

College of Natural and Social Sciences Guidelines on Promotion and Tenure

I. Preamble

The purpose of this document is to clarify the promotion and tenure process of the College of Natural and Social Sciences (CNSS) at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The document is designed to improve individual faculty member's understanding of promotion and tenure criteria as well as the process. It is also designed to serve as a basic guide for the CNSS Rank and Tenure Committee.

The Rank and Tenure Committee recognizes that decisions regarding promotion and tenure (continuous appointment) can not be totally objective in nature. Such decisions are largely based on professional judgments of value. By their very definition, judgments of value are qualitative and the standards which are applied are derived from values associated with a professional culture. In this sense, they are subjective but certain facts are also objective and can be easily understood.

This element of subjectivity does not mean, however, that the evaluation process is arbitrary or capricious. These college guidelines are set within the criteria of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, the approved guidelines of the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Regents and the University of Nebraska at Kearney Education Association.

The general principles underlying this evaluative process are the following:

- Faculty Members shall be evaluated within the context of the role and mission of the University of Nebraska at Kearney.
- Faculty Members shall be evaluated within the context of the actual resources available for Faculty performance and development at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, with the understanding that Faculty are free and encouraged to secure resources outside of the University for their professional development and performance.
- Faculty shall be evaluated only on the basis of factors over which the individual has knowledge and reasonable control or upon which they may comment.
- Faculty expect and are entitled to a fair and uniform process of evaluation in accordance with the written guidelines provided to them. In this regard, Faculty may only be formally evaluated by those individuals and committees identified in the Bylaws and guidelines of the department, college, university, and university system. It is understood that departments and individual faculty members may choose to include among their formal evaluators an outside party or parties. However, inclusion of outside parties must be formalized and in place before the Promotion and Tenure

process begins. After the process has been initiated no other individuals or groups may be brought into the process as formal evaluators. Faculty members may request and formal evaluators may seek helpful information from outside or off-campus professionals, but in reference to Regents Bylaw 4.6, which states, "Faculty members shall have access to all materials submitted for their evaluation and the opportunity to respond in writing," no formal request for outside opinion will be used in evaluating Faculty without the written consent of specific individuals and each Faculty member shall have an opportunity to respond in writing to any remarks, comments, or other elements of evaluation.

- Faculty differ in abilities, interests, and opportunity for accomplishment and thus there should not be just one select model of faculty performance used to evaluate faculty members seeking tenure and/or promotion. Rather, evaluation will be based upon an understanding that promotion and tenure criteria must be defined by those within the discipline of the faculty.
- While the College does recognize more than one profile of performance within a field, this does not mean that all possible profiles are acceptable for tenure or promotion. Moreover, acceptable profiles may vary not only individually, but by departments.

II. The Process

a. Letter of Appointment/Reappointment (CNSS)

In accordance with Regents Bylaws and the UNK Guidelines, letters of appointment or reappointment must include in writing any and all terms agreed upon by a new or reappointed Faculty member regarding how much past experience will count toward promotion and tenure criteria. This letter will "set the clock" allowing Faculty to know well in advance when they will be able to qualify in terms of experience to apply for promotion and tenure.

University Bylaws 4.10 states, "The total period of full-time service on a faculty Appointment for a Specific Term prior to acquisition of a Continuous Appointment shall not exceed seven years, including all previous tenure-related full time service with the rank of instructor or higher in all accredited institutions of higher education, unless a contrary agreement is specified in writing at the time the appointee is initially appointed by the University to an Appointment for a Specific Term." For faculty with three or more years of previous acceptable service such agreements will not normally extend the period of probationary service beyond four years before a Continuous Appointment is required.

In addition, this letter must also include any special considerations regarding promotion and tenure. In the absence of any such statements in writing at the time of appointment or reappointment, all qualifying previous experience is counted and no verbal or unwritten "understandings" will be considered binding or taken into account by the Rank and Tenure Committee.

b. Faculty Records/The Portfolio

The portfolio is that combination of documents and materials which the faculty member presents to support their application for promotion and/or tenure. The portfolio is not the annual evaluation, although the annual departmental peer reviews and chair evaluations will be included in the portfolio. For a list of recommended materials, See Appendix 1. ~~See~~ The UNK Guidelines also offers ~~for~~ a detailed description of the portfolio. ~~Also see~~ and the "Definitions and Criteria" section of this policy offers additional information on the portfolio. For further information on assembling a professional portfolio consult materials available in the office of the Dean.

