

(September 2018)

**PROMOTION AND TENURE EXPECTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**

Successful candidates for promotion and tenure must demonstrate sustained excellence as teachers and researchers, and they shall also demonstrate sustained effectiveness in service to the department and the university. The department has a broad and integrated definition of these three areas. Teaching may include classroom and laboratory instruction, mentoring and supervision of students, and preparation of instructional materials. Research may be basic, synthetic, applied, or interdisciplinary in nature, and includes publication of research findings and efforts to secure funding for scholarly activity. Service includes activities that benefit the department, university, and profession, as well as outreach to the community, business, and government.

The Department of Geography and the Environment adheres to all University and CLASS policies with respect to promotion and tenure procedures. The UNT policy can be found [here](#), and the CLASS guidelines can be found [here](#).

**1. Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor**

**1.1 Teaching Activity**

Given the importance of teaching to our department, faculty should be effective educators of undergraduate and graduate students, providing a high-quality educational experience. Teaching encompasses combinations of classroom lectures, laboratory instruction, activity outside the classroom that reinforces and supplements lectures, and mentoring and supervising undergraduate and graduate students. Evidence of excellence in teaching may be derived from various sources.

Evaluations from students, administered in each organized class each long semester, are especially important in assessing teaching performance. The department considers both written comments and quantitative scores from students. In general, the department expects faculty members to strive for very good to excellent teaching, based upon current evaluation protocols and student comments. The candidate's mean score will be compared to the departmental mean score. In addition, qualitative assessments (e.g., students evaluation comments and peer assessment) are of high importance.

Additional measures of teaching performance shall include at least one of the following: peer observation, number of students mentored and supervised, quantity and quality of instructional materials produced, and grants to support classroom instruction.

Both the department chair and the Promotion and Tenure Committee will use the above sources in a holistic appraisal of teaching performance.

## 1.2 Research

Whether the individual does basic, synthetic, applied, or interdisciplinary research, or a combination of these, s/he will be expected to publish and present results in appropriate peer-reviewed outlets and to seek funding to support scholarly activities. The candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor must have a well-defined research agenda and demonstrate professional growth beyond the dissertation. Review of the candidate's record will place particular emphasis on the rate of research productivity (i.e., number of publications per year) in the candidate's time at UNT (i.e. the probationary period).

*Publication venues*—Geography is an integrative discipline. Research specialties of geographers cover a wider range of topics than most other academic disciplines. Current faculty members in the department specialize in climatology, development geography, economic geography, ecosystem science, environmental archaeology, geographic information science, geomorphology, health geography, hydrology, meteorology, political ecology, resource geography, urban geography, and water resources. Consequently, there is not a single set of journals in which all faculty members are expected to publish nor is there a preferred mode of publication. Most candidates will have both single- and jointly-authored publications and each faculty member may select the most appropriate outlet for her/his work, from geography to other interdisciplinary journals, provided the review process is strictly refereed. For some (though not all) areas of geography, publication of books with reputable scholarly presses is important, and, on a case-by-case basis, a sole-authored book may offset one or more refereed journal articles. In addition, most candidates for promotion will have a publication record that includes some non-refereed manuscripts. These would include such items as symposia proceedings, research reports, and book chapters (which in some cases may be peer-reviewed).

*Publication rate and impact*—The Promotion and Tenure Committee recognizes the vast differences in the amount of time and effort that an individual publication may represent. Assuming the candidate has had a two course per semester teaching load and relatively modest service commitments, the successful candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor will typically average one refereed publication per year on which s/he is single or first author. It is the responsibility of the candidate to explain the impact and merit of their publication record within the dossier, which may be done in the annotated CV and/or the authorship statement. Tiering of journal publications and weighting of multi-year book projects follows the recommendations of our Personnel Assessment Policy, which is used for our faculty annual evaluations (see Supplement). Forms of evidence can include impact factors and citation indices of journals, statements about the reputation of scholarly presses, citation rates of papers, books, or other works, or appearance of research findings in the media. In addition, we place substantial emphasis on comments provided by external reviewers concerning the quality of the candidate's publication record.

