Earth Sciences: Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Documentation

The College at Brockport
The primary mission of the Department of the Earth Sciences is to provide a high quality undergraduate education in geoscience to students, so that they have the opportunity to build life-long careers. Pursuant of this mission, Department faculty are engaged in three broad activities: teaching, scholarship, and service. Our common goal is to excel in each of these activities. Accordingly, each faculty member in the Department is expected to develop into an excellent teacher. To attain excellence in teaching, it is imperative that each faculty member maintains an active scholarship program. Just as every engaged member of a community contributes to its vitality, each faculty member in the Department is expected to contribute to the vigor of the communities with which he/she is affiliated.

The Department of the Earth Sciences recognizes that the swiftness with which a faculty member accomplishes the aforementioned goals is predicated on the opportunities for personal development and professional growth available to him or her. Several unique factors of our discipline, such as its multi-disciplinary nature, infusion of nascent technologies/methodologies like numerical modeling, and the inevitable requirement of long-term monitoring of certain processes help and hinder the progress of an individual faculty member. To reward those who achieve these professional goals and to steer others towards achieving them, the Department of the Earth Sciences provides the following guidelines. These guidelines are to be viewed as minimal conditions for receiving a favorable recommendation from the Department. This document is intended as a Department of the Earth Sciences supplement to College policy as described in the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies – Personnel Actions (http://www.brockport.edu/acadaff/facguide/). Any legislation that the College Senate implements or policies adopted by the Division of Academic Affairs or the College of Sciences and Mathematics in the future as a common procedure for academic personnel action across all Departments of the College will supersede the following recommendations.

While the guidelines contained in this document provides useful information about departmental expectations and a framework or guide for evaluation, nominal (and/or apparent) attainment of these guidelines does not ensure a favorable recommendation for the candidate. APT committees, department chairs, deans, the Provost, and the President have the responsibility to interpret a candidate’s performance relative to departmental, College, and SUNY guidelines. Furthermore, decisions on continuing appointment must also consider the candidate’s potential for the future as well as the present and future programmatic needs of the department or the College. Candidates for continuing appointment should demonstrate potential for promotion to the next academic rank. A positive recommendation for continuing appointment reflects the expectation that the person has the potential for attaining the highest rank in the department and that the person’s contribution to the program will be
significant and necessary in the future. Review for continuing appointment may also take programmatic considerations into account. Such considerations may include enrollment patterns, the need for the faculty position in degree or curricular offerings or requirements, and the addition, reduction or elimination of programs or courses at the College.

WORKLOAD AND RANK

The workload of a full-time tenure track or tenured faculty is considered at rank when an individual carries a 3/3 course load, maintains an active program of scholarship, and carries appropriate service responsibilities as outlined in these guidelines. Workload assignments are determined on the basis of a faculty member's anticipated activities during the coming academic year. Modification of the balance between teaching, scholarship, and service or workload release are subject to the discretion and approval of the Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics. “At Rank” performance is evaluated on an annual basis for faculty at all ranks.

Minimum expectations of faculty workload parallel the criteria for evaluation of reappointment, tenure, and promotion appropriate to an individual’s faculty rank. All faculty are expected to demonstrate continuous effective teaching and assessment, conduct research with the goal of producing scholarly peer review products, and effectively contribute service to the Department, School, College, University, Profession, and Community.

Full-time faculty need to be flexible in developing workload activities on a yearly basis commensurate with the needs of The Department of the Earth Sciences. Faculty should be simultaneously active with teaching, research, and scholarship each academic year, and a proportional balance should be achieved in accordance with these guidelines. The Department Chair and/or the Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics can make allowances to modify this balance in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Department, School, or College.

APPLICATION

A candidate seeking re-appointment, continuing appointment, or promotion is required to prepare a dossier and forward it to the departmental APT Committee in accordance with the administrative deadlines. It is to the benefit of the candidate to include a letter, no more than two pages long, that highlights his or her teaching, scholarship, and service activities described in detail in the dossier. Such a letter can be addressed either to the APT committee, or to the Department Chair, or to the College President. A typical dossier would include:

- Current CV
- Annual reports including chair’s comments and signature pages;
- Teaching portfolio as outlined in the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies – Personnel Actions
- Supporting documents related to scholarship;
- Supporting documents related to service; and
- Other documents at the discretion of the candidate.
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