c. Deadlines--Promotion and Tenure

November 1	Applicant submits portfolio to department chair and department promotion/tenure peer review committee.
December 20	Chair and committee respond. The applicant may attach a response, ask for a reconsideration of the original portfolio in light of that response, or withdraw before the application is put forward to the Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor by February 22.
January 15	Portfolio closed and goes to Dean and Rank and Tenure Committee.
February 15	Dean and Committee respond. The applicant may attach a response, ask for a reconsideration of the original portfolio in light of that response, or withdraw before the application is put forward to the Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor by February 22.
February 22	Portfolio is reviewed by Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Chancellor's Committee on Promotion and Tenure, and Chancellor. Favorable decision forwarded to the Regents for action. Unfavorable decision reported back to applicant by Dean.

d. Recommendations, Reconsiderations, Appeals (CNSS)

In rendering their recommendations, the Chairs, Dean, Peer Review, and Rank and Tenure committees should make every effort to explain their

decisions in as clear and helpful a way as possible so that the applicant understands the rationale for the decision.

A request by the applicant for reconsideration means that the original portfolio submitted to the party or parties reviewing the portfolio will be reviewed again and considered in light of the applicant's request. Reconsideration may be requested because the applicant may feel some material in the portfolio was overlooked, or misread or misinterpreted. No new materials are to be added to the portfolio. No new reviewers or procedures are to be added to the process. In requesting, in writing, a reconsideration, the applicant should not just offer a reaction to the recommendations but be specific in terms of what item or items the applicant feels need looked at once again and why.

While the final decision of the Chancellor may not itself be appealed, if a faculty member feels that there has been a violation of proper processes, mishandling of information, the violation of their academic freedom or civil rights which in some way influenced the decision on their application, they may formally grieve these circumstances through the appropriate processes and bodies as noted in the Regents Bylaws, the UNK Faculty Handbook, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

III. Definitions and Criteria (CNSS)

The following material should be considered in addition to the Regents Bylaws, the UNK Guidelines and the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and it is offered to help explain and clarify the rank and tenure process in the College of Natural and Social Sciences. Faculty should have a sound understanding of these other documents and know that the following information exists within the context of those other policies.

a. Tenure/Continuous Appointment.

This is the most significant recognition the University can grant to faculty member because it most significantly impacts the future of the institution.

1. The tenure system operates separately and independently from salary and promotion and where promotion is offered to a faculty member before their probationary period is completed, no promise of eventual tenure is implied by the promotion.

2. Persons holding academic rank below Assistant Professor are not eligible for tenure. The general guidelines listed below are the minimum standards for applicants seeking tenure in the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

Teaching: A cumulative record of good teaching, including measures developed within the department or college, which leads to departmental endorsement of the faculty member. The applicant should also demonstrate interest in student development and pedagogical issues.

Scholarship: All candidates must demonstrate success in an original research program substantially completed while employed at UNK. This research program must include a published article in a refereed journal or a book and may also include book chapters, attendance and presentations at professional conferences, book reviews, other scholarly essays, or evidence of work for an ongoing research project or projects.

Service: The applicant will participate in university activities which may include system-wide, campus-wide, college and departmental committees. Also acceptable would be service in professional organizations.

3. A candidate without prior experience will normally be considered for tenure in the sixth year at UNK. Exceptional candidates and circumstances may allow the awarding of tenure at an earlier time. Credit for prior experience must be negotiated and specified in writing at the time of hiring in the initial letter of appointment.

4. Candidates for tenure will compile and submit a portfolio in support of their request. If a candidate is applying for promotion and tenure simultaneously the one portfolio will be used for both applications.

b. Ranks and Promotion/Tenure

Academic ranks at UNK which fall under the provisions of rank and tenure guidelines, in ascending order, include Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor. In accordance with Regents Bylaws faculty within these ranks will hold either a special appointment, specific term appointment, or continuous appointment (tenure), or other unique appointment as approved by the Regents. The following outlines general promotion criteria and criteria specific to rank.

1. All faculty applying for rank and tenure will be expected to have within their portfolio a recommendation in writing from their departmental rank and tenure peer review committee. The definition of such committee is left to the departments to determine. It is expected that as a department sets its policy it will inform the Dean and the Rank and Tenure Committee of the process it will use. These policies will be kept on file for use by the Rank and Tenure Committee to assist them in the evaluation of portfolios.

2. All applicants are expected to submit student evaluation information in their portfolio. The College of Natural and Social Sciences has its own student evaluation

questionnaire, which was created in the interest of establishing one instrument of uniform measure for all faculty members in the College. The Rank and Tenure Committee expects all CNSS faculty to incorporate this form into their class evaluations. The college form is a "core" form and as such individual faculty members and departments may add such formative materials as they wish for individual and departmental goals. Faculty should use the data from the college form, and any other supplemental materials they deem appropriate, in support of their teaching evaluation for promotion or tenure. At a minimum such materials should reflect at least five semesters of experience and present a comprehensive review of at least two classes.