*Research funding*— Seeking funding to support research and other professional activity is integral to the functioning of a contemporary academic department and university. The candidate

should demonstrate a record of seeking funding from competitive external granting agencies (e.g., National Science Foundation, NASA, National Geographic Society, National Institutes of Health, and other agencies). The Promotion and Tenure Committee also encourages candidates to seek funding from internal UNT grant competitions, funds that can provide the foundation for more competitive external grant applications. A record of seeking funding in the probationary period should demonstrate grant proposal submissions to both external agencies and internal competitions.

The weight of funding related to forms of scholarship other than grant seeking is clarified in the Personnel Assessment Policy (see Supplement). The Department requires “grant seeking” but also rewards “grant getting” under the following logic. As a social science department at a tier 1 research university, two factors are important: 1) faculty members in CLASS teach twice the load (on average) compared with faculty in the sciences, thus any weight added to the research component of productivity through grant seeking is indeed a significant contribution to UNT’s research goals. 2) Social scientists draw from highly competitive, small pools of funding. Sustained effort put into grant proposals may thus result in little to no funding. Given this stark funding reality, it is necessary to submit proposals many times. Thus, in our Personnel Assessment policy we *reward seeking and getting* of grants, but for promotion and tenure we *require* that people *seek* grants. Rewarding the seeking of funding increases the number of proposals that are submitted and, thus, sustains an environment in which faculty members become better grant writers over time.

### 1.3 Service

Some service activity is expected from all faculty members. Typically, untenured assistant professors have lower service expectations than faculty of higher rank. Service consists of the additional activities each faculty member undertakes, usually for which there is no explicit reward. Examples include time-consuming governance activities within the department, college, or university. A typical candidate for promotion and tenure will have a service record both within and outside the department. Candidates should serve on one departmental committee (e.g., curriculum, graduate admissions) or render a significant service to the department (e.g., student recruitment, Geography Club advising). Service outside the department may include service to the discipline, such as board/committee membership, serving on funding agency review panels, and organizing conference sessions. Service is an important part of professional growth and also is evidence of attaining a national/international reputation. Generally, assistant professors should not serve on university-level committees and should not chair departmental committees. In all cases, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will evaluate the time expended on service activities as well as the type of contribution.

## **2. Promotion to Full Professor**

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences guidelines indicate promotion to full professor will normally be considered after five to eight years at the level of associate professor. Requests for earlier promotion will be considered in cases of exceptional achievement. Promotion to full professor is based upon demonstrated achievement of a national and possibly international reputation in the candidate’s area of expertise. Essential evidence for a national/international reputation must be

demonstrated by a record of peer respect, such as invited lectures/seminars, roles on granting agency panels and journal editorial boards, invited publications, invited reviews from prestigious journals, awards for teaching/research, leadership roles, and recognition/awards by professional societies. Achievement of a national/international reputation must be fully supported by letters from at least five full professors at other universities. At a minimum, those universities must be comparable to UNT in terms of academic programs, funded research, and standards for promotion.

Additional evidence for this achieved status should include a consistent and continuous level of scholarly productivity, resulting in refereed publications and multiple external funding applications. This should include a consistent record of seeking funding from competitive external granting agencies (e.g., National Science Foundation, NASA, National Geographic Society, National Institutes of Health, and other agencies including external contracts with businesses and/or non-profits). Numbers of publications should be equal to and preferably greater than the standards for tenure and promotion to associate professor (annually, one refereed journal article as first/sole author in geographic and topical journals appropriate for the candidate's research specialties). Additional scholarly publications such as book chapters will be considered. The number of refereed articles may be offset to some degree by a sole/senior-authored book, and to a lesser degree by an edited book of separately contributed papers (see Supplement for the weighting of articles and books below). It is the responsibility of the candidate to explain the impact and merit of their publication record, which may be done in the annotated CV and the authorship statement. Forms of evidence can include impact factors and citation indices of journals (see description of journal tiering in the Supplement below), statements about the reputation of scholarly presses, citation rates of papers, books, or other works.

Successful candidates will maintain a level of high-quality teaching consistent with promotion to associate professor. Individuals must demonstrate this commitment to high-quality teaching as evidenced by student evaluations of teaching and/or other supporting materials, providing evidence of additional instructional activity as described previously. In all cases, it is expected that candidates for promotion to full professor will have mentored graduate students through the defense of their thesis (or dissertation, if mentoring PhD students).

