

**Department of Atmospheric Sciences
College of Mines and Earth Sciences, University of Utah**

Criteria for Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT)

Policy Statement Adopted by Faculty, 19 December 2007

1. Statement of Goals

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences, together with the other departments of the University, is charged by the University Administration with achieving academic excellence in all of its programs. The criteria for RPT in the Department are based upon the normal standards of academic excellence recognized in major universities throughout the United States. These include demonstrated excellence in teaching, scholarly activities, and service.

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences follows all applicable regulations of the University of Utah on RPT matters, as set forth in the University's Policy and Procedures Manual, especially the latest version of Section 9.5 on their web site <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/9-tbl.html>. The Department also obtains the annual update of these policies in the RPT Workshop Document each spring and makes these available in the Department Office to all faculty and interested parties. In the event that anything herein conflicts with the latest version of these University policies, the latter is controlling, and Department policy will be revised to attain conformity as soon as possible.

2. Departmental RPT Committee.

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences has a departmental RPT Committee, which makes recommendations to the Department Chair regarding RPT matters. For potential retention of a regular faculty candidate at the assistant professor, the committee consists of all regular associate and full professors in the department. For potential promotion of a regular faculty candidate from assistant to associate professor/tenure, the committee consists of all regular associate and full professors in the department. For potential promotion of a regular faculty candidate from associate to full professor, the committee consists of all regular full professors in the department. The department chair normally does not participate in the RPT committee meetings, but should appear by invitation to respond to questions that may arise. If requested by the RPT committee and Department Chair, other regular or auxiliary faculty members than those defined above may participate in the consideration of candidates for retention and promotion, but may not vote.

3. Criteria for RPT

The evaluation of regular faculty for RPT is based upon accomplishments in teaching, scholarly activities, and service. Excellence in performance is of primary importance; that is, the quality, significance, and impact of accomplishments are of much greater importance than their raw numbers. For all ranks, faculty members are expected to demonstrate the ability and willingness to perform as responsible members of the faculty, as defined in the Code of Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (PPM 8-12.4).

The judgments of professionals in the faculty member's field provide the best and most reliable basis for making sound decisions about retention, promotion, and tenure. Consequently, the level of accomplishment and potential relative to disciplinary norms and standards as judged by peer review are central to the process. Accomplishments that are not subject to peer review generally will not be a major

consideration in RPT evaluations, with the exception of certain areas of teaching and public service where peer reviews may be less appropriate.

The department achieves excellence by the combination of excellent qualities of its faculty. It is unrealistic to expect excellence in all three categories for each and every faculty member. A successful RPT outcome can hinge upon effective performance in one category combined with outstanding performance in another category, not necessarily from equally excellent performance in all three. Examples would include (a) gifted and productive teachers who are abreast of their field, but whose scholarly activities or whose contribution to new knowledge is judged to be satisfactory; (b) exceptionally outstanding researchers whose teaching is judged to be effective; (c) faculty whose service to the University, to their profession, or to the public is distinctive and outstanding, combined with satisfactory teaching and scholarly achievements.

Rank of Professor. A consistent standard of excellence in teaching, a recognized leadership role in scholarly activities, and a significant record of service will normally be expected for promotion to Professor. Outside letters will normally be expected to recognize the candidate as possessing a national and preferably an international reputation in the appropriate field.

Rank of Associate Professor with Tenure. (For an existing Assistant Professor in the Department, it is expected that one will not be awarded without the other. For a new faculty hire, it is sometimes appropriate to offer the rank of Associate Professor and postpone the tenure decision for a few years.) A demonstrated ability for successful teaching, demonstrated ability for original scholarly activities of high quality, and a demonstrated record of effective service will normally be expected for promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure. Outside letters will normally be expected to recognize the candidate as possessing a national reputation in the appropriate field.

Retention as Assistant Professor (at time of 3-year review). For the purpose of retention, demonstrated ability for teaching, scholarly activities, and service should be evident, with a reasonable potential for achieving the criteria for promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure at the appropriate time. Outside letters will normally be expected to recognize such potential.

Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, and Research Assistant Professor. The criteria for these ranks are for at least the equivalent quality of achievements and reputation as the analogous ranks of tenure-track faculty, with the sole difference being that the category being judged is primarily that of scholarly activities. Outside letters are required for promotion or initial appointment.

4. Categories of Activities

a. Teaching. This category includes, among other things, classroom instruction; development of new courses and teaching methods; publication of innovative pedagogical approaches or instructional materials, including textbooks or web-based materials; and supervision of graduate students in research.

b. Scholarly Activities. This category will normally include original scientific research and publication of the results of such research in the peer-reviewed literature. In all cases it consists of creation and dissemination of new knowledge or other creative activities.

c. Service. This category includes service to the institution-to students, colleagues, department, college, and the university-as well as service beyond the campus including service to professional societies, research organizations, governmental agencies, the local community, and the public at large.

5. Levels of Performance

Note: The following indicators are intended to be illustrative, but they are in no way intended to be used as checklists, nor are they all-inclusive of the possibilities in individual cases.

a. Teaching.

