

**INSTITUTE OF
AGRICULTURE AND
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE
EVALUATION OF FACULTY:**

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

May 2025

SECTION I -- INTRODUCTION

The Bylaws of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure* provide foundational guidance for the evaluation of faculty, including promotion and tenure, within IANR. As permitted by policies referenced in the aforementioned documents, IANR has developed the supplemental guidelines identified below. These provide additional guidance and clarification about the policies, procedures, requests, and expectations in response to unique needs of IANR. To reduce confusion, this document combines relevant material from both the source documents and the additional material unique to IANR into one inclusive set of guidelines. However, this document does not replace or supersede the University Bylaws or UNL Guidelines documents. The most recent version of the UNL Guidelines document is located at <https://ianr.unl.edu/bylaws-and-policies/promotion-and-tenure-guidelines/>.

IANR administrators responsible for the evaluation of faculty ensure that guidance documents pertaining to faculty evaluation exist within their administrative unit. These local guidance documents must align with the IANR Guidelines. Faculty members are expected to be familiar with the guidelines at all levels.

Each of the following sections addresses one of the major evaluation activities: annual evaluation, reappointment, and tenure and promotion. A general overview of each activity is found in the *UNL Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure*. IANR is striving to nurture an ethos that supports faculty success. Faculty evaluation plays a crucial role in establishing that ethos. Everything about faculty evaluation should be focused on the success of the faculty member.

The senior administrators of IANR recognize that the application of evaluation policies and procedures, as well as the metrics used to inform evaluation, can create or reinforce disparities that disadvantage certain groups or individuals, particularly those who possess attributes that are underrepresented within the Institute and/or minoritized in society¹. These disparities may be perpetuated through factors such as unacknowledged and unchecked structural and cognitive biases, discrimination, and inequitable systems and processes. Those conducting evaluations are expected to operate within an atmosphere of trust and respect, to be aware of inequities, and to implement strategies that facilitate acknowledgment of and reflection on biases, values, attitudes, and behaviors and the effects these factors can have on performance evaluations. Faculty should be evaluated on multiple criteria to reduce the effects of bias. Unit-level procedures and standards should be designed to increase accuracy, fairness and equity in evaluation of faculty performance.

A. Definitions.

Unit: Any administrative unit within IANR to which faculty members are assigned (i.e., department, school, engagement zone, center, institute)

Unit leader: Department head/chair, school director, engagement zone coordinator, center/institute director.

Administrator: The person in an administrative role who has responsibilities for evaluating faculty performance. In most cases, the administrator responsible for overseeing the

evaluation is a department head, school director, engagement zone coordinator, or dean.

Tenure-track faculty members: These faculty members are eligible for both tenure and promotion. Tenure-track faculty members who are not yet tenured have a *specific term appointment* and are referred to as *probationary*. Tenured faculty members are on continuous appointment. Regardless of workstation and/or affiliation with a center, institute, program, division, etc., the tenure home unit is a department or school, and these faculty members are evaluated by a department head or school director. The only exceptions are those tenure home affiliations with Extension that were established prior to January 2020.

Specialty-track faculty members: These *special appointment* faculty members are not eligible for tenure. Those in professor of practice, research professor, and extension professor positions are appointed for a specific term, not to exceed 5 years, and are eligible for promotion. Those in Extension educator, forester, and geoscientist positions are appointed for an unspecified term and are eligible for promotion. Those who have lecturer, senior lecturer, visiting, research associate, or post-doctoral appointments are not eligible for promotion.

Candidate: This term refers to a faculty member who is being considered for tenure and/or promotion.

Adjunct faculty members: While units may designate adjunct faculty members as “assistant”, “associate”, or “full”, it is not required to do so. The criteria for using rank designations for adjunct faculty is determined at the unit level with the approval of the deans. Determinations of adjunct faculty members’ rank are determined at the unit level; their materials do not route through the multitier evaluation process described in Section III.

Joint appointment: This refers to a faculty appointment in multiple administrative units (e.g. departments or schools). Although faculty members with joint appointments contribute to multiple academic units, the academic unit with the majority appointment is responsible for leading the faculty member’s evaluation. The academic unit with the minority appointment provides feedback on their performance (as described below) but does not conduct a separate evaluation. For tenure-track faculty members, the academic unit with the majority appointment is generally the tenure-home unit.

B. IANR forms related to the evaluation of faculty members. Unit leaders and their administrative assistants have access to all required forms related to the evaluation of faculty.

SECTION II -- ANNUAL EVALUATION

A. Guidelines Documents.

1. Bylaws and policies of the NU Board of Regents (subsequently referred to as *University Bylaws* <https://nebraska.edu/regents/bylaws-policies-and-rules>)
2. *UNL Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure* (subsequently referred to as *UNL Guidelines* (<https://executivevc.unl.edu/faculty/evaluation-recognition/guidelines/>)).
3. IANR Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty (this document)
4. Unit-specific guidelines documents.

