

## DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES

### Tenure and Promotion Criteria

Approved by the Tenured Faculty of the Department of Earth Sciences: May 2, 2007

#### I. OVERVIEW

Tenure and promotion (hereafter T&P) are two of the most important concerns for faculty who join the Department of Earth Sciences (hereafter DES) at The University of Memphis (hereafter U of M). Thus the following guide is developed to assist individuals, committees, and administrators involved in matters of T&P in the DES. In particular, it is intended to assist each candidate to qualify for Tenure, for promotion to Associate Professor or Associate Research-Professor, and for promotion to Professor or Research Professor. The candidate must be familiar with these requirements and must meet Tennessee Board of Regents, department, college, and university eligibility criteria at the time of application. Such criteria, guidelines, and requirements may change over time through DES, College, or University review, and the candidate has the responsibility to be aware of official changes.

T&P criteria set forth in this document apply to all faculty with DES as their home department. This document reflects both the combined views of this collective faculty regarding T&P criteria and the review of these criteria by the College of Arts and Sciences. To insure that expectations are met, all candidates should consult frequently with the DES chair. The DES chair will provide current departmental guidelines to potential T&P candidates upon initial employment and as modifications are made.

The common achievement of both T&P requires the same general criteria, and candidates will be held to the guidelines existing at the start of the Fall semester in which they make application. Faculty should be familiar with the Mission of DES. Teaching, research, service, and all other professional activities that forward the DES mission enhance each candidate's potential for T&P. Although DES has work expectations for faculty that reflect the broad nature of the DES, T&P guidelines specifically relate to achieving excellence, for which all faculty should strive, in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

Criteria for T&P are available in the Faculty handbook, the department office, and on the web.

DES criteria (this document) can be found at:

[http://academics.memphis.edu/provost/provost\\_tp\\_guide/esci.pdf](http://academics.memphis.edu/provost/provost_tp_guide/esci.pdf)

College of Arts and Sciences criteria can be found at:

[http://cas.memphis.edu/ten\\_prom.htm](http://cas.memphis.edu/ten_prom.htm)

University criteria can be found at:

<http://www.memphis.edu/facultyhandbook/>

#### TYPES OF FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Tenure-track appointments are made to the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor. Research-faculty appointments are made to the ranks of Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor, or Research Professor (see relevant pages of the Faculty Handbook). Under university guidelines, research faculty are not eligible for tenure. However, research faculty are subject to the same promotion guidelines as tenure-track faculty (see section below on Criteria for promotion of Research Faculty). Other types of DES faculty appointments that do not involve tenure or promotion include Instructor, Visiting Professor, Post-doctoral Research position, Adjunct, and Emeritus faculty.

#### II. EVALUATIONS

##### A. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Copies of all annual performance evaluations will be provided to the faculty member, as well as be recorded in the faculty member's file. Annual performance evaluation is an integral part of the T&P process. Annual performance evaluations for faculty will follow currently existing performance-review procedures established by the Dean and Provost.

## B. MID-TERM TENURE REVIEW.

A mid-term evaluation during the Spring term of the third academic year for each tenure-track faculty member will be made by the DES T&P committee. The dossier for mid-tenure review must be similar to the dossier required for application for T&P, except no external letters of support are required. The contents of the T&P dossier are described in the College of Arts and Science web site listed above. Exceptions to the third year rule may include faculty with substantial prior experience at other universities or previously on non-tenure track at The U of M. Such exceptions must be fully documented and authorized by the signatures of appropriate administrators. The committee summary should clearly state any perceived shortcomings and recommend corrective efforts to be made prior to the formal T&P application. The committee's mid-tenure review will be sent to the DES chair and to the Center for Earthquake Research and Information (hereafter CERl) director, when appropriate.

The DES chair will write a separate mid-term evaluation of the faculty member. The evaluation will identify the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses and recommend strategies for improvement. Comments and recommendations of both the T&P committee and the DES Chair will be provided to the faculty member and placed in the faculty member's file.

The mid-term review reports are an integral part of the T&P process and should be included in the dossier when the candidate applies for T&P. If it does not appear that the faculty member under consideration will satisfy the criteria for tenure, this must be expressed to the candidate both at mid-term review and at annual performance evaluations and so noted in writing with an expression of what increased expectations he/she must achieve for serious consideration for T&P to Associate Professor.