The Department of Geography and the Environment will expect candidates for promotion to full professor to maintain excellent levels of service to the department, the university and the profession.

Associate professors may seek a preliminary review by the Promotion and Tenure Committee to determine the timing of seeking promotion to full professor. The candidate may request that the Department Chair and/or a faculty advocate participate in the review. The product of the preliminary review will be a feedback letter from the Promotion and Tenure Committee to the candidate.

### **3. Final Analysis**

The annual evaluations and midterm reviews are important milestones on the road to tenure and promotion. The activities and accomplishments reported ought to be consistent with the percentage of effort for professional activity, teaching, and service in the annual workload

reports. Deficiencies identified in the midterm review should be explicitly addressed in the final dossier submitted for promotion and tenure. After promotion and tenure, the annual evaluations should provide guidance for assessing progress toward promotion to full professor, and to assist the chair in counseling faculty.

In the final analysis, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will examine sustained excellence in the three traditional categories of professional activity, teaching effectiveness, and service activities when evaluating candidates for promotion and tenure. Excellence in one or two categories will not outweigh a lack of performance in any category.

All candidates for tenure and promotion to associate or full professor should demonstrate an understanding of the nature of membership in a community of scholars, that s/he adheres to high standards of integrity and professional ethics, that s/he has the ability and desire to work as a member of a group while retaining all rights to individual expression, and that s/he feels a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the University of North Texas and a commitment to work for the accomplishment of its goals.

## **Supplement: Department Personnel Assessment Policy**

### **Introduction**

Faculty members at the University of North Texas are evaluated in terms of their scholarly productivity for two purposes: promotion and merit. Promotion refers to cumulative productivity in relation to teaching, research, and service and is evaluated by the Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC). Merit refers to yearly scholarly output which is evaluated by the Personnel Affairs Committee (PAC). As with tenure and promotion, merit too is evaluated in terms of teaching, research, and service. Each faculty member does an annual self-evaluation and submits it to the Department PAC. Decisions based on merit evaluation (e.g., merit raises) use a record from a sliding “three year window,” such that when merit raises are being decided by the Department Chair she/he uses an average of the previous three years of annual evaluation scores in teaching, research, and service. Productivity in these areas, however, also relates to how a faculty member plans to use their time during a year. For each year faculty members negotiate a workload allocation in anticipation of how she/he plans to spend their time and energy in terms of teaching, research, and service. This document discusses the organizational structure of the PAC, the workload allocation process, and the annual evaluation process.

### **PAC Organizational Structure**

*Committee Chair:* The Chair of the PAC is elected to a three-year term. An incoming PAC Chair must have served on the committee during the previous term and must be a tenured faculty member. The PAC Chair is responsible for guiding application of the Personnel Assessment Policy and for summarizing the annual productivity of each faculty member in letters to CAS. The PAC Chair facilitates meetings of the PAC committee for administration of the annual evaluation process and for consideration of revisions to the annual evaluation criteria. The PAC Chair summarizes the committee’s review of faculty members’ annual updates and drafts summary letters of faculty members. The Chair of the PTC will draft the annual letter for the PAC Chair. If the PAC Chair has a spouse on the Geography Faculty, the PTC Chair will also draft the spouse’s annual letter.

*Committee Members:* There are four members (excluding the chair) on the PAC who serve for terms of two years; each year three members will rotate off the committee. Ideally, the three major subject matter areas (human geography, physical geography, and archaeology) as well as all faculty ranks (full

professor, associate professor, and assistant professor) should be represented on the PAC. The role of the committee in the evaluation process is to assess, challenge (if necessary), and approve the self-evaluation that each faculty member does each year. This may include offering clarification concerning what is important in terms of productivity in one of the subject areas, asking for clarification from faculty members, or recognizing weaknesses in the system that need to be accounted for in a particular case or for a particular year. The PAC Policy is a living document subject to revision and improvement from year to year.

