

University of Georgia
Department of Plant Biology
Bylaws

Adopted August 1995, Modified August 2006, September 2007, June 2014

I. Statement of Purpose:

As the only teaching/research department of Plant Biology in the State, the mission of the University of Georgia Department of Plant Biology is:

To disseminate knowledge about the science of Plant Biology through classroom instruction, specialized programs, and other opportunities for the intellectual, professional, and personal development of undergraduate and graduate students.

To generate and publish new knowledge about plants and related organisms and to seek solutions to societal problems related to the impact of plants on the environment, human health and agricultural/forest productivity.

To provide service to the scientific community and the general public through meetings, consultation, technical information and assistance, as well as short-term training on issues pertaining to plants.

To fulfill these purposes, the Department of Plant Biology defines its instructional, research, and public service missions as broadly as possible, and recognizes the need to solve plant-related problems as an overriding consideration in defining the overall mission of the department.

II. Faculty:

The Faculty shall consist of the teaching and/or research Instructors, Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Full Professors, Research Professionals, both permanent and temporary, Academic Professionals, and individuals holding adjunct appointments in the Department. Voting privileges are limited to faculty identified under Article IV. E.

III. Department Head:

The Department Head is the administrator who manages the Department and who shall have the duties and responsibilities as outlined by the University and by the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. Duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to: budget, space, and instruction in the Department; representing the Department in and to the Administration of the University; providing leadership and focus for the Department; representing the Department to agencies or individuals outside of the University.

IV. Faculty Meetings:

A. Meetings shall be held as required by the University statutes and/or Bylaws of the Colleges. The agenda for these meetings shall be distributed to the faculty at least one week in advance of the meeting.

B. Special meetings shall be called as deemed necessary by the Department Head.

C. Meetings shall be called upon a petition signed by not less than one-third of the Faculty. In such meetings discussions and actions shall be limited to items listed on an agenda distributed to the faculty at least one week in advance of the meeting by the petitioners.

- D. Unless otherwise specified, the Department Head shall preside at all faculty meetings.
- E. Voting privileges are limited to tenured and tenure-track permanent faculty assigned to the Franklin College Department of Plant Biology. Other individuals, such as research professionals, graduate students, members of other departments, and adjunct appointments, may be granted the privilege of voting at specific faculty meetings or on specific issues as appropriate or needed.
- F. For official business to be conducted at any meeting, a majority of the faculty eligible to vote as defined in Article IV. E must be present.
- G. In matters requiring formal approval by the faculty, such approval shall be a favorable vote by a majority of all faculty who are eligible to vote.

V. Graduate Coordinator:

A Graduate Coordinator shall be recommended to the Dean of the Graduate School by the Department Head from among the faculty who are members of the Graduate Faculty. The Graduate Coordinator shall serve at the pleasure of the Department Head; he/she shall serve as the Department Head's representative in all matters pertaining to the Department's graduate program. Duties shall include, but are not limited to: supervising recruitment and admission procedures and processes; advising Unclassified Post-Graduate Students and students temporarily without an Advisor; monitoring graduate student performance and progress; serving as the Department's intermediary with the Graduate School; recommending appropriate administrative action for graduate students; approving and/or appointing all graduate student committees; monitoring of all University actions or requirements pertaining to graduate students and to the graduate program; determining that graduate students meet all Department and Graduate School requirements; and other duties assigned by the Department Head pertaining to the graduate program or graduate students. The Graduate Coordinator shall serve as a member and chair of the Graduate Studies Committee. He/she shall keep the Department Head informed of important items or events pertaining to the graduate program or graduate students.

VI. Undergraduate Advisor:

An Undergraduate Advisor shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Department Head. The Undergraduate Advisor shall serve as the Department Head's representative in all matters pertaining to the undergraduate program. Duties shall include, but are not limited to: advising undergraduate majors; determining that degree requirements are met on a timely basis; maintaining communications among the students, faculty and the Colleges; monitoring student progress and performance; recommending appropriate administrative actions at appropriate times; and carrying out other duties or requests as necessary regarding the undergraduate program.

VII. Standing Committees:

- A. Standing Committees shall be the Executive Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee, the Seminar Committee, and the Instructional Evaluation Committee.
- B. The Department Head shall appoint such *ad hoc* committees as deemed necessary for efficient management of departmental affairs.
- C. Appointments to committees shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

- D. Service on departmental committees is expected of each faculty member as part of his/her participation in University governance. In general, non-tenured Assistant Professors are given a lighter committee work load than are Associate and Full Professors.

