Introduction

Research, including the training of graduate students, and undergraduate education represent the core missions of the Department of Geography and Geology at The University of Southern Mississippi. The Department strives to (1) provide high quality undergraduate and graduate education that prepares students to pursue professional degrees and/or to enter the workforce with skills necessary for life-long professional achievement, (2) advance the body of scientific knowledge through the scholarship of discovery, integration and application, and (3) offer technical and educational expertise through formal and informal outreach locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

The Department of Geography and Geology expects its faculty members to contribute to its missions by fostering the intellectual growth of students through effective teaching and by advancing knowledge through productive research activity. The Department also expects its faculty to render professional service to the Department, the University, their profession, and the public. Service activities, whether compensated or not, draw on professional expertise, relate to the teaching and research missions of the University, and typically, imply a connection to the University. Activities in which faculty engage that do not involve their professional expertise (e.g., activities centered on the family, neighborhood, church, political party, or social action group) are commendable, but are not components of the workload of a member of the faculty.

University and College documents on tenure and promotion shall take precedence over Department guidelines and policy cases where conflicts in interpretation arise. Department guidelines on tenure and promotion are intended to distinguish Departmental mission objectives and clarify criteria upon which recommendations are made. Recommendations for tenure and promotion are separate processes, although in some cases identical criteria may be prescribed.

Annual Evaluation

All faculty will be evaluated each calendar year as required by the State of Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning. The evaluation will be conducted under the rules of governance for the Department and supervised by the Chair if the governance policy does not include the Chair as the primary evaluator.

The annual evaluation will cover the areas of teaching, research, and service/advising. The purpose of the annual evaluation is to set annual goals for the faculty and department, to monitor the achievement of these goals, to determine progress towards tenure and/or promotion, to serve as a measure of post-tenure performance, merit-pay, and overall measurement of the expectations of faculty in the Department of Geography and Geology.
Third Year Review for Untenured Faculty

Each non-tenured faculty member holding a tenure-track position will undergo a comprehensive review of progress toward tenure during the third year of full-time service in the Department of Geography and Geology. This review, to be conducted in conjunction with the candidate’s annual review, will involve the Department’s tenured faculty, Department Chair, College Advisory Committee, College Dean, and Provost. The appropriate dossier must be submitted in accordance to the policy stated in the Faculty Handbook. A positive review will signify that the candidate is making satisfactory progress toward tenure; a negative review may result in a terminal contract for the fourth year. At the time of the third year review the candidate can be informed as to deficiencies in their progress that should be addressed between the time of the review and the time the candidate applies for tenure and promotion.

Teaching

Unless otherwise indicated in a university/faculty employment contract, it is expected that an individual will spend a portion of their working time in the classroom and in preparation for classroom instruction. Normally an individual will teach 9 hours per semester and maintain a minimum of 15 hours of preparation time in the office. Preparation includes but is not limited to: preparing lectures; preparing examinations; the creation of electronic and alternative delivery formats; counseling students, etc.; and keeping a breast of one’s major academic interests.

Although the ability to instruct varies from individual to individual, each member of the faculty is expected to present a well structured course content with clear and detailed learner outcomes, one that includes relevant and up-to-date research findings supporting the latest paradigms or theories or knowledge, a course utilizing advancements in technological delivery, a course with a fair and objective method of student assessment, and delivered without prejudice to the student. Since effective teaching is an essential criterion for tenure and promotion, evidence of a sustained pattern of good teaching needs to be documented. In accordance with University policy, faculty will conduct student evaluations of their classes each semester during an academic year. The faculty will use the on-line course/instructor evaluation provided by the University. Because of the applied nature of the Department’s several academic programs, it is expected that certain classes will involve field work. In most cases field exercises or projects are a normal part of an individual’s instructional responsibility. On occasion, however, normal expectations can be exceeded as in, for example, a case where an instructor has been able to interrelate the learning experience with a particular need of the practitioner(s) in the community. Learning experiences of these kinds are particularly rewarding for the student; so they are demanding and time consuming on the part of the instructor. Courses designed to fulfill practitioner needs may be considered to be “innovative” classes. Products derived from the course for the practitioner client may, depending upon authorship (student, instructor, students/instructor), be considered documentation for consideration of a service.
Teaching: Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