## III. FACULTY GUIDELINES FOR T&P TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

All faculty are expected to establish a vigorous research program, teach and mentor undergraduate and graduate students, and provide service. Faculty are expected to maintain good departmental citizenship through professionalism in their interaction with other faculty and students, a willingness to assist fellow faculty, and to treat all persons with courtesy, respect, and dignity. Expectations for individual faculty will vary based upon their expected annual teaching, research and service activities as stated in their faculty appointment letter and yearly assignments. The chair of the DES T&P committee, the DES chair, and the CERl director when appropriate, will discuss these expectations with new faculty members early in their first semester. After that discussion, the chair of the DES T&P committee, in conjunction with other faculty forming a mentoring committee, will be responsible for assisting new faculty members in developing an appropriate plan to meet DES expectations to achieve T&P.

A Ph.D. degree (or equivalent) from an accredited university in a discipline relevant to DES is required for tenure and for all levels of promotion. Exceptions (e.g., a Ph.D. in chemistry or physics; or an equivalent education in universities from countries other than the U.S.A.) must be validated by the DES chair and approved. A written statement of approval of equivalency must accompany the application. Application for Full Graduate Faculty status is also required prior to submission of the dossier for T&P consideration to Associate Professor.

Specific criteria cited in this document reflect the type of activities DES encourages for new faculty to become permanent colleagues. For both T&P, the candidate's activities in the areas of teaching, research, and service will be specifically evaluated. Included in these general topics are student advising and mentoring, external support for research and scholarship, and outreach.

The criteria for excellence are intended to set standards toward which all faculty members should constantly aspire. All of these excellence criteria do not have to be met for T&P, but are intended as guides for excellence in different categories. Clearly, no individual is likely to excel in all areas, but progress and potential are expected in each category. Furthermore, candidates satisfying fewer areas will be expected to show higher achievements within those areas.

### A. CRITERIA FOR EXCELLENCE

The following are guidelines for excellence in each of the following areas:

#### *Teaching*

An excellent teacher is one who:

1. is an effective teacher as measured by the S.I.R.S. evaluations/reports; evidence of quality teaching may also include letters of commendation from alumni, teaching awards presented by the university, and letters certifying quality teaching from fellow faculty.
2. develops new courses or new classroom methodologies.
3. integrates field experiences, special projects, new technology, techniques, and ideas into courses.
4. obtains external funds to improve teaching/learning or to develop new courses.

#### *Advising/Mentoring*

An excellent advisor is one who:

1. engages students in innovative research that leads to publishable results coauthored by students.
2. advises students through completion of their degrees in a timely manner; provides resources/assistance for completion of degrees.
3. creates a positive mentoring relationship with students that is helpful and collegial, that encourages original thought; and that helps them achieve their career objectives.
4. serves on thesis and dissertation committees both at U of M and other institutions.

#### *Scholarship*

An excellent scholar is one who, on an annual basis:

1. publishes significant papers in nationally recognized refereed journals and books that establish the author as a recognized leader, expert, or innovator in the profession. Some publications should be first authored.
2. maintains an externally funded research program with high national and international visibility that attracts and supports graduate students, visiting scientists, or post-doctoral scholars.
3. receives invitations to speak at national/international meetings and special conferences.
4. receives invitations to speak at departmental colloquia across the nation.
5. presents or contributes to multiple abstracts at national/international meetings.
6. has sustained participation in scholarly activities/field trips as a recognized leader or expert that leads to publications or funded proposals.
7. may contribute through engaged scholarship\* in various communities. Not to exceed 20% of total scholarship effort.

#### *Service*

A faculty member providing excellent service is one who:

1. serves as DES graduate or undergraduate Director.
2. serves on university, college or departmental committees, particularly as chair.
3. serves on national or international government or professional scientific committees or national review panels or boards, particularly as chair.
4. serves as a U of M administrator or Faculty Senate officer.
5. serves as an editor or associate editor for professional scientific journals or as a volume editor for books.
6. reviews proposals for funding agencies; reviews manuscripts for professional scientific journals; reviews books for publishers.
7. serves as an officer in one or more professional societies; organizes conferences, workshops, field trips, and short courses for professional societies.
8. under special circumstances that do not impede faculty duties, does unique consulting work that contributes significantly to professional recognition.

