

Planning for Tenure

Scott Stepan

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Outline

- General thoughts and summary of strategy
- FSU Biological Science Standards
- Contents of tenure binder
- How will you will judged? A thumbnail sketch
- Excerpts from FSU guidelines
- FSU resource links

General Thoughts

- Background
- Tenure is the key hurdle, not PhD or job offer
- Find out tenure standards when you interview
- Variation among institutions
- Learn to say “No” to service
- Get mentoring from the start
- Committee work: evaluation and executive
- Research: establish an independent research program that has achieved national recognition and is on an upward trajectory

General Thoughts II

- Step outside yourself
- The Process: Faculty applies, many levels of assessment
- Strategies:
 - Novel research directions?
 - Collaborations?
 - How many grad students?
 - Book chapters, review papers, editorial service, grant panels, etc...?
- Hit the ground running
- Get to know (and be known by) leaders in the field

FSU Biological Science Standards

The fundamental standard for promotion and awarding of tenure is significant achievement in advancing knowledge of the biological sciences. This advancement is attained through organization and incorporation of new and established knowledge into educational curricula, through research and discovery, and through contributions to the functioning of the department, the university, and the profession at large. The traditional three areas of evaluation are therefore teaching, research, and service. The decision to recommend a candidate for promotion and/or tenure is based on the evidence presented in the candidate's binder concerning activities in these three areas. The standards below are those used by the department in making this judgment.

Teaching

Evidence of a commitment to excellence in teaching, according to assigned duties at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as judged by any peer evaluation of teaching, the quality of courses taught, and performance on standardized and other evaluation measures. Excellence in teaching includes production of high quality syllabi and examinations. The candidate's teaching should use modern approaches to present the latest discoveries and techniques as well as debates within the field. Courses should enable students to articulate issues and solve problems on their own. Excellence in teaching also includes mentoring post-docs, students (including DIS) at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and availability outside the classroom for further instruction and advice, as well as participation as a member of M.S. and/or Ph.D. supervisory committees at the graduate level and Honor's committees at the undergraduate level. Among mentoring activities, greatest weight is given to mentoring of M.S. and Ph.D. students.

Research

Evidence of a strong program of independent scholarly research. The scholarly effort should be of sufficient quality and quantity to indicate the beginning of a national reputation in the candidate's intellectual discipline and a high probability of continued growth. Papers based on research performed at FSU and published regularly in prominent, primary refereed journals and/or other scholarly products like software distributed through standard mechanisms for the field, constitute the most important evidence of scholarly excellence. Additional positive indicators include receipt of extramural grants or contracts, receipt of fellowships, invitations to write review chapters and to present seminars and/or symposia at other institutions and at national and international meetings, direction of graduate research, service on editorial boards, and other elements of research accomplishment appropriate to the candidate's area of expertise. Sub-disciplines of biology may differ in the levels of these indicators considered to reflect excellence in research. The research effort should demonstrate intellectual independence from prior mentors and current collaborators. At the time of promotion, the department will consider evidence in letters from experts outside the university in the candidate's discipline, taking into account the stature and reputation of the letter writers.

Service

Evidence of a level of professional service appropriate for the year by year assignment of responsibilities; such activities should include membership on committees at the department, college, and/or university level, journal and/or grant peer-reviews, and possibly extramural committees related to scholarly achievement, the administration of scientific societies, and/or appropriate educational or other outreach beyond the university.

Contents of Tenure Binder

- Assignment of Responsibilities
- CV
- Evidence of Teaching
 - Syllabi, tests, etc...
 - Student evaluations
 - Peer evaluation
- Teaching Statement
- Evidence of Research
 - Reprints
 - List of publications with explanations of significance and contribution
- Research Statement
- Outside letters
- Service Statement
- Annual evaluation letters
- Chair and Dean letters

How will you be judged?

At a Research I University (in roughly decreasing importance):

- Publications
- Grants
- Prestige
- Student evaluation of teaching
- Quality of teaching
- Mentoring of students and post-docs
- Service

Excerpt from “Successful Faculty Performance in Teaching, Research and Original Creative Work, and Service”

Dean of the Faculties Office Florida State University

- Do I have a clear understanding of the elements of successful faculty performance?
- Do I have clearly defined goals of what I want to achieve as a faculty member?
- Do I have a realistic plan for achieving my goals?
- Am I thinking strategically about my teaching, research and original creative work, and service?

Resources

- <http://fda.fsu.edu/Faculty-Development/Promotion-and-Tenure>
- <http://fda.fsu.edu/content/download/25448/163336/Successful-Faculty-Performance.pdf>
- <http://provost.fsu.edu/faculty/tenure/expectations.html>