VIII. Duties and Composition of Standing and Search Committees:

- A. Executive Committee:
Duties - shall act in an advisory capacity to the Department Head, shall be the committee responsible for duties not assigned to another committee, and shall carry out such duties as requested by the Department Head.
Composition - shall consist of at least five faculty members, associate or full professors, appointed by the Department Head. The committee shall be balanced by discipline.
- B. Graduate Studies Committee:
Duties - shall make recommendations to the Graduate Coordinator regarding admission of applicants to the graduate program, change of status of students in the program, identify deficiencies in previous academic work of accepted applicants or students requesting status change, and other duties associated with admission to carry out graduate programs or degrees. Duties shall also include an annual evaluation of each graduate student in Plant Biology to determine: that satisfactory and timely progress is made toward meeting degree requirements; that graduate student requirements (i.e., teaching requirement, core course requirements, etc.) are met; shall act upon graduate student petitions for exemption from specific Department requirements; shall make recommendations regarding termination of graduate students whose academic or degree progress is unsatisfactory; and other matters to assure an academically strong graduate program.
Composition - shall consist of the Graduate Coordinator and three Graduate Faculty members who are appointed by the Department Head.
- C. Instructional Evaluation Committee:
Duties - shall advise the Department Head on matters relating to course instruction and classroom presentation by the instructor. The committee shall make their recommendations after attending a series of lectures and shall report to the Department Head in writing on their evaluation of the instructor, noting both positive aspects of the classroom presentation and materials as well as any suggestions for improving course content and presentation.
Composition – The Department Head appoints the chair of the committee. The chair and the department head then identify members of each specific committee as appropriate to the course and instructor being evaluated.
- D. Search Committees for New Faculty Hires:
Duties – Search committees for new faculty hires are charged with writing an advertisement, and screening the applications to identify a list of 8-10 candidates they recommend for further consideration by the whole faculty. Members of the search committee also play an active role during the various activities of the interview process. At faculty meetings where the candidates for the position are discussed, the members of the search committee will normally offer their opinions and views early in the meeting.

Composition – Search committees for new faculty hires generally contain 5 faculty and 1 graduate student. At least 1 of the faculty on the committee should be from a different department. The Department Head selects the faculty for the search committee; the final faculty composition requires approval by the Dean. The graduate student representative is selected by the Plant Biology Graduate Student Association, is a full voting member of the search committee, and has a vote at the faculty meetings discussing the search, in addition to whatever votes are given to other graduate students. Although graduate students are not normally granted access to the candidates' letters of recommendation, the student representative on the committee is permitted to view them.

IX. Adoption of Departmental Policies and Procedures:

Any member of the faculty may propose a procedure or policy that would be beneficial to the mission of the Department and the management of its programs. The proposed policy or procedure should be given in writing to the Department Head, who will present it to the Executive Committee for consideration. If approved by the Executive Committee, the policy or procedure will be circulated among the faculty at least one week prior to a faculty meeting, at which time the proposal will be discussed and voted upon by the faculty. The result of the vote will be announced to the faculty. A majority of the faculty favoring the policy or procedure will be required for its adoption.

X. Research Professional Faculty:

- A. An individual may be appointed to the rank of temporary Research Professional provided external funding is assured. Nominees are expected to present a departmental seminar prior to discussion and vote of their candidacy by the faculty. Appointment to this rank requires formal approval of the faculty.
- B. An individual may be appointed to the permanent Research Professional ranks when continuous funding is available. Only individuals who meet the standards for an appointment to the permanent departmental faculty shall be nominated. Approval by the faculty requires a majority vote.

XI. Academic Professional Faculty.

Appointment to this rank shall follow the policies and procedures set forth by University of Georgia guidelines.

XII. Graduate Faculty:

All faculty holding permanent appointments in the Department are expected to work with graduate students and to qualify for appointment to the Graduate Faculty.

XIII. Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct status is provided for individuals who do not hold an appointment with the University of Georgia or who hold faculty status in another department at the University of Georgia. Adjunct appointments should be recommended only when it is clear that the individual will have an opportunity to become actively involved, at some level, with the instructional program of our Department. Individuals recommended for Adjunct appointment in the Plant Biology Department are expected to meet the criteria given for University faculty appointment in The University of Georgia Guidelines for Promotions

