

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY**

Retention, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) Statement for Tenure-line Faculty

Approved by the Tenure-line Faculty of the Department of Biology on April 28, 2015

Approved by Dean of the College of Science on **May 2**, 2015 .

Approved by Senate Faculty Review Standards Committee on [date] and the Senior Vice President on [date], for implementation on **[date]**.

This document describes the criteria, standards, evidence and procedures that will be used to evaluate faculty in the Department of Biology being considered for retention, promotion and tenure (RPT). It constitutes the Departmental RPT Statement required by University Policy 6-303-III-A-2-a. That and other relevant University policies can be found on line at <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-303.php> and regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-311.php.

Copies of this statement will be distributed to all members of the regular Biology faculty and specifically enclosed when a faculty member is notified of an upcoming review. All of the criteria, standards and procedures described here are intended to comply fully with the traditions and formally stated policies of the University and the College of Science, and to result in thorough, rigorous and fair conduct of RPT reviews.

Departmental Mission Statement

Our purpose is to create and maintain a community of scholars devoted to research and teaching in biology. We aim to (i) advance scientific knowledge through research of the highest quality; (ii) prepare undergraduate biology majors, graduate students, and postdoctoral scientists for successful careers in academia, biotechnology, conservation, medicine and related fields by providing them with an understanding of biological systems at all levels of organization and the ability to use concepts and experimental approaches of modern biology in research and classroom settings; (iii) provide undergraduates majoring in other fields with an introduction to modern biology as a scientific discipline; and (iv) inform the community about the biological aspects of issues of general public concern.

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1 Effective Date and Application to Existing Faculty

The revised RPT criteria, standards, evidence, and procedures contained in this Statement are effective as of **July 1**, 2015. All faculty RPT candidates appointed on or after this date will be considered under this Statement.

With the exception of those candidates seeking promotion to Professor (see below), candidates whose appointments began prior to that date who are reviewed for retention, promotion, or tenure will have the option of choosing to be reviewed under either (1) the prior RPT requirements that were in place at the time of their appointment or (2) this new Statement. This Statement will apply unless the candidate's choice of the prior requirements is communicated to the Department Chair and the Dean by means of a signed letter before review materials are sent to external reviewers.

Candidates who will be reviewed for promotion to the rank of Professor after the effective date of this Statement will be reviewed according to the statement and requirements in effect at the time review materials are sent to external reviewers.

2 Informal and Formal Reviews

2.1 Timing of Reviews and Length of Probationary Period

a. *Timing.* The Department will conduct either informal or formal reviews of its tenure-track candidates in each year of their probationary period as indicated in Table 1 below.

b. *Normal probationary period.* The normal probationary period for a candidate appointed at the rank of assistant professor is seven years. The normal probationary period for a candidate appointed without tenure at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor is five years.

Candidates with a seven-year probationary period undergo one formal mid-probationary retention review, in the fourth year.

Candidates with a five-year probationary period undergo one formal mid-probationary retention review, in the third year.

Table 1. Normal Review Schedule

Rank at Appointment	Year of Informal Review	Year of Formal Review
Assistant Professor	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 5 th , 6 th	4 th , 7 th
Associate Professor or Professor (appointed without tenure)	1 st , 2 nd , 4 th	3 rd , 5 th

If a tenure-track faculty member does not demonstrate clearly adequate progress to the reviewers in an informal review, an early formal review may be “triggered” by the Department RPT Advisory Committee or the Department Chair, in accord with University Policy.

c. *Shortening or extending the probationary period.* Candidates may request early tenure reviews (i.e., *shortening* the normal probationary period) on the grounds described in and by following the procedures provided for in University Policy. Because early review cases require a

candidate either to have qualifying prior service or to have made truly extraordinary progress, few requests are made and few are granted. Candidates are therefore encouraged to consult with the Department Chair and Dean and senior colleagues before requesting an early tenure review.

If the candidate has had an authorized *extension* of the probationary period (e.g., for medical or parental leave), the years of the formal retention review and the mandatory review for tenure shall be adjusted accordingly. Extensions of the probationary period authorized by University Policies may postpone formal reviews, but informal reviews will occur in any year in which a formal review is not held.

2.2 Informal Reviews

Informal reviews provide constructive feedback on progress and guidance on RPT expectations to candidates. A primary function of the informal review is to provide advice in developing the file that will be made available for the formal review process, with due attention to the materials appropriate to each of the three areas of evaluation: research, teaching, and service to the profession, university, and community.

