

**TENURE GUIDELINES  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**

**I. Departmental Mission and Goals**

The mission of the Chemistry Department of the University of North Texas is to provide quality education in science and the scientific method to both its undergraduate and graduate students using chemistry as the medium.

A significant aspect of this mission is the training of future chemists in the graduate program. This training is accomplished through research programs that increase our knowledge and understanding of both basic and applied areas of chemistry.

The department strives to increase scientific literacy in the general populace through its service courses and service activities.

The products of these activities, namely, informed citizens, scientists, and knowledge, benefit the North Texas area, the State, and the Nation.

The goals of the Chemistry Department in the three areas of teaching, research, and service are integrally correlated and cannot be separated into distinct subdivisions. For example, a major component of the department's teaching responsibility is the freshman chemistry program that serves as part of the university and the college core. This program represents a predominantly service activity for the department that is vitally related to its teaching function.

The research component of the department's mission is also a teaching function because its primary product is scientific problem solvers. These individuals, as a result of their studies, generate new knowledge or applications that will serve humankind. At the same time, research and service by the faculty, in basic or applied areas of chemistry, in chemical education, or in consulting activities, serve to provide the department's students with faculty who can better fulfill their teaching function.

It is recognized that not all faculty can contribute equally to all of the goals of the department. However, a balanced fair-share contribution is expected of each candidate for tenure.

## II. Introduction

The Chemistry Department adheres to the university tenure policy as outlined in UNT Policy 06.004 (Faculty Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Reduced Appointments) and the UNT College of Science Guidelines for Documentation of Promotion and/or Tenure Cases.\* In accordance with these policies, consideration of promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and a decision regarding tenure will, except in unusual cases, be made concurrently.

The granting of tenure is the most important decision arrived at in the development of an outstanding faculty. It is a selective process which recognizes the individual as a continuing member of the faculty based on performance during a probationary period. The importance of this decision to the university dictates that affirmative action in awarding tenure be taken only when there is no reasonable doubt of the individual's ability to continue making long-term contributions to the goals of the Chemistry Department and the University.

## III. Criteria for Recommendation of Tenure

Review of a faculty member's qualifications for tenure is based on the following considerations.

**III.A. Teaching and Mentoring:** The Department of Chemistry considers teaching to be very important. The candidate must demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching, as characterized by thoroughness of preparation, effectiveness of presentation, a willingness to give special help and counseling to students, and the ability to stimulate the interest of students in classroom, laboratory, or online instructional settings. The candidate must also establish themselves as an effective research mentor in connection with a viable independent research program of a quality suitable for M.S. theses and Ph.D. dissertations. It is thus expected that the candidate will satisfy the Chemistry Departmental criteria for Graduate Faculty membership, which will enable them to direct doctoral research students.

It is recognized that evaluation of teaching is a difficult and subjective task; however, it is essential that evaluations be carried out. Inputs used will include the nature of the courses taught, as well as numerical ratings and written comments on the student evaluations administered by both the department and the university near the end of each semester. All tenure dossiers, as well as Midterm Reappointment dossiers (see below), must contain other evidence of teaching effectiveness in addition to student evaluations. These may include, but are not limited to: peer evaluations, a teaching portfolio, published scholarship of teaching and learning, instructional grants, and learning outcomes.

Further evidence of commitment to teaching may include teaching awards, improvement of existing courses, design of new courses, and other curricular innovations.

**III.B. Research:** The following criteria are used by the Chemistry Tenure Committee when evaluating whether a candidate's record in the area of Research has met the standards

required by the department. These criteria reflect the expectation that faculty members should establish a vibrant, independent, and nationally recognized research program, with a record indicative of sustained excellence, in the probationary period leading up to tenure.

**1. Scholarly Publications:** The candidate is expected to have published a significant number of scholarly publications based on the candidate's independent research and within their subdiscipline of chemistry since arriving at UNT. Collaborative research is welcomed. However, it is expected that a major portion of the publications should be in the candidate's area of independent research expertise, and in which the candidate is a Corresponding Author. The number and quality of the candidate's research publications must be consistent with the expectation that the faculty member will continue to perform high-quality, nationally recognized research in future years.

