

**INSTITUTE OF  
AGRICULTURE AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE  
EVALUATION OF FACULTY:**

**ANNUAL EVALUATION,  
PROMOTION, TENURE,  
AND REAPPOINTMENT**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I.	Introduction .....	4
Section II.	Annual Evaluation .....	4
	A. General Guidelines .....	4
	B. Clarification on who is to be evaluated.....	4
	C. Clarification on faculty review of annual performance evaluation .....	4
	D. Clarification on unit administrator evaluation responsibility .....	4
	E. Essential IANR forms.....	4
	F. Special Guidelines relating to Research and Extension Centers (REC) .....	5
Section III.	Reappointment.....	5
	A. General Guidelines .....	5
	B. Annual Feedback Toward Tenure.....	5
	C. Reappointment Recommendation.....	6
	D. Special Procedures relating to faculty at Research and Extension Centers REC).....	6
Section IV.	Promotion.....	6
	A. General Guidelines .....	6
	B. IANR Promotion Criteria .....	6
	C. Promotion File .....	6
	D. External Letters of Review.....	6
	E. Peer Review Committee (except REC's) .....	7
	F. Annual Feedback Toward Promotion.....	8
	G. Special Procedures Relating to Faculty at REC's .....	8
	H. Special Procedures for Faculty on Partial or Full-Time NRI Funds.....	9
	I. The Promotion in Rank Process .....	9
	1. General Guidance.....	9
	2. Promotion Process Steps .....	9
	3. Promotion Process Notification Timeline.....	10
	Attachment A: Documentation Request for Promotion and Tenure (contents of P & T files approved by IANR Faculty Vote - May 2005) ....	11-12
	Attachment B: Description of Contents of a Promotion File .....	13
Section V.	Continuous Appointment/Tenure .....	14
	A. General Guidelines .....	14
	B. IANR Tenure Criteria .....	14
	C. Tenure File .....	14
	D. External Letters of Review.....	14
	E. Peer Review Committee (except REC's) .....	15
	F. Annual Feedback Toward Tenure.....	16
	G. Special Procedures Relating to Faculty at REC's .....	16

H. Special Procedures for Faculty on Partial or Full-Time NRI Funds..... 16

I. The Tenure Process .....16

    1. General Guidance.....16

    2. Tenure Process Steps .....16

    3. Tenure Process Notification Timeline.....17

Attachment A: Criteria for Granting Tenure.....18

Attachment B: Description of Contents of a Tenure File .....19

Appendix A. Waiver of Right to See Information Form.....20

Appendix B. Model Letter Soliciting External Reviews .....21-22

## **SECTION I -- INTRODUCTION**

The Bylaws of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents (<http://www.nebraska.edu/docs/board/bylaws.pdf>) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure ([http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/documents/tenure\\_guide.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/documents/tenure_guide.pdf)) serve as the primary source of guidance for the IANR evaluation of faculty and associated processes. In addition, IANR has developed supplemental guidelines as permitted by the Bylaws and UNL Guidelines. These provide additional and more specific operating policies and procedures in response to unique needs of IANR. This document attempts to combine all these sources into one complete and inclusive set of guidelines. The most recent version of this document is located at <http://ianr.unl.edu/faculty-staff>.

Each of the following sections address one of the major evaluation activities: Annual Evaluation, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure. A general overview of each activity is found in the UNL Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty at the web site above.

## **SECTION II -- ANNUAL EVALUATION**

- A. **General Guidelines.** Reference: Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents and UNL Guidelines at the web sites listed earlier.
- B. **Clarification on who is to be evaluated** -- All faculty are to be evaluated annually, which includes tenured faculty, faculty on tenure-leading lines, non-tenurable faculty, and postdoctoral research associates.
- C. **Clarification on faculty review of annual performance evaluation** -- The UNL guidelines require that prior to preparation of the final written evaluation, the faculty member be given the opportunity to meet with the supervising administrator to discuss their performance evaluation. For IANR, the unit administrator meets with the dean(s) prior to finalization of the written evaluation.

The choice of whether faculty members view the annual evaluation prior to submission to the dean(s) resides in the department. After unit administrator sessions with the dean(s) and the unit administrator's final written evaluation meeting with the faculty member, the faculty member has the option of placing written comments on the evaluation form.

