

TENURE REVIEW PROCESS  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES

---

When an assistant professor begins his/her appointment, this document will be provided to the candidate by the Nutritional Sciences chair within one month of their appointment date. The chair will appoint a tenure committee composed of three members of the Department's Executive Committee. If the Department does not have sufficient expertise in the research area of the assistant professor, a faculty member from outside the Department can be added to this committee. At least once each year this committee will evaluate the progress of the probationary faculty member, meet with him/her and provide advice. This committee shall report on the progress toward tenure or lack thereof in writing to the Department chair, and will present the report to the Executive Committee at a meeting called for this purpose. The assistant professor will receive a copy of this report by letter from the Department chair and will be given the opportunity to respond to the evaluation in writing or may, upon request, address the Executive Committee regarding the evaluation. This procedure will ensure that all assistant professors are informed of the departmental assessment of their performance in the areas of research, teaching, or extension activities. The tenure committee will ensure that the probationary faculty member's file contains materials relevant to effective evaluation including teaching evaluations, awards and copies of publications.

An assistant professor is initially appointed for a three-year period and normally reappointed for a second three-year period. This reappointment is subject to approval by the majority of the Executive Committee present at a meeting called to act on a recommendation of reappointment by the assistant professor's tenure committee. At this stage in his/her career, it is expected that an assistant professor will demonstrate evidence of progress toward tenure, but will not be expected to present an unassailable case for an ultimate positive tenure decision. He/she can expect that reappointment will be given unless performance in teaching, research, or extension activities have been significantly below normal expectations.

The Executive Committee will ensure that affected probationary faculty members will be kept informed of any changes in department goals or other circumstances that alter the opportunity for promotion to tenure.

According to UW-Madison rules, a decision to grant tenure must be made before the end of a six-year probationary period. When the tenure committee and the Department chair feel that promotion to tenure is appropriate, the committee and the candidate will prepare the needed documentation. If the tenure committee and Department chair do not agree on the timing for a tenure decision, the question will be brought to the Executive Committee. All probationary faculty will receive formal consideration of their tenure status during their probationary period.

The tenure documentation will be prepared according to the current guidelines of the appropriate divisional committee. In the Department of Nutritional Sciences, this would normally be the Biological Sciences Divisional Committee, but upon request of the assistant professor an alternate divisional committee can be selected. This decision should occur as early as possible in the probationary period. The tenure committee and the Department chair will also consult with the assistant professor early in his/her career to determine if tenure will be sought primarily on the basis of research, teaching, or extension activities, and which area will receive secondary consideration.

In selecting individuals to furnish letters of recommendation, the tenure committee will seek input from the candidate for tenure, but will also seek letters from appropriate individuals whose names were not furnished by the candidate. Three-to-five names are to be furnished by the candidate and three-to-five others are to be selected by the tenure committee. Individuals at the associate or full professor level who are familiar with the candidate's area of research will be invited to provide letters of recommendations. At least six letters are required, at least five of which must be "arms-length" evaluations.

The tenure committee will make the tenure document and its tenure recommendation available to the Executive Committee prior to a meeting called to consider the promotion to tenure. The entire tenure document is reviewed by the Executive Committee. A quorum for this meeting will consist of 2/3 of the number of Executive Committee members. Although this option is seldom exercised, according to the UW-Madison rules, the assistant professor being considered for tenure may be present at the meeting. All members of the Executive Committee, present and absent, will be asked to provide a written, signed ballot indicating a yes or no vote on the motion to grant tenure or to abstain. A 2/3 majority of the members voting yes or no will be needed to approve a recommendation of tenure. Failure to achieve a 2/3 majority results in a non-retention and the granting of a seventh year terminal appointment. Appeal of a negative decision must be made in accord with Faculty Policies & Procedures 7.10.

When the department proposes to the dean to promote an assistant professor to the rank of associate professor with tenure, the dean will request the advice of the appropriate divisional executive committee. If the divisional committee does not recommend promotion and tenure, the department may request reconsideration under Faculty Policies & Procedures 7.15.C.

Tenure is not based on completion of a “checklist” of accomplishments, but upon demonstration of significant service to the Department and the University and convincing evidence that these scholarly achievements will continue for a productive career. Criteria will vary with the responsibilities of each individual, but the following are important factors:

1. For tenure being sought on the basis of research excellence, the development of an independent research program and productivity as evidenced by publications in significant peer-reviewed publications are of particular importance. Scholarly publication will also be an important consideration in tenure decisions involving faculty seeking tenure on the basis of extension excellence.
2. For tenure being sought on the basis of extension excellence, evidence of leadership and organizational skills and examples of effective program impact will be of particular importance.
3. Letters from leaders in the candidate’s field attesting to the quality and excellence of on-going research work and accomplishments, or providing positive assessments of innovative and effective extension programming.
4. Demonstration of excellence in teaching by a) student evaluations and b) peer evaluations.
5. Documentation of the ability to obtain competitive research grants at the national level.
6. Invitations to present lectures and seminars, or to organize and participate in workshops at other universities and national in international meetings.
7. Evidence of contributions to the national scientific community, such as service on scientific grant review panels, membership on editorial boards, and participation in national professional organizations as a member or officer.
8. Evidence of contributions to the Department, College, and University as evidenced by performance of committee duties at these levels.

Adopted by Nutritional Sciences faculty action, 1/28/92

Revised and approved by Nutritional Sciences faculty action, 11/19/98

Revised and approved by Nutritional Sciences Executive Committee, 1/27/16

Revised and approved by Nutritional Sciences Executive Committee, 2/22/16