For most chemistry faculty, the majority of scholarly publications should be research articles or communications in peer-reviewed journals. These provide the best evidence of high-quality research, as the papers have withstood the scrutiny of expert reviewers in the faculty member's research field. Review articles, book chapters, patent applications, and related works will be considered as additional evidence of contributions to research, but these will not generally be regarded as substitutes for peer-reviewed papers containing independent, original research.

It is recognized that the *quantity* of publications expected for a successful tenure case will vary based on the nature of the candidate's research. For research areas that are especially labor-intensive, or those that require construction of new apparatus, there may be significant delays before research results can be translated into publications. In such cases, assessments of the quality of the publications (see below) will be of paramount importance. A typical expectation for publication output would be 1-2 peer-reviewed papers within the first three years, and at least 2-3 papers per year in the 4<sup>th</sup> year and beyond. A successful tenure application should generally include at least six peer-reviewed papers in journals of good to high quality, although it should be emphasized that meeting this minimal level of productivity may not be sufficient to earn tenure depending on the candidate's research area and the quality of the work.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide evidence that will allow for assessment of the *quality* of scholarly publications. Examples of such evidence include numbers of citations, journal citation index rankings, journal acceptance rates, media coverage or highlight articles showcasing published work, and invitations to write review articles. Given the fast pace of change in the field of chemistry, the metrics and other evidence used to judge quality of publications may vary significantly over time. The Tenure Committee will strongly consider the opinions of the external reviewers in assessing the evidence of publication quality and in determining whether the candidate's independent publication record warrants a positive decision for tenure.

**2. External Research Funding:** It is expected that the candidate will have been aggressive in pursuing and obtaining external funding to support their research program. Funding may be in the form of grants and/or contracts from governmental, industrial, or private sources, as appropriate to the candidate's specific area of research. The level of

funding acquired should be sufficient to maintain a vibrant and sustainable research program. These funds are necessary to support students in the candidate's research group, to acquire new equipment needed to conduct research, and to pay for the ongoing costs of research. The level of funding obtained during the probationary period should be sufficient to maintain a high level of research productivity and should give an indication that the faculty member will be able to garner the continued funding necessary to support a vigorous, high-quality research program in the years following tenure. The acquisition of sustainable research funding also provides a positive judgment by the scientific community of the value of the candidate's research.

**3. External Reviews:** As an integral part of assessing a candidate's research accomplishments, the department will solicit external reviews from five or more experts in research areas closely related to that of the candidate. The candidate should provide a list of up to five potential external reviewers to the Department Chair and the Tenure Committee Chair. The Department Chair and Tenure Committee Chair will identify and select additional reviewers as needed, to attain a final list of reviewers that is balanced between the candidate's selections and the department's selections.

Favorable evaluations of the candidate's research program by the external reviewers, including assessments of the candidate's promise for continued professional development after receiving tenure, represent very important considerations in the Chemistry Tenure Committee's appraisal of the candidate's research record. These external evaluations are one of the strongest means of informing the committee that the candidate has established a national reputation in their research field and is well positioned for a productive long-term career as a faculty member.

**4. Other Considerations:** Although the three criteria listed above are regarded as the most important measures of research success by the Chemistry Tenure Committee, the following additional criteria will also be considered when evaluating the candidate's research record:

**Presentations and Invited Seminars:** In addition to research publications in high-quality journals, it is expected that the candidate, and ideally the candidate's research group members, will disseminate the results of their research through presentations at professional meetings and invited seminars at other universities or professional symposia.

**Student Mentorship and Co-authorships:** In addition to publishing high-quality original research, it is expected that the successful candidate will train graduate and undergraduate students to perform research. Evidence for successful mentoring can be shown by student co-authorships on the candidate's articles and presentations, as well as by the success of students in the candidate's research group in obtaining their degrees. Mentorship of postdoctoral scholars is also viewed favorably and should include significant training in the writing of scientific papers and/or proposals.