In keeping with the mission of the Department of the Earth Sciences and that of the College, we consider excelling in teaching to be twice as important as excelling in scholarship, and excelling in scholarship to be twice as important as excelling in service. At the same time, it is also important to recognize and nurture talents of each faculty member. To accommodate these twin objectives, the department will use the following weighting scheme for personnel decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>At least 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship</td>
<td>At least 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>At least 10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining 15% is left to the discretion of the candidate seeking personnel action, and must be specified at the time of the application. This weighting scheme is based on a teaching load of 9 contact hours per semester. Any departure from this present norm will require an appropriate re-calibration of the weighting scheme. The 9 contact hours per semester expectation assumes that the faculty member is also maintaining an active program of scholarship. In the absence of an active program of scholarship, other duties will be assigned. Additionally, the Department expects faculty members to demonstrate collegiality and commitment to the Department mission.

Evaluation of Teaching

At the outset, besides teaching courses in support of Department majors, each faculty member is expected to teach courses in support of the College’s General Education Program as needed. The goal of achieving excellence in teaching may have a definite beginning, but it ends only at the end of one’s career. Therefore, we expect a candidate seeking a specific personnel action to demonstrate:

- competence as a teacher that is commensurate with rank;
- dedication to incubate the thrill of doing science in students; and
- commitment to help students study nature and its processes through their own exploration.

To evaluate teaching, the APT Committee will use the following weighting scheme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer evaluations</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student evaluations</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate’s plans for continued improvement</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, in each of these three categories, accomplishments of a candidate will be assessed using items listed below.
1. Teaching philosophy

2a. Effectiveness in the classroom  

2b. Peer observation

3. Appropriateness of course objectives/learning outcomes outlined in syllabi

4. Suitability of exams questions, homework assignments, & grading protocol

5. Participation in programmatic (departmental & Gen Ed) learning outcome assessment and “closing the loop” activities

6. Quality of selected independent study and collaborative research projects; supervision and participation in Senior Research (ESC 494) and Senior Seminar (ESC 495) projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items to be used as part of Student Evaluation</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Testimonials (solicited &amp; unsolicited) from students</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student evaluation (IAS) of individual courses</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items to be used for Evaluating Plan for Continued Improvement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality of the reflective statement</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Responsiveness to comments from students</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership role in providing contemporary course content and delivery</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other items that may support the teaching portfolio are:
- Grade distribution (summary from lower-level, upper-level required and upper-level elective courses) and candidate’s reflection.
- Candidate’s response to peer suggestions
- Efforts undertaken to improve improvement of teaching (CELT, conference attendance, etc)

Student achievements directly attributable to instruction by the faculty member.

**Evaluation of Scholarship**

Pursuing scholarship is also a career-long endeavor. Through scholarly activities, the department expects its faculty to: contribute to the current body of knowledge in his/her area, keep abreast with recent developments in his/her area, in discipline-based education research, and educate students in relevant research methodologies. Accordingly, the APT committee will evaluate scholarship based on three criteria:
* quality and number of scholarly products;
• commitment to attend conferences/workshops; and
• involvement of students in scholarly activities.

Products originating from scholarly activities and external grants acquired by the candidate will be evaluated on a four-tier system. The policies of the Division of Academic Affairs and the College of Sciences and Mathematics should be consulted to determine if future modifications to the weighting of scholarly products differ from departmental evaluations. Consult the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies – Personnel Actions (http://www.brockport.edu/acadaff/facguide/) for College policies. Scholarship of Teaching strives to improve our understanding of how students learn and how different methods of teaching influences learning. Developing original material that can be used by other instructors, and systematic evaluation of teaching and learning are typically treated as Scholarship of Teaching. Scholarly products in the area of Scholarship of Teaching may be credited, but are limited to 25% of the total amount of scholarship submitted for consideration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Published research books; monographs; text books</td>
<td>Refereed journal articles; chapters in books; approved patents</td>
<td>Conference proceedings papers; technical reports; open file publications; book reviews</td>
<td>Abstracts from professional meetings; presentations at workshops; quality of selected abstracts coauthored by students; book reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite foundation grants (e.g., Kellogg &amp; MacArthur Foundations)</td>
<td>Large funded grants that underwent peer review.</td>
<td>Small foundation grants; corporate grants and donations</td>
<td>Internal SUNY grants; grant proposals submitted but not funded after peer review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of Service

