

# Promotion and Tenure in the Department of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences (CSES) –Procedures and Guidelines

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adopted by the tenured faculty of the Department: June 25, 2021

The purpose of this document is to outline the guidelines for promotion and awarding of tenure in the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences. This document is meant to complement the policies described in the *Auburn University Faculty Handbook*. Faculty members interested in promotion and tenure are expected to be familiar with the appropriate and most up-to-date policies in the *Handbook*.

### **Promotion to associate professor and awarding of tenure**

The guidelines for promotion to the rank of associate professor and awarding of tenure are the same as it relates to academic merit. To be awarded tenure, the candidate must also demonstrate that he or she contributes as a productive and collegial member of the Department in all relevant areas. It is anticipated that assistant professors who work for the normal tenure probationary period will be considered for promotion and tenure at the same time.

#### **1) Faculty members with a teaching appointment are expected to demonstrate effective teaching as evidenced by:**

- Peer Review of Teaching
- Student evaluations
- Mentoring graduate students to the completion of their degrees
- Other documents (e.g., conference abstracts and proceedings and journal articles), conference presentations, participation in pedagogy/curriculum improvement programs, recognitions, and/or activities that may be appropriate

#### **2) Faculty members with a research appointment are expected to establish an active, extramurally funded, and independent research program involving students as evidenced by:**

- Consistent external funding adequate to support their research program and students
- Publishing research articles regularly in nationally or internationally recognized peer-reviewed journals
- Directing thesis and dissertation research

Note: The expected level of publishing and the number of students graduated will depend heavily on the percentage of the research appointment. As a guideline, an individual would be expected to publish, as a minimum, one paper per 25% research appointment, on average, each year; however, the expectation may be less based on the discipline and quality of journals. The faculty member is expected to graduate two graduate students (either MS or PhD) during the probationary period and, be in a position to graduate one student per year afterward.

#### **3) Faculty members with an Extension appointment are expected to develop a strong in-state Extension program (with any appropriate related regional activities) in their area of responsibility as evidenced by:**

- Publication of peer-reviewed Extension materials appropriate to the area of responsibility (e.g., printed materials, videos, digital media, development and maintenance of social media or other internet sites and material)
- Personal interactions with stakeholders (e.g., group or individual meetings, non-face to face contacts)
- Evaluation letters from stakeholders and/or evaluation forms from training and information

sessions

- Providing in-service training opportunities (when demand exists) for other Extension personnel
- A demonstrated impact on their area of responsibility

**4) All faculty members are expected to:**

- Provide service to the Department, College and University, as needed, although this expectation is limited for tenure-track individuals
- Assist with the Land Grant mission of the University by interacting with stakeholders as needed
- Comport themselves in a collegial manner

*The likelihood of continued and consistent excellence and productivity, based on the above four guidelines, will be a major consideration in the recommendation by the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Department Head.*

**Promotion to professor**

**5) Continue to meet the guidelines above for promotion and tenure to associate professor**

**6) Establish a national or international reputation in their discipline as evidenced by:**

- Invitations to participate on review panels, committees, and/or other influential groups within their discipline
- Invitations to be a plenary and/or keynote speaker at national or international conferences
- Recipient of a national or international award within a professional society or their discipline
  
- Invitations to serve on editorial boards of prestigious journals and/or write reviews, syntheses or perspectives

**7) Demonstrate leadership within the Department, College, University, professional societies, discipline, and/or government agencies as evidenced by:**

- Holding elected office and/or appointed positions in professional societies
- Chairing committees within the University
- Serving on public- and/or private-sector advisory and/or steering committees and/or or panels
- Holding leadership positions within the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, regional Extension organizations, and/or national Extension organizations
- Leading large, funded educational, Extension, outreach, research, or development projects

Note: The bulleted items in guidelines 6 and 7 are examples of evidence that can be offered. It is not necessary to have done them all, and other evidence may be offered.

