



Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor with Tenure

Approved by the Department of Biology Standing Committee August, 2014

The Department of Biology at UBCO has developed these guidelines in an effort to aid Assistant Professors in understanding the general expectations of the Department for promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor at UBCO, and in the attainment of tenure.

Caveats:

1. Even if a candidate is of the opinion that he or she has met these expectations, there can be no guarantee that external reviewers, or members of the Standing Committee, DACOPAT, the Senior Appointments Committee or the President of UBC will vote in favour of promotion or tenure. These norms do not constitute a checklist.
2. While evaluation of a candidate for promotion and tenure is based on scholarly activity, teaching and service, it is important to understand that deficiencies in one area cannot be compensated for by achievement in another area. All three areas must be judged favourably for promotion and/or tenure.
3. Voting on promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor will involve the members of the Elected Standing Committee of the Department of Biology who are not in conflict of interest.

Expectations for Scholarly Activity:

The Collective Agreement states that “sustained and productive scholarly activity beyond that expected of an assistant professor” is required for promotion and tenure. The SAC guidelines state that scholarly activity “means research of quality and significance.”

When evaluating scholarly activity, the Department expects that a faculty member will have developed a cohesive and independent research program. With respect to publications, the Department will consider not only the quantity of publications, but also the quality of the venues in which the papers are published and the impact that the papers have on the discipline. Faculty members are also expected to show a record of competitive external funding over the pre-tenure period.

Explanatory Notes:

1. **Quality:** It is expected that faculty members will publish in international peer-reviewed journals, which are ranked by ISI and which are considered to be ‘leading’ journals in the discipline in which the scholarly activity is occurring. Evidence that the journals could be considered to be ‘leading journals’ could include impact factors, the rank of the journal within the relevant ISI field, or publication in a prestigious special issue. Publication of book chapters or in other venues is also acknowledged, but peer-reviewed journal articles are the typical form of publication expected in this department.

2. **Quantity:** The Department of Biology expects to see a research program that demonstrates independent and sustained scholarly activity. In many cases, this program will show a trajectory of increasing productivity, but in some cases the productivity will be more consistent through time. In either case, evidence of a strong research program could be demonstrated by the publication of between 10 and 20 peer reviewed papers, of which at least 5 or more should be based on independent work produced since joining the Department of Biology at UBCO. Independence is demonstrated by the publication of single author peer reviewed papers, publications with students or collaborations with people other than previous supervisors. Over time, an increasing proportion of papers should be co-authored by students (graduate and undergraduate) and other HQP that you have supervised while at UBC O. The wide range indicated here reflects the recognition that Biology covers many sub-disciplines with different conventions for publication frequency and co-authorship. The CV must contain a statement indicating authorship conventions with an explanation of the faculty member's role in any multi-authored papers.
3. **Quality and impact of papers:** The impact of papers can be demonstrated in various ways, such as those listed below. Note that many measures of impact (e.g. h-index, impact factor) are dependent on the size of the field and the frequency at which journals publish. Therefore, metrics should be accompanied by context specific to a candidate's (sub) discipline. For example, journal rank or quartile impact factors in a disciplinary area can be useful as comparisons.
 - a. Colleagues are recognizing the work, as shown by citation statistics
 - b. Papers are commented on, e.g. in editorial material, in Faculty of 1000, or in news sections of scientific journals
 - c. H-index
 - d. Document the innovation or solution to a problem that the paper provided, i.e. how the data and ideas address an issue in the field
4. **Funding:** The Department expects to see evidence of sustained, continuing, external funding sufficient to support an independent research program. The faculty member should be the Principal Investigator on at least some external operating grants. Typically, we expect at least one Tri-council grant or one from a granting agency of equivalent stature.

Please note that the SAC guidelines suggest that judging whether candidates have achieved a 'national reputation' is appropriate when considering promotion to Associate Professor. Clearly, the funding and publication record is the primary way such a reputation is judged. Additional evidence of such a reputation includes, but is by no means limited to, activities such as: invited research talks at universities or conferences, reviewing journal articles (especially for higher-profile journals), acting as an external examiner for graduate students at other Universities, reviewing grant applications, and sitting on editorial boards or grant panels.

Expectations for Teaching:

Assistant Professors are expected to contribute to teaching in the Department of Biology that is of high quality and that shows a willingness to teach a range of subject matter at various levels.

1. **Undergraduate Courses:** The Department of Biology expects that an Assistant Professor will teach 2 undergraduate courses per year up to the first reappointment. While an effort will

be made to maintain this teaching responsibility throughout the pre-tenure period, a faculty member may be assigned to teach 3 courses per year after the first reappointment.

2. **Graduate Students:** The Department of Biology expects that an Assistant Professor will establish ongoing graduate training that results in the graduation of at least one M.Sc. student prior to application for promotion and tenure. The faculty member should be the sole supervisor of this student, and should demonstrate that he or she has published or will be publishing with that student.
3. **Quality of Teaching:** Evaluation of teaching will be based on the effectiveness rather than the popularity of the instructor. The Department of Biology expects to see evidence of very good teaching ability.
 - a. Peer reviews of teaching will be conducted during the pre-tenure period, and Assistant Professors will be expected to address any concerns raised by the peer reviews. If initial peer reviews document serious concerns, improvement in the areas of concern should be apparent from subsequent peer reviews.
 - b. Demonstrating teaching effectiveness could include TEQ scores near the norms for the discipline, or improvement of initially low scores to scores that approach or exceed the norms by the end of the qualifying period.
 - c. Evidence of student success can also be used to demonstrate effective teaching. Such evidence includes fellowships awarded to students during the time of supervision, other student awards, co-publication in peer-reviewed sources, student presentations at conferences, and positions students take after completion of their training.
 - d. Although we encourage faculty to engage with the Center for Teaching and Learning, especially if initial TEQ scores are low, documentation of attending training sessions there does not replace the need to document that actual classroom performance meets standards of high quality instruction.
4. **Directed Study and Honours Students:** Assistant Professors are encouraged to engage undergraduate students in directed study or honours projects in the pre-tenure period.
5. **New Course Development:** We do not expect or require that Assistant Professors develop entirely new courses or teach at the graduate level, nor do we expect untenured faculty members to teach outside of their general area of expertise, except at the first-year level.

Expectations for Service:

The Department of Biology expects that Assistant Professors will be prepared to take part in service activities of the Department, but their time will be protected by the Department as much as possible. Pre-tenured faculty members are advised to consult with the Department Head with respect to service opportunities.

We expect some Departmental service activity in each year, which could include sitting on ad hoc committees or standing committees. Note that sitting on graduate student committees counts towards teaching, rather than service.

All faculty members are expected to attend Department of Biology meetings and Barber School Faculty Meetings unless teaching schedules are in conflict.