- D. **Clarification on unit administrator evaluation responsibility** -- The performance review should provide feedback on how well the faculty member is performing in relation to their assigned duties and, most importantly, where and how the faculty member might improve that performance. It serves neither the faculty member nor the institution's best interest when the evaluation is overstated or understated. Tell it "like it is" because at some time the record could be an important factor in the assessment of special recognition or a court case.
- E. **Essential IANR Forms:**
  - 1) Academic Performance Evaluation and Professional Development of Faculty Form (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>).

- 2) Annual Report of Faculty Accomplishments and Impacts is to be completed through Activity Insight (instructions located at <http://ianr.unl.edu/activity-insight-resources>).
- 3) Position Description (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/searches>).

F. **Special Guidelines Relating to Faculty at Research and Extension Centers (REC)** -- For REC faculty, excluding extension educators, the district director should communicate with department heads/chairs to review plans for evaluation of faculty at Research and Extension Centers. One approach is for the district director to prepare a draft of the evaluation and forward it to the department head/chair to develop the combined evaluation. Another approach is for the department head/chair and the district director to each complete a separate performance evaluation form on a faculty member and exchange with the other evaluator after which the district director and the department head/chair confer (face-to-face or by telephone) and reach agreement on a single, jointly signed evaluation. Only one evaluation form should be forwarded with the faculty member's evaluation file.

### **SECTION III -- REAPPOINTMENT**

#### **A. General Guidelines.**

- 1) Faculty on specific term appointments (tenure leading probationary faculty) and special appointments (non-tenure leading) have an appointment for a stated term. Generally, the stated term is one year. In order to continue the appointment beyond the expiration date, specific action is required to reappoint the faculty member for another stated term of at least one 12-month term or academic year.
- 2) Probationary faculty undergo a particularly rigorous evaluation involving an assessment of accumulated accomplishments and a determination of whether the performance is likely to meet expectations for the indefinite future.

#### **B. Annual Feedback Toward Tenure**

- 1) The departmental peer review committee should provide written feedback to the faculty member and the unit administrator annually regarding the progress of each tenurable faculty member. This should be done annually through their sixth year.
- 2) The faculty member may, but is not required, to share their previous academic year(s) performance evaluation form with the departmental peer review committee.
- 3) The department head/chair reviews the peer review committee's comments on progress towards tenure and makes an independent appraisal of the faculty member's progress. For faculty located at Research and Extension Centers, this appraisal is made with input from the district director. The department head/chair then shares his/her appraisal, as well as that of the peer review committee, at the faculty member's annual evaluation session. For faculty at Research and Extension Centers, the district director and department head/chair share feedback from the district director and department head/chair, as well as that of the peer review committee, at the faculty member's annual session.
- 4) The departmental peer review committee and department head/chair should use the IANR "Faculty Annual Progress Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>), for written feedback to faculty.
- 5) If a negative tenure decision appears inevitable, it is in the best interest of both the University and the faculty member to notify him/her of non-reappointment at the earliest possible date.

**C. Reappointment Recommendation --**

If the department head/chair, after reviewing the entire record, recommends reappointment to another stated term, this is forwarded to the dean(s) by indicating appropriately on the "Faculty Annual Progress Form" referenced above in B.4.

**D. Special Procedures Relating to Faculty at Research and Extension Centers (REC).**

- 1) For REC faculty, excluding extension educators, the department head/chair makes a recommendation on appointment renewal with input from the district director. The district director recommends specific term and special appointment renewals via a memo to department head/chair.

### **SECTION IV -- PROMOTION IN RANK**

A. **General Guidelines - Reference:** Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents and UNL Guidelines at the web sites listed earlier.

B. **IANR Promotion Criteria** -- A recommendation for promotion shall be based upon "Criteria for Appointment and Promotion in Rank" located at <http://ianr.unl.edu/faculty-staff>. There are separate criteria for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR), the Agricultural Research Division (ARD), the Cooperative Extension Division (CED) - Specialist, the CED - Extension Educator, the Conservation and Survey- Geoscientist, the Nebraska Forest Service (NFS), and scholarly service. Specific criteria for promotion available in unit administrator's office.