B. Who is to be evaluated. All faculty members are to be evaluated annually.

C. What informs annual evaluation. Annual evaluation should be informed by multiple data sources.

The basis for the annual evaluation is:

1. the faculty member's self-appraisal of annual accomplishments
2. the faculty member's updated CV
3. the faculty member's impact report
4. other data requested by the administrator
5. other pertinent data available to the administrator (e.g., course evaluations)
6. annual peer review of faculty accomplishments and progress toward promotion and/or tenure as appropriate
7. the administrator's observations of the faculty member's performance.

The faculty member's materials informing annual review must be submitted by January 15 of the year following the calendar year for which the faculty member is being evaluated. IANR Impacts is the web portal for submitting and accessing materials submitted by the faculty member for annual evaluation. Materials must be submitted through IANR Impacts. The faculty member's self-appraisal is essential documentation of annual accomplishments. Failure to submit through IANR Impacts a self-appraisal, impact report, updated CV, and other materials requested by the administrator by the deadline can result in a "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" evaluation.

If the administrator uses additional information to that submitted by the faculty member or peer review committee (see above) to inform their evaluation, the faculty member must be a) informed that this additional information is being taken into consideration, b) given the opportunity to review this information for themselves, and c) given the opportunity to present supplementary and/or clarifying information.

D. What is being evaluated. Administrators evaluate the quality and impact of a faculty member's accomplishments (e.g., products, outcomes) and contributions considering the faculty member's apportionment and position description over the course of the evaluation period. Faculty members should document accomplishments in each area of their apportionment considering the expectations identified in their position description and unit (e.g., department, school, college, division, and IANR) documents. While faculty members may be given credit for contributions and accomplishments in areas that are outside their apportionment and that are not stated in their position description, these contributions and accomplishments do not replace stated expectations of the apportionment and job description unless previously agreed upon and approved by the administrator responsible for the faculty member's evaluation or other appropriate IANR administrator. Faculty members' contributions to the culture and environment within the unit and IANR are subject to evaluation regardless of apportionment and position description. Faculty members are also expected to contribute to an atmosphere of intellectual honesty and demonstrate integrity, academic responsibility, and ongoing professional development in all aspects of their work. A faculty member may receive an overall rating of "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" for deficiencies in only one performance area despite accomplishments in other performance areas. This includes the faculty member's contributions to the unit's culture and environment, honesty and integrity, and professionalism.

IANR expectations for various faculty positions are found at <https://ianr.unl.edu/faculty->

[expectations](#). Units may have additional guidelines. Faculty members and those conducting evaluations must familiarize themselves with the IANR (general) and unit (specific) guidelines and expectations.

- E. The role of peer review in annual evaluation.** Annual peer review is expected of all probationary and promotion-eligible faculty members who are not fully promoted. The primary purpose of peer review is to provide feedback on progress toward tenure and/or promotion (see Section IV.D).

The composition of the unit peer review committee (including how faculty members are selected for service on this committee) is determined at the unit level and must be documented in guidance documents to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness. In most IANR administrative units, the unit's promotion and tenure committee or promotion committee functions as the unit peer review committee.

The peer review committee's charge is to review the annual report of goals and accomplishments, impact reports, CV, and other materials submitted by each faculty member who is not yet fully promoted, and, in the collective judgment of the committee, assess the progress toward promotion and/or tenure (see Section IV.E). Unit peer review committees document their review using the *IANR Annual Faculty Progress Form*. Peer review committees may also provide a separate letter to give faculty members detailed evaluative feedback on their progress toward tenure and/or promotion. The results of this review inform the administrator's evaluation.

- F. The annual evaluation rubric and ratings.** Administrators are required to use a standard *Academic Performance Evaluation and Professional Development of Faculty* form to document their evaluation. The form has spaces for the administrator to document their evaluation of the faculty member's accomplishments; impacts; and organizational, team, and communication competencies. "Good Work" is the performance rating that is the standard of excellence expected of all IANR faculty members. The "Outstanding Work" rating is given when the faculty member documents significant successes beyond normal expectations. "Extraordinary Year" is reserved for the occasional year in which the faculty member achieves meaningful programmatic impacts and accomplishments far above their peers. A "Needs Improvement" performance rating is used when a faculty member's performance falls below expectations in one or more areas of their apportionment and when it is believed that corrective action will result in the faculty member being able to return to a satisfactory performance rating. A "Needs Improvement" rating is not to be used in more than two consecutive years. A substantial chronic deficiency in performance warrants an "Unsatisfactory" performance rating. For tenured faculty members, an "Unsatisfactory" performance rating may trigger post-tenure review.

- G. The responsibility of the administrator in annual evaluation.** The annual 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 or when it does not indicate how the faculty member might improve. Even faculty members who receive a rating of "Outstanding Work" and "Extraordinary Year" may benefit from candid feedback about how they might improve their performance.

- H. Faculty members' right to review their annual performance evaluation.** Prior to finalization of the administrator's written evaluation, the faculty member must be given the opportunity to meet

with the administrator to discuss their performance evaluation. The finalized written evaluation is given to the faculty member for review and signature. The faculty member's signature on the evaluation indicates that they received it, not that they agree with all aspects of the evaluation. The faculty member has the option of including written comments on the evaluation form, or of including a separate letter that will be attached to the administrator's evaluation.

