

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

Procedures for Evaluation for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The College has established a set of principles and best practices involved in evaluating junior faculty for tenure and promotion to associate professor. The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) has used these to develop the specific procedures described below that will be followed in our department. For faculty with joint appointments with other units, the specific procedures for evaluation for tenure and promotion for each case will be specified in a joint letter to the new faculty member from the Chairs or Directors of all units involved. Candidates undergoing review for tenure and promotion, and parties involved in that review, are encouraged to consult with the College principles and best practices and consider attending the College's annual Tenure Information session. College tenure policies can be found at:

<https://gateway.lsa.umich.edu/academic-affairs/policy-guidelines/tenured-and-tenure-track-faculty/promotions.html>.

Promotion in EEB will be granted only to candidates who have demonstrated excellence in research, teaching, service, and, as appropriate, curation. Excellent research should have a demonstrable impact on the area of study to which it is meant to contribute and should provide evidence for a strong presumption of future distinction. Excellent teaching should be demonstrated by evidence of a strong motivation to engage students in the learning process, by the rigor and scope of the courses taught, and by student and peer evaluations of the course and instructor.

Candidates will be notified of all requests for information described below **at least two months before the relevant deadline**.

I. SELECTION OF EXTERNAL ASSESSORS

1. **By April 1** in the academic year preceding the Department's recommendation to the College regarding tenure, candidates are to provide the Chair with a list of 8 scientists and scholars whom they consider appropriate to assess their work. With each name, the candidate should provide complete contact information and a brief biography indicating the research area and professional stature of the potential reviewer.
 - i) Candidates may include ≤ 2 non-arms length scholars in their list who can meaningfully comment on the candidate's scholarly independence, *e.g.*, their dissertation and/or post-doctoral advisors and/or their long-term collaborators. Otherwise, the names should not include scientific collaborators or co-authors within the last ten years.
 - ii) Candidates should indicate to the Chair the names of persons they consider inappropriate to assess their work by reason of conflict of interest, or kinship

or domestic relationship, and should indicate why they consider these persons inappropriate. In such cases, the Chair should not ask these persons to provide external assessments. Intellectual disagreements do not constitute conflict of interest and are not grounds for exclusion as a potential assessor.

2. The Chair will consult with the Tenure Review Panel for additional names of potential reviewers for a total list of at least 15 reviewers. For candidates with joint appointments in a museum unit, this list should include some reviewers appropriate for assessing curatorial contributions. From this list, the Chair will choose 10 names from whom to request letters of evaluation, assuring that at least three external assessments are from persons suggested by the candidate. When external assessments are not provided because the persons suggested by the candidate declined to write or did not respond to requests, these exceptions shall be documented at the end of the list of assessors in the file that goes to the departmental decision making body and the College.

II. CANDIDATE SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS FOR CONSIDERATION BY EXTERNAL ASSESSORS, THE TENURE REVIEW PANEL, THE DEPARTMENTAL DECISION-MAKING BODY AND THE COLLEGE

By June 1 of the academic year preceding the review, the candidate should provide copies of:

- i) a current curriculum vitae;
- ii) a teaching statement (five page maximum);
- iii) a research statement (five page maximum);
- iv) copies of his or her written work, including studies that have been accepted and are in press, but not yet published, and
- v) for candidates with a curatorial appointment, a curatorial statement.

The research and teaching statements should address a general intellectual audience and the candidate is encouraged to ask colleagues, especially former members of a Divisional Evaluation Committee or the College Executive Committee, to review drafts of the statements. Potentially relevant topics for the teaching statement include: main objectives at each level of instruction (including mentorships), genesis of the candidate's pedagogical and curricular innovations, evolution of teaching style, and explanations of especially good or bad performance in particular classes or terms taught, and plans for future teaching. Potentially relevant topics for the research statement include: the conceptual areas addressed, how components of the research program fit together, specific contributions made during the UM tenure-track period, false starts in procurement of funding or execution of the research program, exact role(s) in collaborative work, and plans for future research. Potentially relevant topics for the curatorial statement include: goals for the candidate's curatorial work, genesis of innovations and major contributions, how curatorial

research feeds into the candidate's research and vice versa, and plan for future curatorial activities.