C. **Promotion File** -- The candidate is responsible for compiling the file. The unit administrator sets the date for submitting the file so as to permit adequate time for the initial deliberations of the peer review committee. Documentation Request for Promotion and Tenure, approved by IANR Faculty Vote May 2005 is shown as Attachment A, this section. This file should portray the accomplishments of the candidate and include as a minimum those items contained in "Contents of a Promotion File," Attachment B, this section. The candidate is entitled to access all materials in the file and to know the identity of everyone who reviews the file. They must be informed of the content and source of any substantive new evidence to be added to the existing file.

D. **External Letters of Review** -- The UNL Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure state as mandatory procedures:

*A candidate may waive the right to access outside reviews and/or the right to know the identity of outside reviewers. Such waivers shall not be assumed, implied or coerced, and must be executed in writing prior to solicitation of outside reviewers. The scope of the waiver shall be clearly indicated in writing. A copy of any waiver executed by a faculty member shall become a part of the file. (See Appendix A, Waiver of Right to See Information Form)*

**All external evaluation letters must assess the quality and impact of the candidate's research or creative activity, extension education and/or outreach, and/or the candidate's teaching.** This is of much greater importance than a mere listing of the quantity of pieces or course evaluation numbers with little assessment of their value. Each candidate must include in their documentation a statement

identifying that portion of the candidate's work that in the candidate's judgment represents his or her most *significant* work, explains *why* he or she thinks this work is significant, and points out what its *impact* has been or will be. When external reviewers are solicited for reviews, they should receive copies of the statement and should be asked to address the quality and impact of the candidate's work.

**It is the responsibility of the department head, the chair of the tenure and promotion committee, or the dean—not the candidate—to solicit external letters for review.** (See Appendix B, Model Letter Soliciting External Reviews) Generally, external reviewers should have full professorial rank, but they must at least occupy a rank equal to or above that being considered for the candidate. Reviewers must be chosen who are qualified to judge the quality of the candidate's work because of their own knowledge of the field. Generally, we would expect reviewers to hold positions at institutions comparable to or more highly-ranked than UNL.

The UNL Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion and Tenure state: *Any unit that intends to solicit outside reviews as a part of its review process shall develop rules for solicitation of such reviews that are consistent with this section. In situations where outside review is undertaken, the faculty member is entitled to know how, and by whom, the panel of potential reviewers is to be identified and selected. Every reasonable effort must be made to assure that the external reviewers represent an appropriate subset of peers; a candidate shall have the opportunity to propose names to the panel and to object to the inclusion of others, but the final identification of the reviewers remains the responsibility of the person charged with conducting the review.*

**Every tenure-line promotion file must include at least three external (to UNL) and independent letters of review.** For all other faculty categories, refer to division guidelines. "Independent" means letters will be from individuals who have had no (or only limited) professional or personal relationships with the candidate and who have been chosen by the department head (or the tenure and promotion committee or dean, as appropriate) for their ability to provide a disinterested ("objective") assessment; these would **not** include dissertation advisors, current or former collaborators, former colleagues, personal friends or others who have any special relationship to the candidate. In the file, the authors of external letters should be clearly identified in terms of whether they were chosen by the department (head or committee) or the candidate, the qualifications of each reviewer, and the relationship (if any) of the reviewer to the candidate. A copy of the letter soliciting the review should also be included. Other external letters of review, not independent and/or solicited by the administrative officer, may be included but must be so identified in the file.

**Ordinarily, each promotion-to-full professorial rank file should also contain at least three external and independent letters of review.** For cases in which the extreme prominence of a candidate makes independent letters impracticable, special care should be taken to solicit letters from exceptionally prominent reviewers.

**E. Peer Review Committee (except Research and Extension Centers).**

- 1) The unit administrator will provide for a peer review committee of three or more faculty members with tenure and who are eligible to vote on a promotion application. A committee member shall not be eligible to vote on a recommendation for a candidate aspiring to a rank not yet achieved

by the committee member. The unit administrator shall not be a member of the peer review committee.

- 2) The peer review committee may be either appointed or elected in accordance with the rules of each administrative unit.
- 3) One or more Research and Extension Center faculty member(s) shall be included on the committees of those administrative units with one or more faculty members located at a Research and Extension Center.
- 4) An administrative unit may include IANR faculty members from outside the unit in order to meet the minimum committee size (Section E.1) and Research and Extension Center representation (Section E.3) requirements.