- I. **Guidance relating to faculty members at Research, Extension, and Education Centers (REEC) and/or contributing to a center, institute or program area.** Annual evaluation of faculty members whose workstations are at an REEC or center/institute; or who have a formal affiliation (as described in their position description) with a center/institute and/or Extension program area are conducted by their department head/school director/dean or, in the case of extension educators, their Engagement Zone coordinator. The REEC, center or institute director or program leader does not conduct an annual evaluation of the faculty member. The director or program leader reviews the faculty member's annual report of accomplishments/impacts and provides written feedback to the administrator responsible for the faculty member's annual evaluation prior to February 1 about their assessment of the faculty member's performance and contributions to the REEC, center, institute or program area. The observations of the director and program leader inform the administrator's annual evaluation of the faculty member and must be acknowledged by the administrator in the documentation of their evaluation. The faculty member must be able to review the written feedback on their performance provided by the director of the REEC or center/institute and/or program leader. Directors and program leaders will be invited to participate in the annual evaluation meeting with the faculty member. See Table 1: Guidance for Annual Review Related to Faculty Members at REECs, Centers/Institutes, and/or Program Areas.

**Table 1: Guidance for Annual Review Related to Faculty Members at an REEC or contributing to a Center or Program Area
Draft January 22, 2025**

	Peer Review Committee	REEC Director	Center Director¹	Program Area Leader	Administrator Responsible for Evaluation²
What materials do they have access to prior to formulating feedback?	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials and feedback from all other sources
When do they provide feedback on performance?	Before the administrator, concurrent with directors and PALs.	Before the administrator, concurrent with Peer Review Cmte.	Before the administrator, concurrent with Peer Review Cmte.	Before the administrator, concurrent with Peer Review Cmte.	After Peer Review Cmte, directors and PALs.
How do they provide feedback on performance?	Written. Focus on progress toward tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Limited to performance at and contributions to REEC.	Written. Limited to performance at and contributions to the Center.	Written. Limited to contributions to the Program Area.	Written. Includes expected outcomes across all apportionment areas. Feedback from all other sources inform their evaluation.
Who do they send their feedback to?	Administrator	Administrator	Administrator	Administrator	Faculty member ³
Do they participate in the annual review meeting?⁴	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	Yes for Educators. No for Specialists.	Yes
Do they receive a copy of the final evaluation?	No	Yes	No	Yes for Educators. No for Specialists.	Yes

¹ Only pertains to Centers with which faculty members have a formalized relationship reflected in their position description and/or which faculty members are embedded physically (i.e., Daugherty Water for Food, GPVEC, NPOD, PSI, VDC, Virology Center, Water Center)

² Department Head, School Director, Engagement Zone Coordinator.

³ All written materials informing the administrator's annual review must be included in the annual review materials given to the faculty member.

⁴ If they participate in the annual review meeting, they have access to all materials forming the annual review.

⁵ Some peer review committees meet with faculty members to provide feedback on their progress toward tenure and/or promotion but they do not participate in the feedback sessions with the administrator.

J. Guidance relating to faculty members with a joint appointment. For faculty members with appointments in two academic units, the administrator responsible for the faculty member's evaluation is in the unit with the majority appointment. For faculty members who are not yet fully promoted, the peer review committee and the unit leader of the minority appointment evaluate the faculty member annually but their evaluations are limited to the faculty member's contributions to the unit with the minority appointment consistent with the apportionment and position description and they do not include an indication of the faculty member's progress toward tenure and/or promotion. For faculty members who are fully promoted, only the unit leader, not the peer review committee, of the minority unit provides feedback on their contributions to the minority unit. For faculty members who are not fully promoted, the minority unit's peer review committee documents its evaluation in writing and submits it to the unit leader of the minority unit. This evaluation informs the unit leader's independent evaluation of the faculty member's contributions and accomplishments. The minority unit leader submits their evaluation and that of the peer review committee to the administrator responsible for the faculty member's evaluation. For faculty members who are not yet fully promoted, the peer review committee of the majority unit evaluates the faculty member annually. They take into consideration all contributions of the faculty member when making a determination of progress toward tenure and/or promotion, although they do not have access to evaluations provided by the minority unit's peer review committee and unit leader. The majority unit's peer review committee documents their evaluation and submits it to the administrator responsible for the faculty member's evaluation. It is expected that all evaluations from the minority and majority units will inform the administrator's independent evaluation of the

faculty member and will be acknowledged in the administrator's written evaluation. The administrator of the unit with the minority appointment will be invited to participate in the annual evaluation meeting with the faculty member. Experience indicates that faculty members with joint appointments receive the most helpful coaching for success when the majority and minority unit leaders meet together with the faculty member. See Table 2: Guidance for Annual Review Related to Faculty Members with a Joint Appointment in Two Academic Units.