*The likelihood of continued and consistent excellence and productivity, based on the above seven guidelines, will be a major consideration in the recommendation by the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Department Head.*

June 25,  
2021

**This document details Department procedures for reviewing the performance of tenure-track faculty members (Assistant and Associate Professors). This document conforms to current University rules, and the latter take precedence in the event of any changes. The objectives of this document are to provide tenure-track faculty members with guidance, information and instructions as they proceed through review, tenure application, and promotion application. This document replaces and supersedes all previous department statements on review, tenure and promotion.**

Reference: Auburn University Faculty Handbook

### **Departmental Description**

The Department of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences (CSES) is a diverse department of faculty who work in the general area of food, fiber and forage production, with additional emphases on soil, water, climate and impacts of agronomic production on the surrounding environment. Faculty expertise is some of the most diverse in the College of Agriculture and covers specializations (among others) in plant breeding, genomics, climate modeling, soil physics, weed science and turfgrass management. Other areas of study include soil chemistry, soil microbiology, soil morphology, soil resource management, nutrient management, forage management, watershed management, limnology, crop physiology, crop production and management, precision agriculture and irrigation management. Because of our professional diversity the standards by which faculty are judged and rewarded are numerous, and those standards also reflect the fact that CSES faculty practice their widely different expertise across teaching, Extension, and research assignments. For this document the use of the word 'Extension' refers to those with a budgeted Extension appointment. We recognize that most faculty, even those without a budgeted Extension appointment, will engage in university Outreach, and those outreach activities are also considered as a part of a promotion dossier.

Appointments in the Department are typically split and are usually assigned as follows: research/teaching, Extension/research and, less commonly, Extension/teaching. The exact percentage of time for each activity (research, teaching or Extension) is agreed upon by the faculty member and Department Head, and the initial assignment is given in the hiring letter. Budgeted and actual percent distributions of time are noted in each yearly evaluation, and by signing the annual evaluation the Department Head and faculty member are agreeing that the percentage appointments are correct, and in line with the actual activities of the faculty member. Because these percentage time allotments are used as a part of the promotion and tenure process, it is important that they actually match the work effort of the faculty member.

### **Faculty Reviews**

The College of Agriculture Faculty Activity Report (FAR) is the annual document by which faculty productivity is assessed. The FAR must be completed by candidates and submitted to the Department Head's office by the date established by the Dean's office in the College of Agriculture. The Department Head then reviews the document and prepares and submits a written evaluation of the FAR to the faculty member. The faculty member and Department Head schedule a meeting to discuss the annual review. If the faculty member is satisfied with the review, they may sign the review and return it to the Department Head, where it will be placed in their file and a copy submitted to the College of Agriculture's Human Resources office. If the faculty member has questions or concerns about the assessment they may request a meeting with the Dean's office to

discuss any discrepancies.

The Department Head will require a meeting for the following cases: 1) any faculty member who has not yet received tenure, and 2) any faculty member who the Department Head has judged to be lacking in productivity in one or more assigned areas, based on the annual reviews. Following these meetings, a written report of what was discussed will be prepared by the Department Head and both the faculty member and Department Head will sign this letter, indicating their agreement on the discussion. Disagreement on the review process will be resolved as provided by University policy.

## Tenure

To earn tenure the candidate must demonstrate willingness and aptitude to participate and excel in two of the three missions of the university (research, teaching and Extension). Unlike many other Colleges, some faculty in CSES have a budgeted 'Extension' appointment – an appointment with detailed responsibilities. Thus, for the purposes of evaluation of a promotion dossier in CSES, those faculty with Extension appointments will be assessed differently than those that participate in 'Outreach,' an important University function, but one that does not come with a funding (salary) line.

For CSES, Extension will be evaluated differently than Outreach, as they are not the same type of activity. Extension will have defined and accountable activities (discussed later in this document), such as publications, meetings, and other scholarly products and developed materials which communicate information to clientele. While Outreach may also produce such materials, Outreach can also include broader definitions such as service to a professional society or program development for allied groups such as community organizations. For many faculty members in the College of Agriculture, we may view 'Outreach' as the same as 'Service'. Neither of these functions (Outreach or Service) are budgeted lines of work.

For tenure, the candidate must show that his/her continuing service at the university, college and department will improve the long-range goal(s) of the institution through teaching, research and Extension. The individual will also continue to develop distinguished academic achievement in those same three areas (varying with their appointment) that will serve as a basis of regional, national and international reputation.

The individual must show collegiality. 'Collegiality' is not to be interpreted as 'always friendly', but it does mean that the faculty member conducts the business of the University in a cordial manner, and that a level of professionalism and decorum is maintained. Because interdisciplinary work will continue to be the norm, the individual should be able to work with others in interdisciplinary research, teaching, Extension or outreach activities. Interdisciplinary work, public engagement, international activities and initiatives, attention to questions of diversity, technology transfer, and other special kinds of professional activity by the candidate should be considered when applicable.