**F. *Annual Feedback Toward Promotion.***

- 1) The departmental peer review committee should provide written feedback to the faculty member and the unit administrator regarding the progress of each promotable faculty member. This should be done annually through their sixth year and then at least once every three years for tenured but not fully promoted faculty.
- 2) The faculty member may, but is not required, to share their previous year(s) academic performance evaluation form with the departmental peer review committee.
- 3) The department head/chair reviews the peer review committee comments on progress towards promotion and makes an independent appraisal of faculty member's progress toward attaining promotion in rank to the next level. For faculty located at Research and Extension Centers, this appraisal is made with input from the district director. The department head/chair then shares his/her appraisal, as well as that of the peer review committee, at the faculty member's annual evaluation session. For faculty at Research and Extension Centers, the district director and department head/chair share feedback from the district director and department head/chair, as well as that of the peer review committee, at the faculty member's annual evaluation session.
- 4) The departmental peer review committee and department head/chair should use the IANR "Faculty Annual Progress Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>), for written feedback to faculty.

**G. *Special Procedures Relating to Faculty at Research and Extension Centers (REC).***

- 1) The district director will provide for a peer review committee to make recommendations to the Dean and Director of Cooperative Extension on candidates for promotion in the equivalent rank. The committee shall be made up of three or more faculty members. A committee member shall not be eligible to vote on a recommendation for a candidate aspiring to a rank not yet achieved by the committee member. One committee member may be a faculty member of the Research and Extension Center who holds regular academic rank and is tenured.
- 2) For REC faculty, excluding extension educators, the district director provides input to the department head/chair on promotion. Letters providing input on promotion from the district director are transmitted directly to the department head/chair and become part of the candidate's file after the departmental peer review committee has completed its review.
- 3) Department heads/chairs need to share departmental peer review committee comments on REC faculty, excluding extension educators, with the district director.

H. **Special Procedures for Faculty on Partial or Full-Time NRI Funds** --Recommendations for promotion will reside within the academic unit; however, an annual appraisal by the NRI center director will be included in the packet of information going to the academic unit peer review committee. The NRI center director will also prepare a letter for inclusion in the promotion file that gives an opinion regarding the faculty member's suitability for promotion. The NRI center director's appraisal is to be integrated with the department head/chair evaluation.

I. **The Promotion in Rank Process.**

1) **General Guidance**

- a) Any member of the faculty, the unit administrator, or the peer review committee should encourage a faculty member to submit his/her promotion application at the appropriate time. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to determine if he/she wishes to be a candidate for promotion and to compile the file.
- b) For promotion, the candidate has the right to request reconsideration of a recommendation against promotion at each level of the administrative decision process. A reconsideration should be requested and deliberations completed before an appeal is made to the next level in the decision process.
- c) The candidate must be informed of the ability to obtain reasons if at any point in the decision process the candidate is not recommended for promotion. The candidate may request reasons for the adverse recommendation, in writing, if desired.
- d) At any level of the consideration process, a candidate may request that the nomination be withdrawn from further consideration.

2) **Promotion Process Steps**

- a) An application is first considered at the departmental level by the peer review committee. See Subsection G. 1, for Research and Extension Center equivalent rank decision process exception.
- b) The recommendation, including a synopsis of the decision and the vote of the committee, are transmitted in writing to the department head and to the candidate. NOTE: Action taken by each of the reviewing parties (committee through the Vice Chancellor) should be recorded on the "Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>).
- c) Following completion of deliberations by the Peer Review Committee, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the department head/chair reviews the entire record and makes an independent recommendation that is transmitted in writing to the candidate and notifies the committee of that decision.
- d) Following deliberations by the department head/chair, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the dean(s) reviews the entire record. The dean(s) makes an independent recommendation that is transmitted in writing to the candidate and to the department head/chair.
- e) Following deliberations by the dean(s), including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the IANR Deans Committee reviews the documentation file and makes a recommendation to the IANR Vice Chancellor. The recommendation of the IANR Deans Committee is transmitted in writing to the Vice Chancellor, department head/chair and to the candidate. If, after the reconsideration process is complete, the dean(s) and the IANR Deans Committee concur in a recommendation against promotion, the promotion

- process terminates and the candidate and the department head each have a right to appeal the decision of the IANR Deans Committee to the Vice Chancellor.
- f) The IANR Vice Chancellor reviews the documentation file and makes an independent recommendation to the Chancellor. If, in the evaluation process, a negative recommendation has been made by one of the reviewing parties and the IANR Vice Chancellor also makes a negative evaluation and the reconsideration process is complete, the process terminates. Each of the reviewing parties making a positive recommendation has the right to appeal the decision to the Chancellor.
  - g) If the Chancellor decides against promotion, the IANR Vice Chancellor shall transmit the decision in writing to the dean(s), the department, and the candidate. After the reconsideration process is complete, the candidate may appeal the decision through the NU Executive Vice President and Provost to the Board of Regents. Positive recommendations are reported to the Board of Regents.