3. Since the criterion for appointment as Assistant Professor is normally a terminal degree, an Instructor usually will be encouraged to apply for consideration for promotion upon completion of the terminal degree.

4. While the terminal degree in the College of Natural and Social Sciences disciplines is ordinarily the Ph.D. there may be circumstances in which some combination of other graduate degrees and/or experience or distinction in a discipline may be considered as the equivalent of a Ph.D. Such instances will be decided upon a case-by-case basis and will require recommendation by the department and concurrence by the Dean and the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs. When an alternate to the Ph.D. is approved, performance requirements for the faculty member will be the same as for persons holding the Ph.D.

5. Only after an affirmative judgment as to documented teaching effectiveness has been made can serious consideration be given to an evaluation of a candidate's scholarship and service.

6. Scholarship: All candidates must demonstrate success in an original research program substantially completed while employed at UNK. Scholarship concentrated in one area and scholarship in a variety of areas are equally acceptable, provided they demonstrate ongoing scholarly activity. Sound scholarship often does cross boundaries of disciplines and such understanding will be part of the evaluation process.

7. Definitions of qualitative terms noted in UNK Guidelines as applied by CNSS Rank and Tenure Committee:

Qualifies:

Teaching. The faculty member displays excellent performance in teaching, with no evidence of any serious deficiency. Teaching evaluations are generally positive, indicating student satisfaction with the faculty member's teaching. The quantified scores meet departmental and college expectations. The teaching portfolio contains clear evidence of expertise in content, good course management, and effectiveness in creative teaching.

Scholarship: The faculty member's scholarly record is clear and meets expectations. The portfolio contains clear evidence of consistent scholarly activity, and provides evidence of a peer-reviewed publication, or its scholarly equivalent. The faculty member's scholarship and record of publication meets standards expected by the department and college.

Service: The faculty member's record of service to the university and the profession meets college expectations and does not indicate a deficiency. The portfolio contains clear evidence of meaningful service to the campus community, to the department, and to the profession. Evidence of service to the community or the campus includes service specific to the discipline. The amount and level of faculty service clearly meets department and college expectations.

Fails to Qualify:

Teaching. The faculty member's teaching performance fails to meet minimal expectations for effective teaching. The teaching evaluations are consistently lower than departmental and college expectations. The teaching portfolio fails to provide evidence of expertise in content, effectiveness in the classroom, or expected ability in course management. The formal evaluation letter from the Department Chair indicates significant deficiencies in teaching success.

Scholarship. The faculty member's scholarly activity and research record is clearly unsatisfactory. The portfolio contains minimal evidence of scholarly success, failing to provide evidence of a peer-reviewed publication, or its scholarly equivalent. The faculty member's scholarly activity falls below expectations for the department and college. The formal evaluation letter from the Department Chair indicates significant deficiencies in scholarship.

Service: The faculty member's record of service is clearly unsatisfactory. The portfolio contains little evidence of service either to the university community or to the profession. Participation in committee work or activity on campus is minimal. The faculty member clearly fails to meet department and college expectations. The formal evaluation letter from the Department Chair indicates significant deficiencies in service.

8. In accordance with UNK guidelines, all faculty members applying for promotion and/or tenure must have qualified in all three categories of teaching, scholarship, and service.

9. Individuals desiring to go up early for promotion and/or tenure must have exceeded qualification in all three categories of teaching, scholarship, and service. Early is defined as earlier than the previously describe years of service and Early

promotion or Early tenure is different from years negotiated in one's hiring letter. The criteria for Exceeding Qualifications are provided below. Exceeding qualifications in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service do not guarantee appointment.

Teaching: The faculty member's teaching performance exceeds normal expectations and provides clear evidence of outstanding teaching success. The teaching evaluations are consistently positive and the scores exceed college and departmental expectations. The teaching portfolio indicates an unusual commitment to creative teaching, excellent course management, and notable expertise in course content.

Scholarship: The faculty member's scholarly record is noteworthy. The portfolio contains clear evidence of consistent research success and an exceptional record of achievement in peer-reviewed publications, or its scholarly equivalent. Overall the record of scholarship and successful publication significantly exceeds standards expected by the college.

Service: The faculty member's record of service to the university and to the profession is exceptionally high. The portfolio contains significant evidence of high achievement in service activities, both in terms of level of service and years of consistent activity. Service to the campus, the community, or the profession is relevant to the discipline and meritorious in nature. The faculty member's service record is notable in exceeding college expectations.

