

**PROMOTION GUIDELINES FOR NON-TENURE TRACK EXTENSION FACULTY
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND RURAL SOCIOLOGY
AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

Approved by Dept. Vote 11-11-2022

The purpose of this document is to outline the guidelines for promotion from Assistant Extension Professor to Associate Extension Professor and from Associate Extension Professor to Extension Professor for faculty who hold non-tenure track extension positions in the department. The document is developed to supplement the policies described in the Auburn University Faculty Handbook Section 3.5.8 - Guidelines for Establishing and Filling Positions in the Extension Title Series. Faculty interested in being promoted are expected to be familiar with the most up-to-date policies in the Handbook.

The Extension Title series was created in 2019, and existing personnel who had Extension appointments and were non-tenure track were converted. It is important to note that many of these converted faculty had master's degrees and not PhDs. In our department, all tenure track and non-tenure track faculty hold faculty status. On hires after 2019, most if not all non-tenure track Extension faculty will have PhDs. The difference in degrees, nonetheless, is not a qualitative factor to consider in promotion review.

Scholarly activity is expected of all extension faculty in the non-tenure track series and will be used to assess contributions made by an individual. Scholarly activity is defined broadly but is most often captured as creating new knowledge and transferring knowledge to others.

Extension faculty in the non-tenure track series are expected to demonstrate effective development and transmission of knowledge to clientele groups, to be committed to developing new knowledge and its communication to appropriate audiences, and to provide input for improving the department's academic programs.

Excellence in extension activities may include, but is not limited to:

- Production of scholarly analyses of important problems/issues affecting rural communities
- Development or adoption of innovative methods for disseminating information to stakeholders
- Active review of new findings in the scholarly literature as they relate to the food and agricultural system and their timely dissemination to appropriate clientele groups

Examples of evidence of scholarship in extension may include:

- Authorship or co-authorship of articles in scholarly journals, extension publications, and the popular press
- External or internal funding to support extension programs
- Presentations at state, regional, and national meetings related to extension/outreach

- Awards in extension/outreach
- Invited presentations by stakeholder groups
- Participation in statewide or multistate professional development activities
- Collaboration with faculty in the department on integrated research and extension grants (both internal and external) addressing the needs of state stakeholders
- Collaboration with other disciplines/departments as well as other faculty members at other institutions that address problems/issues relative to developing new knowledge that will address the needs of stakeholder groups
- Service to scholarly and professional organizations

All faculty in this series are expected to:

- Provide service to the department, college, and university (when appropriate). The level of service will be managed by the department Head and typically will be related to extension
- Actively participate in the academic life of the department by attending faculty meetings, serving on graduate committees, collaborating on research projects and funding proposals, etc.
- Provide service to professional societies and organizations by serving as officers or members of committees. Examples of professional societies include Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, Southern Agricultural Economics Association, Rural Sociology Society, Southern Rural Sociology Society, Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education, and the Alabama Association of County Agricultural Agents and Specialists.
- Comport themselves in a collegial manner

Mentoring

In consultation and agreement with each Assistant Extension Professor and Associate Extension Professor, the department Head shall appoint a mentor to each faculty member. The mentor shall be chosen in the first semester after appointment of the faculty member and preferably will have an extension appointment. The mentor may be changed at any time by the request of the junior faculty member or by resignation of the mentor. Mentors must have greater longevity in the department as a faculty member and hold a higher faculty rank than the mentee. The mentor will be responsible for informing the mentee of expectations, success strategies, and potential for collaborative work. The mentor will be accessible to provide advice on program content and to review publications and other work products to assess quality and appropriateness relative to expectations. For mentees interested in promotion, the mentor will assist the mentee in developing a packet to be submitted to the department's P&T committee for evaluation. Mentoring by senior faculty will count as part of the senior faculty member's service appointment.

Voting Procedures and Evaluation Criteria

Eligible voters are departmental faculty who hold higher rank than the individual being considered for promotion (Associate Professors and Professors irrespective of tenure for promotion from Assistant Extension Professor to Associate Extension Professor; Professors for promotion from Associate Extension Professor to Extension Professor). The department Head will circulate the candidate's packet at least two weeks prior to a meeting of eligible voters to discuss the packet. The candidate or an advocate may attend the meeting to present the packet and answer questions. After the packet is presented and questions answered, the presenter (if not an eligible voter) will be asked to leave the meeting. A vote to promote will be taken by secret confidential ballot.