- Participation both in undergraduate and graduate course offerings.
- Development of undergraduate and/or graduate courses in areas of expertise.
- Expansion of teaching methodologies to include electronic and alternative delivery formats.
- Supervision of graduate and undergraduate research.
- Evaluation of quality teaching as evidenced by:
  - Maintaining a teaching portfolio to include sample tests, sample exercises, and examples of articles required as reading by class.
  - Annual evaluation by students (using SOAR on-line university process) of lecture and laboratory courses. Satisfactory quality in teaching/survey categories (especially #s 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 15, and 18) should achieve a ranking of at least 3.5 out of 5 among all university instructors.
  - Outcome of student-oriented research, including publication, presentations, and awards.
  - Peer evaluation of class lectures obtained from syllabi, and if possible, using an active observation format with techniques such as video taping with comments from university instructional methods consultants. Satisfactory quality of instruction should be determined by standards which should include, but not be limited to: clear and concise spoken delivery, organization, time management, adherence to course objectives and learner outcomes, engaging in student discussions, delivery of timely and up-to-date content.
  - Creation of and offering courses which meet the mission of the department.

Teaching: Expectations for Promotion to Professor with Tenure

- Having taught undergraduate and/or graduate students for at least ten years.
- Participation in undergraduate and/or graduate course development to meet the mission of the department and evolving needs of the student/major.
- Development of upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses in area of expertise.
- Supervision of graduate and/or undergraduate research.
- Evidence of sustained graduate research and productivity as evidenced by graduate student completion of a series of professional papers or thesis or dissertation.
- Evaluation of quality teaching as evidenced by:
  - Maintaining a teaching portfolio to include sample tests, sample exercises, and examples of articles required as reading by class.
  - Annual evaluation by students (using SOAR on-line university process) of lecture and laboratory courses. Satisfactory quality in teaching/survey categories (especially #s 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 15, and 18) should achieve a ranking of at least 3.5 out of 5 among all university instructors.
  - Outcome of student-oriented research, including publication, presentations, and awards.
  - Peer evaluation of class lectures obtained from syllabi, and if possible, using an active observation format with techniques such as video taping with comments from university instructional methods consultants. Satisfactory quality of
instruction should be determined by standards which should include, but not be limited to: clear and concise spoken delivery, organization, time management, adherence to course objectives and learner outcomes, engaging in student discussions, delivery of timely and up-to-date content.

- Creation of and offering courses which meet the mission of the department.
- Letters from former students, both undergraduate and graduate.

**Research, Scholarship, and Professional Activities**

Research is recognized as a viable and significant activity of the academic community and will be considered as such by the Department in tenure and promotion considerations. As with teaching, research is expected to reflect creditability on the individual, Department, and University.

Activities that can be utilized to document achievements in scholarly production are outlined below. The Department recognizes that individuals will be evaluated in terms of quality, as well as, quantity of production. Although individual achievements will not be subjected to a weighting or statistical procedure, the department does recognize there exists a range of quality in scholarly value of journals, books, publishers, and professional organizations.

Basically, there tends to be general agreement on what constitutes research. However, the Department maintains that in several instances the distinction between applied research and service remains subject to a problem of philosophic interpretation. The basic problem centers on the interpretation of *applied* research versus service. Because the Department is recognized as having an applied orientation, it is crucial for purposes of tenure and promotion that faculty be aware of which of their activities are categorized as research and which as service.

The Department defines applied research as the movement of new or innovative knowledge from the research community to the practitioner community (i.e., the involvement of pragmatic problem solving). Applied research may include both funded and non-funded efforts which result in the preparation and distribution of a manuscript or map; the publication of a professional paper, especially a peer-reviewed publication, book monograph or volume; the presentation of a paper before a professional organization; or the publication of a document submitted to a funding agency through grant or contract, where the document has been subjected to rigorous review and approval, and exhibits new and/or innovative approaches to the solving of a problem or the reporting of an outcome learned from lengthy and rigorous scholarly investigation. Evidence of any of the preceding products constitutes applied research.
Research and Scholarship: Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor
A sustained dissemination of scholarly activity as demonstrated by a combination of:

- Publication in peer-reviewed regional, national, and/or international journals. It is expected that if journal authorship is the principal means of scholarly dissemination, then a sustained record should be a minimum of 1 publication per year. It is assumed that in some research fields, it is less practical that a sustained pattern of external funding support be expected. In which case, scholarship should be increased in the number of peer-reviewed journal publications to a minimum of 1.5 publications per year.
- And/or the, authorship of books and book chapters. One book should not be the sole evidence of scholarly published activity for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

Quality and professional ranking of the journal or publisher will be considered, as well as, author's rank in the case of multiple authors. First or second author will be given highest value.