**5. Collaborative Research:** Collaborative projects leading to publications can be very beneficial to the participants and the scientific community. These projects are welcomed and valued by the Tenure Committee. The level of value depends upon several factors:

**a. Intellectual Contribution:** Is the research project in an area in which the faculty member has expertise, and makes a fundamental contribution to the project, rather than providing a technical service?

**b. Student Co-authorship:** An important component of a faculty member's research responsibilities is in directing graduate and undergraduate students, resulting in publication co-authorships that will help the students to obtain their intended degrees and to achieve successful professional careers.

**c. Research Funds:** External funding is very important in operating a viable, active research program (see Section III.B.2). For collaborative grants on which the candidate is a co-PI or co-investigator, the percent of grant funds dedicated to the faculty member's research group will be considered in assessing the candidate's funded effort on the research project, taking into consideration that this may not directly correlate with the candidate's scientific contributions to the project in all cases. Funded effort will be determined using records from the UNT Office of Research and Innovation and should also be corroborated by the candidate.

**III.C. Service:** The Department of Chemistry operates through a committee system which, for maximum effectiveness, requires effective participation by all faculty. Members of the Department are expected to serve on Departmental and/or College and/or University committees when appointed.

The type and level of service can vary considerably, and will depend on the individual's rank and professional interests as well as the needs of the department. Only a moderate amount of service is expected of an Assistant Professor in order to enable the establishment of an active research program. Evidence of sustained effectiveness in any service activities during the probationary period will be viewed positively by the Tenure Committee.

Service outside the university—for example, acting as a peer reviewer for journals and funding agencies, chairing sessions at professional meetings, and election to offices in professional organizations—will also be viewed as part of the service record of the candidate.

**III.D. Membership in the University Community:** The granting of tenure is the beginning of a second and longer-term phase of professional association. The recommendation must carry with it the assurance, so far as can be determined, that the individual understands the nature of membership in a community of scholars; that they adhere to the high standards of integrity and professional ethics; that they have the ability and desire to work as a member of a group while retaining all rights of individual expression; and that they feel 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. University policy dictates that affirmative action in awarding tenure be taken only when there is no reasonable doubt of the individual's long-term contribution to the goals of the University.

**III.E. Breadth of Contribution:** Some degree of balance in performance in the areas of teaching, research and service is desirable. However, primary emphasis will be placed on teaching and research. But even here, significant contributions in one of these primary areas alone will not ordinarily suffice to qualify a person for tenure. Thus, research even of

exceptional merit will not compensate for substandard classroom teaching, nor will exceptional teaching compensate for failure to establish an active research program.

It is recognized that evaluation of a faculty member's contributions in some of the above-listed areas is difficult and may involve subjective judgments. The faculty of the Department of Chemistry considers the collective judgment of all tenured faculty to be an effective authority in such matters.

#### **IV. Procedures**

**IV.A. Tenure Committee:** The Tenure Committee of the Department of Chemistry shall be composed of all tenured members of the Chemistry Faculty on full-time appointments. The Department Chair is a non-voting, ex-officio member of this committee. The Committee shall elect a chair as early as feasible in the academic year.

**IV.B. Tenure Subcommittee:** In the candidate's first semester, the Chair of the Departmental Tenure Committee shall appoint (in consultation with the candidate) a sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee, which shall consist of one faculty member from the candidate's division and one from outside the candidate's division. The appointment shall be for the duration of the candidate's probationary service. If either sponsor is unable to serve at any time, the Chair shall appoint a replacement. The Tenure Subcommittee shall counsel the candidate in all matters concerning reappointment and tenure.

The Tenure Subcommittee members will aid the candidate in preparing their file for review by the Tenure Committee each year, and will also present a brief oral summary of progress by the faculty member to the Tenure Committee. In addition, one member of the candidate's Tenure Subcommittee will typically serve as a Faculty Advocate for the candidate at the College-level review stage of the tenure evaluation process.