*Committee Meetings:* The committee members will review all updates each year and choose either to support a faculty member's self-evaluation, ask for clarification about aspects of the evaluation, or to not support aspects of the evaluation. If a majority of the committee members do not support an aspect of the evaluation of any faculty member, she/he will be asked to submit a revised update and the process will proceed to the point of resolution.

*Committee Product:* The evaluation finally approved by the committee will be summarized by comparing the faculty members productivity for the year to her/his declared workload. The PAC will report if a faculty member met, exceeded (percent above), or failed to meet (percent below) their declared workload. In addition to a quantitative assessment of a faculty members productivity for the year, the PAC Chair, in consultation with the committee, will draft a qualitative assessment of productivity in letter highlighting research, teaching, and service accomplishments.

The system is designed to evaluate productivity in relation to a faculty members declared workload. The system is designed to compensate for temporary fluctuations in productivity through two mechanisms: (a) faculty members have an opportunity to declare workloads twice a year – they can choose to adjust their workloads mid-year to better reflect circumstances surrounding their teaching, research, or service output, and (b) a three-year moving window for evaluating merit will smooth out any temporary fluctuations in productivity.

### **Department Chair's Evaluation**

Each year the PAC will evaluate the chair through two mechanisms: (a) the committee reviews the annual update of the Department Chair to evaluate her/his annual performance in terms of teaching, research, and service, and (b) the PAC Chair solicits responses to an anonymous and confidential survey evaluating the administrative role of the Department Chair. This survey provides quantitative and qualitative feedback to the Department Chair from the faculty. The PAC Chair does not participate in the survey and drafts a letter to the Chair summarizing the results of the survey.

### **Workload Allocation**

Faculty members may negotiate a workload allocation with the Department Chair each calendar year, for the current academic year, in mid fall semester. Declaring an appropriate workload allocation is critical as the PAC will evaluate a faculty members productivity with reference to their declared workloads. There are a few simple rules: 1) although workload allocation can be flexible, the PAC recommends that each faculty member allocate standard 40-40-20 (TRS) workload. Certain circumstances such as those pertaining to a faculty member in her/his first year of appointment or those on sabbatical leave may adjust their workload allocation to reflect higher percentages of research compared to teaching and service. 2) Teaching loads are negotiated with the Department Chair, though a "standard teaching load" in Geography is 2 courses per semester. 3) Although there is no departmental average workload that CAS wishes the faculty to aspire to, the departmental PAC recommends using a standard 40-40-20 (TRS) workload allocation. The Department Chair has final say in teaching load distributions each year. For general information on the UNT Workload Allocation Policy,

see this [link](#).

### Honor System

Annual PAC updates are self-reported assessments of a faculty member's teaching, research, and service output each year in terms of points achieved. While these annual updates are based on an honor system, the PAC may request additional clarifications and/or changes if substantial variations are noted in point allocations for similar activities.

### The Annual Evaluation System

Step 1: Select your workload allocations (e.g. T 40%, R 40%, S 20%)

Step 2: If you have selected a standard 40-40-20 workload, the point levels needed to meet expectations for the year are: Teaching: 400; Research: 400; Service: 200

Step 3: If you have selected a workload other than 40-40-20, compute point levels needed to meet expectations for your declared workload using the following steps:

- a. Calculate your multiplier:

$$M_t = (\text{Declared Teaching Workload}/40)$$

$$M_r = (\text{Declared Research Workload}/40)$$

$$M_s = (\text{Declared Service Workload}/20)$$

- b. Compute point levels needed to meet expectations:

Teaching Point Threshold:  $(M_t * 400)$

Research Point Threshold:  $(M_r * 400)$

Service Point Threshold:  $(M_s * 200)$

For example, a faculty member with a 30-60-10 (T-R-S) workload:

$$M_t = (30/40) = 0.75$$

$$M_r = (60/40) = 1.5$$

$$M_s = (10/20) = 0.5$$

Point levels needed to meet expectations:

$$\text{Teaching} = 0.75 * 400 = 300$$

$$\text{Research} = 1.5 * 400 = 600$$

$$\text{Service} = 0.5 * 200 = 100$$

Step 4: Compute your points using the tables below.