- And/or the, establishment of a nationally recognized and externally funded research program as evidenced by:
  - Submission of proposals to state, federal, and/or international funding agencies. The expectation is that funding be obtained to sustain a productive research program, including graduate student support.
  - Continued diligence in submitting proposals, whether funded or rejected, will be considered favorably.

- Evidence of scholarship can also include, but should not be limited to:
  - Authorship and/or editorship of edited publications, such as books and journals,
  - Alternative research publications, such as government research publications, technical guidance documents, and agency-specific series. These publications should have internal and/or external review processes. NGO research publications and technical data development are also considered.
  - Alternative format data delivery, such as geospatial web-based design of data acquisition, interpretation, management, and dissemination is also considered.
  - Research presentations at regional, national, international meetings/conferences or workshops. A minimum average of one per year is expected.
  - Sustained recruitment of graduate students, a high-level of collaboration and research support, degree completion/graduate, and find professional employment or acceptance to doctoral programs.

Research and Scholarship: Expectations for Promotion to Professor with Tenure
- Dissemination of scholarly activity as evidence by, but not limited to:
  - Sustained pattern of publication in peer-reviewed, national/international journals.
  - Sustained pattern of research presentations at national/international meetings/conferences/workshops.
o Establishment of a nationally/internationally recognized and/or funding supported research program as evidenced by:
  o Sustained research agenda on a topic for which national recognition is achieved and which meets the mission of the department.
  o Pattern of submission of proposals to funding agencies.
  o Pattern of received funding support sufficient to sustain their research program, including graduate student support.
  o Evidence of collaboration with colleagues within and beyond the University.

o Achievement of nationally recognized scholarly record.
  o Evidence that research has made an impact on the field and influenced the thinking of others in the field.
  o Peer evaluation by nationally recognized leaders in their respective fields.

Service

Academic service is a necessary faculty activity for the Department, College, and University. Responsible service activities demonstrate and support the goal of shared governance within the University system. All faculty will be expected to participate in, and share responsibility for, service activities. Standards and requirements for institutional, professional, and public service vary according to the duration of assistance needed, level of professional experience required, and application of the service to enriching sustained learning.

With exception of the distinction made between public service and research service in the preceding section, the following examples are accepted guides to determining what constitutes academic service of Department faculty.

Service: Minimum Expectations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor May Include, but is not limited to:
  o Institutional: Any association or participation on Department, College and/or University committees. Positions of leadership on committees where applicable. Advisor to student organizations.
  o Community service/outreach: Professionally based assistance to individuals, schools, business/industry, and presentations to lay audiences.
  o Educational and Instructional Development: Participation in programs to advance higher education.
  o Professional discipline: Organizational leadership or service to state, regional, national, international societies/organizations in area of expertise, review of journal articles, book chapters, and research proposals.

Service: Minimum Expectations for Promotion to Professor with Tenure may include:
  o Institutional: Accept leadership roles on Department, College and/or University committees.
Promotion to Professor with Tenure

Candidates for the rank of professor are teacher-scholars with a well-established national/international standing in their discipline and a strong record of contribution to the University and Department. Successful candidates will have a record of sustained high level performance in each of the three areas of the University mission. It is expected that candidates will have spent at least five years at the associate professor rank prior to applying for promotion to professor. Candidates will be expected to have graduated students with graduate degrees. The candidate must be recognized by peers as having made a major contribution to their specific field of expertise, as indicated in explicit evaluation by at least three (3) external reviewers.

Other Faculty Expectations to be Considered for Tenure and Promotion

Advisement

- Familiar with University, College, and Department requirements.
- Assist undergraduate and graduate students in preparing class schedules and advising students on career goals and opportunities.
- Writing letters of recommendation on behalf of students.

Collegiality

Collegiality among faculty is essential for the effective operation of the Department. Hence, colleagues must be able to interact with faculty and students in a constructive and professional manner. This is evidenced by:
- Share committee assignments.
- Participate in Department and University functions.
- Maintain a non-disruptive presence in the department with office hours that are reasonable to student schedules.
- Provide advice in areas of research and teaching to faculty and students.
- Collaborate with colleagues within/without the Department when appropriate.
- Support the goals/mission of the Department, College, and University.

Procedures for Tenure and Promotion

For faculty seeking promotion and/or tenure, the Department will follow the procedures as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.