

Tenure and Promotion Policy  
Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Auburn University  
December 3, 2012

PREAMBLE

The Department has a strong commitment to excellent teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. We, the faculty, dedicate ourselves to maintaining this tradition of service to our students' education and intellectual growth. The resources that are provided to a Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in a Land-Grant University are founded on a commitment to imparting knowledge in the classroom and to generating knowledge through research. Therefore, we also dedicate ourselves to maintaining a research community of students and faculty that advances the frontier of knowledge. In addition to presenting general guidelines for all faculty, this document attempts to provide necessary conditions for tenure and promotion in this Department.

1. Introduction

All policies of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry (DCB) on promotion and tenure conform to the requirements of the Faculty Handbook.<sup>1</sup> They apply only to members of the faculty in tenured and tenure-track positions. They do not apply to Lecturers or Instructors. Procedures of the Department and guidance to Candidates for promotion or tenure are discussed below.

2. General Duties

The DCB faculty attempts to provide a mutually supportive environment for professional advancement, including promotion and tenure, and to sustain a collegial community of scholars. The Department Chairman (DC) coordinates processes that pertain to promotion or tenure. For each Candidate for promotion or tenure, the DC appoints a Promotion-Tenure Committee (PTC) to assist in various aspects of these processes. To provide information and professional guidance to an untenured member of the faculty (UMF), the DC appoints a Mentor who is acceptable to that UMF and who is willing to serve in this capacity. A Candidate provides information that is

requested by his or her PTC or by the DC in accord with the procedures discussed below. Members of the DCB faculty who are eligible to vote on a promotion or tenure case participate in a Departmental Deliberation, where the merits of a Candidate are discussed in confidence prior to a vote.

### 3. Initiation of Candidacy

If an UMF who wishes to be considered for tenure or a member of the faculty who wishes to be considered for promotion declares his or her candidacy in writing to the DC before the end of a Spring semester, then he or she will be considered in a Departmental Deliberation in the following Fall semester. An untenured Assistant Professor under consideration for tenure must also be considered for promotion to Associate Professor. If the Faculty Handbook requires that an UMF be considered for tenure in a given year of employment at Auburn University (AU) in order to remain eligible for tenure, then the DC shall declare that member of the faculty to be a Candidate.

### 4. Appointment of Mentor

To each UMF, the DC shall assign a member of the faculty to serve as Mentor. All Mentors must have tenure and must have at least equal faculty rank as the UMF. Mentors meet with their assigned UMFs on a regular basis to discuss the professional advancement of the UMF.

### 5. Preparation of Dossier

As part of the annual review process, a member of the faculty is required to provide to the DC information that is described in the annual review form (see Appendix 1) and an updated curriculum vitae (CV). These documents and the information required of the Candidate and the DC by the Faculty Handbook will be provided by the DC to the members of the faculty who are qualified to vote in a Departmental Deliberation on that Candidate.

### 6. Peer Review of Teaching

Peer evaluation of teaching shall occur at least once per semester for every UMF and at least once per academic year<sup>2</sup> for every tenured member (TMF) of the faculty. The DC or a TMF designated by the DC shall attend at least one entire lecture for the purpose of completing a Peer

Review of Teaching (PRT) form (See Appendix 2). The completed form shall be given to the DC. No advance notice of lecture attendance to the person being evaluated from the faculty reviewer is necessary. Peer evaluations of teaching are among the documents required of the DC by the Faculty Handbook in advance of Departmental Deliberations.

#### 7. Third-Year Review

The Third-Year Review will occur during the third Spring semester of an UMF's employment at AU. In addition to the information that is provided to the DC for Annual Reviews and an updated CV, the members of the faculty who are eligible to vote in a Departmental Deliberation on an UMF may consider any supplementary documentation on research, teaching or service that is provided by that UMF. After a confidential discussion of the UMF's merits, there will be a vote on whether adequate progress toward tenure has taken place and a subsequent vote rating the UMF's research, teaching and service. A recommendation of non-continuation also may be made by a vote in a Departmental Deliberation. Without compromising the confidentiality of the discussion (especially the specific attribution of remarks to individuals), the DC will orally and in writing convey recommendations from the Third-Year Review to the UMF. The latter meeting will be completed before April 30 of the third Spring semester of an UMF's employment at AU.

#### 8. Candidacy During the Fifth or Sixth Academic Year

An UMF may choose to have his or her case for tenure considered in the Fall semester of his or her fifth academic year<sup>2</sup> of employment at AU by informing the DC before the end of the previous Spring semester. To attain tenure, an UMF who has not been the subject of a Departmental Deliberation in the Fall semesters of his or her first five academic years<sup>2</sup> at AU must become a Candidate for tenure in the Fall semester of his or her sixth academic year<sup>2</sup> at AU. However, the Faculty Handbook's provisions that relate to leaves of absence or to the Family Medical Leave Act may supersede the previous statement. Credit for prior service stated in the offer letter that establishes the conditions of the UMF's employment at AU may require that candidacy for tenure be considered before the Fall semester of the fifth academic year<sup>2</sup> of employment.

#### 9. Votes in Departmental Deliberations

After discussing the merits of a Candidate's case in a Departmental Deliberation, a vote by present, eligible faculty takes place by casting secret, paper ballots. These votes are then added to secret, paper ballots submitted to the DC in advance of the Departmental Deliberation by those who are eligible to vote but are not able to attend. All votes are counted by the DC and then by another member of the faculty. The result of the vote is announced at the meeting. In cases where promotion and tenure are being considered, the vote on promotion is conducted before the vote on tenure. In such cases, a temporary recess will take place after the vote on promotion to allow members of the faculty who are ineligible to vote on tenure to depart. Each vote is reported to the Candidate by the DC within one day of the Departmental Deliberation.