<b>Research</b>			
<i>Books, Edited Books, Premier Journal Publications (e.g. Nature, Science, PNAS)</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	800	Co-Author	400
Notes: Author(s) may choose to split points over 2 years for the categories above			
<i>Tier 1 Journal</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	400	Co-Author	200
<i>Tier 2 Journal</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	300	Co-Author	150
<i>Tier 1 Book Chapter</i>			

Sole/Lead Author	300	Co-Author	150
<i>Tier 2 Book Chapter</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	200	Co-Author	100
<i>Book Review, Bibliographic Entry, Other Opinion Piece</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	150	Co-Author	75
<i>Invited Lecture</i>			
International/National	75	Regional/Local/UNT	25
<i>Tier 1 Conference Presentation</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	50	Co-Author	25
<i>Tier 2 Conference Presentation</i>			
Sole/Lead Author	25	Co-Author	15
<i>Grants from Federal Agencies (e.g. NSF, NIH, NASA, EPA, etc.)</i>			
Application (PI/Co-PI)	50	Application (Co-I)	35
Award (PI/Co-PI)	200 per year	Award (Co-I)	100 per year
<i>Grants from State &amp; Regional Agencies (e.g. TCEQ, TX-DSHS, etc.)</i>			
Application (PI/Co-PI)	35	Application (Co-I)	20
Award (PI/Co-PI)	150 per year	Award (Co-I)	75 per year
<i>Internal UNT Grants, Local Agencies, Local Businesses (e.g. City of Denton, etc.)</i>			
Application (PI/Co-PI)	25	Application (Co-I)	10
Award (PI/Co-PI)	50 per year	Award (Co-I)	25 per year

### **Authoring**

Being sole/lead author leads to the maximum possible score in any research publication or conference presentation category. Being co-author results in half the score of that of a sole/lead author.

### **Journal Rankings**

*What is a premier journal?*

A premier journal is international in reputation for the strength of the scholarship that it publishes, and it is disciplinary-wide (or wider) in scope such that scholars from multiple of areas of scholarship could aspire to publish in it. Key elements of this category are thus, *scope* and *impact* of the journal. The journal must be of wide enough in scope first, and then it must also be extremely high in terms of impact to attain the status of premier journal. Very few journals will qualify for this category; they will be heavily scrutinized by the PAC for inclusion.

*Representative Examples:* PNAS, Science, Nature

*What is a tier 1 journal?*

A tier 1 journal is one that ranks highly in terms of scholarly impact in a discipline or sub-discipline (a top 5 journal in one's field). Key elements of this category are thus, *scope* and *impact* of the journal. The journal must be of wide enough in scope first, and then it must also be high in terms of impact to attain the status of tier journal. Metrics from rating systems (e.g., H-index, impact factor, or SJR score), such as ISI, Scopus, or Google Scholar should be used to highlight the ranking of a journal relative to other journals in the discipline or sub-discipline. Areas might include hydrology, archaeology, GIS, medical geography, or broader geography-wide journals. Documentation of journal ranking should be provided to the PAC.



Questionable based on weak impact but not breadth: move to tier 2

Questionable based on narrow breadth but not impact: move to tier 2

*What is a tier 2 journal?*

Tier 2 journals are disciplinary or sub-disciplinary journals that are national and international in scope that are not in the top five for an area using any of the metrics mentioned for Tier 1.

*The meaning of publishing in tier 2 journals:* publication in tier 2 journals is an important component of the research program for faculty in our department. These are reputable journals that relate directly to each faculty member's individual research program.

### **Co-Authoring w/ Students**

Faculty members may take points in two categories for publications with students—in *research* and/or in *mentoring*. In cases where the faculty member plays a major role in the writing and analysis of a publication, she/he may request to be co-lead author provided evidence from the journal is included. Evidence may include a letter from the editor or a note on the publication itself.

### **Co-Presenting w/Students**

Faculty members co-presenting with students may take points as a co-presenter in one of two categories—in *research* or in *mentoring*. If a faculty member is the lead author, points will be taken under research in the lead author category, and no points will be taken for mentoring.