**IV.C. Faculty Mentoring Committee:** Many of the expected research and teaching functions will be new to Assistant Professors. To help the faculty member in adapting to these new responsibilities, the Departmental Tenure Committee shall appoint (in consultation with the candidate) a Faculty Mentoring Committee composed of two-to-three senior faculty members. The Mentoring Committee members may also be members of the Tenure Subcommittee. In some cases, inclusion of faculty outside the Chemistry Department on the Faculty Mentoring Committee may be appropriate. The Mentoring Committee should meet with the faculty member for a review of progress toward tenure at least once each year. The Committee should also be available throughout the year to help in various matters, such as planning equipment and chemicals orders, setting up a research laboratory, writing grant proposals, submitting manuscripts, recruiting students, and developing classroom instruction, among others.

**IV.D. Annual Reappointment Review:** The Chemistry faculty affirms its intent, by annual review and counseling, to assist in every way possible in the professional development of the candidate for tenure. The Tenure Committee shall conduct an annual review of all tenure-track faculty at the appropriate time as established by relevant UNT

Policies (06.004, Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion; 06.007, Annual Review) and by the Tenure and Promotion schedule published by the Office of the Provost. This review shall focus on progress toward meeting the criteria for tenure (Section III of this document and the relevant university and College of Science policies), and shall identify strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's record. The results shall be communicated to the candidate as a written evaluation, and the candidate shall be counseled as to how any deficiencies may be remedied.

The annual reappointment review will serve a primarily advisory function during the first three years of the probationary period. During the fourth year, and based upon material submitted by the faculty member at the end of the third year, an intensive midterm reappointment review is conducted (see Section IV.E). University policy requires that the Tenure Committee conduct a reappointment vote each year, including the first three years, for probationary faculty. The annual review process in the first three years will consider the annual evaluation of the faculty member's accomplishments by the departmental Personnel Affairs Committee, as well as additional information provided by the faculty member in cooperation with their Tenure Subcommittee Chair. The annual review will be followed by a vote of the Tenure Committee on whether to recommend the faculty member for reappointment. A simple majority affirmative vote of all voting members of the Tenure Committee is required in order for the candidate to receive a positive recommendation for reappointment in the next year of probationary service. If a candidate does not receive an affirmative vote for reappointment, the Tenure Committee may recommend a terminal contract as prescribed in the UNT Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Policy (06.004). In the event of a negative vote by the Tenure Committee, a review of the candidate by the College-level review committee and the Dean will be conducted; if the vote is affirmative, no College-level review will occur during the first three years of probationary service. Results of all annual reviews by the Tenure Committee shall be made a part of the record of the candidate.

Reviews for the granting of tenure ordinarily will be held in the last year of the candidate's probationary appointment. This will normally be the 6<sup>th</sup> year for faculty initially appointed at the level of Assistant Professor, and the 5<sup>th</sup> year for faculty initially appointed at the rank of Associate Professor without tenure. In extraordinary cases, consideration for early tenure may be advanced on recommendation of the sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee in consultation with the candidate. The candidate should consult the Department Chair and the Tenure Committee Chair to determine whether consideration of early tenure is warranted.

**IV.E. Midterm Reappointment Review:** In the fourth year of the probationary period, an extensive review involving the department, the College of Science, and the Provost will be conducted. No external reviews will be solicited for this review, but evidence of progress toward meeting the requirements for tenure in all three areas of teaching, research, and service will be examined. The candidate will be expected to provide evidence of a commitment to effective teaching and mentoring, progress in research in the form of submitted or published papers and/or presentations at professional conferences, serious efforts to obtain research funding via proposals to federal agencies and/or private sector

funding sources, and some involvement in departmental service. As part of this review, the departmental Tenure Committee will vote on whether to reappoint the candidate for an additional year of probationary service (see Section IV.D). The Midterm Reappointment process will follow the schedule published by the Provost.