and Appointments. Adjunct appointments to the University of Georgia Faculty are for a period of three years. Recommendations for adjunct appointment may be submitted at an existing University professional rank or as Adjunct Research Scientist. Applications for Adjunct appointment should be made by letter with an accompanying C.V. to the Department Head. The letter should describe the expected or existing interaction of the nominee with Plant Biology graduate students. The nominee for adjunct status will give a departmental seminar for initial adjunct appointment consideration. After review of the appointment materials and the seminar, a formal vote of the faculty will be taken. If given formal approval by the faculty, nomination files will be forwarded to the Dean of the Franklin College. At the end of the appointment term, the individual is either recommended for reappointment or terminated as an adjunct of the University Faculty. Consideration for reappointment requires an updated C.V. and a statement describing how the individual has or will interact with students and faculty. The nominee for adjunct status renewal will give a departmental seminar at least every third request (9 years) for renewal. After review of the reappointment materials and the seminar, a formal vote of the faculty is taken. Recommendations for reappointment, plus required background materials, will be submitted by the Department Head through the Dean of the Franklin College to the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Final approval is made by the Regents.

XIV. Grievances:

Faculty, students, staff and employees shall be provided the opportunity to have grievances heard in accordance with University of Georgia procedures. Grievances are first brought to the attention of the Department Head who will make the grievant aware of University of Georgia policies and procedures. Either the Department Head or the person filing the grievance may request the grievance be heard by a committee within the Department (see below). Grievances to be heard by a departmental committee shall be prepared in writing and presented to the Department Head. A written committee report is to be given to the Department Head and the person bringing the grievance no later than three weeks after the Department Head received the written grievance. No member of a grievance committee shall have a direct interest in the grievance, and, if such is the case, the Department Head will appoint a replacement member. An individual bringing a grievance has the right to appear before the committee. The grievance committee shall obtain all necessary information to reach a fair and just decision; the committee report will specify the facts reviewed in reaching their decision. If an appeal of a committee decision is requested, the Executive Committee or an *ad hoc* committee will decide if a new hearing will be granted.

A. Faculty Grievance:

Unless a special committee is appointed, the grievance shall be heard by the Executive Committee. Examples of grievances include, but are not limited to: teaching assignments, space, budget support, student charges, promotion, and harassment.

B. Student Grievance:

Unless a special committee is appointed, grievances shall be heard by the Graduate Studies Committee. If the grievance is brought by an undergraduate student, the Undergraduate Student Advisor shall become a member of the committee. Examples of grievances include, but are not limited to: grades, class assignments, petitions denied, space, support, and harassment.

C. Staff Grievance:

The Department Head shall appoint an *ad hoc* committee to hear staff grievances.

Examples of grievances include, but are not limited to: salary, working conditions, work versus job description, and harassment.

XV. Amendments:

The faculty may alter or amend all or part of these Bylaws by majority vote at any appropriate faculty meeting, provided a draft of the proposed changes are given to the faculty one week prior to the meeting.

Appendix I – Promotion and Tenure Advisement and Criteria

Adopted 5 September 2007, Modified June, 2014

In all matters related to promotion and tenure, the Plant Biology Department will carefully follow and adhere to the University of Georgia's *Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure* (subsequently referred to as the *Guidelines*). The procedures and criteria that follow provide specific information on how promotion and tenure will be handled in our department, and on the criteria approved by our faculty for promotion and for tenure in the department. Issues not addressed in this document can be answered by resort to the *Guidelines*. When a formal vote is required, a quorum of the appropriate set of faculty must be present. Currently the departmental Bylaws define a quorum as a simple majority.

Advisement:

At the time of appointment, a new faculty member will be given a copy of this document and the *Guidelines* to advise him or her about the department's requirements for promotion and tenure. The new faculty member will sign a letter indicating receipt of this information.

Annual Spring Semester Review of Progress:

In addition to the reviews for promotion and tenure that are mandated by the University and by the College, the Plant Biology Department will conduct an annual review of progress towards promotion and/or tenure in the following manner:

1. Assistant and Associate Professors will prepare dossiers indicating their progress. These dossiers will document what has been accomplished in the last year, what has been accomplished since hiring or the last promotion, and what has been accomplished in one's entire career. The Department Head will explain the desired format, which is similar to an actual promotion dossier, using previously prepared dossiers as examples.
2. Associate and Full Professors will meet to review the progress of Assistant Professors, Assistant Research Scientists, and Assistant Academic Professionals.
3. Full Professors will meet to review the progress of Associate Professors, Associate Research Scientists, and Associate Academic Professionals.
4. The faculty member being reviewed will receive a letter from the Department Head summarizing comments made at the annual review. At least one other member of the reviewing faculty will examine a draft of the summary letter and make suggestions to ensure the letter is consistent with the discussion at the review meeting. The faculty member being reviewed may discuss the summary letter with the Department Head.

This review will normally occur in Spring Semester of every year. The departmental annual review of progress need not be conducted in the Spring Semester of an academic year when promotion or tenure for the faculty member was approved by the Department during the preceding Fall Semester.