<b>Teaching</b>			
<i>Teaching</i>			
Fall/Spring Semester	75 x	Number of Classes	
<i>Graduate Student Advising</i>			
Proposal (Chair)	25	Proposal (Member)	10
Thesis (Chair)	50	Thesis (Member)	20
PSM (Chair)	25	PSM (Member)	10
<i>Undergraduate Student Advising</i>			
Honors/Thesis	25		
Other Mentoring	10		
<i>Mentoring Leading to Publications/Grants/Fellowship Awards and Presentations</i>			
Publication/Awards	25		
Presentations	10	Choose research or mentoring	
<i>Teaching Evaluations</i>			
SPOT Effectiveness	Compute average of all courses and use lookup table		
SPOT CEI	Compute average of all courses and use lookup table		
Effectiveness	Points	CEI	Points
≥ 4 and ≤ 5	30	≥ 6 and ≤ 7	30
≥ 3 and < 4	25	≥ 5 and < 6	25
≥ 2 and < 3	20	≥ 4 and < 5	20

≥ 1 and < 2	15	≥ 3 and < 4	15
<i>Others</i>			
Summer Field School	30		
Field Trip	15		
New Course Prep	15		
Other Activity	15	Provide justification	

### **Semester Course Load Expectations**

The allocated points received for each structured, formal course during the academic year is lucrative and includes credit related to a number of baseline expectations. All use and dissemination of web-based materials related to normal teaching activities (e.g., circulation of syllabi, exercises, readings, discussions, correspondence, announcements, et cetera) that might alternatively be handled via paper copy or in person during class time are accounted for in the 75 points allocated per course. All correspondence, individualized meetings with students and efforts to retain students in courses that are part of normal class-time and office-hour responsibilities are also accounted for in the 75 points. Efforts to retain students and to aid them to encourage their success are baseline expectations of instruction. If the instructor structures workshops, panels, exercises, field trips, or similar activities that are substantial investments outside of course preparation, the effort may be awarded in the “Field Trip” or “Other Activity” categories.

### **Summer Courses/External Contracts**

The annual update is for purposes of evaluating merit related to the 9 month salary. Faculty members may not take points for teaching or preparation of summer courses, field courses, studies abroad, or external contract research that pay salary in addition to the 9 month salary. However, points for organizing field schools during the academic year are allowed.

### **Mentoring Milestones**

There are three departmental milestones that points may be taken for in terms of mentoring graduate students: defense of the proposal and defense of the thesis. Mentoring centers on an average-effort, with some students requiring more attention and others requiring less attention. Retention of struggling students, for example, is balanced by excellent forward progress of other students. Mentoring is also recognized by achievement of merit in terms of presentations and papers co-authored with students; if students are unable to meet these internal and external criteria representing professional progress, no mentoring credit should be taken for their efforts. The same criteria apply to mentoring of students funded as RAs via external grants; merit is taken in the funded grant categories, and mentoring is to be recognized via reaching the expected milestones and/or through co-authoring and co-presenting. The PAC recognizes progress via achievement of milestones; all related efforts on a weekly, monthly, and semester-wise basis are assumed to be represented by students’ abilities to reach these marks and faculty members’ ability to mentor successfully.

<b>Service</b>			
<i>Service to the Department</i>			
All Committee Chairs	50	All Committee Members	25
Graduate Advisor	100	Undergraduate Advisor	100

Lab Coordinator	25	Certificate Coordinator	25
Core Assessment Coord	25	Core Assessment Contrib	5
Geog. Club Mentor	20	Website News Editor	20
SACS Assessment Coord	25	Other Adhoc Charge	25
Awards Coordinator	25	Student Org. Advisor	20
<i>Service to the University or College</i>			
All Committee Chairs	50	All Committee Members	25
Other Charges	25 (provide justification)		
<i>Service to the Discipline</i>			
Editor (Tier 1)	100	Editor (Tier 2)	50
Editorial Board (Tier 2)	25	Editorial Board (Tier 2)	15
Review Panel (Federal)	100	Review Panel (State)	50
Review Panel (Local)	25	Review Panel (UNT)	15
Society Board Chair	25	Society Board Member	15
Peer Review	5 per article	External P&T Review	25
Conference Session Chair	5	Conference Session Organizer	5
Workshop Organizer	15	Workshop Participant	5
Other Charges	15 (provide justification)		