The criteria used to evaluate the candidate will be as specified in the *Faculty Handbook* and elaborated above. Most faculty holding Extension Title Series appointments will have 100% extension appointments. However, in special cases a faculty member may have a joint teaching or research appointment, or both. In such cases evaluation of the candidate will be based on the candidate's specific percentage responsibilities as assigned and documented by the department Head.

To be promoted to Associate Extension Professor the candidate must demonstrate both statewide excellence and emerging regional excellence in their field with additional national and international reach being considered exemplary. The quality of the individual's work must indicate creativity and innovation. External evaluators with a majority Extension appointment will supply letters as in the tenure-track appointment; however, 50% or less of the solicited letters can be from industry experts with non-research appointments.

The dossier of the candidate for Extension Professor must demonstrate both regional and statewide excellence in their field with additional national and international reach being considered exemplary. The individual work should show creativity, innovation and impact as measured by citations, levels of adoption of results or methods, and other measures of scholarly contribution. Scholarly contributions also include competitive extramural or non-extramural funding, invited national and international conferences, books and book chapters published. Collaboration with faculty and scientists within and outside the department and College and other universities will also be evaluated according to current practices at peer institutions. External evaluators with a majority Extension appointment will supply letters as in the tenure-track appointment; however, 50% or less of the solicited letters can be from industry experts with non-research appointments.

The Promotion and Tenure committee and the faculty-mentor will assist the candidate to develop a list of external reviewers of the promotion package. The department Head will discuss the list with the Dean to obtain the Dean's approval of external referees as per University P&T guidelines and will solicit reference letters from five or more external referees.

Performance Reviews

The departmental P&T Committee will conduct *annual* reviews of the performance of candidates for promotion to Associate Extension Professor and *biennial* reviews of faculty for promotion to Extension Professor. The P&T Committee reviews are different than the department Head's annual performance evaluation. The performance document should be organized according to guidelines specified in the *Faculty Handbook* for the Extension Title Series. The document will contain accumulated performance for the past years of service as well as current year performance. The candidates are encouraged to use measures of assessments (e.g., number of citations, acceptance level of journals, number of downloads of the papers and adoption of research or extension methods) that demonstrate the innovative aspects of their extension program and dissemination of information and its contribution to knowledge. The departmental P&T Committee will assess and provide feedback to candidates regarding their progress towards promotion.

These evaluations will consider the candidate's actual extension appointment during the evaluation period as well as changes that might have occurred in the appointment due to changes in needs within the department. A copy of the departmental P&T Committee's report will be given to the candidate and the department chair and included in the faculty member's personnel file. The evaluation by the departmental P&T Committee should be completed no later than August 31 of each year.

Time in Rank

In general, the qualifications for promotion to Associate Extension Professor cannot be demonstrated fully in less than five complete years of service; and promotion to Extension Professor cannot be demonstrated fully in less than four years on full-time appointment at the Associate Extension Professor level. Therefore, the norm for consideration of candidates for promotion to Associate Extension Professor is during the sixth year of appointment. Only in exceptional and well-documented cases, in which a faculty member has met all requirements for promotion in a shorter time, should the candidate be recommended for promotion before meeting these standard expectations for completed years in rank.

Timeline

The department will adhere to the university-approved schedule of events as determined by the Provost's Office and disseminated to the College and Department. Because department recommendations and dossiers generally are due in the Dean's Office in early October, a suggested schedule for the department is as follows:

January – May:

A consultation meeting between faculty member to be considered for promotion and the department Head will be held to initiate the promotion process. This meeting may be initiated

by either the faculty member or the department Head. Following this meeting the department Head shall begin the process of preparing for the eligible voting faculty to receive the necessary documentation.

August – September:

The department Head will call a meeting of the eligible voting faculty to consider the candidate's packet and conduct the vote. External letters will be solicited for those requesting promotion.

Counseling Procedures

If a candidate fails to achieve promotion, the department Head and departmental P&T Committee will work with the candidate and mentor to address the reasons for failure and to develop a plan for overcoming shortcomings.