

PEER COMMITTEE AND PEER REVIEW CRITERIA

University of Maine School of Earth and Climate Sciences

May 21, 2015

PEER COMMITTEE:

This committee will consist of four faculty members, all of whom must hold tenure and have a formal appointment in the School of Earth and Climate Sciences (SECS). Deliberations concerning promotions will be conducted only by committee members holding rank higher than the person being considered for promotion. The Peer Committee also serves as the Policy Advisory Committee for advising the School Director.

PEER REVIEW CRITERIA:

All faculty members in the School of Earth and Climate Sciences will have an appointment that balances teaching, research, and service. The following criteria are intended as a guide to all untenured faculty members, regardless of rank, in preparing for evaluations with respect to progress toward promotion and/or attainment of tenure. The criteria are also intended to specify levels of performance to guide Peer Committees regarding promotions from Associate Professor to Professor, for the standard annual evaluation for both tenured and untenured faculty members, and for quadrennial post-tenure reviews. The School recognizes that mentoring of faculty members at early stages in their careers is important, as is accountability throughout faculty members' careers.

A number of faculty members have Joint Appointments, with some proportion of their salary coming from other units, such as the Climate Change Institute and the Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions, that will modify the details presented below. Those faculty members will be evaluated by a Joint Peer Review Committee, as described in the current AFUM contract. There is a clear distinction in UM and UM System documents between "Joint Appointments" (most commonly referring to split salary line) and "Cooperating Faculty" (where no salary split is involved). However, certain SECS faculty members whose salary comes exclusively from a research unit have Joint Appointments and their tenure or tenure-track resides within the School of Earth and Climate Sciences. Regardless of the joint appointment split, all tenure track faculty members in SECS will be evaluated on the full range of criteria listed below, in proportion to the research appointment. Research units do not grant tenure at the University of Maine. Cooperating Faculty members are evaluated by their primary academic unit. Cooperating Research Faculty members are evaluated by either their primary academic or research unit.

Research Faculty members within SECS are part of the collective bargaining unit. They are evaluated annually by the Peer Review Committee for reappointment, and as necessary for promotion. Evaluation criteria are the same as for tenured or tenure-track faculty members, in proportion to the research appointment, and in consideration of additional contributions such as advising and teaching, if any.

It is important for faculty members applying for promotion and/or tenure to understand that external letters of assessment will be solicited. These letters are intended to provide an independent assessment of the faculty member's performance and as such they represent an important component of the review process. It is therefore in each faculty member's best interest to work towards establishing a competitive portfolio that is likely to meet with strongly positive reviews from national and international experts in their field of study.

The faculty member under review is advised to preface their materials with a cover letter that outlines highlights of the package. Within this, statements of the number of papers

published, grants obtained and declined, awards received, students advised, and classes taught should be clearly and simply summarized.

The following criteria represent satisfactory performance within rank for a 50% research-50% teaching split and 100% appointment in SECS, and are used as guidelines for decisions regarding tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review. These criteria are considered as an average, typically over a four-year period, or over the probationary period in the case of untenured faculty. Variations in the conditions of appointment, such as teaching/research split and administrative duties, will result in proportional adjustment of these expectations. Success in one of these areas alone is typically not sufficient for promotion or tenure; rather the peer review committee will form a holistic opinion of the candidate's record based on the individual's collective achievements in all of these areas, with particular emphasis on (I)-(IV).

Note that the numeric publishing targets listed under Section III below are not absolute criteria, but instead are intended to provide faculty members with what constitutes minimum expectations for a 50% research-50% teaching split. In cases of tenure and/or promotion, The Peer Review Committee will also consider the impact of the faculty member's scholarship on the field via external letters of assessment and other means, and the minimum number of publications is not necessarily sufficient for securing tenure and/or promotion. It is particularly important that faculty members on probationary appointments develop a research plan in their first year designed to exceed these expectations, and they should seek relevant guidance from their faculty mentor(s), the Peer Review Committee, and the School Director.

- I. Teaching Functions: Nine credit hours per year. The faculty member shall present evidence of satisfactory teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Evidence should include student evaluations as well as personal student statements. Peer evaluation of course content and presentation should be sought out by the faculty member. In recognition that the geosciences require significant laboratory and field-oriented skills, preparation of students in these areas (e.g., by conducting field trips outside of the coursework), will be recognized appropriately. For the School to fulfill its teaching mission adequately, as a portion of their assigned teaching load, all faculty members are expected to teach on a regular basis at least one undergraduate-level course in SECS. All faculty members with a research component to their appointment shall also teach graduate courses. Documented effectiveness in both graduate and undergraduate teaching will be monitored carefully via student questionnaires and evaluations of student progress. Several courses in the School's curriculum are team-taught by two or more faculty members. In recognition of the fact that individual faculty effort in these instances can vary widely, faculty members involved in team teaching should clarify the nature and extent of their participation in these courses to the Peer Review Committee.