## Departmental Review Committee

The College of Agriculture has a College-level Promotion and Tenure Committee. The department (CSES) does not have a departmental committee. All tenured faculty engage in the third-year review and P&T process, with discussion and guidance from each candidate's mentoring committee (described later in this document). As such, a departmental committee is not necessary.

## **Mentoring Junior Faculty (below the rank of Associate Professor)**

During the first year of the probationary period, each junior (for a mentor program, a junior faculty member is an untenured Assistant Professor) faculty member will be assigned a lead faculty mentor, with two additional faculty members as a mentoring committee. Overall, the role of the mentoring committee is to provide advice about best methods for professional advancement, conflict resolution or other issues that may pose pitfalls for new members of the faculty. Mentors may also identify areas that would help a probationary faculty member succeed, such as grant or professional award opportunities.

Specific mentoring activities include: 1) regular meetings with the candidate to discuss any issues, success, progress or concerns, 2) if the candidate has a teaching appointment, arranging for and conducting Peer Review of Teaching (PRoT) reviews, 3) presentation of the packet, and leadership of discussions at the faculty meeting in which the third-year review and vote is conducted, and, 4) presentation of the packet, and leadership of discussions at the faculty meeting in which the promotion and tenure dossier is presented and voted upon. A summary letter of the candidate's P&T packet is also written by this mentoring committee.

### **Third-Year Review<sup>1</sup>**

The department will conduct a third-year review of all its probationary faculty members, according to University policy. Prior to the review, the Department Head shall request a current vita. The vita does not have to be prepared to P&T dossier standards (as per Auburn guidelines). The vitae should be made available to all tenured faculty (via e-mail, with a hard copy on file in the main office) for at least two weeks prior to the scheduled review meeting. The particular focus of this review is the faculty member's progress toward achieving tenure. The review, therefore, must address the criteria for tenure set forth in this document. The review should involve all tenured faculty members. If faculty members know that they will miss the scheduled third-year review meeting, they may enter a vote with the Department Head, and they may include any other review comments. These votes will be included in the final total. At the scheduled meeting, the candidate's packet will be presented and summarized to the faculty by the candidate's mentoring committee.

The third-year review meeting will conclude with a vote on whether or not, in the judgment of the tenured faculty, the candidate is making appropriate progress toward promotion and tenure. The result of the vote shall be announced at the meeting and later communicated to the person under review by the Department Head. Faculty should understand that this vote is not a commitment to grant or deny tenure in the future.

The Department Head shall prepare a written report covering the discussions of the review meeting and characterizing the vote. The letter written by the mentoring committee will be included as a part of this A meeting will be scheduled (by the Department Head) with the faculty member, and the results of the vote and report will be discussed between the faculty member and the Department Head. If both are in agreement, the report will be signed by both, and the report filed in the faculty members file. If there is disagreement in the content of the report a meeting will be scheduled with the Dean that will include the faculty member and the Department Head. This report may be consulted by the tenured faculty when the faculty member is a candidate for and promotion and tenure.

If on the basis of the third-year review the consensus among faculty, Department Head, and Dean that inadequate progress is being made towards promotion and tenure, such that there is little likelihood of a successful promotion and tenure vote, the candidate may be given a letter of non-

continuation.

## **Expectations for Appointment in Research, Teaching and Extension.**

### **Research**

Research evaluation should be based on productivity, measured in terms of outputs. The general expectation is that a candidate for Associate Professor with a research appointment would demonstrate quality of research by publishing in leading refereed journals in their field. Candidates for Full Professor (hereafter called ‘Professor’) would have a continued record of publication in these same journals, plus additional publications that would reflect a program of national scope, such as books, book chapters or invited published papers in symposia or proceedings.

Research and publication in areas aligned with ones’ time allocation are also considered as worthy and could include research in refereed publications in the area of teaching methodology and Extension (such as the Journal of Extension of Natural Resources and Life Science Education). The exact number of publications will vary widely with the appointment, and thus cannot be distilled to a concrete number. For minimum expectations, see Research and Scholarship Expectations and Guidelines for AAES Faculty Members.

Additional indicators of the reach of a research program may also be considered, and can include items such as: published abstracts, symposia proceedings, web pages focusing on a research program, webinars, workshops or other academic activities in support of a research program. Such materials should be directly associated with a research program. Other similar materials with an outreach or instruction focus should be included in other sections of the dossier.