2.3 Triggering Formal Retention Reviews

If in the context of an informal review in which the candidate does not demonstrate clearly adequate progress, the Department Chair or a majority of the RPT Advisory Committee members votes to conduct a formal review, a triggered formal review shall occur the following fall unless a majority of the Committee votes to proceed with the review in the current academic year. Such a review must not be conducted sooner than 30 days after written notice of the review is provided to the candidate. A triggered formal review shall include external letters of evaluation unless a majority of the Committee votes that quality of research is not at issue in the review.

2.4 Candidates Hired at the Rank of Associate Professor or Professor Without Tenure

The Department typically does not appoint tenure-line faculty members at or promote current tenure-line faculty to the Associate Professor or Professor rank without the concurrent granting of tenure. Under appropriate exceptional circumstances, however, a new faculty member could be appointed at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor or a current tenure-line faculty member could be promoted to Associate Professor without the immediate granting of tenure.

2.5 Request for Promotion to Rank of Professor

A tenured faculty member at the rank of Associate Professor may request a review for promotion to the rank of Professor at any time when they have met the requirements for that rank. The Department does not require any minimum number of years subsequent to granting of tenure or promotion to Associate Professor before a candidate may be considered eligible for promotion to Professor. However, normally such requests are not made prior to the time of the candidate's first tenured faculty review, which occurs five years after tenure is granted. All activities at the University of Utah since the initial granting of promotion and tenure shall be counted towards promotion to the rank of Professor.

3 RPT Guidelines

Faculty in Biology are evaluated with respect to three basic functions referred to as criteria in University Policy: *research*, *teaching* and *service*. Summary ratings of performance in each of these three areas serve as the standards for retention, promotion, and tenure. University Policy identifies a three-level scale of standards: *excellent*, *effective*, and *not satisfactory*.

The criteria and standards for retention during the probationary period, tenure, promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, and promotion to the rank of Professor are described below. Accomplishments in one area do not compensate for substandard performance in another area. The same criteria and standards apply to both formal and informal reviews.

University Policy allows a candidate's conduct as a responsible member of the faculty to be taken into consideration during a review. As a result, failures to abide by the Faculty Code may be considered in determining whether a candidate will be retained, promoted, or tenured.

3.1 Summary of RPT Standards

The general purpose of review at each level is to ensure that each faculty member is making satisfactory progress in his or her development as a teacher and scholar whose achievements are of high level compared with others of similar experience. Advances in almost all aspects of biology occur rapidly. Faculty members are expected to remain current with important developments in their fields, and to contribute to the ongoing progress of their fields. Otherwise the Department cannot maintain a faculty that is competitive with similar departments at major research universities, or offer state-of-the-art training to its students.

Retention. A candidate for retention must demonstrate that he or she has *reasonable potential* to meet the standards established for tenure. The Department will recommend retention only if there is evidence of satisfactory progress toward the high levels of achievement in research, teaching and service that are expected for subsequent promotion and tenure, as outlined above and below. It is our duty to recommend against retention if this is not the case.

Tenure. A candidate for tenure must achieve a rating of *excellent* in research, at least sustained *effectiveness* in teaching, and at least sustained *effectiveness* in service. The seriousness of granting tenure is stressed in University Policy (e.g., 6-303.III), and is obvious. Tenure will be recommended only where the candidate's record clearly demonstrates excellence in research and effectiveness in teaching and service, as outlined and justified above. Tenure will not be granted if there is merely evidence indicating a promise of high achievement in these areas.

Faculty hired as Assistant Professors typically receive tenure when they are promoted to Associate Professor, but in some cases an individual may be promoted or hired at the Associate Professor level without tenure. In such cases, the subsequent conferral of tenure requires evidence that the faculty member will continue to achieve the standards expected of an Associate Professor and is likely to achieve the standards expected for promotion to the rank of Professor. In the event that a person is hired at or promoted to the rank of Professor before achieving tenure, the subsequent conferral of tenure requires evidence that he or she will continue to achieve the standards expected of a Professor.

Associate Professor. Promotion to associate professor requires sustained productivity and excellence in research; sustained effectiveness in teaching; and effective service in some combination of university, community, and professional settings. The evidence must also

demonstrate the candidate's potential to achieve the requirements for the rank of Professor. Thus promotion requires evidence that the candidate has established a research program that is substantially independent from that of the candidate's graduate and postdoctoral mentors. Modern biology is highly collaborative, so "independent" does not mean "isolated". However, an Associate Professor should be someone fully in charge of his or her own research directions and activities, and should clearly be capable of further growth as an independent principal investigator. Evidence of independence will come primarily from the candidate's peer-reviewed research publications and also from grant applications and other ongoing research activities.