#### *Outreach*

A faculty member providing excellent outreach is one who:

1. develops programs that attract undergraduate majors in earth sciences from high schools.
2. actively recruits students for the graduate program.
3. presents talks at regional universities, colleges, high schools, and community organizations.
4. involves undergraduates at local colleges and universities in research projects.
5. shares professional expertise with the wider community and state.

6. provides distance learning through video assisted courses or on-line courses.
7. serves as advisor to student groups and other sanctioned organizations at U of M.

*Engaged scholarship* is the scholarship of application. It adds to existing knowledge in applying intellectual expertise to collaborative problem-solving with urban, regional, state, national and/or global communities and results in a written work shared with others in the discipline or field of study. Engaged scholarship conceptualizes “community groups” as all those outside of academe and requires shared authority at all stages of the research process from defining the research problem, choosing theoretical and methodological approaches, conducting the research, developing the final product(s), to participating in peer evaluation. Products from engaged scholarship can include, but are not limited to, materials such as program evaluations, opinion surveys, new administrative procedures, grant proposals, seminars and workshops, technical assistance, and interventions that may not always involve a written product.

Excellent engaged scholarship demonstrates, on an annual basis:

1. impact on the agency and/or community
2. originality of design and methodology
3. results that can be generalized
4. connection to a literature and/or theoretical frame
5. visibility gained for the researcher and Department of Earth Sciences
6. significance of the work to the discipline

#### B. EXCEPTION CRITERIA RELATED TO T&P TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Normally, the applicant *must* apply for T&P to Associate Professor at the start of his/her 6<sup>th</sup> year at U of M, (i.e., after five years experience at the Assistant Professor level) and one set of criteria covers both events.

Exceptions for either earlier T&P consideration or a delay in T&P consideration must be fully documented, explained, and explicitly authorized by signatures of appropriate administrators. Judgment to apply for either earlier or later T&P consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Once the application for T&P is initiated, the candidate *cannot withdraw or modify* the application. The seventh year is the terminal year if T&P is denied in the sixth year or if no exception to delay T&P consideration has been authorized. If an early tenure application is denied, then the following academic year is the terminal year.

#### IV. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR

The rank of Professor is not a reward for long service, but instead is recognition of excellent performance, with every expectation of continuing superior contributions to the department, college, university, and profession. Applicants for promotion to Professor or new faculty members appointed at this rank must satisfy and maintain the criteria outlined earlier under T&P to Associate Professor. ***Research is the primary point of distinction*** between the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor. Although continuing good performance is required, a significantly higher level in quantity and quality of research is expected for promotion to Professor than that expected for promotion to Associate Professor. Among the research publications done beyond those required for T&P to Associate Professor should be those that have established a solid international reputation. The applicant must be a tenured Associate Professor with Full Graduate Faculty status and have completed at least ten years of appropriate professional employment as defined in the Faculty Handbook. Exceptions to this time-in-service requirement must be justified in writing with the signature of administrators authorized to make such modifications. Special recognition of service through awards or memberships to select societies may be included.

#### V. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO RESEARCH ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OR RESEARCH PROFESSOR

Faculty with research appointments typically have specific contract terms which need to be fulfilled as outlined in the individual's faculty appointment letter and any modifications thereof as agreed to by the candidate and either the DES chair (for a DES research appointment) or the director of CERI (for a CERI research appointment). Written documentation permitting any modifications as well as a copy of the faculty-appointment letter must accompany the application for promotion. Research Assistant Professors seeking promotion to Research Associate Professor will be evaluated following the same criteria listed above for tenure track professors seeking T&P with the exception that research productivity will be the major criterion. Research Associate Professors seeking

promotion to Research Professor will be evaluated using the same criteria listed above for tenured professors seeking promotion to Professor with the exception that research productivity will be the major criterion. In all cases, classroom teaching, student mentoring and service will still constitute important criteria and will be taken into consideration. In particular, the candidate's record of attracting significant external funding, and supervising and supporting students through grants will weigh heavily in the decision for promotion as these activities form an integral part of a successful research program. The candidate must provide all documentation requested for T&P or for promotion to Professor specified above.