The general expectation is that the candidates will develop an innovative program to address important state, regional, national or international problems within the general areas of agronomy, crop science, soil science, water science, climate science, or environmental science. Work related to international projects such as field studies, collaborative research and grant proposals with faculty located overseas, presentations at major international professional conferences, joint publications are also valuable parts of a faculty’s research portfolio. However, extensive international work, especially for junior faculty members, should be considered carefully, particularly if such work is not part of ones’ stated faculty responsibilities. Other contributions to science as described by the AU Faculty Handbook will also be considered in the evaluation.

While varying by appointment, there is an expectation that faculty will secure external funding to conduct their research. The level and competitiveness of this funding depends on the research in which each faculty member is engaged. While non-tenured faculty should make use of competitive funding opportunities within Auburn University (Intramural Grants Program, AAES programs, Equipment Grants, etc.), they should recognize that securing outside funding is a necessity for promotion and tenure. This funding can take many forms, and may include industry funds, monies from commodity groups, competitive grant dollars, or other similar programs. As with publications, grant funding may also support teaching and Extension activities, and those monies should be reported in the appropriate sections of the dossier.

### **Promotion to Associate Professor-Research**

To be promoted to Associate Professor the candidate must demonstrate that he/she has an emerging stature as regional or national authority in his/her field, unless the assignments are specifically at the local level. It is acknowledged that many faculty members in CSES have specialized areas of work (ex: peanuts) and thus their programs may be of significant regional scope rather than

national or international. The quality of the individuals' work must indicate creativity and innovation, and results should be published in appropriate scholarly products. Examples of materials that will be considered in the promotion and tenure of an Assistant Professor could include (this is a listing of examples – not every activity must be included in a dossier):

- Graduate student advising, including service as a major advisor on a limited number of committees and service as a committee member (note: this is also listed under Teaching).
- An emerging history of publication. ‘Publication’ refers to published materials that fit within the faculty members’ job description, and can include publications in appropriate refereed journals, Extension publications, book chapters, symposia or proceedings, industry trade publications, or newsletters. It must be noted that refereed publications will carry more weight in a promotion and/or tenure decision, and there is an expectation that every faculty member will publish in appropriate refereed journals. The exact number and nature of the refereed journal articles will vary with faculty appointment and expertise.
- Evidence of the faculty members emerging research stature at a regional or national level. This could include invited presentations, elected positions, and invited memberships in organizations associated with the faculty members’ area of expertise.
- Evidence of a growing ability to garner outside funding for the faculty members’ research, teaching or Extension program.
- Evidence of research output via patents, copyrights, webinars, web material, or other intellectual property.

### Promotion to Professor-Research

The dossier of the candidate for the rank of Professor should be comparable to previously successful departmental candidates and candidates at peer institutions, and must demonstrate a national/international reputation. The individual work should show creativity, innovation and impact as measured by citations, levels of adoption of results or methods, and other measures of scholarly contribution. Scholarly contributions also include competitive extramural funding, invited national and international conferences, books and book chapters published. In summary, for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor, the following are needed measures in the research area:

- At least four years of service at the rank of Associate Professor.
- Consistent graduate student advising, including service as a major advisor, committee member and university reader (note: this is also listed under Teaching).
- A consistent, regular history of publication. ‘Publication’ refers to published materials that fit within the faculty members’ job description, and can include publications in appropriate refereed journals, Extension publications, books, symposia or proceedings, industry trade publications, or newsletters. This can also include a national/international presence in web-based media or other methods for research communication. It must be noted that refereed publications will carry more weight in a promotion decision, and there is an expectation that every faculty member will publish in appropriate refereed journals. The exact number and nature of the refereed journal articles will vary with faculty appointment and expertise.
- Evidence of the faculty members growing research stature at a regional, national or international level. This could include invited presentations, service on grant review panels or editorial boards, elected positions, and invited memberships in organizations associated with the faculty members’ area of expertise.
- Evidence of continued ability to garner outside funding for the faculty members’ research, teaching or Extension program.