Professor. Promotion to professor requires sustained excellence in research, at least sustained effectiveness in teaching, and at least sustained effectiveness in service. Thus promotion requires evidence that high levels of achievement have been maintained and expanded over time. Emphasis will be placed on continuity and development of research programs, maintenance of a research group, recognition of research achievements nationally and internationally, contributions to the development and improvement of courses, contributions to graduate or post-graduate education programs, and contributions to the quality of the Department and the University through various kinds of administrative and other service activities.

3.2 Evaluation of Research

The University is the flagship institution of the Utah system of higher education and it strives to be one of the leading research universities in the country. Faculty throughout the University are expected to be active scholars of national standing, and the Department has long placed considerable emphasis on the originality and significance of its faculty's research. Faculty who are productively engaged in research and scholarship are also vital to the Department's educational mission. They bring a distinctive perspective to the classroom and provide opportunities for first-hand experience with biological research for undergraduates as well as graduate students and postdoctoral researchers.

The Department will recognize and evaluate contributions and accomplishments of all of the following kinds:

- a. Original research published in peer-reviewed journals;
- b. Other published scholarly writing, such as textbooks, book chapters, review articles, symposium contributions and technical commentaries;
- c. Invited presentations at scientific meetings and at other institutions;
- d. Informal contributions to the research of others;
- e. Success in obtaining external funding as needed to support a research program.

Maintenance of a productive research program and of a research group that offers training opportunities usually requires external funding, and such funding requires favorable review of the research program by a group of scientific peers. Thus faculty are expected to make serious and sustained attempts to obtain external funding. Invitations to participate in scientific meetings, to present seminars at other institutions, to contribute chapters to books, and to demonstrate leadership in other such ways, similarly indicate recognition by scientific peers. We also value and benefit from the intellectual climate fostered by stimulating and interactive colleagues. Thus, acknowledged contributions to other research programs can be recognized even when there is no formal collaboration or joint publication.

At the time of review for tenure, all regular faculty in Biology are expected to have demonstrated excellence in research and scholarship, by which we mean high levels of originality and significance in published contributions to the faculty member's field, as judged by experts in that field.

Modern biological science is extremely diverse. Different fields ask very different questions, pursue them with a great variety of approaches and techniques, and have their own unique traditions. The Department aims to encompass much of this diversity, which is a source of strength and stimulation. Thus we recognize that excellence can only be generally defined and that it is best judged on a case-by-case basis, in context, and by researchers with substantial experience in the candidate's specific field of study. For this reason, external evaluations of the candidate's research by experts without any conflicts of interest are especially critical to the quality and integrity of the RPT process in biology.

All reviewers (external and internal) inevitably make some use of generic indicators such as numbers of papers published in peer-reviewed journals, first and/or senior authorships on those papers, the perceived editorial standards and selectivities of the journals, and funded grant proposals. But quantitative measures of accomplishment to be expected under these and other headings vary widely among fields, and for a variety of reasons. For example, first and senior authorships must be relatively less frequent in fields where much of the most significant research is accomplished through large-scale collaborations involving tens or hundreds of participants. Citation of published research is often used, validly, as a measure of its influence, but here too the rates to be expected vary substantially among fields because of their sizes and publishing habits, among other things; in addition, some highly original and significant papers may be little cited at first, when few people understand or notice them, but later become very popular. Thus all of these indicators provide evidence about the significance of a candidate's research accomplishments, but the validity of that evidence depends on its interpretation by experts who understand the substance of the research and the fields to which it contributes.

A letter is sent to each individual who has agreed to provide an external review, formally soliciting that individual's evaluation of the candidate's research. The current template for this letter is included below as Appendix 1. It includes the following passage:

Our RPT policy document states that "regular faculty in Biology are expected to achieve excellence in research and scholarship, by which we mean high levels of originality and significance in published contributions to the faculty member's field, as judged by experts in that field". We would like to know whether you think [Candidate's] progress (especially since [he/she] joined our faculty) justifies [retention and seems to predict the award of tenure within a few years; or promotion and tenure] at a major research university such as ours. We will be interested to know your reasons for answering as you do, and we will value any specific comments you make about [Candidate's] research program, but we do not need a detailed critique of [his/her] entire career.

This passage asks the reviewer to rate the candidate's trajectory in relation to others in that field at similar career stages, with respect to the reviewer's understanding of the expectations for promotion and tenure at major research universities, and to give reasons for his or her opinion. Those reasons are usually specific and illuminating, and many reviewers explicitly state how they think the candidate's file would be evaluated in their own department. Broad concordance among the evaluations provided by highly qualified external reviewers provides strong evidence that the candidate's work does or does not meet the general standards articulated above.