Classroom evaluation: Senior faculty conducting the classroom visits will be given a protocol to guide them in evaluating the class, and CRLT will be asked to help develop this protocol. The departmental peer review protocol is available online at https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/eeb-assets/eeb-documents/internal/eeb_peer_review_protocol_ug_teaching.pdf

Before the tenure evaluation, each member of the Tenure Review Panel or an ad hoc committee will visit one class of the larger-enrollment course of the assistant professor undergoing review. This evaluation will be done during either the second semester of the year before tenure evaluation or early in the semester of tenure evaluation, timing dependent on when the larger-enrollment course is taught. This report will be included in the tenure packet.

III. DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREPARING AND REVIEWING THE COMPLETED TENURE FILE

1. **By April 1**, the Department Chair, with the advice of the Promotions and Merit Committee, will appoint a committee of three faculty, typically at the rank of full professor, to serve as the Tenure Review Panel for each assistant professor undergoing evaluation for tenure and promotion. At least one of the committee members will be a member of the PMC and one member should be designated as closely associated with the candidate's research specialty. For candidates with a curatorial appointment, at least one member of the Tenure Review Panel should also have a curatorial appointment.

The Department Chair will notify the candidate of the composition of the Tenure Review Panel **no later than April 10**. The candidate shall have the opportunity to review the membership of the Tenure Review Panel to ensure that the candidate's field and methodology are represented in the group and to challenge the faculty person designated as being most closely associated with the candidate's research specialty. Any conflicts over the composition of the Tenure Review Panel may be brought to the Associate Dean for Natural Sciences in consultation with the Chair. Any challenges must be brought to the Chair within one week after the candidate is notified of the composition of the Tenure Review Panel.

2. Once the Tenure Review Panel is established, the Chair will meet with its members to give a detailed overview of the promotion process and of the Panel's key role within it. Panel members are required to have participated in a STRIDE workshop within the previous 3 years. Members who do not meet this criterion are required to enroll in the next available STRIDE workshop. The Chair will consult with the Tenure Review Panel in selecting ≥ 7 additional names of potential reviewers. Priority will be given to arms-

length authoritative scholars whose expertise is germane to the candidate's field of study, but consideration may also be given to include ≤ 2 non-arms length scholars in their list who can meaningfully comment on the candidate's scholarly accomplishments, research profile and/or independence.

3. The Chair will be responsible for requesting external letters of assessment no later than **July 1** of the year preceding consideration for tenure. The Tenure Review Panel will be responsible for preparing the completed tenure file, with all documents listed in II above and the external letters of assessments. They are also responsible for writing a preliminary tenure report that summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's record in relation to tenure and for revising this report in light of the candidate's response (see item 3, below). Once the Tenure Review Panel has completed a draft preliminary tenure report, it will be made available to the Chair for review before it is forwarded to the tenure candidate. Because of the procedural importance of the Preliminary Report in the process, it is within the overall procedural responsibility of the Chair to ensure that any negative issues from the letters are addressed in the TRP report and that this report is balanced before it goes to the candidate. This includes consideration of whether the report contains implicit gender, racial, or other bias. If needed, the Chair should suggest revisions to the draft to achieve balance, and if the changes are substantive, the Chair will call a meeting of the Tenure Review Panel to discuss the changes in detail.
4. The candidate has a right to respond to the preliminary report on his or her suitability for tenure before the Tenure Review Panel forwards the report to the decision making body. Toward that end, the Chair should give the candidate a copy of the preliminary tenure report prepared by the Tenure Review Panel. The Chair will invite the candidate to respond to any inaccuracies, misunderstandings of the candidate's work, or failures to contextualize the candidate's work appropriately. Candidates are encouraged to discuss the tenure report with non-TRP colleagues prior to writing an official response to the Chair. If these colleagues have questions about the preliminary TRP report, they may consult with the Chair.
 - i) Maintaining confidentiality of the external letter writers in the preliminary tenure report is critical; the summary must protect absolutely the identity of the external assessors. While the strengths and weaknesses this summary enumerates will be consistent with those described in the report that the Tenure Review Panel sends to the decision making body and prepares for discussion by the College, the summary for the candidate must not quote directly from letters of assessment, and it must not include any markers that would enable the candidate to identify who wrote the letters of assessment.
 - ii) The candidate will have a minimum of two weeks to respond to the preliminary tenure report. If the candidate chooses not to respond, she/he should submit a written statement to that effect.