Table 2: Guidance for Annual Review Related to Faculty Members with a Joint Appointment in Two Academic Units
Draft January 22, 2025

	Peer Review Committee of the unit with the minority appointment	Leader of the unit with the minority appointment	Peer Review Committee of the unit with the majority appointment	Administrator Responsible for Evaluation ¹
What materials do they have access to prior to formulating their feedback?	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials and feedback from the minority unit's peer review committee	Faculty supplied materials	Faculty supplied materials and feedback from all other sources
When do they provide feedback on performance?	Before the unit leader and concurrent with the peer review committee of the majority appointment unit.	After the peer review committee and before the administrator	Before the administrator and concurrent with peer review committee of the minority unit appointment unit.	After the two peer review committees and the leader of the unit with the minority appointment.
How do they provide feedback on performance?	Written. Limited to contributions to the minority unit	Written. Limited to contributions to the minority unit	Written. Focused on progress toward tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Includes feedback across all responsibilities and appointment areas and contributions to both units. Feedback from all other sources inform their evaluation.
Who do they send their feedback to?	Leader of the unit with the minority appointment.	Administrator ²	Administrator	Faculty member ³
Do they participate in the annual review meeting ?⁴	No	Yes	No ⁵	Yes
Do they receive a copy of the final evaluation?	No	Yes	No	Yes

¹ Department Head or School Director of the unit with the majority appointment.

² Sends to the Administrator both their written feedback and that of the minority unit's peer review committee.

³ All written materials informing the administrator's annual review must be included in the annual review materials given to the faculty member.

⁴ If they participate in the annual review meeting, they have access to all materials informing the annual review.

⁵ Some peer review committees meet with faculty members to provide feedback on their progress toward tenure and/or promotion, but, they do not participate in the feedback sessions with the administrator.

K. Guidance relating to postdoctoral associates. Post doctoral associates are evaluated by their sponsor/mentor or primary investigator on the project funding their postdoctoral fellowship. This evaluation is documented using the Postdoctoral Associate Annual Evaluation & Assessment form. The postdoctoral associate must meet with their sponsor/mentor/PI for an annual evaluation meeting. The sponsor/mentor/PI must complete the evaluation form and meet with their postdoctoral associate prior to their own annual evaluation meeting with the administrator responsible for their evaluation (or, if they decline the annual evaluation meeting, before their annual review is finalized). The mentorship and annual evaluation of the postdoctoral associate is a performance competency that contributes to the mentor's performance evaluation. The administrator must sign off on the annual performance evaluation of the postdoctoral associate for it to be complete.

L. Guidance for addressing disputes with the unit leader's assessment in annual evaluation.

1. If the evaluation is disputed, the first step is for the faculty member to explain their concern about the evaluation to the administrator. It is recommended that they request clarification as to the reasons for the evaluation and that they present clarifications regarding the relevance and impact of their accomplishments and other additional relevant information. This can be done either verbally or in writing, or both.
2. If the dispute is not resolved, the affected faculty member has the right to submit a written statement of rebuttal that becomes part of the evaluation.
3. Copies of the written evaluation, and the faculty member's rebuttal, must be provided to the faculty member, and to the appropriate dean(s) and vice chancellor.
4. As detailed in [Section 2.9.8 of the UNL Bylaws](#), the faculty member has the right to access and respond to all material, including recommendations, synopses of discussions and the outcome of any vote used in annual evaluation. The faculty member also has the right to know the identity of anyone who reviews these materials.
5. Given an unfavorable review, a faculty member has the right to request and receive reconsideration at the unit level and appeal to the college, division and/or Institute in addition to any rights granted under the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee (ARRC) of the Faculty Senate.

SECTION III -- REAPPOINTMENT

- A. General guidelines.** Tenure-track probationary faculty members are appointed for a specific term of one year. With satisfactory annual reviews, reappointment for additional one-year terms is assumed and automatic up to the tenure notification date specified in the faculty member's letter of offer (or properly executed addendum or approved request for tenure extension). If a negative tenure decision appears inevitable, it is in the best interest of both the university and the faculty member to notify the faculty member of non-reappointment as soon as possible.

Many specialty-track faculty members have an appointment for a stated term (special appointment contract). Exceptions generally include extension educators, foresters, and geoscientists. The stated term of a special appointment generally ranges from 1-3 years, but may, in some circumstances, be up to 5 years.

For specialty-track faculty members on a faculty practice (i.e., professor of practice and extension professor) or research faculty line (i.e., research professor), specific action by an appropriate administrator is required to reappoint the faculty member to another stated term. If action to reappoint the faculty member is not taken, continuation for an additional 12 months is assumed and automatic. In the event of non-reappointment, if the stated term of the appointment expires at the end of one year of employment or sooner, notice shall be given by an appropriate administrative officer not less than three months in advance of the termination date. If the stated term of appointment expires after one year of continuous service, but not later than two years, notice shall be given by an appropriate administrative officer not less than six months in advance of the termination date. If the stated term of appointment expires in three years or more, notice shall be given by an appropriate administrative officer no less than 12 months in advance of the termination date.

- B. Reappointment recommendation of probationary and specialty-track faculty members.** If the appropriate administrator, after reviewing the entire record, recommends reappointment to another stated term, this is to be communicated to the dean(s) by indicating reappointment in the

appropriate section on the “Faculty Annual Progress Form” referenced above in B.4.