3.3 Evaluation of Teaching

Effective teaching is central to the Department's mission and is expected of all regular faculty. This implies not only the ability to communicate effectively with students, but also the ability to make course offerings current, correct and appropriately challenging. Important forms of teaching take place outside the classroom, especially in the research experiences of students who work in faculty laboratories. These and other more informal contributions to student learning are valued and recognized.

The Department will recognize and evaluate teaching contributions in all of the following areas:

- a. Undergraduate Biology courses, including general education, service courses, and required and elective courses for Biology majors;
- b. Advanced undergraduate and graduate level courses and seminars, including those offered in interdepartmental programs;
- c. Supervision of undergraduate research or independent study;
- d. Supervision of graduate thesis research, including participation in graduate supervisory committees;
- e. Supervision of postdoctoral research.

At the time of review for tenure, all regular faculty in Biology are expected to have established an effective teaching program, as demonstrated by student course reviews, undergraduate and graduate SAC evaluations, and peer evaluations of course content, methodology and execution.

Within the University system, the term *teaching* refers to regularly scheduled course instruction, curriculum and program development, and various forms of student advising and mentoring.

Course instruction encompasses (a) didactic classroom instruction; (b) online and distance education teaching; (c) the organization and facilitation of seminars and workshops that are related to curriculum needs; and (d) independent instruction involving one or more students on special topics. Specific sources of information to evaluate the candidate's course instruction shall include: (a) the candidate's statement of teaching philosophy as found in his or her personal statement; (b) peer review of the candidate's syllabi, assignments, and other teaching materials; (c) peer observation of the candidate's course instruction, seminars, workshops, and other public presentations, (d) information from student course evaluations; and (e) Student Advisory Committee (SAC) reports. Other information about teaching, including, for example, a teaching portfolio, teaching awards, or any evaluation of the candidate's teaching done by personnel from the University's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) may also be included if the candidate so chooses.

Curriculum and program development is essential if the Department is to provide ever-improving educational experiences for its students. The contributions of a candidate to such efforts, beyond regular teaching assignments, may therefore be considered as part of his or her teaching. Examples of such contributions include the development and teaching of new and novel courses and the publication of textbooks or other teaching materials.

Student advising and mentoring are also important forms of teaching. Activities under this heading include general student advising and mentoring; chairing and serving on graduate thesis advisory committees; and collaborating with students on research projects and scholarly publications.

3.4 Evaluation of Service

The University is a large and complex organization that interacts with a diversity of local, national and international communities of professional and public interest. All regular faculty members are expected to contribute to the service activities that give life to these relationships. An academic department the size of ours requires substantial effort in planning and administration, and we have significant obligations to the College and the University. Service on departmental, college and university committees, task forces or other units is therefore a basic responsibility for individual faculty members. Likewise, the larger scientific community depends on volunteer efforts for many vital functions such as organizing meetings, administering professional societies, and peer review of manuscripts and grant proposals. Capable and conscientious service in these and other capacities (including scientific outreach to the local and national communities) will be recognized. Invitations to participate in such activities represent yet another form of peer recognition.

The Department will recognize and evaluate service in the following contexts:

- a. Departmental committees, particularly the major committees concerned with curriculum, graduate education, graduate recruiting and admissions, and faculty searches;
- b. Other administrative duties within the department, including *ad hoc* assignments and special projects (e.g., coordinating proposals for shared equipment or training grants or preparing materials for internal and external reviews);
- c. Service to interdepartmental programs, particularly those administering graduate and undergraduate training programs;
- d. Service to the College and the University, including standing and *ad hoc* committees, University Senate, *etc.*;
- e. Contributions to science at the national and international levels including service on panels and committees of granting agencies, foundations and scientific societies and on editorial boards of scientific journals; organization of scientific meetings or workshops; and service as an *ad hoc* reviewer for journals and granting agencies;
- f. Contributions to outreach and other community-centered programs focused on education (formal or informal) or on policy issues where scientific expertise is relevant.

At the time of review for tenure, all regular faculty in Biology are expected to have established a record of effective participation in service activities within the Department, the wider University, and the scientific community at large. We also recognize and evaluate service to the general public in a variety of modes including but not limited to "science outreach."

Individual faculty will inevitably differ in the relative levels at which they participate in these various kinds of service. But taken together, the sum should be significant in effort and effective in outcomes.

4 RPT Procedures

4.1 Participants. The following are normal participants in RPT reviews.

Candidate. The faculty member under review for retention, promotion, tenure, or tenure and promotion.

Department RPT Advisory Committee. Membership in and voting on a Department RPT Advisory Committee are determined by University Policy. Qualified members of the RPT Committee may attend and participate in its meetings, and vote on its recommendations. The committee may invite others to participate in the meeting as provided by University Policy, but these other participants may not vote on recommendations.

