courses. This commitment can be recognized in different ways including, but not limited to, excellent-to-outstanding student teaching evaluations, receipt of teaching awards, development of new courses, creativity in course structure and/or student assessments, and attendance at teaching development workshops.

Mentoring

Mentoring of trainees is an important component of a faculty member's responsibility. At the time of promotion, it is expected that a candidate for promotion to associate professor with tenure will have (or have graduated) one or more Ph.D. level graduate students. Moreover, each postdoctoral trainee and graduate student (including M.S. level) will have, or be expected to earn, first authorship on a peer-reviewed publication from research undertaken in the candidate's lab. The department views having undergraduates involved in the research program as an important component of student education and requires this to be documented in the dossier.

ENGAGEMENT

Service at Purdue University

All candidates are expected to serve on departmental committees. Promotion to full professor should additionally include service on college and/or university committees, with service on at least one committee that contributes to issues of departmental policy and/or operations.

Professional service

Professional service is considered as evidence that the candidate is an active and contributing member in their field of study. An example of a professional service activity expected for promotion to associate professor with tenure is substantial grant and/or manuscript reviewing. Examples for promotion to full professor include in addition service on editorial boards of leading journals in their field and leadership roles in professional societies.

Leadership

Leadership at the home institution or in professional societies, organizing sessions at conferences, and chairing sessions are encouraged for those seeking promotion to full professor. Leadership in larger, collaborative research projects is also highly valued.

MENTORING SUBCOMMITTEE

Role of the Mentoring Subcommittee

The subcommittee plays several roles in the success of promotion cases. First and foremost, members of the subcommittee serve as direct mentors for junior colleagues by providing guidance on career directions, department expectations, and advice on how best to accomplish goals. The subcommittee is also responsible for setting appropriate timelines regarding productivity in the three key areas (Discovery, Learning, and Engagement), providing assistance in assembling a complete promotion dossier, and presenting the facts of the case to the Department's Primary Promotions Committee on a yearly basis for review. Additionally, the subcommittee is tasked with obtaining outside letters from leading scholars to assist in the review of the case.

Mentoring Subcommittee Guidelines for Presentation of Candidates to the Primary Promotions Committee

- Members of the promotion mentoring subcommittee discuss the case at the primary promotions committee meeting. There will be no formal vote or action by the subcommittee regarding a case.
- The subcommittee is tasked with presenting their case to the primary committee. The presentations should be abbreviated, providing only the facts of the case and unbiasedly pointing out strengths and weaknesses in the case. The presentation should avoid reiterating the tenure talk given by the candidate. Following and separate from the presentation, the open discussion period will be the time for more in-depth evaluation and critique of the strengths and weakness of the case.
- The subcommittee is responsible for highlighting to the primary promotions committee the quality and the rigor of the research of the candidate. As it is informative for evaluation of the case, the subcommittee may list publications as Tier-1, -2, or -3 journals in the promotion dossier. It is acknowledged that this will vary between disciplines. The journals' Impact Factors will not be a key consideration in evaluating the case.
- The subcommittee is responsible for generating names of appropriate external referees from top scholars in the broad field. These should include international colleagues, distinguished or named professors, National Academy members, institute directors, etc. from top tier research institutes. The subcommittee is also responsible for collecting a limited number of suggested referee names from the candidate to provide a balanced list of reviewers. The committee is responsible for generating an accurate set of extracts from the letters of recommendation that, individually and in toto, reflect the tenor of the letters. Comments about the letters or the individuals writing the letters should not be presented to the primary promotions committee members during the initial presentation, but rather should be reserved for the open discussion.
- Annual reports from the subcommittee should be discussed with the primary committee.
- The promotion document (without the letters of recommendation) should be prepared by the subcommittee with the advice of the candidate.