- iii) The candidate may choose to modify the teaching, research, and, as appropriate, curatorial statements in response to this preliminary report; if statements are modified, the modified statements shall be the ones included in the file that is forwarded to the College.
 - iv) The Tenure Review Panel will prepare a final tenure review report to the College taking into account the candidate's response. The preliminary report, candidate's response, and final report will all be forwarded to the College as part of the tenure dossier.
5. Evaluation of the tenure file and report prepared by the Tenure Review Panel and voting on a recommendation to the College will be done **by October 15th** in the year in which the candidate will be considered for tenure.
- i) The decision making body will consist of all tenured faculty members holding appointments of 50% or greater in EEB or whose tenure resides in EEB and who have reviewed the promotion file. Quorum for the decision making body is half of all on-duty faculty at rank. Immediate members of the candidate's family should be recused from the decision making body. If the candidate believes a member of the decision making body has a conflict of interest that will prevent them from assessing the candidate fairly, the candidate should discuss this with the Chair and can request the faculty member be recused from the decision making body. Intellectual disagreements do not constitute conflict of interest and are not grounds for recusal as a potential assessor. Candidates are encouraged to talk with the Chair about their concerns and the basis of the conflict during their initial meeting regarding the tenure review process that occurs prior to April 1. If the candidate decides to proceed with a request for recusal, the Chair will consult with the LSA Associate Dean. The request will be confidential unless approved. Any challenges to the decision making body composition must be brought to the Chair at least a month before the decision making body meets.
 - ii) The decision making body will receive from the Tenure Review Panel the tenure file concerning the achievements and external evaluations of the candidate being considered for tenure. Members of the decision making body are expected to fully participate in the evaluation of each candidate for tenure, including the examination of all relevant documents. After thorough discussion, the group will vote on whether or not to recommend to the College of LSA that the candidate be recommended for promotion and tenure. A positive vote by written secret ballot of at least 2/3 of those who are a) eligible to vote and b) who have participated in the discussion in person or by teleconference is required for a positive recommendation to the College for promotion and tenure. Abstentions, which are written, are treated as negative votes.

- iii) For both positive and negative cases - In the event that wholly new, substantive negative elements that did not appear in the Preliminary Report emerge in the course of the discussion of the decision making body the candidate must be informed of those new elements in a letter from the chair and be given one week to respond in writing. The chair should consult with the relevant Associate Dean when drafting the communication. This letter from the chair, along with the candidate's response (if any), must be forwarded to the College as part of the tenure dossier.

IV. MAKING A RECOMMENDATION ON TENURE AND PROMOTION TO THE COLLEGE OF LSA

1. The preliminary Tenure Review Report, candidate's response, final Tenure Review Report, and the Candidate's final research and teaching statements (and, as appropriate, curatorial statements) will all be forwarded to the College as part of the tenure dossier.
2. The Chair will provide a cover letter for the tenure packet to the College. The Chair's letter will summarize the tenure review process, including the discussion of the decision making body, as well as the numerical vote of the decision making body.

<i>Approved by the Executive Committee:</i>	<i>April 28, 2004</i>
<i>Revision approved by the Executive Committee:</i>	<i>September 9, 2008</i>
<i>Revision approved by the EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>September 22, 2008</i>
<i>Revision approved by the Executive Committee:</i>	<i>March 7, 2011</i>
<i>Revision approved by the EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>March 28, 2011</i>
<i>Revision approved by the EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>January 19, 2015</i>
<i>Revision approved by the EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>April 23, 2018</i>

Appendix A: Initial request letter sent to promotion candidate

Date

Professor Name

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Dear XX,

As you know, the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology will be evaluating you for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure in the next academic year.

By **April 1**, I ask that you provide the executive secretary with a list of no more than 8 external scientists and scholars whom you consider appropriate to assess your work. With each name, be sure to include complete contact information and a brief biography indicating the research area and professional stature of the potential reviewer. You may include up to 2 non-arms length scholars in this list who can meaningfully comment on your scholarly independence, *e.g.*, your dissertation and/or post-doctoral advisors and/or your long-term collaborators. Otherwise, the names should not include your scientific collaborators or co-authors within the last ten years.

If there is anyone you consider inappropriate to assess your work by reason of conflict of interest, kinship, domestic relationship, or specific scholarly competition, you should indicate who and why you consider these persons inappropriate. Note that intellectual disagreements alone do not constitute conflict of interest and are not grounds for exclusion as a potential assessor.