10. While individual departments may have distinct rank definitions by which they determine their peer and chair recommendations to the Dean and Rank and Tenure Committee, applicants shall also be subject the universal policies of the Regents Bylaws, the UNK Guidelines, and the following general definitions of academic rank criteria for the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

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| 1. Assistant Professor | Faculty member must demonstrate dedication and ability for teaching; scholarly knowledge of disciplines relative to their academic responsibilities, a mastery of relevant skills, and clear potential for continued professional growth. |
| 2. Associate Professor | Faculty member must demonstrate dedication and ability for teaching. Must have cumulative record of scholarly or creative contributions to their discipline. Have become a visible member of the academic community through involvement in university and/or professional service. |
| 3. Professor | Faculty member must demonstrate dedication and ability for teaching. Must have a cumulative record |

of scholarly or creative productivity substantially greater than that expected of other ranks. An established record of significant contribution in university or professional service, and clear contribution to the intellectual environment of the university and/or profession.

11. On occasion there are speculations and requests for a quantitative sense of criteria relative to rank. As noted earlier Promotion and Tenure judgments are made within a broader understanding of qualitative valuation and professional judgment. This College does not endorse the emphasis of publication to the detriment of teaching and service. Faculty will be evaluated in a comprehensive and holistic fashion, measuring the faculty in relation to all three categories of the role and mission of the university, college, and department.

Departments are encouraged to provide to the Rank and Tenure Committee their own rank criteria which will reflect the particular elements consistent with the goals and plans of the department. With the approval of the Rank and Tenure Committee and the Dean, the departmental definitions will replace the following college minimum criteria. In the absence of an approved departmental guideline, the following definitions will be used as rank criteria.

It is realistic to acknowledge that faculty members will wonder as to some basic quantitative definition of expectations at each rank. In an attempt to address those concerns, the following is a general description of minimum levels for ranks. These are offered with the supposition that most of the time the majority of any given faculty here at UNK or at any similar institution would find these quantitative elements, basic, fair, reasonable, and honestly attainable. Meeting minimum criteria does not automatically guarantee entry into that rank, but faculty not reflecting such levels will only be seen as qualifying for that rank due to exceptional and unique circumstances.

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| 1. Assistant Professor | Teaching: Primary responsibility. Expect most professional time invested in preparing classes, meeting classes, meeting obligations of departmental curriculum development. Becoming aware of and laboring to attain a good foundation of classroom performance and student evaluation. |
| | Scholarship: Of secondary priority. Presentation of one paper at a professional conference over the academic year or demonstration of scholastic ability through presentation at campus programs or publication of a book or film review within discipline or submission of such for consideration or clear evidence of scholastic work on ongoing research. |

Service: Attendance at department meetings. Willing to serve on departmental committees and accept reasonable assignments from chair.

2. Associate Professor

Teaching: Quantitative and qualitative assessment should demonstrate a cumulative record of good teaching with an overall average, by whatever measurement, which leads to departmental endorsement of faculty member for good teaching. Demonstrated interest in student development and pedagogical issues.

Scholarship: Of equal priority with teaching. A cumulative record of scholarship which includes: a peer-reviewed journal article within the faculty member's discipline or equivalent scholarly production; on the average of once a calendar year attendance at a professional conference which may include a paper presentation; other published items like book reviews or other scholarly essays of demonstration of work for an ongoing research project or projects.

Service: In addition to departmental responsibilities, participation in university and/or professional service, which may include campus-wide committees, system-wide committees, and service in professional organizations.

3. Professor

Teaching: Cumulative record must demonstrate a continuation of dedication to teaching as described for Associate.

Scholarship: Of equal priority with teaching. A cumulative record of scholarship which includes: publication of a book or three articles within discipline or equivalent scholarly production; on average, attendance every other year at professional conference which may include paper presentation; other published items like a book chapter, book review or other scholarly essays or demonstration of work for ongoing research.

Service: In addition to departmental responsibilities, service in responsible positions on campus-wide, system-wide, or professional committees. Demonstration of leadership qualities and an active concern for faculty development and the

academic/intellectual quality of the campus environment.

Approved, CNSS Rank & Tenure Committee, August 28, 1992; Section III, A.s2. scholarship, revised 4-95, CNSS Rank & Tenure Committee, CNSS Council of Department Chairs; College Dean. Revised November 7, 2011, CNSS Rank & Tenure Committee, CNSS Deans Advisory Committee, College Dean, Faculty.