RPT Advisory Committee Chair. The Chair of the RPT Advisory Committee is a tenured member of the Biology faculty, elected annually during the spring semester, with all tenure-line faculty eligible to participate in the election. The Department Chair is not eligible to serve as RPT Chair.

Selection Board. By April 30 of each year the RPT Chair in consultation with the Department Chair will select four tenured Professors or Distinguished Professors who together with the RPT Chair constitute the Selection Board, which then appoints the *ad hoc* RPT subcommittees (described below) for each candidate to be reviewed during the coming fall semester.

Ad Hoc RPT Subcommittee. Each RPT subcommittee gathers and considers the relevant evidence and prepares a report on the candidate's performance in the three areas of research, teaching and service. Biology RPT subcommittees consist of two members for informal reviews and three members for formal reviews. All members must be tenured and qualified by rank to vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the candidate.

Candidates being reviewed formally are invited by the RPT Chair to nominate one member of the three-member subcommittee. The Selection Board then adds a subcommittee chair (normally a member of the candidate's division [EEOB or MCEB]) and a third member (typically chosen to enhance the subcommittee's disciplinary diversity). All three members of the subcommittee are expected to work closely together in all phases of the review, with the chair bearing primary responsibility to obtain the external letters of evaluation and to see that the subcommittee's report is finished on time.

Candidates being reviewed informally are invited to nominate one member of their two-person RPT subcommittee, and the Selection Board appoints the other. Informal-review subcommittee members work symmetrically (i.e., as co-chairs).

Department Chair. As the department's administrative head, the Chair plays special roles in the RPT process as described in University Policy and in more detail below. The Chair normally attends the RPT Advisory Committee meeting, and may participate by invitation of the Committee, but does not vote on the Committee's recommendations.

Undergraduate Student Advisory Committee (USAC). A committee made up of representatives of undergraduate Biology majors.

Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC). A committee made up of representatives of Biology graduate students.

Peer Teaching Reviewers. These are tenured faculty members who conduct peer reviews of a candidate's teaching. They are appointed by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee, the RPT Chair and the candidate.

External Evaluators. For candidates being formally reviewed, the RPT subcommittee will identify and recruit individuals qualified to serve as outside reviewers. Normally these will be distinguished senior researchers who work in the candidate's field, with the breadth of experience needed to evaluate the candidate's research contributions fully and fairly. All must be at or above the academic rank for which the candidate is being considered (or will be considered in the next promotion review). All must be from outside the University and the local community. No more than *two* may have been recommended by the candidate, *formally or informally*. None may be a former mentor (e.g., graduate or postdoctoral advisor) or have other conflicts of interest with the candidate, including recent close scientific collaboration. However, minor and more distant collaborators are not disqualified, as long as such individuals comprise fewer than half of the external evaluators. The candidate must inform the subcommittee of any conflicts of interest that might not be obvious.

4.2 Informal Review Procedures

Informal reviews of tenure-track faculty shall take place in every year of the probationary period in which a formal review is not conducted.

a. First-Year Informal Review. For candidates whose appointments began less than a year prior to the RPT meeting, the first-year review will be conducted during the spring semester. The Department Chair will review the candidate's research, teaching (if any) and service, and will prepare a brief written report copied to the candidate and placed in the RPT file. If this review identifies any issues needing attention, the Chair will meet with the candidate to discuss them. The candidate may respond in writing, and any such response will be added to the RPT file.

b. Informal Reviews after the First Year. The file materials provided by the candidate for an informal review will normally consist of an up-to-date curriculum vitae and a narrative personal statement that includes a summary of the candidate's progress to date and future plans in the areas of research, teaching and service. The candidate may also include relevant supplementary material such as reprints, preprints, grant proposals and course syllabi. These items should be submitted by the candidate to the Department Chair's assistant by August 30 and may be updated until the close of files on September 30.

In the case of a candidate having a joint appointment in another academic department or a shared appointment with an interdisciplinary academic program, the Department Chair will notify the appropriate administrator of the other unit in writing of the informal review by April 15 and invite the unit to submit a report with that unit's perspective on the candidate's progress toward tenure, which should be submitted to the Department by August 30. Any materials provided by the other unit will be added to the RPT file and a copy provided to the candidate.

Course evaluations from the University of Utah are added to the file by the Department Chair or Chair's assistant. Evaluations from other institutions may be added by the candidate.

The Student Advisory Committees are not asked to submit reports for informal reviews, and there are no external evaluations.