The willingness to responding to the needs of the communities with which a Candidate has an affiliation is an important indicator of professionalism. Therefore, contributions to the service needs of The Department of the Earth Sciences, the College, professional organizations, and the community will be evaluated using the following three-tier system. Since The Department of the Earth Sciences is a relatively small Department with a focus on undergraduate student success, service to the Department is considered of primary importance relative to other types of service. In each category, leadership roles are privileged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve as Department Chair; serve as officer in a national professional society; serve as an editor of a professional journal; serve as a scientific advisor on regional, national, or international committees/panels; service on SUNY-wide committees; chair a college-wide committee or taskforce; chair a standing committee of the College Senate</td>
<td>Chair a Departmental Committee; serve on a Search Committee; serve as College senator; serve on College-wide committees; serve as an editor of a conference proceeding; serve as an officer in a regional professional society; serve as a scientific advisor on local government/corporate boards/panels</td>
<td>Major advisement; advise at SOAR/SIS Final registration; attend Senior Research (ESC 494) and Senior Seminar (ESC 495) presentations; serve on Departmental committees; local presentations in the candidates area of expertise; serve as a reviewer of a manuscript or grant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EVALUATION PROCESS

It is the responsibility of the Department APT Committee to formally review all applications for re-appointment, continuing appointment, or promotion. The purpose of the review is to evaluate whether or not the candidate has attained criteria relevant to his or her candidacy. The APT Committee’s recommendation first goes to the candidate. This is to allow the candidate to respond to the recommendation and/or to decide whether or not to go forward with the review process. If the candidate decides to go forward, the APT Committee will submit its recommendation in the form of a written report to the Department Chair. In turn, the Chairperson will review the candidate’s dossier and the APT Committee’s evaluation to prepare and forward his/her recommendation to the Dean of the School Science and Mathematics. Additionally, the Department as a whole will vote on the APT Committee recommendation. The numeric results of the vote (number agreeing/disagreeing/abstaining) will be reported in the Department Chair’s letter. All materials deemed necessary by the Dean also will be forwarded to his/her office; others will be retained in the Department office. Materials forwarded to the Dean will be returned to the candidate by the appropriate College official.
FIRST REAPPOINTMENT (normally in the second year)

During the first contractual period most candidates will have no choice but to devote most of his or her time to prepare for classes and establish a research laboratory or project. Hence incoming faculty are expected to demonstrate:

- competence in developing and delivering coherent lectures;
- ability in preparing examinations and evaluating student performance; and
- potential to develop into an excellent teacher.

In so far as the scholarship is concerned, it is not the expectation of the Department that a candidate produce one or more Level 3 products; rather, we look for a steady progress. A candidate may demonstrate his or her ability to progress towards the scholarship requirements for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor by completing Level 1 or Level 2-type products. Active participation in two or more Level 1-type service activities is viewed by the department as evidence of the candidate's commitment to involvement in service-related activities.

SECOND REAPPOINTMENT (PRETENURE) (normally in the fifth year)

During the second contractual period, the Department expects the candidate to become quite competent in teaching courses in support of Department majors and the College's General Education Program. Completion of at least one Level 3 product is expected; evidence that suggests that future products are on their way strengthens the candidate's reappointment application. Completing one Level 2-type service activity is desirable, but not mandatory. However, it is mandatory that the candidate establish a continuous record of Department service.

TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

According to the current practice, the decision to award tenure (continuing appointment) to a candidate and promote him or her to the Associate Professor level are made at the same time; as such, the same criteria apply to both. At this stage, the Department expects the candidate to demonstrate mastery as a teacher in delivering courses that support Department majors and the College's General Education Program. In order to help the APT Committee evaluate the accomplishments of a candidate, he or she must prepare and submit a teaching portfolio that begins with a statement of teaching philosophy. A typical portfolio should also include such items as the syllabi of courses, sample exams, course handouts, student evaluations, IAS scores and grade distributions for all course taught, and any other items required by the College and the School. Portfolio requirements are outlined in the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies—Personnel Actions. Besides reviewing the documents provided by the candidate, the APT Committee will use classroom visitations, testimonials from past and present students, and the opinions of colleagues to complete the review. The candidate will submit a list of present and past students from which the APT Committee will solicit written or oral testimonials.

In evaluating a candidate for promotion and tenure, the Department will recognize his or her entire body of scholarly work. The candidate will prepare a Scholarship Focus and Summary statement that includes an overview of the area of scholarship, a list of each scholarly product with a brief
description of the peer review process and reputation of each product, and a brief reflective critique.