### **3) *Promotion Process Notification Timelines***

- a) The candidate must be notified of a negative recommendation within two working days of the decision if at any point in the process the candidate is not recommended for promotion.
- b) The candidate must inform, at any point in the process, the group or individual not recommending promotion of the intent to request reconsideration/appeal of the decision within two working days after receipt of notification of the negative recommendation.
- c) The candidate will have five working days after the initial notification to prepare the reconsideration/appeal which can be presented orally, in writing, or both.
- d) The group or individual to whom the reconsideration is being made must inform the candidate of the decision within five working days after the reconsideration/appeal has been presented.

## Attachment A Documentation Request for Promotion and Tenure (Contents of a Promotion and Tenure File)

### Administrative Section

1. Transmittal Letter or Form (which includes apportionment if applicable)
2. Letters of appointment or position descriptions, reappointment and record of any changes including in apportionment
3. Annual Evaluations and/or reappointment letters by Department Chair/Head
4. Promotion and Tenure Evaluations (as applicable)
  - Letter from Department Review Committee
  - Letter from College or Institute Committee
  - Letter from Chair
  - Letter from Dean(s)
  - Peer Evaluations of Teaching
  - External Reviews
  - Also Include:
    - Sample letter soliciting evaluation
    - Candidate's waiver form
    - Brief statement of how external reviewers were chosen, their qualifications and relationship to candidate.
5. Teaching Information
  - List of courses taught with summary of quantitative data from student teaching evaluations, if available; or summary of extension education

*Note: All letters must include an analysis of quality and impact and what the analysis is based on but need not duplicate previous analysis of quality and impact.*

### Candidate Section

1. Curriculum Vitae (clearly note refereed or juried work; extent of contributions if collaborative work)
2. Candidate statement identifying that portion of the candidate's work that in the candidate's judgment represents his or her *most significant* work, explains *why* he or she thinks this work is significant, and points out what its *impact* has been or will be. This statement should reference supporting materials in the Appendices.  
To include as appropriate to assignment:
  - Teaching philosophy, goals, summary of evidence that documents achievements and local and broader impact (1-5 pages).
  - Research/Creative Activity philosophy, goals, achievements, significance and impact (1-5 pages).
  - Extension Education/Outreach philosophy, goals, achievements, significance and impact (1-5 pages).
  - Scholarly Service philosophy goals, achievements, significance, impact at the department, college, university, professional and community levels (1-5 pages).
  - Service to UNL units and professions with reference to achievements, significance, and impact (1-5 pages).

## Appendices

- To contain only significant and relevant information.
  - Should not contain any new information not referenced in the Candidate Section.
1. Evidence of the quality and effectiveness of teaching; possible examples of supporting evidence:
    - Student Evaluations
    - Course Portfolio
    - Number of undergraduate advisees
    - Web based/distance teaching
    - Curriculum/course development
    - Student Achievement/Outcomes
    - Number of graduate students produced
    - International Activity
    - SOTL Activities (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning)
  2. Evidence of the quality of scholarly, professional, and creative activity; possible examples of supporting evidence:
    - Publications (including electronic)
    - Performances/Exhibitions
    - Reviews
    - Citations
    - Funded Grant Proposals
  3. Evidence of the quality and significance of professional and institutional service, outreach activities; possible examples of supporting evidence:
    - Editorships
    - Committee Service (Department, College, University)
    - Leadership in professional organizations
    - Community service related to assignment
  4. Evidence of the quality and significance of extension activities; possible examples of supporting evidence:
    - EARS (Extension Accomplishments Reporting System)
    - Citations
    - Publications
    - Funded Grant Proposals
    - Programming Highlights and Impacts