## Teaching

Teaching is a vital part of many faculty members' appointments, and it should be viewed as a faculty function that is as important as Extension or research. At a basic level, classroom instruction (defined to include both live or distance/on-line) by a faculty member must include: 1) class meetings that are organized, informative, and communicate timely course material, 2) a correctly developed course syllabus and content, 3) student course evaluation and regular peer-review, and, 4) regular editing and updating of course content. Specific indicators of a quality teaching program could include (not all of these must be included):

- College, university or national awards for teaching excellence.
- Published laboratory manuals, textbooks or on-line teaching tools.
- Field trips and international or national study tours with graduate or international graduate students
- Publications in refereed journals and/or research presentations on teaching related research.
- Consistent undergraduate mentoring.
- Consistent graduate student advising, including service as a major advisor, committee member and university reader.
- Service on teaching-related committees at the department, college and university level.
- Service as an advisor for student clubs or organizations.

## Promotion to Associate Professor-Teaching

The candidate must demonstrate (1) an effective teaching program, (2) a commitment to student learning; and (3) effective advising to students and/or student organizations and to students' career development. Based on the appointment, individuals wishing to be promoted to the rank of associate professor should be actively involved in serving on graduate committees, including where appropriate serving as Chair or co-Chair at the MS (both thesis and non-thesis, on-campus and distance) and Ph.D. levels. Advising advanced undergraduate research projects (such as Undergraduate Research Fellowships) also would represent meritorious contributions to the department's teaching mission.

A promotion packet should include both student evaluations (typed) and peer reviews of teaching. Student evaluations should be included for the previous five years of teaching (for every course), and at least one peer-review should be performed for every class that the Assistant Professor teaches in the three-year period prior to the promotion and tenure document submittal. Peer reviews should be performed by a member of the mentoring committee, or by a senior faculty member who also teaches courses in the general subject area. Peer reviews should consist of the following: 1) a written review of course material (to include sample exams and the syllabus), with the course materials provided by the instructor, and 2) a written review of the course, developed after the evaluator has attended at least one course lecture.

Written peer review reports shall be provided to both the faculty member and the Department Head. If student evaluations and the peer review indicate that a faculty member is having difficulties in the classroom, a peer review may be performed more frequently. Other strategies for teaching improvement will be discussed, including such steps as consultation with the Biggio Center, for example.

## Promotion to Professor-Teaching

The candidate to be promoted to the rank of Professor must also demonstrate teaching competence through activities such as advising doctoral students, course and material developed for teaching, and teaching publications such as laboratory manuals or textbooks. For Associate Professor a peer review shall be completed every-other year. In some cases, the development of new or novel courses in emerging areas of their science is a mark of professional development. Leadership in teaching must also be demonstrated, either through awards of excellence at the university or national level, or via service on teaching-related committees. Teaching effectiveness and competence may be measured by the direction and guidance of graduate and undergraduate students, and service on other graduate student committees. In general, a faculty member who teaches and who is pursuing promotion to the rank of Professor must demonstrate a long-term, consistent and high-quality program in the instruction of undergraduate and graduate students.

## Extension

Extension faculty members are responsible for providing expertise and statewide leadership in their respective discipline for educational outreach programs conducted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). The primary role is developing and implementing creative, innovative educational programs and educational products for a broad audience and communicating these programs through interactions with state Extension personnel and other stakeholders. Faculty members with Extension appointments are responsible for producing educational curricula, publications and teaching materials; and working collaboratively with colleagues in other states, community agencies, and government agencies to address problems or needs of the region and nation. Faculty with Extension appointments are expected to engage in outreach work through a planned Extension program in a manner consistent with the percentage of their appointment supported by Extension funds. Applied and adaptive research is expected to obtain specific information that can be used by clientele in technology and knowledge transfer. Faculty members are expected to reach appropriate, diverse audiences and leverage the research and knowledge bases to address issues, needs and opportunities across the state and beyond. Promotion is based on program planning and implementation accomplishments, disciplinary competence, professional development, and leadership achievements. Specific guidelines and measures of success for faculty with Extension appointments could include (not all of these must be included – they are examples):