We expect a typical candidate to have completed at least four Level 3-type products; no less than two of which must have been initiated and completed while in residence at SUNY Brockport. Previous products will be credited if they were generated within 5 years previous to appointment at Brockport. If, during this previous 5 years, the candidate was employed in a position which did not require scholarly publication (ex. industry) then each year in such a position will increase the look-back interval by one year. In no case, however will the look-back interval exceed 10 years. Furthermore, the candidate should be the sole or senior author on at least one of these two Brockport-generated products. The Department expects its entire faculty to involve students in research, and when students are involved in a research project, their contributions must be acknowledged in a manner that is commensurate with their participation. Research products with student co-authors are highly valued. Overall, the candidate is expected to have established a sustainable program of scholarship at SUNY Brockport.

Products originating from scholarly activities and external grants acquired by the candidate will be evaluated on a four-tier system (see Evaluation of Scholarship). The policies of the Division of Academic Affairs and the College of Sciences and Mathematics should be consulted to determine if future modifications to the weighting of scholarly products differ from departmental evaluations. Consult the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies - Personnel Actions (http://www.brockport.edu/acadaff/facguide/) for College policies.

The department expects a candidate seeking promotion and tenure to have elevated his or her activities to the Level 2-type of service while continuing to maintain Level 1-type service.

EXPECTATION FOR ACTIVE PROGRAM OF SCHOLARSHIP

The Department of the Earth Sciences expects faculty throughout their careers to maintain an active program of scholarship. These activities and the products that originate from them should achieve the following goals:

- maintenance of currency in academic field leading to peer-reviewed products
- enhancement of reputation of college and opportunities for external funding

Level 3 or 4 products are expected at a rate approximately equal to that which leads to continuing appointment, i.e. 2 products per 6 year period. We consider Level 1 or Level 2 products or summer research projects with students to be additional valuable indicators of an active program of scholarship. We especially value scholarly activity that fosters student-faculty collaborations and provides opportunities to improve course instruction. We recognize that field based activities or projects with substantial contributions from undergraduates (as opposed to peer collaborations) may take additional time for products to be produced. We also realize that developing grant proposals is a time consuming activity that frequently does not result in funding.

PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF PROFESSOR

The formal review process for promotion to Professor is initiated by the Department APT Committee upon receiving an application from a candidate. Once again, the Department will recognize the entire body of work of a candidate; however, his or her achievements in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service should be significantly greater than those expected for promotion to Associate
Nothing short of attaining excellence in teaching courses that support Department majors and the College’s General Education Program, and demonstrating a commitment to maintain that excellence are acceptable. And, the Department APT Committee will evaluate a candidate’s teaching portfolio, which should contain such items as the syllabi of all courses, sample exams from general education and majors-only courses, course handouts, and student evaluations. Moreover, the APT Committee will conduct classroom visitations, seek testimonials from students (past and present), and solicit opinions of colleagues to complete the review process. A contact list of students and colleagues will be provided to the APT Committee by the candidate upon initiation of portfolio review. The APT Committee will request letters from students regarding the candidate’s teaching and mentoring.

To ensure that the scholarly activities of a person promoted to the rank of Professor have significantly exceeded requirements for promotion to Associate Professor, the Department expects a typical candidate to complete at least four Level 3 products since tenure. Scholarly products in the area of Scholarship of Teaching may be credited, but are limited to 25% of the total amount of scholarship submitted for consideration. Furthermore, the candidate should be the sole or senior author on at least two of these products. The Department expects its entire faculty to involve students in research, and when students are involved in a research project, their contributions must be acknowledged in a manner that is commensurate with the participation. We expect the candidate to have attempted at least one major external grant in which he or she is the principal investigator or co-principal investigator. Grants involving the scholarship of teaching may be considered.

Products originating from scholarly activities and external grants acquired by the candidate will be evaluated on a four-tier system (see Evaluation of Scholarship). The policies of the Division of Academic Affairs and the College of Sciences and Mathematics should be consulted to determine if future modifications to the weighting of scholarly products differ from departmental evaluations. Consult the Faculty Guide to Academic Practices and Policies – Personnel Actions (http://www.brockport.edu/acadaff/facguide/) for College policies.

The APT Committee will request letters from external reviewers evaluating the research of the candidate. The candidate will provide a list of possible reviewers and indicate who among them have been research collaborators or advisors.

Commitment to excel in serving the College, professional society, and community is the hallmark of an individual attaining a Professorship. As such, the Department expects a candidate seeking promotion to Professor to have participated in Level 3 service at some time in the post-tenure period and show continuous Level 1 and Level 2 service.