By **June 1**, please provide the executive secretary with electronic copies of the following documents:

- Current curriculum vitae with a complete list of publications
- Research statement (5 pages max.)
- Teaching statement (5 pages max.)
- Copies of your most significant publications, including any manuscripts that have been accepted for publication along with letters indicating such acceptance.
- Curatorial statement (if applicable)

The departmental guidelines are attached for advice on writing the teaching, research, and curatorial statements and I encourage you to consult with your mentors and others on preparing those.

Best,

EEB Chair

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Appendix B: EXTERNAL REVIEW SOLICITATION LETTER

Promotion from Assistant Professor without Tenure to Associate Professor with Tenure
(updated April 2019)

SOLICITATION TEMPLATE LETTER TO AN EXTERNAL REVIEWER

(Do not change template language unless it is in bold;
bolded items should be modified appropriately)

[Date]

Dear Professor **[Name]**:

The **[Unit(s)]** at the University of Michigan **[is/are]** considering **[Candidate Name]** for promotion from the rank of assistant professor without tenure to the rank of associate professor with tenure. We would very much appreciate your candid evaluation of **[her/his]** achievements as a scholar and, if you have information on the subject, as a teacher. Faculty at the University of Michigan are promoted on the basis of research, scholarly, and creative contributions, as well as teaching ability and service. Recognition of the quality of their work by peers is a significant factor in the review process. We value your candid assessment of **[Candidate Name's]** research accomplishments and future promise, including both positive points and areas needing improvement. Your scholarly and professional judgments will play an important part in our evaluation of **[Candidate Name]** for promotion.

Please keep in mind that at the University of Michigan the criteria for the granting of tenure are the same regardless of the length of a candidate's service as an untenured faculty member. We recognize that different institutions use different tenure "clocks," which may include the possibility of one or more exclusions from the tenure clock. Our policy states that the criteria for tenure and promotion at Michigan are the same for all faculty regardless of the length of their service as an Assistant Professor. We ask that you use this standard in your evaluation of **[Name]**. Also note that a review for tenure in **[Unit]** can only occur once.

Based on the enclosed materials and any other knowledge that you have of **[his/her]** work or professional accomplishments, we would like your candid evaluation of **[Name]**'s written and scholarly contributions in relation to others of comparable experience in their field.

[For joint appointments, please include, “Professor [NAME] is engaged in research that is interdisciplinary in nature. [She/He] holds a joint appointment in [UNIT]₁ and [UNIT]₂. We invite your consideration of the interdisciplinary nature of [NAME]’s work in your review of her/his scholarly activity.]

Please address the following questions in particular:

1. How do you know **[Candidate Name]**? (in what capacity and for how long?)
2. What are your impressions about the quality, quantity, focus and scholarly impact of the **[Candidate Name’s]** works?
3. Which, if any, of the scholarly publications or works do you consider to be outstanding?
4. How would you estimate **[Candidate Name’s]** standing in relation to others in their peer group who are working in the same field?
5. How would you evaluate **[Candidate Name’s]** service contributions to the discipline; that is, their work on professional committees, as a reviewer of proposals or papers, as an editor, or similar activities?
6. Might their work meet the requirements for someone being considered for promotion and, if applicable, tenure at your institution?

Your evaluation of the candidate’s scholarship – of its strengths and of its limitations – is essential to our review. We value frank judgments very highly. Questions sometimes arise about the confidentiality of external review letters, and we do want to advise you that your letter will be reviewed by senior faculty at the University of Michigan. Because the University is a public institution, legal considerations limit our ability to assure confidentiality but it is our practice not to release external review letters unless required to do so by law.

We request that you return your review to us by **[Date]**. We would also appreciate it if you would provide us with a short biosketch, including a brief description of your areas of expertise and current research interests.

We know that you are very busy and that we are asking you to perform a time-consuming task. You have been selected because of your expertise in this area and should you fail to respond, this will be so noted in the promotion record. We are most grateful for your willingness to help with a decision that is very important to the candidate and to the University of Michigan.

If you need further information please contact **[Name]** at 734-**[phone number]**, 734-**[phone number]** (fax), or **[uniquename]**@umich.edu.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Name, if joint]

[Chair/Director]

[Chair/Director]

Enclosures: **[List materials provided to reviewer which should include at a minimum a current CV, teaching and research statements, selected written materials.]**