The fifth-year reappointment review, similarly to those in the first three years of the probationary period, will be conducted in coordination with the PAC's Faculty Annual Review process (UNT Policy 06.007) and will involve a reappointment vote by the Tenure Committee. A review by the College and the Provost's office will only take place if there is a negative reappointment recommendation by the Departmental Tenure Committee, or if a mandatory full fifth-year review is stipulated by the Provost at the conclusion of the Midterm Reappointment Review.

**IV.F. Preparation of Midterm Reappointment and Tenure Dossiers:** For both midterm reappointment and tenure reviews, the candidate will be responsible for assembling a dossier containing the required documentation, in consultation with the Department Chair and the candidate's sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee. The types of evidence submitted should be consistent with guidelines for tenure stated in elsewhere in this document, and in accordance with the relevant College of Science and University policies in force at the time. The following is a non-exclusive list of items that should be included in dossiers for third-year reappointment and tenure:

1. A complete CV
2. A self-evaluation/personal narrative (maximum 750 words)
3. Copies of peer-reviewed publications based on work done during the candidate's independent career, with a focus on work done at UNT
4. A list of proposals submitted, including the funding agency, the amount requested, the funding period, funding status, and percent effort by the candidate for collaborative proposals
5. Referee comments for submitted proposals (optional)
6. Compilations of numerical results and student comments from student teaching evaluations
7. Other evidence of teaching effectiveness (see Section III.A). At a minimum, this must include peer teaching evaluations from two faculty members: one chosen by the candidate, and one chosen by the chair of the Tenure Committee.
8. Other documentation of research and service accomplishments, including mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students in research

For internal review within UNT only, the candidate must also provide copies of annual review and reappointment letters written by the departmental PAC, the Tenure Committee, and the Department Chair.

For all Midterm Reappointment and Tenure reviews, the candidate's dossier shall be available for examination by members of the Tenure Committee at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the record of the candidate is to be reviewed.



**IV.G. Procedure for Midterm Reappointment Reviews:** All proceedings of the Tenure Committee shall be held in executive session.

The consideration of each candidate shall be opened with a presentation by the sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee, which shall be followed by questions and discussion among the members of the Tenure Committee.

For Midterm Reappointment reviews, a vote shall be taken by the Tenure Committee to determine if a continuing year of probationary appointment for the candidate is to be recommended to the Department Chair. To the extent possible, a consensus shall be reached by the Tenure Committee concerning specific points to be expressed in the Committee's written evaluation of the candidate. Following the discussion and vote, the sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee Chair shall prepare a draft evaluation statement containing results of the vote and summarizing points raised during the course of the Committee's deliberations. The draft statement is to be circulated to all members of the Tenure Committee for comments and revisions prior to its transmittal by the Tenure Committee Chair to the Department Chair. The Committee Chair shall ensure that the written evaluation reflects the collective judgment of the Tenure Committee. Committee members who disagree with the majority opinion may choose to submit a minority opinion statement, which should be included by the Committee Chair in the document.

**IV.H. Annual Meeting with Department Chair and Tenure Committee Chair:** When the annual review of the faculty member's record by the Tenure Committee and Department Chair is complete, the Tenure Committee Chair and Department Chair will arrange a meeting with the faculty member to go over the points in the evaluation letters, and to answer any questions concerning items in either evaluation. The faculty member will be allowed to have another person (e.g. a Mentoring Committee member, Tenure Subcommittee chair, or another faculty familiar with his/her research) attend the meeting if desired. At the conclusion of this meeting, all participants will sign a statement that the faculty member has been counseled and understands the recommendations in the annual evaluations of progress toward tenure. This statement shall be retained as part of the candidate's file.

**IV.I. Tenure Review:** The Candidate's dossier is prepared in accordance with the UNT College of Science and University guidelines,\* and shall be available for examination by members of the Tenure Committee at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the tenure decision is to be discussed.

Review of the candidate's case for tenure shall focus on the criteria listed in Section III of this document and in the UNT and College of Science Tenure and Promotion policies. The meeting shall be opened with a presentation of the candidate's record by the sponsoring Tenure Subcommittee, which shall be followed by questions and discussion among the committee members.