SECTION IV – TENURE AND/OR PROMOTION IN RANK

- A. General guidelines.** *University Bylaws* and the *UNL Guidelines* at the web sites identified in Section II.A.
- B. Who is eligible for tenure and/or promotion.** To be eligible for tenure, a faculty member must be appointed to a tenure-track position. Tenure-eligible faculty members have probationary year-to-year appointments until granted tenure. Probationary faculty members are eligible for promotion until they are fully promoted. Specialty-track faculty members who are in professor of practice, research professor, extension professor, extension educator, forester, and geoscientist positions also are eligible for promotion if they are not already fully promoted.
- C. IANR tenure and promotion criteria.** IANR has established standards for tenure and/or promotion (see <https://ianr.unl.edu/faculty-expectations>). Unit and disciplinary specific criteria for promotion are available through each unit leader’s office. Faculty members must meet both the standards published by IANR and their unit (e.g., department, school, division, college).
- D. Annual feedback toward tenure and/or promotion.**
1. The appropriate administrator will provide for a peer review committee of three or more faculty members who are eligible to vote on an application for tenure and/or promotion. This committee may be the unit Promotion and Tenure Committee/Promotion Committee or may be a separate committee specially charged with conducting annual peer review.
 2. A peer review committee member shall not be eligible to provide feedback on or engage in committee discussions leading to a recommendation of progress toward promotion on a candidate aspiring to a rank not yet achieved by the committee member. Committee members who are not tenured are not eligible to provide feedback on or engage in committee discussions leading to a recommendation on a probationary faculty member’s progress toward tenure.
 3. The unit’s peer review committee assesses progress toward tenure and/or promotion on each promotable and/or tenure-eligible faculty member. The committee provides candid feedback in writing regarding progress toward tenure and/or promotion. This evaluation is documented using the form “IANR Annual Faculty Progress Form”. Peer review committees may also provide a separate letter with detailed evaluative feedback on a faculty member’s progress toward tenure and/or promotion. See item II.E in this document.
 4. The peer review committee shall have access to peer review evaluations of the faculty member from previous years.
 5. The faculty member may, but is not required to, share administrator’s performance evaluations from previous years with the unit peer review committee.
 6. For faculty members located at REECs, see guidance in item II.I in this document.
 7. For faculty members contributing to a center, institute or program area, see guidance in item II.I in this document.
 8. For faculty members with minority appointments in other academic units, see guidance in item II.J in this document.

9. The appropriate administrator reviews the peer review committee's comments on progress towards tenure and/or promotion, as well as feedback from directors, program leaders, and leaders in units where the faculty member has a minority appointment and makes an informed yet independent appraisal of the faculty member's progress. The appropriate administrator then shares his/her appraisal, as well as that of the peer review committee and others, in a meeting with the faculty member to review their annual evaluation.
10. The administrator records their assessment of the faculty member's progress to tenure and/or promotion on the IANR "Faculty Annual Progress Form". They may also provide a separate letter with detailed evaluative feedback on the faculty member's progress toward tenure and/or promotion.
11. If a negative tenure decision appears inevitable, it is in the best interest of both the university and the faculty member to notify the faculty member of non-reappointment as soon as possible.

E. Cumulative Review in anticipation of submitting materials. For probationary faculty members, the best practice is for units to institute a third- or fourth-year comprehensive review in which probationary faculty members can receive feedback on their cumulative accomplishments in preparation for submitting their dossier for tenure and promotion consideration. Units are encouraged to institute a similar third- or fourth-year comprehensive review for all promotion-eligible faculty members, regardless of rank, so they can receive feedback on their cumulative accomplishments since the last promotion. These comprehensive evaluations provide faculty members with valuable feedback on their progress toward promotion. A separate annual peer evaluation is not necessary in the year in which this comprehensive review of cumulative accomplishments occurs; however, the committee should still document their evaluation of progress toward tenure and/or promotion on the IANR Annual Faculty Progress Form.

F. Tenure and/or promotion files. The candidate is responsible for documenting the case for tenure and/or promotion. This includes writing candidate statements that illustrate the significance of their contributions, accomplishments, and impacts, and documenting these contributions, accomplishments and impacts through their CV; student, peer and administrator reviews and evaluations; and other supporting material.

The current IANR Documentation Request for Promotion and/or Tenure is found on the IANR Promotion and Tenure web page at <https://ianr.unl.edu/bylaws-and-policies/promotion-and-tenure-guidelines/>. While the appropriate administrator is responsible for providing material to be included in the administrative section, it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that this material is organized appropriately. It is the unit administrator's responsibility to ensure that all necessary elements are included in the dossier.

The appropriate administrator sets the date for submitting the file to permit adequate time for deliberations and due process at each stage of review. The candidate is entitled to access all materials in the file and to know the identity of everyone who reviews the file or any of the file's elements. A candidate must be informed of the content and source of any substantive new evidence to be added to the file and/or that contributes to any group's or administrator's evaluation. Candidates have a right to add commentary in response to any of this new information at any point as their materials progress through each stage of review.

G. External letters of review. External review letters are required for tenure and/or promotion

files, except for extension educators, foresters, and geoscientists.

The candidate must provide a properly executed Waiver of Right to See Information Form. The waiver cannot be assumed, implied or coerced and must be indicated with the candidate's signature on the form. This signed form is included as part of the file.