See Description of Contents of an IANR Promotion File – Attachment B this Section  
 See Description of Contents of an IANR Tenure File – Attachment B Section V  
 (Approved by IANR Faculty Vote - May 2005)

**Attachment B**  
**DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS OF AN IANR PROMOTION FILE**

- 1) Letter of transmittal from the candidate to the unit administrator requesting consideration for promotion.
- 2) A copy of the candidate's current Position Description.
- 3) A copy of the Annual Report of Faculty Accomplishments and Impacts for the current year (Section 4.6 Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents).
- 4) Copies of the five most recent annual performance evaluations, including the current year's evaluation.
- 5) A summary of courses taught, enrollment, percent creditable to the candidate, and student evaluations for the past five years (candidates with appointments in the **College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources** only).
- 6) A summary of major program accomplishments including creativity, impact and contribution to program goals over the past five years (candidates with appointments in the **Cooperative Extension Division** only).
- 7) A summary of major research program accomplishments and impacts over the last five years and a complete listing of publications since appointment or last promotion.
- 8) External letters of review are mandatory for tenure-line faculty. Letters must be requested of reviewers by the unit administrator. Support letters from clientele are appropriate.
- 9) A summary of scholarly service (candidates in such program areas as the Nebraska Forest Service, Conservation and Survey Division, and Veterinary Diagnostic Center) program accomplishments over the last five years.
- 10) A summary of service to UNL units and professions (e.g., membership on university committees, student recruitment, and leadership roles in professional societies).

The unit administrator will add the following items to files forwarded to the deans:

- 11) The written recommendation of the peer review committee.
- 12) A letter of recommendation by the unit administrator.
- 13) The "Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>).

(Approved by IANR Faculty Vote – May 2005)

(Approved by the VC for IANR – June 2009)

## **SECTION V -- CONTINUOUS APPOINTMENT/TENURE**

- A. **General Guidelines.** Reference: Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents and UNL Guidelines at the web sites listed earlier.
- B. **IANR Tenure Criteria.** The Bylaws of the Board of Regents (Section 4.5) state that each major administrative unit of the University shall prepare written standards which shall be used in making all decisions on awarding continuous appointment (tenure).

In IANR, a recommendation for tenure shall be based upon the IANR standards, "Criteria for Granting Continuous Appointment, The University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (January 1982), found in Attachment A, this section.

- C. **Tenure File.** The candidate is responsible for compiling the file. The unit administrator will set the date for submitting files so as to permit adequate time for the deliberations of the departmental peer review committee. This file should accurately portray the accomplishments of the candidate and should include as a minimum those items contained in Attachment B, this section. The candidate is entitled to access all materials in the file and to know the identity of everyone who reviews the file. They must be informed of the content and source of any substantive new evidence to be added to the existing file.
- D. **External Letters of Review.** The UNL Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure state as mandatory procedures:  
*A candidate may waive the right to access outside reviews and/or the right to know the identity of outside reviewers. Such waivers shall not be assumed, implied or coerced, and must be executed in writing prior to solicitation of outside reviewers. The scope of the waiver shall be clearly indicated in writing. A copy of any waiver executed by a faculty member shall become a part of the file. (See Appendix A, Waiver of Right to See Information Form)*

**All external evaluation letters must assess the quality and impact of the candidate's research or creative activity, extension education and/or outreach, and/or the candidate's teaching.** This is of much greater importance than a mere listing of the quantity of pieces or course evaluation numbers with little assessment of their value. Each candidate must include in their documentation a statement identifying that portion of the candidate's work that in the candidate's judgment represents his or her most *significant* work, explains *why* he or she thinks this work is significant, and points out what its *impact* has been or will be. When external reviewers are solicited for reviews, they should receive copies of the statement and should be asked to address the quality and impact of the candidate's work.

**It is the responsibility of the department head, the chair of the tenure and promotion committee, or the dean—not the candidate—to solicit external letters for review.** (See Appendix B, Model Letter Soliciting External Reviews) Generally, external reviewers should have full professorial rank, but they must at least occupy a rank equal to or above that being considered for the candidate. Reviewers must be

chosen who are qualified to judge the quality of the candidate's work because of their own knowledge of the field. Generally, we would expect reviewers to hold positions at institutions comparable to or more highly-ranked than UNL.