The terms senior or reviewing faculty for a given rank are used in this document as defined in points 2 and 3 above.

Peer Evaluation of Instruction:

Assistant Professors will be given a mentoring or formative instructional evaluation during one

of their early teaching efforts. A senior faculty, selected jointly by the Assistant Professor and the Department Head, will attend a representative fraction of the classes for one course. The mentoring faculty may make helpful comments and suggestions to the Assistant Professor at any time during the semester. At the end of the semester, the mentoring faculty will write a letter to the Department Head summarizing the observations and suggestions made. This letter may be discussed in the annual Spring Semester review by senior faculty, but would not become a part of a promotion dossier.

Assistant and Associate Professors will be evaluated at least once by the more formal peer evaluation committee of the Department. This will consist of at least three senior faculty attending at least three lectures or class sessions each. The committee members will score various aspects of instructional skills and success, and summarize their evaluation in a formal written report at the end of the semester. The faculty member being evaluated has the opportunity to discuss the report with the committee, and to suggest possible changes. The chair of the evaluating committee turns in the final report to the Department Head. This report is used as part of promotion dossiers.

Additional Mentoring:

Assistant professors may request that the Department Head identify a senior faculty mentor or mentors to provide advice on matters of teaching, research, professional decorum, the department, and promotion and tenure, as an additional source of guidance.

Third-year review:

The third-year review is a thorough, formative, review of progress mandated by the University and College. In the spring of the third year each assistant professor will submit a dossier similar to those prepared for the annual Spring reviews. The Department Head or other senior faculty mentor may advise the faculty member on the contents of the dossier and help ensure its accuracy.

The Department Head will appoint a committee of at least three faculty to review the faculty member's dossier and performance. Faculty from other departments may be members of this committee. The committee will review all aspects of the candidate's performance as documented in the dossier, and will present their evaluations to the rest of the faculty at the annual Spring review. This will be followed by a general discussion.

The reviewing faculty will then vote on the following question: "[Name] has made sufficient progress towards [promotion to the next rank and/or tenure]." If a candidate does not receive a majority of "Yes" votes on this question, then the reviewing faculty will subsequently vote on whether the candidate should be continued in the department. If a candidate does not receive a majority of "Yes" votes on continuation, the Department will not renew the candidate's contract at the next opportunity to do so. A quorum of the department's senior faculty must participate in these votes.

The Department Head will summarize the results of the vote, the discussion, and the findings of the third year review committee in a letter to the faculty member being reviewed. The Department Head will consult members of the review committee to ensure the text of the letter accurately reflects their evaluations and the general discussion. The letter is then given to the person being reviewed and its contents discussed with the Department Head.

The faculty member being reviewed may then write a response letter, addressed to the Department Head. Both the third-year review letter from the Department Head, and the response letter, will be sent to the Dean of the College, and a copy maintained in the Department's faculty

personnel files.

Preliminary Consideration:

The department will follow procedures for initial consideration presented in the *Guidelines*. Prior to the annual spring reviews, candidates who wish to be considered for promotion and/or tenure will communicate this in writing to the Department Head. As part of the Spring review process, the senior faculty will then vote on whether outside letters of evaluation should be solicited for the candidate, in preparation for a final consideration, or formal review, vote to be held early in Fall semester. Following the vote on each candidate the Department Head will announce how he/she voted. The results will be conveyed by the Department Head in writing to the candidate within three working days of the vote.

In accordance with the *Guidelines*, candidates who receive a majority of “Yes” votes on this question and who wish to be formally reviewed for promotion and/or tenure will work with the Department Head or an appointed senior mentor to prepare the dossier. If the Department Head voted "No" then an appointed senior faculty who voted "Yes" must be in charge of soliciting the outside letters of evaluation and preparing the dossier for the departmental formal review.

Final Consideration (Formal Review):

In all matters pertaining to the formal review, the department will follow the *Guidelines*. The candidate and the Department Head (or appointed senior faculty) will prepare a dossier for the formal review to be made available to the senior faculty for their consideration; this should be completed and available to the senior faculty no later than the first day of classes of Fall semester. The dossier will include an updated Curriculum vitae, an initial draft of the achievements section specified by the *Guidelines*, and the external letters of evaluation. The candidate may help prepare and review all parts of the dossier except for the external letters. The senior faculty will then meet to discuss the credentials and vote on a recommendation. Following the vote on each candidate the Department Head will announce how he/she voted. If the Department Head voted "No" then an appointed senior faculty who voted "Yes" must be in charge of preparing the dossier for the next level review committee.