All external evaluation letters must assess the relevance, quality and impact of the candidate's scholarship, research or creative activity; Extension programming and/or engagement/outreach; and/or teaching, depending on apportionment. When external reviewers are solicited for reviews, they should receive copies of the waiver form, candidate statement(s), CV, and any other materials (e.g., examples of publications, descriptions of standards) that will allow them to evaluate the quality and impact of the candidate's work across all areas of their work responsibility as defined in their position description and reflected in their apportionment. Unit-level guidelines and discipline-specific expectations exist that help determine what material external reviewers receive.

Those conducting external reviews should not be asked to indicate whether the candidate would be tenured or promoted at their institution.

It is the responsibility of the unit leader, the chair of the tenure and promotion committee, or the dean—not the candidate—to solicit external letters for review. The *UNL Guidelines* state: *Units shall develop rules for solicitation of outside reviews as part of the promotion process that are consistent with this section. 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. The faculty member also has the right, unless waived, to have a copy of any review received and to append a written response to each copy of the review that is to be used for evaluation purposes.*

External reviewers must 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 outcomes, products, accomplishments and impacts because of their own knowledge of the field. With few exceptions, it is expected that reviewers hold faculty or administrator positions at peer or aspirational-peer institutions.

The tenure and/or promotion file must include at least three external (to the University of Nebraska) 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 with each other, and who have been chosen by the administrator (or the tenure and promotion committee as appropriate) for their ability to provide an 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. For cases in which the extreme prominence of a candidate for full professor makes independent letters impracticable, special care should be taken to solicit letters from exceptionally prominent reviewers.

A document must be included in the candidate's file that clearly identifies whether the external reviewers were nominated by the unit (e.g., unit leader, P&T 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 template soliciting the review must also be included in the candidate file. While a unit leader may determine their unique template, a sample letter, “Model Letter Soliciting External Reviews” is located at <https://executivevc.unl.edu/faculty/evaluation-recognition/promotion-tenure>. Other external letters of review, not independent and/or solicited by the unit, may be included but must be identified as such in the file. Letters solicited by the candidate are not included in the Administrative Section; they are normally included in the Appendices. **The candidate has a right to know the contents of the file. No letter may be submitted to the file without the candidate’s awareness unless the candidate has waived this right (see above).**

- H. Unit promotion and tenure committee/promotion committee.** In IANR departments, schools, divisions, and the college, the department head, school director, or dean provides for a P&T/P committee of three or more faculty members who are eligible to vote on applications for tenure and/or promotion. In academic units this committee is referred to as the Promotion and Tenure (P&T) committee, and at least three of the members of this committee must be tenured. In Extension and other units where tenure files are not considered, this committee is referred to as the Promotion (P) committee. To be eligible to serve on a P&T or P committee, faculty members must have received consecutive ratings of Good Work or above for the past three years. These committees will evaluate materials for candidates for tenure and/or promotion for non-fully promoted faculty members.
1. The unit leader shall not be a member of the P&T or P committee.
 2. The P&T or P committee may be either appointed or elected in accordance with the rules of each administrative unit.
 3. For units with not-yet-fully-promoted and/or tenured faculty members with workstations at an REEC, one or more faculty members with workstation assignments at an REEC shall be included on the committee in the year in which there is a candidate for tenure and/or promotion whose workstation is at an REEC.
 4. An administrative unit may include IANR faculty members from outside the unit to meet the minimum committee size and REEC representation requirements.
- I. Directors of centers or institutes (including REECs) and program leaders.** Promotion and/or tenure recommendations are provided by the administrator responsible for the faculty member’s evaluation. Directors of REECs and other centers and institutes, and program leaders provide a letter to be included in the Administrative Section of the candidate’s dossier when the candidate has a formal affiliation with the entity overseen by the leader. The letter is to be addressed to the appropriate administrator (department head, school director, or engagement zone coordinator) and should be evaluative of the candidate’s contributions to the REEC, center/institute, or program area only. The director or program leader does not provide a recommendation for tenure and/or promotion. The letter should be received prior to evaluation of the dossier by the appropriate peer review committee. See Table 3: Guidance for P&T/P Evaluation Related to Faculty Members at an REEC or contributing to a Center or Program Area.

**Table 3: Guidance for P&T/P Evaluation Related to Faculty Members at an REEC or contributing to a Center or Program Area
Draft January 27, 2025**

	Peer Review Committee	REEC Director	Center Director	Program Area Leader	Administrator Responsible for Evaluation
What materials do they have access to prior to formulating their feedback?	Complete P&T/P dossier that includes letter from director and/or PAL	Complete P&T/P dossier	Complete or partial dossier depending on the center and the faculty member's affiliation.	Entire dossier for Extension Educators. Only the Candidate Section for Specialists.	Entire dossier
When do they provide feedback on performance?	After directors and PAL; before the Administrator.	Before the peer review committee and administrator	Before the peer review committee and administrator.	Before the peer review committee and administrator.	After directors, PAL and Peer Review Cmte
How do they provide feedback on performance?	Written. Provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Limits feedback to contributions to the REEC. Does not provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Limited to contributions to the Center. Does not provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Limited to contributions to the Program Area. Does not provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion.	Written. Includes expected outcomes across all responsibilities and apportionment areas. Feedback from all other sources informs their evaluation.
Who do they send their feedback to?	Administrator with copy to the faculty member.	Administrator	Administrator	Administrator	Dean, with copy to the faculty member.