An affirmative vote by a simple majority of the voting membership of the Tenure Committee by secret mail ballot, or an equivalent secure electronic voting method, shall be required for recommendation of tenure. For candidates initially appointed as Assistant Professors, an affirmative vote will also confer a recommendation for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. After the results of the secret ballot are known, the sponsoring

Tenure Subcommittee Chair shall prepare a draft recommendation letter containing results of the vote and a summary of points raised during the course of the Tenure Committee's deliberations. The draft letter is to be circulated to all members of the Committee for comments and revisions prior to its transmittal by the Tenure Committee Chair to the Department Chair. Reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that the recommendation letter accurately reflects the collective judgment of the Tenure Committee. If necessary, the Committee may be reconvened to finalize its recommendation. Committee members who disagree with the majority opinion may choose to submit a minority opinion statement, which should be included by the Committee Chair in the recommendation letter. The recommendation of the Tenure Committee shall be transmitted to the Department Chair along with the candidate's tenure dossier.

If the initial vote of the Tenure Committee is not favorable, the committee will notify the candidate in writing that the committee is considering a negative recommendation and will provide a written summary of the committee's concerns. The candidate has the right to request a meeting with the Chair of the departmental Tenure Committee within 5 business days of this notification. The candidate has the right to submit a rebuttal of any negative recommendation by the Committee in accordance with UNT Policy 06.004.

**IV.J. Department Chair Recommendation:** The Department Chair will provide an independent evaluation of the candidate's dossier for reappointment and tenure decisions. The Department Chair's recommendation will be added after the candidate and the departmental Tenure Committee submit the dossier to the Chair and before the dossier and supporting materials are forwarded to the College of Science Review Committee and Dean.

Upon review of the dossier, the Department Chair must notify the candidate in writing if a negative recommendation is being considered, providing a written summary of the Chair's concerns. The candidate has the right to request a meeting with the Department Chair within 5 business days of this notification. The candidate has the right to submit a rebuttal of a negative recommendation by the Chair in accordance with UNT Policy 06.004.

The Chair will prepare a recommendation letter addressing the candidate's achievements in the three primary areas of teaching, research, and service. This letter will be prepared in accordance with College of Science and university guidelines.\*

**IV.K. Submission of Recommendations to the College Review Committee and Dean:** The Department Chair shall transmit to the College of Science Review Committee and Dean the candidate's dossier, the recommendations of the Department Chair and the Tenure Committee, and any other information required by COS and UNT Tenure and Promotion policies. These materials will be submitted prior to the deadline published by the Provost's office for that academic year.

**IV.L. Extending the Probationary Period:** In extraordinary circumstances, a tenure-track faculty member may request an extension of the probationary period, also known as a "stop-the-clock" request, as permitted by UNT Policy 06.004. Circumstances that may warrant an extension of the probationary period include, but are not limited to, the birth or adoption of a child, responsibility for managing the illness or disability of a family member,

serious persistent personal health issues, death of a partner or family member, military service, and significant delays in fulfillment of UNT resources committed in the appointment letter. Not having met teaching, research, and service expectations during a previous review period does not qualify as extenuating circumstance for extension of the probationary period.

## **V. POST-TENURE REVIEW**

A tenured faculty member who receives an overall unsatisfactory annual review by the unit review committee must be placed on a professional development plan (PDP) as specified in the UNT Review of Tenured Faculty policy (06.052). A faculty member has up to two calendar years to achieve the outcomes identified in the PDP.

## **VI. AMENDMENTS**

This tenure policy is an Appendix of the By-Laws of the Department of Chemistry. A 2/3 affirmative vote of the voting-eligible tenured and tenure-track faculty will be required for the policy to be amended.

\*The Chemistry Department will follow the University and College of Science guidelines in force at the time the candidate is being considered for Tenure and/or Promotion. In the event that departmental or college policies for tenure differ from the university Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion policy (06.004), the university policy will take precedence.