Indicators of excellence:

- Selection for a university, college, or professional society outstanding teacher award
- Evidence of courses taught on a rigorous, challenging level
- Outstanding teaching performance as evidenced by SAC faculty evaluation sheets
- Outstanding direction of graduate research
- Outstanding performance cited in letters from former students
- Publication of widely adopted or acclaimed instructional materials
- Development of new courses or major revision of existing courses
- Widely sought for membership on graduate student committees

Indicators of effectiveness:

- Direction of graduate student thesis or dissertation research
- Membership on graduate student committees
- Evidence of high quality in class preparation, interaction, and accomplishments
- Evidence of teaching effectiveness by SAC faculty evaluation sheets
- Effective performance cited in letters from former students
- Service as departmental undergraduate or graduate advisor
- Significant self-development activities leading to enhanced teaching effectiveness.

b. Scholarly Activities

Indicators of excellence:

- Publications in leading refereed journals
- Receiving major fellowship or research award(s)
- Frequent citation of publications
- Publication of scholarly books
- Editor of a major refereed journal
- Sought for review panels for national research organizations
- Presentation of invited papers at international and national meetings
- Receiving significant external peer-reviewed funding for research

Indicators of effectiveness:

- Publications in refereed journals
- Service as reviewer for major refereed journal
- Occasional service on review panels for national research organizations
- Publication of a chapter in a scholarly book
- Publications in conference proceedings
- Significant self-development activities, such as a faculty development leave, that lead to increased research and publication effectiveness

c. Service

Indicators of excellence:

- Officer in a national professional organization
- Service on a major governmental commission, task force, or board
- Administrative leadership role at the University of Utah
- Program chair or similar role at a national meeting
- Officer in Faculty Senate
- Chair of major standing or ad hoc university committee
- Outstanding service in outreach and volunteer activities in the community

Indicators of effectiveness:

- Officer in regional or state professional organization
- Program chair or similar role for regional or state professional meeting
- Service on governmental commission, task force, or board
- Service as an active member of the Faculty Senate
- Service on university, college, and departmental committee or task force
- Effective service in outreach and volunteer activities in the community
- Advisor to student organizations

6. Procedures and Time Lines for Formal RPT Reviews

(Note: The dates below in italics are absolute deadlines)

The following are general guidelines for formal RPT reviews. A formal retention review of tenure-track Assistant Professors will be conducted during the third year of the probationary period. Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with tenure will be considered in the sixth year of the seven-year probationary period. Promotion from Associate to Full Professor will be considered after 4-5 years in the position of Associate Professor. However, it is possible that a faculty member could remain as an Associate Professor for many additional years; it is not an "up-or-out" position, and promotion to Full Professor is based upon attaining the required standards.

March-April: The Department Chair determines obligatory RPT reviews for the upcoming academic year, and asks for election of chair of RPT committee for upcoming academic year. Undergraduate and Graduate SAC officers are determined for upcoming academic year. The Chair sends letters to all tenured and tenure-track faculty asking if they wish to request formal consideration for promotion or tenure (one could also request *not* to be considered). All applicable faculty are given current statements of policy and list of materials required for review.

May-August: The RPT Chair calls an RPT meeting to recommend which faculty members shall be considered for RPT action during the coming Fall. If a faculty member has requested consideration for an RPT action not agreed to by the RPT, that person may appeal the decision to the Department Chair. Any disagreement about a potential RPT action or inaction should be resolved in favor of the candidate. The objective is to arrive at clear decisions before the summer begins, so candidates can begin to prepare their files.

The candidate is responsible for completing the file, reviewing the file periodically for completeness, and he/she has the opportunity to respond to material in file at any time (sole exception: viewing letters if right to view those letters has been waived by candidate). The file will eventually include the following items:

- Complete curriculum vitae
- List of reviewers nominated by candidate, Dept. RPT committee, and Dept. Chair
- Sample letters to external reviews (and internal reviewers if applicable)
- SAC report, signed
- Letters of evaluation by qualified reviewers
- Statement briefly describing qualifications of reviewers
- Department RPT report
- Department Chair's letter to Dean

August: Department Chair meets with all candidates, discusses file contents, holds meetings of appropriate personnel to choose internal (optional, depends upon circumstances) and external reviewers. At least 5 external letters are required for all retention and promotion reviews, 3 or more chosen from list supplied by candidate, and 2 or more chosen from list supplied by Dept. Chair, in consultation with RPT Committee Chair. At the discretion of the candidate, the RPT Chair, or the Dept. Chair, it may be appropriate to solicit a larger number of outside reviewers. Normally, most of the reviewers will be senior to the candidate, but it may be appropriate to include one or two well-regarded peers of the candidate. The Department Chair sends letters to the reviewers *no later than 31 August, with due date for return no later than 30 September*. In his request to reviewers for these evaluation letters, the Chair asks reviewers their opinion of how the candidate measures up to the criteria for the position as outlined in the Department's RPT Policy (applicable portions are enclosed). The emphasis is on the quality of the candidate's work, especially their scholarly contributions, and the candidate's standing in the field.

September: About 1 September, the Chair charges the SAC officers with the responsibility of reviewing the candidate's files, including student evaluations of teaching, of holding meetings with the undergraduates and graduates that they represent, and of *preparing and completing their report for the candidate's file no later than 30 September*. Chair follows up in mid-month to assure timely return of outside letters. *Department Chair assures that files are complete by 30 September*.

October: Department RPT Committee meets *by 15 October*, conducts meeting and records votes, all in strict accordance with applicable University of Utah RPT procedures. RPT Committee Chair drafts minutes of meeting, gives members 2-5 days to respond, writes final report *by 22 October*, which is given to candidate and to Department Chair.

November: Department Chair writes recommendation *by 5 November*, provides notice to candidate, adds candidate's response, if any, to RPT Committee Report and/or Department Chair recommendation, forwards complete file to Dean's Office *no later than 15 November*.