## VI. APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates must inform the DES chair of his/her intent to make application for tenure and/or promotion and obtain permissions where exceptions are requested. Note that application for T&P to Associate Professor is a one-time-only process and *must* take place no later than the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Earlier application for T&P to Associate Professor may take place if so specified in the initial contract or if petition is made to the DES chair and approved by appropriate administrative officials. However, once the process is underway with submission of the dossier to the chair of the T&P committee, the application and dossier can be neither amended nor withdrawn. Thus new faculty are encouraged to fully discuss possible ramifications of an early tenure application with the DES chair and the DES T&P committee before actually submitting an application and dossier for early T&P consideration.

Application for promotion to Professor may be made as early as the Spring semester prior to the Fall semester of a candidate's tenth year of appropriate professional employment as defined in the Faculty Handbook. Later and repeated application for promotion to Professor may take place. Once the process is underway in a given year with submission of the dossier to the chair of the T&P committee, the dossier cannot be amended that year. However, the application may be withdrawn.

### A. EXTERNAL LETTERS

Application for T&P to Associate Professor and for promotion to Professor must be supported by a minimum of four external letters of reference. External reviewers will be selected from a list of names submitted by the candidate, other members of the DES tenured faculty, the DES chair, or the CERI director. The final selection of names will be made through consultation with the DES chair, the CERI director when appropriate, and the chair of the DES T&P committee. No more than one of the reviewers may have been a major advisor of or a collaborator with the candidate. The DES T&P committee chair, in his/her report, should provide the rationale for the choice of external reviewers and summarize their credentials. Vitae of reviewers are not to be included with the application. Exceptions must be documented. Letters are not required for annual and mid-term reviews.

### B. THE DOSSIER

A detailed description of the dossier, which must document teaching, research, and service, required for application for T&P to Associate Professor and for promotion to Full Professor can be found in the Faculty handbook and on the web at:

<http://academics.memphis.edu/provost/> and [http://cas.memphis.edu/cas\\_ten\\_prom\\_forms.htm](http://cas.memphis.edu/cas_ten_prom_forms.htm)

Note that such an extensive documentation is not required for annual and mid-term reviews. The mid-term review materials should follow the dossier format, except for internal review letters.

### C. SCHEDULE

A schedule of events related to DES T&P applications is on the last page of this document. Candidates must enquire at the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the current timetable for the College T&P process. In the event of conflicts regarding submission of material to the College, the College schedule supercedes the departmental schedule.

## VII. MODIFICATION OF DES T&P GUIDELINES

These guidelines may be modified on an annual basis at the end of the Spring semester through faculty discussion to suit changing goals and organization in the department, college, and university. Discussion of T&P guidelines may include faculty who have not yet achieved tenure and promotion to Associate Professor and may

include research faculty who follow these guidelines for promotion. Modifications to the guidelines, however, can only be approved by a vote of the tenured faculty. Both the DES chair and CERI director, if tenured, can participate as voting members for making changes to the T&P guidelines. A two-thirds vote of the tenured faculty present at the annual Spring meeting of the T&P committee shall constitute their approval of modifications. The chair of the T&P committee will be responsible for writing approved modifications, circulating a draft to all tenured and tenure-track faculty in the DES, and forwarding the final draft to the DES chair for submission to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for approval.

#### VIII. COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DES T&P COMMITTEE

For T&P to Associate Professor, the DES T&P committee will consist of all tenured Associate Professors and Professors in the DES. For promotion to Professor the Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured Professors in the DES. Non-tenured faculty, spouses of candidates, the DES chair, and the CERI director (for CERI appointments, only) will not participate in the vote of either committee.