After reviewing these materials and meeting with the candidate, the subcommittee members will write a brief report evaluating the candidate's progress in the three areas and noting any issues

that might need to be addressed. A copy of this report will be provided to the candidate and added to the RPT file. The candidate may (but need not) write a response to the report, in which case that response is also added to the file.

At the RPT Advisory Committee meeting, one or both members of the subcommittee will briefly present their report and lead a discussion of its findings, as detailed below.

4.3 Formal Review Procedures

A formal mid-probationary retention review, a formal tenure review, and a formal promotion review (either to Associate Professor or to Professor) follow the same format.

a. Department Chair's Responsibilities. By April 1, the Chair will determine obligatory RPT reviews for the upcoming academic year and will notify, in writing, the faculty members required to be reviewed, and will invite any other tenured and tenure-track faculty wishing to be reviewed formally for promotion and/or tenure to reply in writing to the Chair by April 20. For each candidate being reviewed, the Chair will also request nominations from the candidate for external evaluators (subject to the constraint that no more than two of them will actually be recruited) and will request that the candidate sign the waiver/non-waiver form governing the confidentiality of external letters of evaluation.

At least three weeks prior to the RPT Advisory Committee meeting, the Chair will invite any interested faculty and staff members in the Department to submit written recommendations to the file of each candidate being reviewed.

In the case of a joint appointment in another academic department or a shared appointment with an interdisciplinary academic program, the Chair will notify the administrator of the other unit in writing of the formal review by April 15 and invite the unit to provide a report with its perspective on the candidate's progress, which should be submitted to the Department prior to August 30. Any materials provided by the joint/shared appointment unit will be added to the RPT file and a copy provided to the candidate.

The Department Chair will notify the Student Advisory Committees of candidates undergoing formal review by April 30, ensure that they are informed of proper methods for conducting the SAC evaluation, and inform them that reports should be submitted to the Chair no later than September 15. The Chair must provide the candidate's relevant teaching and mentoring materials to the SAC no later than August 1. The SAC is to evaluate teaching and make RPT recommendations in accord with University Policy as appropriate with respect to each candidate to be considered, stating as specifically as possible the reasons for each recommendation. The SAC reports must be written.

The Department Chair must ensure that *peer teaching reviews* have been conducted at least three times during the current formal review period, and that reports of those reviews are in the candidate's file.

b. RPT Chair's responsibilities. As discussed above, the RPT Chair convenes the Selection Board to appoint RPT subcommittees for all reviews taking place in the coming fall semester. This meeting will normally take place by May 15.

The RPT Chair will prepare the annual RPT Memo to the Faculty, summarizing the reviews to take place during the following fall semester, inviting interested parties to contribute signed materials to the candidates' files, and announcing the time and place of the RPT Meeting. The RPT Memo should be distributed to the entire faculty and the staff of the Department by the end

of May. The RPT Chair will also prepare and distribute a list of actions and target dates to guide the RPT subcommittees conducting formal reviews. It is the responsibility of each subcommittee Chair to ensure that all relevant information concerning the candidate, as set out below, is obtained and placed in the candidate's file in the Department Office at least seven days prior to the meeting of the RPT Committee.

The RPT Chair then advises the formal-review subcommittees as they form lists of potential external evaluators and begin the recruitment process. Commitments to write letters evaluating the candidate's research, and to submit them by the end of September, should be obtained from the final set of outside reviewers by August 1.

For formal fourth year retention reviews (and third-year retention reviews for untenured Associate Professors) a minimum of *five* outside letters of evaluation are required. For promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and all tenure decisions a minimum of *six* outside letters of evaluation are required. For promotion from Associate Professor to Professor a minimum of *four* outside letters of evaluation are required.

c. RPT Subcommittee Chair's Responsibilities. Working with the Department Chair's assistant, the Subcommittee Chair will send the packet of materials for review (CV, personal statement, reprints/preprints and relevant passages from this RPT Statement) to each of the external evaluators, under cover of a formal letter from the Subcommittee Chair soliciting a review (see formal letter template, Appendix 1, below). The packet should also include a CD with all of these materials (and more, if desired by the subcommittee and/or the candidate), for the convenience of reviewers who may prefer to read the materials on a computer. The packet should be sent to each outside reviewer immediately after the candidate's deadline for updates to the file (i.e., in the first few days of September). Reviewers are not asked to evaluate the candidate's teaching and service, because they will typically have no substantial basis for doing so, but they are invited to offer comments on the candidate's teaching and service if they happen to know something about the candidate's activities in those areas and wish to comment. Each reviewer's letter should be sent directly to the subcommittee chair who will vouch for its authenticity. Whether sent by e-mail or by post, it must be rendered on the reviewer's institutional letterhead and signed.