- Evidence of multidisciplinary collaboration with Extension peers. For example, this could be the development of a multidisciplinary Extension program in a commodity or other production area, with participation from Extension specialists in other disciplines such as agricultural economists, animal scientists, biosystem engineers, entomologists, plant pathologists, horticulturalists, aquaculturalists and poultry scientists.
- A high level of interaction with stakeholders. For example: service on commodity research boards, frequent presentations at trade group or commodity meetings, an active and engaged web presence, and hosting tours and field days.
- Examples of multiple program delivery methods, including distance education, web sites, fact sheets, radio programs and other recorded deliveries, and newspaper articles/interviews.
- Multiple speaking (both invited and attended) events in each year.
- Demonstrated (via speaking invitations and other contacts, such as e-mail) success as the resource person with state-wide (or greater) expertise in their resource area.
- Evidence that the Extension program reaches across a wide demographic range. Extension efforts in the faculty members' program that reach youth, people of color or those with economic disadvantages are beneficial.
- Collaboration with research faculty is beneficial for all. Faculty with Extension appointments should collaborate with research faculty, serving on graduate committees and co-writing manuscripts for publication in refereed research journals.
- Funded research projects with an emphasis on Extension-style projects (large-scale, on-farm, demonstration) are expected. For Assistant Professors, however, care must be taken that demonstration projects will produce some type of measurable published document that will enhance the quality of the faculty member's program.
- As with teaching and research, university, regional or national awards that recognize the quality of the candidates' program are always beneficial.

### **Promotion to Associate Professor-Extension**

The candidate for promotion to Associate Professor must demonstrate: (1) a productive research program as measured primarily by departmental and Extension publications, electronic media, and presentations in professional meetings (applied research publications in peer-reviewed journals are also encouraged as a means of establishing a regionally, nationally, or internationally recognized program); (2) an effective Extension program that includes program development, delivery, and relevance, as measured by peer and client evaluation of programs (survey instruments, course evaluations, evidence of program adoption etc.), publications, and presentations; (3) documented expertise in candidate's specialty areas that meets the needs of constituents; (4) pursuit and acquisition of extramural and intramural funds necessary to support the candidate's research and Extension efforts. The individual should have an emerging regional Extension reputation and a developing national reputation.

### **Promotion to Professor-Extension**

The candidate must demonstrate: (1) sustained productivity in research of high quality and significance to support an effective Extension program, which includes program development, delivery, and impact, as measured by peer and client evaluation of programs, publications, web presence, and presentations; (2) a regional and national reputation and a developing international reputation in candidate's specialty area; (3) leadership in Extension or service on a regional or national level; (4) documented expertise in candidate's specialty areas that complements research of the department and meet the needs of constituents.

## Service

All faculty members should engage in some form of service to the department, college, university, profession and community, but expectations of how much service will vary depending on the course of an individual faculty member's career. As of this writing, the inclusion of 'Service' or 'Outreach' is sometimes included as a percent of activity on the dossiers of various faculty, especially those in Colleges other than Agriculture. In CSES, however, this is rarely done, and such service or outreach is typically included in research, teaching or Extension documentation.

As a faculty member works towards promotion to Associate Professor and granting of tenure, the expectations of service are limited by the recognition that the primary focus of effort needs to be on establishing a solid teaching, research, and Extension programs, as appropriate to individual appointments. As a faculty member moves through the ranks, however, the expectation of service increases in the context of a setting where the university operates on the principles of shared governance and where a faculty member's national and international reputations are, to some extent, simultaneously shaped and reflected by professional service as defined in the Faculty Handbook.

# **Peer Review of Teaching**

## **Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences**

Peer review of faculty teaching is mandated by the Auburn University Board of Trustees, as noted in The Faculty Handbook, section 4.2.5. In section 3.6.5.C of The Faculty Handbook, it is further noted that peer evaluations for at least one class for each of the previous three years should be included in promotion and tenure dossiers. Given the department's commitment to excellent instruction and the importance of peer evaluation of teaching for promotion and tenure decisions, a sound and consistent peer review policy is essential. Accordingly, the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences has developed this policy.

### **1. Frequency of Evaluation:**

All probationary faculty with teaching appointments will be evaluated on at least one class each academic year (August to July).

Associate Professors with tenure will be evaluated on at least one class every two academic years. Those planning to go up for promotion be evaluated on at least one class every year in the three years preceding submission of the promotion dossier.

Professors with tenure will be evaluated on at least one class every three academic years.

The schedule for evaluations will be maintained and initiated by the department head.

### **2. Selection of peer reviewer:**

Prior to the beginning of the academic year, the department head, in consultation with the Faculty Mentoring Committee chair of the faculty member to be reviewed, will select a class (or classes) for review and an appropriate peer reviewer for each class. Peer reviewers can be one of the faculty member's Faculty Mentoring Committee members or another faculty member selected by the department head and Faculty Mentoring Committee chair, provided the selected faculty member is someone of higher rank. In situations where the number of higher ranked faculty is too low to make this stipulation practical, the department head may select a reviewer of equal rank.