The UNL Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion and Tenure state:

*Any unit that intends to solicit outside reviews as a part of its review process shall develop rules for solicitation of such reviews that are consistent with this section. In situations where outside review is undertaken, the faculty member is entitled to know how, and by whom, the panel of potential reviewers is to be identified and selected. Every reasonable effort must be made to assure that the external reviewers represent an appropriate subset of peers; a candidate shall have the opportunity to propose names to the panel and to object to the inclusion of others, but the final identification of the reviewers remains the responsibility of the person charged with conducting the review.*

**Every tenure file must include at least three external (to UNL) and independent letters of review.** "Independent" means letters will be from individuals who have had no (or only limited) professional or personal relationships with the candidate and who have been chosen by the department head (or the tenure and promotion committee or dean, as appropriate) for their ability to provide a disinterested ("objective") assessment; these would **not** include dissertation advisors, current or former collaborators, former colleagues, personal friends or others who have any special relationship to the candidate. In the file, the authors of external letters should be clearly identified in terms of whether they were chosen by the department (head or committee) or the candidate, the qualifications of each reviewer, and the relationship (if any) of the reviewer to the candidate. A copy of the letter soliciting the review should also be included. Other external letters of review, not independent and/or solicited by the administrative officer, may be included but must be so identified in the file.

E. **Peer Review Committee** (except Research and Extension Centers)

- 1) The unit administrator will provide for a peer review committee of three or more faculty members with tenure and who are eligible to vote on a promotion application. A committee member shall not be eligible to vote on a recommendation for a candidate aspiring to a rank not yet achieved by the committee member. The unit administrator shall not be a member of the peer review committee.
- 2) The peer review committee may be either appointed or elected in accordance with the rules of each administrative unit.
- 3) One or more Research and Extension Center faculty member(s) shall be included on the committees of those administrative units with one or more faculty members located at a Research and Extension Center.
- 4) An administrative unit may include IANR faculty members from outside the unit in order to meet the minimum committee size (Section E.1) and Research and Extension Center representation (Section E.3) requirements.

- F. **Annual Feedback Toward Tenure**  
(See Section III, Reappointment, Subsection B., for guidelines on feedback for tenure-leading, probationary faculty.)
- G. **Special Procedures Relating to Faculty at Research and Extension Centers (REC).**
- 1) For REC faculty, excluding extension educators, the district director provides input to the department head/chair on tenure. Letters providing input on tenure from district directors are transmitted directly to the department head/chair and become part of the candidate's file after the departmental peer review committee has completed its review.
  - 2) Department heads/chairs need to share departmental peer review committee comments on REC faculty, excluding extension educators, with the district director.
- H. **Special Procedures for Faculty on Partial or Full-time NRI Funds --**  
Recommendations for tenure will reside within the academic unit; however, an annual appraisal by the NRI center director will be included in the packet of information going to the academic unit peer review committee. The NRI center director will also prepare a letter for inclusion in the tenure file that gives an opinion regarding the faculty member's suitability for tenure. The NRI center director's appraisal is to be integrated with the department head/chair evaluation.
- I. **The Tenure Process.**
- 1) **General Guidance**
    - a) The tenure evaluation process must be initiated in time to be concluded prior to the tenure notification date specified in the letter of offer.
    - b) No person may be considered for tenure without his/her consent. Refusal to be considered at the mandatory time, however, is equivalent to resignation no later than at the end of the probationary period.
    - c) For tenure, the candidate has the right to request reconsideration of a recommendation against tenure at each level of the administrative decision process. A reconsideration should be requested and deliberations completed before an appeal is made to the next level in the decision process.
    - d) The candidate must be informed of the ability to obtain reasons if, at any point in the process, the candidate is not recommended for tenure. The candidate may request reasons for the adverse recommendation in writing, if desired.
    - e) At any level of the consideration process, a candidate may request that the nomination be withdrawn from further consideration, recognizing the conditions as outlined in Section I. 1) b).
  - 2) **Tenure Process Steps**
    - a) A nomination is first considered at the departmental level by the peer review committee.
    - b) The recommendation, including a synopsis of the decision and the vote of the committee, are transmitted in writing to the department head/chair

and to the candidate. NOTE: Action taken by each of the reviewing parties (committee through the Vice Chancellor) should be recorded on the "Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>).