The subcommittee will write a report summarizing (i) the candidate's accomplishments and contributions, (ii) the relevant written evaluations, especially the solicited external letters of evaluation and SAC reports, and (iii) the subcommittee's own recommendation.

The subcommittee Chair will give a draft of this subcommittee report to the RPT Chair and to the candidate at least one week prior to the RPT meeting. The candidate will be invited to address any errors of fact (including significant omissions). The candidate may respond informally to the subcommittee chair, or in writing to the RPT Chair and the Chair of the Department, in which case the written response must be circulated to the full RPT Committee prior to its meeting, so that the substance can be discussed during the meeting.

d. RPT File Contents and Closing Date. A candidate's file will close no later than October 7 (except for materials added subsequent to the Advisory Committee meeting).

(1) *Candidate Responsibilities for File Contents.* Prior to August 1, the candidate will submit to the Department Chair's assistant the following materials: (i) a current CV; (ii) relevant reprints and preprints of scientific publications; and (iii) a personal statement that describes progress to

date, current activities and future plans for research, teaching and service. The candidate may also submit other relevant materials, including course evaluations from outside the University. The candidate may update these materials, which are the substance of the packet sent to external evaluators, until August 31, at which time they will be copied and sent to the evaluators.

(2) *Department Responsibilities for File Contents.* The Department Chair will ensure that the file includes: (i) current University of Utah course evaluation results; (ii) available SAC reports; (iii) any written recommendations from department faculty and staff; (iv) any reports from joint/shared appointment units; (v) external evaluator reports (stored separately and treated as confidential, as appropriate; minimum numbers as detailed above in **4.3.b**); (vi) peer teaching reviews; (vii) reports and recommendations from all past reviews; and (viii) any other required materials or signed letters submitted by any individuals with interests in the review.

e. Candidate's Right to Comment on the File. The candidate may submit a written response to anything in the file no later than five business days after the file closing date.

4.4 RPT Advisory Committee Meeting and Subsequent Steps

a. Date of the RPT Meeting. The Departmental RPT Advisory Committee meeting should take place by October 15, but in many years this is impossible owing to fall break, in which case it usually takes place on the first Tuesday after the break. In any case the post-meeting steps that occur within the Department (see below) must be completed by the end of October, so that the Department Chair's recommendations can be sent to the Dean by November 1.

b. RPT Committee Meeting Action. The RPT Chair leads the meeting, during which RPT subcommittees present their reports to the full Committee. Informal reviews are considered first, then formal reviews of untenured assistant professors, after which the associate professors are excused from the meeting. Finally any formal reviews for promotion to professor are considered. The following procedures apply to all phases of the meeting.

The RPT Chair will designate a secretary (non-faculty) to take notes during the RPT Committee meeting and to record the votes, which will be cast by secret ballot. Separate votes will be taken for each action as to each candidate (e.g., promotion, and tenure). The Secretary and the RPT Chair together will write a brief summary report on the consideration of each candidate (minutes of the RPT meeting) that includes the composition of the RPT Committee (members present and voting), the recommendation of the RPT subcommittee, the substance of discussions at the RPT meeting, and the vote. This report will be added to the candidate's file, along with the subcommittee's report, and both will be available for review by members of the RPT Committee for not less than two nor more than five days. Members may suggest corrections or additions to the minutes. If the RPT Chair declines to make requested changes, any member can demand a meeting of the full Committee to consider amendments and approve the final report.

The report of the RPT Committee must protect the confidentiality of external reviewers (unless the candidate has retained the right to see those evaluations), and individual members of the RPT Committee likewise are bound to protect that confidentiality. Moreover, all discussions during RPT Committee meetings are to be treated as confidential.

Committee members who cannot attend an RPT meeting, including those on sabbatical, may submit absentee votes in writing to the designated secretary prior to the meeting. It is the responsibility of the Department Chair to solicit such votes in adequate time to meet this requirement. Absentee votes will be tallied together with the regular votes, not separately.

When the summary report (minutes of the RPT meeting) and the RPT subcommittee report (as drafted prior to the RPT meeting by the subcommittee, with any subsequent emendations) are finalized, the secretary will send them to the Department Chair and to the candidate.

If there is a negative vote of the RPT Committee regarding the progress of a candidate being informally reviewed, then the Department Chair or RPT Committee, in consultation with the RPT subcommittee members, will call for a formal RPT review (see “triggered formal review” above). This can be done only after giving the candidate written notice that such a review is planned, and of its timing. The RPT Committee may choose to conduct the formal review in the following year or as soon as a file suitable for a formal review can be assembled. This formal review must include written external evaluations, if relevant. The meeting of the RPT Committee to conduct this formal review may not take place sooner than 30 days after written notice is provided to the candidate that a formal review will be carried out.

