

Augustana College's Geology Department's Tenure & Promotion Guidelines

A candidate for tenure in the Geology Department should present evidence of excellence in teaching, advising, scholarship and service, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Prior to a candidate's tenure hearing, a committee consisting of the tenured members of the department will prepare a recommendation assessing the candidate's performance in each of these areas that will be submitted in writing to the Faculty Welfare Committee. Although all three areas are important, the teaching/advising component will affect the strength of the departmental recommendation more than scholarship, and scholarship significantly more than service.

TEACHING

The Faculty Handbook suggests that four teaching domains should be evaluated:

"Instructional delivery" includes articulate communication, organized and well-planned use of class time, effective interaction with students, enthusiasm, and fair evaluation of student work along with meaningful, timely feedback. Laboratory work in the geosciences is of fundamental importance, and, especially due to the compressed nature of Augustana's 10-week term, appropriate use of lab time and assignments is essential for maximum student learning outcomes. In recognition of the adage that, "the more rocks seen, the better the geologist will become," field trips for students are highly prized, and a candidate is expected to participate in and co-lead, potentially develop new, and add educational value to field experiences, whether as part of a regular on-campus course or an off-campus inter-term or summer break project.

"Instructional design" includes such activities as producing accurate and relevant syllabi with clearly stated objectives, learning outcomes and expectations, providing helpful supplemental materials, challenging students to learn and perform at a level of rigor consistent with departmental expectations, intentionally connecting course material with past and future learning, and incorporating appropriate visual aids and technology in the classroom.

"Expertise in course material" assumes that the candidate's background and education is sufficient to relate course material to past knowledge and perspectives in the particular academic area addressed in the course, to give appropriate up-to-date examples, and to challenge the students to a higher level of critical thinking and problem solving.

"Course administration" includes making appropriate assignments, offering help to struggling students, being available to students for help and consultation outside the classroom, and timely grading.

Because geology as a course of study is, unfortunately, not on the minds of most students, it behooves us to actively seek out these students, not only to strengthen the Geology department, but also to improve the geological knowledge of our citizenry, with clear benefits to the general public's understanding of environmental and economic issues. Thus, fundamental to the department's role is its faculty members' commitment to the liberal arts and the AGES (Augustana General Education Studies) and interdisciplinary programs (e.g., Introductory natural science-perspective courses, Honors, First Year courses or sequences, learning communities, foreign terms, environmental studies...); all Geology faculty are expected to participate in these diverse teaching opportunities in addition to their "for-majors" courses.

In addition to teaching activities (such as in courses and on field trips), advising and mentoring of geology majors and minors is an important, nearly continuous task assumed by all members of the department, though typically led by the department Chair.

In order to evaluate a candidate's performance in these domains, the departmental committee will consider the following sources of information:

a. Student evaluation data

Data from student course evaluations accumulated during the probationary years will be analyzed. In addition, during the spring term prior to the tenure year, a detailed questionnaire will be distributed to former students in the candidate's courses, half chosen by the candidate and half chosen by the department Chair. Students will be selected from every section of every course that the candidate has taught, so that the sampling will include alumni. Insofar as possible, the list of students surveyed will be gender-balanced. The questionnaire allows respondents to assess, based on personal experience, the candidate's role as teacher, mentor, advisor, and scholar in both the geology department and in the college as a whole. Respondents may be asked to choose one of the following answers to the question of whether the candidate should be granted tenure: "absolutely," "probably so," "uncertain," "probably not," or "absolutely not." In addition to written evaluations by current and former students, oral interviews will be conducted with geology majors throughout the probationary period.

b. Class visits

Throughout the probationary period, and in particular, during the two terms immediately preceding that of the tenure hearing, the department Chair and other tenured members of the department will, on separate and multiple occasions, visit each of the candidate's classes.

c. Evaluation of syllabi, exams and supplementary materials

The tenure committee will expect a candidate's expectations of students to be consistent with the standards of the Geology Department and the College. The committee will evaluate the quality of the candidate's syllabi, exams, homework, in-class and research paper assignments, and supplementary materials (e.g., teaching demonstrations and audio-visual teaching aids). In addition, a sample of student work will also be assessed.

d. Field trips

The department has a many decades-long record of 1- to 2-week-long spring break field trips, which at least one faculty member must organize and lead. Thus, it is expected that the candidate fully participate in these trips (between winter and spring terms) at least one third of the time, with more involvement being of greater benefit to the department and candidate both. Participation in the on-going summer field course (GEOL 105) and/or development of a new summer program is also strongly encouraged.

e. Advising/mentoring

High quality formal and informal advising and mentoring is a hallmark of small departments in liberal arts colleges and gives Augustana's Geology program its familial, close-knit atmosphere. All members of the department are expected to spend considerable advising time helping our majors and minors negotiate the intricacies of course selection and scheduling, the pitfalls and opportunities of college life in general, and the career and vocational options of an ever-changing post-baccalaureate landscape. A record of such meetings and outcomes would be a useful evaluative tool.

f. Letters of support

Opportunities exist that allow faculty to work closely with other faculty (co-teaching, foreign terms, learning communities, extensive committee work...) or community leaders (field trips, internships, outreach programs...). A record of activities and outcomes and recommendations would be a useful evaluative tool.