- c) Following completion of deliberations by the Peer Review Committee, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the department head/chair reviews the entire record and makes an independent recommendation that is transmitted in writing to the candidate and notifies the committee of that decision.
- d) Following deliberations by the department head/chair, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the dean(s) reviews the entire record. The dean(s) makes an independent recommendation that is transmitted in writing to the candidate and to the department head.
- e) Following deliberations by the dean(s), including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the IANR Deans Committee reviews the documentation file and makes a recommendation to the IANR Vice Chancellor. The recommendation of the IANR Deans Committee is transmitted in writing to the Vice Chancellor, department head/chair, and to the candidate. All nominations are forwarded to the IANR Vice Chancellor, regardless of the decision by the IANR Deans Committee.
- f) The IANR Vice Chancellor reviews the documentation file and makes an independent recommendation to the Chancellor. If the IANR Vice Chancellor recommends against tenure and after reconsideration, the candidate has the right to appeal the decision to the Chancellor. All nominations are forwarded to the Chancellor, regardless of the decision at the dean(s), IANR Deans Committee, or IANR Vice Chancellor levels.
- g) If the Chancellor decides against tenure, the IANR Vice Chancellor shall transmit the decision in writing to the dean(s), the department, and the candidate. The candidate may appeal the decision through the NU Executive Vice President and Provost to the Board of Regents. Positive recommendations are reported to the Board of Regents.

3) ***Tenure Process Notification Timelines***

- a) The candidate must be notified of a negative recommendation within two working days of the decision if at any point in the process the candidate is not recommended for tenure.
- b) The candidate must inform, at any point in the process, the group or individual not recommending tenure of the intent to request reconsideration/appeal of the decision within two working days after receipt of notification of the negative recommendation.
- c) The candidate will have five working days after the initial notification to prepare the reconsideration/appeal which can be presented orally, in writing, or both.

- d) The group or individual to whom the reconsideration is being made must inform the candidate of the decision within five working days after the reconsideration/appeal has been presented.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**CRITERIA FOR GRANTING CONTINUOUS APPOINTMENT (TENURE)**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA**  
**INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

January 1982

1. Sustained level of performance in the candidate's assignments. Performance will be judged in relation to the specific appointment, whether it be in research, teaching, extension, service or other domestic or international activities of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
2. Creative and scholarly activity such as professional publications, peer recognition, patents and inventions, development of germplasm and variety releases, program innovations, significant computer programs or other scholarly and creative activities typically associated with academic endeavor.
3. Professional development judged by continued improvement, singular or collaborative research, teaching (instructional improvement), extension programs, other services or participation and leadership in professional activities.
4. The obligations of academic responsibility specified in Section 4.1 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents and the standards of performance defined in Section 2.1 of the Bylaws of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are integral parts of the criteria for granting continuous appointment in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

**Attachment B**  
**DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS OF AN IANR TENURE FILE**

- 1) Letter of transmittal from the candidate to the unit administrator requesting consideration for tenure.
- 2) A copy of the candidate's current Position Description.
- 3) A copy of the Annual Report of Faculty Accomplishments and Impacts for the current year (Section 4.6 Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents).
- 4) Copies of the five most recent annual performance evaluations, including the current year's evaluation.
- 5) A summary of courses taught, enrollment, percent creditable to the candidate, and student evaluations for the past five years (candidates with appointments in the **College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources** only).
- 6) A summary of major program accomplishments including creativity, impact and contribution to program goals over the past five years (candidates with appointments in the **Cooperative Extension Division** only).
- 7) A summary of major research program accomplishments and impacts over the last five years and a complete listing of publications since appointment or last promotion.
- 8) External letters of review are mandatory. Letters must be requested of reviewers by the unit administrator. Support letters from clientele are appropriate.
- 9) A summary of scholarly service (candidates in such program areas as the Nebraska Forest Service, Conservation and Survey Division, and Veterinary Diagnostic Center) program accomplishments over the last five years.
- 10) A summary of service to UNL units and professions (e.g., membership in university committees, student recruitment, and leadership roles in professional societies).

The unit administrator will add the following items to files forwarded to the deans:

- 11) The written recommendation of the peer review committee.
- 12) A letter of recommendation by the Unit Administrator.
- 13) The "Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form" (located at <https://uofnelincoln.sharepoint.com/sites/ianr/vc/pt>).

(Approved by IANR Faculty Vote - May 2005)

(Approved by the VC for IANR – June 2009)