- II. Advising: Student advising and mentoring responsibilities are important elements in the assigned workload of all tenured and tenure-track faculty. Effective advising and mentoring require that the faculty member be available to meet with students at appropriate times, to be able to communicate the requirements of the School, College, and University to the student, and to demonstrate an interest in each advisee's academic progress and concerns. All faculty members shall serve on thesis/dissertation committees and direct thesis/dissertation work on a regular basis. These activities will be considered as part of (but not a substitute for) the individual's research and teaching productivity. Both graduate and undergraduate advising

are viewed as very important contributions to the School, and will be evaluated seriously. Not accepting additional individualized instruction and/or independent study beyond assigned workload will not be held against faculty during the peer review process.

III. Scholarly Activities: Scholarly activity should lead to the dissemination of new knowledge in the form of publications and oral presentations.

(i) At least one refereed article per year. Articles should be in respected national or international professional journals such that they reach wide audiences of peer scholars. A faculty member should be the first author on some of these articles, though students advised by the faculty member may commonly fill that role. Refereed chapters in high-level, research-oriented books will be considered equivalent to a refereed article. Published maps are generally not considered as substitutes for publication in scientific journals, but will be considered as scholarly productivity in a manner consistent with the scope of the map and the nature and extent of the faculty member's contributions. Book reviews, NEIGC guidebook articles, abstracts and the like will not be considered as commensurate substitutes for publication in scientific journals although they are desirable (see (iii) below). For articles or maps with multiple authors, faculty should clearly indicate the nature and extent of their contribution (e.g., conceived the study, collected and/or interpreted the data, advised the student, wrote the paper). Books, whether research-oriented or for popular audiences, are highly valued, and they will be considered as scholarly productivity in a manner consistent with the scope of the book and the nature and extent of the faculty member's contributions.

(ii) At least one oral or poster presentations should be made every year before professional organizations such as GSA, AGU, MSA, AMQUA, INQUA, etc. Invited presentations are highly desirable because they represent recognition by the profession of the quality of the individual's work.

(iii) Open-file reports and field-trip guides are valuable documents and they shall be equated with oral or poster presentations.

IV. External Funding: Research requiring significant funding should be supported largely through external sources. This does not imply that such fund-raising is in itself a substitute for scholarly activity. A crucial part of the School's health is the attainment of external funding by faculty for graduate student stipends and funds for students to conduct their thesis/dissertation research. All faculty members shall attempt to procure such funding on a regular basis. There is a wide variation in the amounts and frequency of submissions required for fundraising activity and for the dollar amounts needed to sustain individual research programs, but this shall be documented, provided to the Peer Committee, and will be evaluated.

V. School Functions: The individual shall participate effectively on the normal committees of the School, contribute to the development of School policy, and be involved in overall unit activities such as faculty meetings, seminars, thesis defenses, invited lectures, and non-classroom interactions with students. Outstanding service in these areas will be appropriately recognized. Untenured faculty should not serve on too many committees.

Failure to regularly attend faculty meetings or School seminars without a teaching or research-driven cause is deemed a failure in this category.

- VI. College and University Functions: Faculty members shall be willing to serve on College and University committees, and in activities that aid the development of the School, College and University. However, untenured faculty should generally limit such service in the early years of establishing their careers.
- VII. Professional Service: Individuals must participate in such valuable service efforts as:
- (a) Proposal reviews (NSF, EPA, etc...)
 - (b) Peer review of papers
 - (c) Convening and/or chairing professional sessions, leading professional field trips
 - (d) Serving on agency boards (NSF, National Academy of Science, etc...)
 - (e) Sustained service to the State, such as membership on advisory committees
- VIII. Public Service: Each faculty member is expected to contribute to the School's interaction with the public. This could involve answering letters (inquiries) and phone calls, giving tours of the facilities, etc. Additionally, the individual should be willing to donate several days a year to the Maine community, for example, through public lectures, (non-paying) consultation with State governmental organizations, and visits to K-12 classrooms.

The above criteria will be the basis for reappointment of untenured faculty and as guidelines for promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure, with particular emphasis on (I)-(IV). Promotion to Professor shall be based on time-averaged, long-term quality and productivity that complies with (I)-(IV), and international recognition as indicated by participation in national- and international-level professional organizations, invited papers, books, edited compilations, and similar efforts involving leadership and advanced organizational abilities. These criteria will also be used in the Post-Tenure Compensation Reviews that occur every four years after being granted tenure.