### **3. Timeline for evaluation:**

- a. The course (or courses) and the associated peer reviewer(s) will be determined on or before the first day of academic year.
- b. The completed review will be returned to the department head, with a copy to the instructor, by January 15 (fall classes), May 15 (spring classes) or August 30 (summer classes).

### **4. The review process:**

The material to be reviewed will include the course syllabus and a selection of assignments, exams, papers, and quizzes. It is acceptable to review these materials on the Canvas course website, if available. For courses taught via Distance Education, the review committee member will review one or more recorded lectures. Alternatively, the faculty member being reviewed may

prepare a teaching portfolio for the class, which will include the material previously listed along with other documents such as a self-reflection, grade distributions, or whatever the faculty member deems relevant.

Observation of one or more class sessions is optional and to be determined by the reviewer and the instructor in consultation with each other. In situations where student comments from previous courses indicate a problem with delivery of the material, direct observation is recommended.

The peer reviewer may not discuss the evaluation with students currently or previously enrolled in the class nor may the peer reviewer obtain copies of student evaluations of teaching.

### **5. Format of the peer evaluation:**

The peer evaluation should be submitted in the form of a letter from the reviewer to the department head. The letter will contain the following information:

- a. Name of the instructor.
- b. Class being reviewed (course name and number and semester)
- c. A short description of the class (level, required or elective, number of students)
- d. A list of the materials/methods used in the review.
- e. A summary of findings, including recommendations for improvement.
- f. The completed course material review form and the class observation feedback form (if class observation is part of the review).

**Course Material Peer Review Form**  
 Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences  
 Auburn University

**Instructor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Note to Reviewers: review those items that are relevant to the information that you have been provided\*\***

**Syllabus: Enter yes or no**

1. Contains information about instructor (i.e. name, office hours, location, email, phone)	
2. Includes course goals and objectives	
3. Lists instruction materials (textbooks, supplemental readings, course website or Canvas information)	
4. Includes course schedule of major activities, assignments, field trips, etc.	
5. Describes grading method(s) clearly	
6. The grading scale is clearly defined	
7. The attendance policy is clearly described, and is not more onerous than University policy	
8. Contains policy statements required by Auburn University	
9. Link to Auburn University policies as found on the web site is provided	
Comments or suggestions:	

**Numerical rating scale: 4 = excellent, 3 = good, 2= fair, 1 = poor**

**Textbook, notes and/or course packages: Enter numerical rating**

1. Are appropriate in level for the students in the course	
2. Are current and relevant	
3. Align with course goals and objectives	
4. Are accessible for all students	
Comments or suggestions:	

**Instructional technology and visual aids: Enter numerical rating**

1. Are related to the learning objectives of that lesson	
2. Are used to enhance learning rather than entertaining	
3. Are in a format which students can download or read	
4. Are available in handout or electronically, if too complex for students to reproduce easily in their notes	
5. Canvas is used correctly and appropriately to communicate assignments and course grades	
Comments or suggestions:	

**Assignments: Enter numerical rating**

1. Are spread through the course so as to provide a balanced workload	
2. Clearly describe the expectations and goals of the assignment	
3. Allow for students individuality and foster creativity	
4. Are related to course goals, and are meaningful	
5. Clearly specify the degree of group and individual effort expected	
6. Grading provides useful comments for student learning	
7. A specific grading scale is provided, or a rubric is provided	
Comments or suggestions:	

**Exams: Enter numerical rating**

1. Contain questions that are clear and straightforward	
2. Are appropriate in length for the time available to take the exam	
3. All questions cover material which has been covered in class, and students are informed ahead of time of the material to be included in the exam.	
4. Are aligned with format to which students are accustomed to in that course	
5. Grading provides useful comments for student learning	
6. Exam scoring is clear and fair	
Comments or suggestions:	

**Class Observation Feedback Form**  
 Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences  
 Auburn University

**Instructor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ranking: 4 excellent, 3 good, 2 fair, 1 poor**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Description and comments</b>
The instructor demonstrated a good command of the course material		
The class was well organized with a clear flow of ideas and the instructor used class time well		
The instructor was responsive to student questions and engaged with students		
The material presented matched well with the written course objectives in the syllabus		
The instructor was easily heard, and written content could be easily seen from any point in the room		