The chair of the DES T&P committee will be selected by a secret vote of the tenured faculty at the end of a Spring semester. The names of candidates for this position will be given the chair of the DES T&P committee prior to the spring meeting. The chair of the DES T&P committee will serve for a two-year period and may not be reelected to a consecutive term. Please note that the chair of the DES T&P committee has responsibilities during the summer that must be met (see schedule) if a candidate intends to submit an application for tenure or promotion in the fall. A quorum will be two thirds of the DES T&P committee members for the appropriate type of consideration and it is the responsibility of the chair of the DES T&P committee to see that a quorum committee meeting is held at the earliest possible date in the Fall semester of each year for consideration of applications filed that year and to see that a quorum committee meeting is held in the Spring semester of each year to consider possible modifications to the DES T&P guidelines. Effort must be made to ensure that balanced representation across the DES sub-disciplines of Geography, Geology, and Geophysics will be on the quorum committee at the time that votes are taken. In the event that a committee of suitable composition (with at least one member representing each discipline) and size cannot be constituted, the DES chair will take remedial action and include an explanation in the candidate's dossier.

Committee members must be present to vote on tenure or promotion; no absentee votes are accepted. Absentee faculty, who are eligible to vote on the T&P committee, may submit written evaluations of candidates that must be read by the T&P committee during committee deliberations prior to voting. Vote is by secret ballot immediately after deliberations are concluded. The summary vote will be read to committee members who are present. The committee chair should retain the vote ballots until the final decision on the application is rendered, usually late in the Spring term. DES committee members who are on the college T&P committee or university appeals committee should vote at the departmental level, because they will be excused at the college and appeals levels.

The chair of the DES T&P committee will write a letter to the DES chair expressing the committee recommendation, summarizing committee deliberations and votes, identifying committee members who voted, identifying committee members who were absent, and identifying absentee committee members who submitted written evaluations of the candidate for consideration by the DES T&P committee. If the vote was not unanimous and more than one minority vote was cast, the letter to the DES chair will contain a statement summarizing discussion that could have led to the minority vote. If no reasons for the minority vote were voiced during discussion, then this should be stated in the committee's letter. Committee members will have an opportunity to review the letter and may offer suggestions for improvement, however only one letter goes forward from the committee to the DES chair. Committee members must maintain confidentiality.

The Director of CERI must provide an independent recommendation of CERI faculty. The CERI director should leave the room during discussion and action pertaining to CERI faculty, but may be present and participate in discussion and action pertaining to all other DES faculty under consideration by the T&P committee.

The DES chair will make a recommendation that is independent of the departmental committee. The DES chair will promptly forward the DES T&P committee's recommendation, the CERI Director's recommendation (for CERI faculty), and his/her own recommendation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The DES chair will then notify the candidate of his/her progress to date.

When the DES chair is considered for tenure and/or promotion, the chair of the DES T&P committee will forward that committee's recommendation directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. When the CERI Director is considered for tenure and/or promotion, only recommendations from the DES T&P committee and the DES chair will be forwarded directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Schedule for DES T&P Actions

	Responsibility	Action	Due Date
1	Faculty	Convene DES T&P committee; designate committee chair for coming year.	May 15
2	Candidates	Notify DES chair of intent to apply for T&P in the following Fall semester.	May 15
3	DES chair	Authorizes application and supplies a written rationale for exceptions to normal procedures. Provides chair of DES T&P committee with list of potential applicants.	June 1
4	Candidates, Chair of DES T&P Committee, DES chair	Develop list of potential external reviewers for each applicant.	June 15
5	Chair of DES T&P committee	Contact external reviewers until four agree to participate for each applicant.	July 15
6	Candidates	Develop vita and support materials to be sent to external reviewers.	July 15
7	Chair of DES T&P committee	Send letter, candidate-supplied materials, and DES T&P guidelines to external reviewers.	July 20
8	Candidate	Complete dossier and submit to DES chair.	Aug. 20
9	DES chair	Submit candidate dossiers, external review letters, and letters authorizing applications for T&P or promotion to chair of DES T&P committee.	Sept. 1
10	Chair of DES T&P committee	Schedule review of applications, schedule committee meeting(s), write committee recommendation-letters, forward relevant materials for each candidate to DES chair.	Sept. 15
11	DES chair	Review candidate applications and recommendations of T&P committee; request recommendation-letters from CERI Director if appropriate; write DES chair recommendation-letters. Write cover letters summarizing DES recommendations and any additional information that might be needed regarding DES T&P committee membership or actions, and/or the rationale for selection of external reviewers.	Oct. 1
12	DES chair	Send candidate dossiers and all relevant material to the Dean of Arts and Sciences.	Oct. 10