#### 10. Department's Dossier

The DC adds a summary of the discussion in the Departmental Deliberation that is unanimously approved by the participants with the exception of the DC, his or her evaluation of the Candidate and evaluation letters received by the DC from members of the faculty to the documents required in the Faculty Handbook. This set of documents constitutes the Department's Dossier. The DC may delegate the preparation of the summary of the discussion in the Departmental Deliberation to participants in the discussion.

#### 11. Confidentiality of Departmental Deliberation

All remarks that are made during the Departmental Deliberation are confidential. Candidates should not seek information from any member of the faculty that compromises the confidentiality of this discussion. The DC shall provide an oral summary of the Departmental Deliberation to the Candidate if the Candidate requests it.

#### 12. College and University Promotion and Tenure Review

The Department's Dossier is submitted to the Dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics (COSAM) in accord with deadlines set by the Provost. The Dean of COSAM adds a letter of evaluation to the Department's Dossier for consideration by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure (UCPT).

#### 13. Abrogation of the Tenure Process

A Candidate may withdraw his or her candidacy before the Department Dossier is sent to the Dean of COSAM.

#### 14. Limits on Candidacy

An UMF may be considered for tenure no more than two times by the UCPT.

#### 15. External Evaluation

All information required of the Candidate in the Faculty Handbook, copies of published works, manuscripts that are accepted but not yet published and a list of six names of potential external reviewers selected in accordance with AU guidelines<sup>3</sup> shall be delivered by the Candidate to the DC before June 1 of the calendar year in which tenure will be considered by the Department. The latter list should be accompanied by a description of each potential external reviewer's qualifications to comment on the Candidate's research. No thesis or dissertation advisors or present or former collaborators may be included in the list. The PTC shall review and verify the accuracy and completeness of the Candidate's information. The PTC may require amendments from the Candidate if the original information is inaccurate, incomplete, excessive or irrelevant. The PTC-approved Candidate's Dossier shall be delivered to the DC by June 15 of the calendar year in which tenure will be considered by the Department. The PTC will also send a list of six names of potential external reviewers with descriptions of their qualifications to comment on the Candidate's research to the DC. The latter list may not have any members in common with the Candidate's list. Although peer reviewers at prominent research institutions in the United States and abroad may be employed, the Provost prefers external reviewers who occupy academic positions in universities in the United States; a list of approved U.S. universities is available.<sup>3</sup> External reviewers from academic institutions must have a rank that is above that of the Candidate. The union of the two lists will be sent to the Dean of COSAM and the Provost for approval. After these approvals are received, the DC will solicit letters of evaluation from potential external reviewers such that three members of the Candidate's list and three members of the PTC's list are included in the set of six external evaluators. If the DC is unable to obtain the cooperation of three potential external reviewers from each list, then the DC may request additional names from the Candidate or the PTC. In requesting additional names from the Candidate, the DC shall not reveal information which would enable the Candidate to infer the

names of members of the PTC's list. The DC will send the portion of the Candidate's Dossier that pertains to research, including the Candidate's CV, to the external reviewers. Letters from external reviewers will be incorporated by the DC in the Candidate's Dossier for inspection by faculty who will participate in the Departmental Deliberation.

#### 16. Teaching

All faculty members recommended for tenure in the Department must teach effectively. This is a minimum requirement. Effective teaching by itself does not lead to tenure. Ineffective teaching, however, leads to denial of tenure. Participation in the graduate program is an important aspect of teaching. Exceptions may be made for distinguished scientists from governmental or industrial backgrounds who are being considered for tenure in their initial appointments.

#### 17. Research

Research accomplishments for tenure or promotion are demonstrated through articles published in refereed journals and external research support. The following general guidelines apply:

##### Quantity of publications

The expected publication rate varies with the research area. We seek evidence of the growth of a Candidate's research program.

##### Quality of research

In judging the quality of a Candidate's work, we consider evidence provided by letters from expert colleagues outside Auburn University and comments from AU faculty members who are most familiar with the Candidate's work and field of specialization. Other evidence of quality includes invitations to speak at professional meetings, other universities and research institutions and the generation of intellectual property such as patents and copyrights. Contributions to collaborative and interdisciplinary research are given due consideration.

##### External Research Support

We expect that faculty members recommended for tenure will have succeeded in obtaining external funding that suffices to sustain an acceptable level of research activity.

#### 18. Service

We expect all Candidates to be active citizens of the Department. All faculty members must participate in the administration of the Department through assigned committee tasks and other duties.

#### 19. Collegiality

We expect all faculty members to strive for the good of the Department, the College of Sciences and Mathematics and the University as they interact with students, colleagues and the community. All faculty members in the Department are expected to maintain a high level of professional collegiality. Professional collegiality is defined as advancing the missions of the Department, the College of Sciences and Mathematics and the University while balancing them with one's needs and goals and conducting oneself in a professional manner while interacting with students, colleagues and the community. A high level of professional collegiality is a minimum requirement, and, by itself, it does not lead to tenure. Persistent or egregious non-collegial behavior, however, may lead to denial of tenure.

#### 20. Promotion to Professor

Section 3.6 of the Faculty Handbook establishes criteria for promotion to Professor.

- 1- <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook/>
- 2- An academic year is defined as the period between August 16 of a given calendar year and May 15 of the following calendar year. The first academic year of employment commences with the first day of employment and ends on the following May 15. This definition is in accord with the Faculty Handbook.
- 3- <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/policies.html>