¹ Directors of DWFI, GPVEC, NPOD, PSI, VDC, Virology Center, and Water Center review the entire dossier. Other center directors review only the Candidate Section.

J. Units in which a faculty member has a minority appointment. For faculty members with a minority appointment in an academic unit, the administrator responsible for the evaluation is the leader of the unit in which the faculty member has the majority appointment. The P&T Committee and unit leader of the unit with the minority appointment provide letters that evaluate the candidate's accomplishments and contributions relevant to the minority unit. They do not provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion. The P&T Committee letter is addressed to the unit leader of the minority unit, with a copy to the candidate. This unit leader's letter is addressed to the administrator of the majority unit, with a copy to the candidate. These letters are inserted into the Administrative Section prior to evaluation of the dossier by the administrator. The majority unit's P&T Committee does not have access to the letters provided by the minority unit because their evaluation is occurring concurrently.

Table 4: Guidance for P&T Review Related to Faculty Members with a Joint Appointment in Two Academic Units
Draft January 22, 2025

	P&T Committee of the unit with the minority appointment	Unit leader of the unit with the minority appointment	P&T Committee of the unit with the majority appointment	Administrator Responsible for Evaluation¹
What materials do they have access to prior to formulating their feedback?	Complete dossier	Complete dossier	Complete dossier	Complete dossier
When do they provide feedback on performance?	Before the unit leader s and concurrent with the P&T committee of the majority unit .	After the minority unit's P&T Committee and before the administrator .	Before the administrator and concurrent with the P&T committee of the minority unit.	After the minority unit and the majority unit's P&T committee.
How do they provide feedback on performance?	Written. Limited to contributions to the minority unit .	Written. Limited to contributions to the minority unit .	Written. Provide recommendations on promotion and/or tenure along with reasons.	Written. Includes expected outcomes across all responsibilities and apportionment areas and contributions to both units . Feedback from all other sources inform their evaluation.
Do they provide a recommendation on tenure and/or promotion?	No	No	Yes	Yes
Who do they address their letter to?	Leader of the unit with the minority appointment.	Administrator	Administrator	Dean(s) ²

¹ Department Head or School Director of the unit with the majority appointment.

² All written materials informing the administrator's P&T review must be included in the dossier.

K. IANR deans. The IANR deans are the deans of CASNR, ARD, Nebraska Extension, and CEHS. The deans evaluate and make recommendations on decisions related to tenure and/or promotion for all IANR faculty members. The deans who oversee apportionment responsibilities that correspond with the apportionments of candidates make joint recommendations for tenure and/or promotion decisions. The dean of CEHS is involved in the joint recommendations on all candidates who are faculty members in CEHS units.

L. Guidance unique to decisions about tenure.

1. The tenure evaluation process must be initiated in time to be concluded prior to the tenure notification date specified in the letter of offer.
2. Faculty members must submit a letter of intent by the date specified by the administrator. This letter must indicate that the faculty member is planning to submit a file for tenure consideration. The administrator will provide the faculty member with instructions for compiling the file to include the request for documentation and timeline.
3. Faculty members have a right to request an extension to the tenure notification date. Extensions may be granted with the approval of the administrator responsible for the faculty member's evaluation, dean(s), and IANR vice chancellor (or designee) for extenuating circumstances that may interrupt a faculty member's ability to meet the standards for tenure eligibility. A faculty member who is granted a tenure extension

cannot be held to a higher standard than that which is expected of any faculty member submitting materials on time. A faculty member submitting a request for tenure extension may submit materials according to their original timeframe without this being considered early.

4. 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.
5. At any level of the consideration process, a candidate may request that the nomination be withdrawn from further consideration, recognizing that if materials are being considered at the mandatory time that withdrawing materials is tantamount to resignation at the end of the probationary period.
6. If tenure is being considered at the mandatory time, the file continues to advance to the IANR vice chancellor, regardless of the decision by the IANR dean(s).
7. 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 continues to recommend against tenure, 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) or IANR vice chancellor levels.

M. Guidance unique to decisions about promotion in rank.

1. Consideration for promotion is not compulsory. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to determine if and when they wish to be a candidate for promotion and to compile the file documenting evidence justifying promotion.
2. Every faculty member who is planning to submit a file for promotion consideration must submit a letter of intent by the date specified by their administrator. The administrator will provide the faculty member with instructions for compiling the candidate file, including the request for documentation and timeline.
3. Any member of the faculty, the unit leader, or a peer evaluation committee may encourage a faculty member to submit their promotion application.
4. Promotion applications shall only be considered according to the published timeline.
5. At any stage of the consideration process, a candidate may request that their application be withdrawn from further consideration. Withdrawing an application for promotion has no negative impact on the person's employment or status with the university.
6. If the IANR dean(s) recommend against promotion, the promotion process terminates. The candidate and the unit leader each have a right to appeal the decision to the IANR vice chancellor.
7. If the IANR dean(s) recommend promotion, the IANR vice chancellor reviews the documentation file, including letters from the unit committee, unit leader, and dean(s) to make 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. In this case, each of the reviewing parties making a positive recommendation has the right to appeal the decision to the chancellor.