SCHOLARSHIP

A geology faculty member at Augustana College should be engaged in significant scholarly pursuits that are publicly expressed. "Significance" will be judged by the extent to which professional expression improves the reputation of the College, makes the College and department more attractive to prospective top faculty candidates and to prospective geology majors, and contributes to the Senior Inquiry program.

The following activities will be considered as evidence of scholarship when the Geology Department tenure recommendation is written.

a. Dissertation

Completion of a Ph.D. is strongly suggested for the initial hire and is a requirement to be considered for tenure.

b. Publications

At least one publication in a peer-reviewed research journal done under the supervision of graduate and post-doctoral advisers during graduate or post-doctoral training. A substantial portion of the research described must have been conducted by the candidate, presumably the publication of the Ph.D. effort; the significance of contribution to the research would be manifested as first or second authorship on the publication. At least one additional article accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed research journal done after arriving at Augustana College. The publication(s) may be in collaboration with other researchers, but a substantial portion of the research described must have been conceived, proposed, and conducted by the Augustana faculty member; the significance of contribution to the research would be manifested as first or second authorship. Participation in the project by Augustana students eventually listed as co-authors or contributors of the publication is especially desirable.

c. External funding for research

Submission to an external funding agency (e.g., NSF) of peer-reviewed grant proposals that seek significant financial support for the faculty member's research at Augustana College is important. Of course, success in obtaining a grant is especially desirable, including both support for fieldwork and for the construction and running of appropriate laboratory space and equipment. Other sources of funding may also be sought (e.g. collaboration with local businesses/agencies).

d. Mentoring of geology majors' research

Serving as faculty advisor for a significant number (i.e., proportionally sharing the dept. load) of Senior Inquiry projects that culminate in student presentations at a professional meeting (e.g. a Geological Society of America regional meeting). This collaborative research with and mentoring of students has a very high priority within our department.

e. Professional research presentations

Presentations of research at national conferences and regional meetings, invited seminars at other institutions, and leadership/organization of professional fieldtrips demonstrate professional activity.

f. Campus seminars

A departmental seminar given during the first term of the tenure-decision year describing research performed with student(s). The seminar must be advertised campus-wide at least one week prior to the seminar date. Participation in other campus-wide research seminars well before this departmental seminar is strongly encouraged.

g. Sabbaticals

It is expected that faculty members of the Geology Department will take pre-tenure paid leaves as well as regular sabbaticals near the appointed times. Guidelines for appropriate pre-tenure paid leave and sabbatical efforts are listed the Faculty Handbook.

SERVICE

A candidate for tenure should have demonstrated a commitment to enhance the programs of both the Geology Department and the larger College community.

a. Departmental service

A Geology Department faculty member is expected to support, develop, and promote the department's mission, curriculum and academic program, participate in governance activities within the department, and support the activities of the Fryxell Geology Museum (*e.g.*, participation in *all* of the following: mentoring, advising, service on departmental committees, outreach to geology alumni and prospective students, participation on and leading local and distant fieldtrips and weekly Udden Geology Club meetings throughout the year, leadership in Alumni Council meetings).

b. Campus service

Campus service might include such activities as serving on College committees and task forces, advising first-year students, interacting with prospective students, advising majors and minors, acting as sponsor of a student group, teaching general education courses, working on college-wide curriculum development initiatives, and serving in other administrative roles at the request of the Dean or President. A tenure candidate must support the department's and College's commitment to the liberal arts and the AGES (Augustana General Education Studies) and/or interdisciplinary programs (*e.g.*, Introductory NB-perspective courses, Honors, sequences, LSFY/FYI, learning communities, foreign terms, environmental studies...).

c. Public service

Public service includes involvement in community activities related to the faculty member's professional role or in any civic activity that represents the College to members of the community in a positive way. A position of leadership in regional and national professional organizations is one such manifestation of service. Because of the special nature of the Fryxell Geology Museum, it is incumbent upon all members of the Geology Department to help sustain and enhance the quality reputation of the department's Museum, though much of this responsibility lies with the Museum's Director and Curator. The department recognizes that the nature of service contributions will differ widely from person to person and will be difficult to measure quantitatively. For example, a short list of especially significant service-related activities could well be judged to constitute more impressive service than a longer list of less weighty activities. Despite the difficulty of making quantitative assessments, the committee expects the difference between especially significant and especially weak records of service to be readily apparent.

PROMOTION FROM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TO FULL PROFESSOR

For promotion to full professor, the candidate should clearly demonstrate a record of continued high-quality teaching and mentoring and ongoing and sustained scholarship. Evidence of scholarship should include (a) an effort to publish in peer-reviewed journals the results of work done since coming to Augustana (*i.e.*, submitted or published manuscripts), (b) continuing efforts to fund research activities through external sources, (c) supervision of student projects that lead to student publications and/or presentations, (d) presentations of research at on-campus seminars and professional meetings, and (e) making good use of sabbaticals to further the candidate's scholarship. In other words, continuing the efforts that were required to obtain tenure, as outlined in more detail above. However, because good teaching is paramount to what we do at Augustana, and is the main key to being awarded tenure, it behooves us to strive to become better teachers throughout our tenured career; a careful balance must be struck, and this balance may differ from person to person within the department. We need to foster attitudes and model behavior, among students and colleagues alike, which emphasize scholarship as integral to our own growth and development and to the improvement of the quality of science education in general.