A cumulative file for each faculty member will be kept in the Department office. All past reviews will be retained in this file. Faculty members always have the right to examine their own files (excluding confidential letters from outside reviewers). Members of the RPT Committee may also examine the files, including confidential letters. The Department’s administrative staff will maintain the security and integrity of the files and provide access to them for eligible individuals (candidates and RPT Committee members).

c. *Chair’s Recommendation and Notice to Candidate.* For formal reviews, when all RPT actions of the faculty are completed, the candidate’s file will be sent to the Department Chair who will add to the file a letter communicating his or her recommendation to the Dean, regarding the formal action. The Chair will send the candidate a copy of that letter, with the RPT subcommittee report and the summary report of the RPT Committee meeting. The Chair will inform the candidate, as required by Policy 6-303-III- F3, that he or she has seven business days from receipt of all of the above mentioned documents during which he or she may respond in writing to the Chair’s recommendation, to the RPT subcommittee report, and to the summary report of the RPT Committee meeting. Any such statement from the candidate (which may include other supporting documentation) will be added to the candidate’s file without comment from the Chair, and the completed file will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Science.

For all formal reviews after the first formal review, a cumulative file that includes all information resulting from prior formal and informal reviews must be forwarded from the Department to the higher administration. This includes promotion from Associate Professor to Professor. To clarify, in such cases there must be included a copy of the curriculum vitae at the time of the candidate’s promotion to Associate Professor (or at hiring if hired as an Associate Professor), reports from all post-tenure reviews, and teaching evaluations since the last promotion up to a maximum of five years.

For informal reviews, the Department Chair and at least one of the two faculty reviewers will meet with the candidate (either together or separately) within two weeks of the RPT meeting, to discuss the review and the candidate's plans for the coming year.

d. *Actions and Appeals Procedures Beyond the Department Level.* Subsequent procedures are described in University Policy.

Appendix 1. Template for letter formally requesting an external evaluation of research

[date]

[address block]

Dear [Dr. Reviewer],

Thank you very much for agreeing to comment on the research accomplishments of Dr. [Candidate's name] who is being formally reviewed in [his/her] [nth] year for [retention as Assistant Professor; or promotion to Associate Professor with tenure; or promotion to the rank of Professor]. This review is required by our department's and our university's retention, promotion and tenure (RPT) policies. [for retention reviews: Typically, a subsequent formal review in the candidate's seventh year provides the basis for a tenure decision.] For the present review, [Candidate's] RPT subcommittee consists of [names of Two Esteemed Colleagues] and me.

I enclose a copy of [Candidate's] CV, statement of research interests, and some reprints. Our RPT policy document states that “regular faculty in Biology are expected to achieve excellence in research and scholarship, by which we mean high levels of originality and significance in published contributions to the faculty member’s field, as judged by experts in that field”. We would like to know whether you think [Candidate's] progress (especially since [he/she] joined our faculty) justifies [retention and seems to predict the award of tenure within a few years; or promotion and tenure] at a major research university such as ours. We will be interested to know your reasons for answering as you do, and we will value any specific comments you make about [Candidate's] research program, but we do not need a detailed critique of [his/her] entire career. Neither do we expect you to comment on [Candidate’s] teaching and service contributions, but if you wish to do so we will be grateful for your views. Finally, please indicate the nature of any professional relationship you may have with [Candidate], and how you became aware of [his/her] work. Please address your letter to me.

Our report will describe your letter and include a few brief quotations from it, but will not identify you or any of the other external reviewers by name or institutional affiliation. [Candidate] has waived [his/her] right to see the outside letters, so they will be treated as confidential communications available only to tenured faculty in Biology and to relevant administrators within the University. However, in the very unlikely event that an RPT case went into litigation, the University might find itself unable to maintain the confidentiality of the letters. Every effort will be made to transmit your letter as few times as possible and to store it securely within the University's computer systems, but computer security is never perfect.

Our report must be written in early October, so we will need to have your comments by earliest October, though sooner would be better. Your letter should be rendered on your institutional letterhead and signed, then sent as a PDF, or else printed on actual paper letterhead and mailed to me. Because the file will be examined by some individuals who are not biologists, we will be very grateful for a short CV (*e.g.*, from a recent grant application), which will serve to supplement our own account of your qualifications.

Independent outside evaluations are critical to the integrity of the academic tenure and promotion system. We are indebted and extremely grateful to you for contributing to this important process.

Yours sincerely,

[your name here]

Professor of Biology [or whatever]

[your e-mail address]