N. When a candidate is being considered for tenure and promotion simultaneously.

1. The candidate's letter of intent should clearly indicate that they wish to be considered for both tenure and promotion.
2. The candidate shall submit only one file documenting their achievements. This file will be used

to consider both tenure and promotion.

3. Groups or individuals acting on the file must make recommendations on tenure and promotion separately. For promotion and tenure committees, this means that they will conduct two separate votes, one for promotion and one for tenure. The resulting recommendations, however, should be documented in the same letter.

O. Tenure and/or promotion materials review process.

1. Action taken by each of the reviewing parties should be recorded on the "Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form". This form is accompanied by a letter addressed to the administrator next in order to conduct a review, with a copy to the candidate. The letter must include the vote of the faculty (if the reviewing party is the P&T or P committee) and a synopsis of the discussion that provides reasons for the recommendation.
2. The candidate must be informed of their rights to obtain reasons for a negative recommendation and to request reconsideration. The candidate may request that reasons (and/or clarification of reasons) are provided in writing. Reasons provided in writing become part of the candidate's tenure and/or promotion documentation file.
3. The candidate has the right to request reconsideration of a negative recommendation at each stage of consideration (see IV.P below). Reconsideration requests and subsequent deliberations must be completed before materials are advanced to the next stage.
4. An application is first considered at the unit level by the unit's P&T or P committee.
5. The recommendation of the committee, including the vote of the committee and a description of the reasons for the recommendation, are transmitted in writing addressed to the unit administrator, with a copy to the candidate and to the candidate's tenure and/or promotion file.
6. Following completion of deliberations by the unit's P&T or P committee, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the unit administrator reviews the entire record, which includes the letter from the unit's P&T or P committee, and makes an independent recommendation that is documented in writing and addressed to the dean(s), with a copy to the candidate. The documentation of the unit administrator's recommendation becomes part of the candidate's file. The unit administrator notifies the chair of the unit's P&T or P committee of the recommendation but does not copy the P&T or P chair on the letter.
7. Following deliberations by the unit administrator, including any reconsideration of an initial decision, the IANR dean(s) with responsibility for any part of the candidate's apportionment review the candidate's materials and meet to determine a joint recommendation. The dean of CEHS participates in the deliberations for CEHS faculty members regardless of the apportionment configuration. The dean(s) document their recommendation to the IANR vice chancellor in writing, with a copy to the candidate, the candidate's promotion file, and the candidate's unit leader.
8. The four IANR deans meet to determine a joint recommendation, which is documented in writing using the Faculty Promotion Tenure Recommendation Form. This documentation is included in the candidate's file, which is transmitted to the IANR vice chancellor.
9. The IANR vice chancellor reviews the documentation file, including letters from the unit committee, unit administrator, and dean(s) to make an independent recommendation to the chancellor.
10. If the chancellor decides against tenure and/or promotion, the IANR vice chancellor shall transmit the decision in writing to the dean(s), the unit administrator, and the candidate.
11. Positive recommendations are reported to the Board of Regents.

P. Unique Aspects of the Review Process for faculty members in Biological Systems

Engineering, College of Education and Human Sciences, and Nebraska Forest Service

1. Biological Systems Engineering. After the department level evaluations, candidate files flow simultaneously to the IANR deans with apportionment responsibility (see IV.O.9) and to the College of Engineering (COE) college-level promotion and tenure committee for evaluation. The COE P&T committee documents their assessment of the candidate's accomplishments in the form of a letter to the COE dean. The COE dean evaluates the documentation contained in the dossier and makes an advisory recommendation to the IANR Vice Chancellor. The advisory recommendations are non-binding recommendations.
2. College of Education and Human Sciences (CEHS). After the department-level evaluations, candidate files flow to the CEHS college-level promotion and tenure committee for evaluation. The CEHS P&T committee documents their assessment and recommendation in the form of a letter to the CEHS dean and other IANR deans with apportionment responsibility. The CEHS dean and relevant IANR deans meet to develop a joint recommendation on the file (see IV.O.9). When faculty members have majority appointments with IANR, the candidate file proceeds to the IANR deans (IV.O.10) and the IANR Vice Chancellor (IV.O.11) for evaluation and recommendation. When 50% or greater of the funding for the faculty member's regular salary is from the Office of Academic Affairs, the candidate file flows to the Executive Vice Chancellor for consideration.
3. Nebraska Forest Service (NFS). After the NFS-level evaluations, candidate files flow directly to the IANR Vice Chancellor for evaluation and recommendation.

Q. Request for Reconsideration of a Negative Tenure and/or Promotion Recommendation.

1. The candidate must inform a group or individual not recommending tenure and/or promotion of their intent to request reconsideration (appeal the decision) within two working days after receipt of notification of the negative recommendation.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. The letter documenting the original recommendation, documentation of the request for reconsideration, materials submitted by the candidate to support the appeal, and the letter documenting the recommendation after reconsideration all become part of the candidate's file. These materials are inserted in the Administrative Section.