In accordance with the "Principle of Flow" called for in the *Guidelines*, after a Formal Review vote, a candidate's promotion and/or tenure dossier will move forward to the next level of review regardless of whether the lower-level recommendation was positive or negative, except that the candidate may terminate the process at any time.

Criteria:

All faculty in the Plant Biology Department are expected to actively participate in (i) academic research and scholarship, (ii) instruction at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and (iii) committee work and similar Departmental and University citizenship obligations.

Service as defined in the University's budgeted EFT distribution is different than the committee work and other obligations that are often referred to as service to the department, to the University, or to one's discipline. Most faculty in Plant Biology have zero EFT budgeted for formal Service, and hence would not be evaluated on this, but all will be expected to function as good citizens contributing to appropriate committee work and other similar obligations.

The balance between budgeted Research, Teaching, and formal Service accomplishments will be considered with respect to the candidate's EFT distribution and work assignments. Each candidate for promotion will have a unique mix of accomplishments.

Research

Publications:

For candidates with appointments that are predominantly in research - For promotion from assistant professor to associate professor and for tenure, the candidate must have published a body of work carried out at the University of Georgia sufficient to establish a national reputation in their field.

For candidates with appointments that are predominantly in instruction – For promotion from assistant professor to associate professor and for tenure, the candidate must have published a body of work carried out the University of Georgia sufficient to provide evidence of an emerging national reputation for excellence in teaching and creative scholarship in the pedagogy of Biology instruction or in basic research.

For candidates with appointments that are predominantly in research - For promotion from associate professor to full professor, the candidate must have published a body of work carried out at the University of Georgia sufficient to establish an international reputation in their field; additionally, the research results of a candidate for full professor should give the sense of having answered a significant research question, or having achieved an alternative objective of comparable significance.

For candidates with appointments that are predominantly in instruction – For promotion from associate professor to full professor, the candidate must have published a body of work carried out at the University of Georgia sufficient to establish a national reputation for excellence in teaching and creative scholarship in the pedagogy of Biology instruction or in basic research.

Generally, publications are expected to appear in appropriate peer-reviewed journals that enjoy high national and international status. An issued United States Patent counts as a publication. Information deposited in national databases or distributed on the web may count as a publication, if these are equivalent in impact to a standard peer-reviewed publication.

Funding:

These criteria apply to faculty for whom their largest budgeted EFT fraction is in research. For promotion from assistant professor to associate professor the candidate is expected to establish an independent laboratory and to have aggressively sought external funding. The receipt of external funding is highly desirable but may not be essential for promotion if the overall record of the candidate is exceptionally strong otherwise.

For promotion from associate professor to full professor, the candidate is expected to have sought and to have obtained external funding for their research, and to demonstrate a continuing ability to obtain external funding.

Largely Collaborative Research:

For individuals whose research publications and funding are largely in collaborative research projects, the candidate's role must be explained and documented. The candidate should present evidence that she or he has played a major creative role in the conception, implementation and publication of the research.

Additional indicators of research productivity and recognition:

- i. Awards or other recognitions;
- ii. Invitations to review manuscripts;
- iii. Invitations to present research at conferences or other institutions;
- iv. Invitations to contribute chapters to books that are rigorously reviewed and widely distributed;
- v. Placement of graduate students and postdoctoral associates in advanced positions.
- vi. Organization or chairing conference sessions or conferences;
- vii. Service on grant panels or editorial boards;
- viii. Service to one's discipline or professional societies;

These activities can be an indication of a national or international reputation, and they can also help establish such a reputation particularly with possible external evaluators for promotion letters. Candidates for promotion are expected to participate in a reasonable number of service activities related to one's discipline, and to have presented their research at appropriate conferences or institutions.

Teaching

Candidates for promotion should have demonstrated excellence in teaching by combination of:

- i. Peer teaching evaluations;
- ii. Student evaluations;
- iii. Receiving teaching awards;
- iv. Innovation in teaching methods;
- v. Creation of new courses that meet the needs of the Department or University;
- vi. Mentoring of undergraduates and graduate students in one's research laboratory.

Significant participation in approved efforts in K-12 teacher preparation and in K-12 school improvement efforts will be viewed as a favorable addition to one's instructional obligations.

Examples of evidence for this participation can include:

- Evidence that the faculty member designs and implements a research agenda in at least one area of need recognized by the public schools.
- Evidence that the faculty member assesses the impact of the engagement.
- Evidence that the faculty member disseminates for peer review the results of the outreach.”
- Improving the candidate's own teaching so as to model effective teaching practices in courses taken by prospective teachers.
- Collaborating with public schools to strengthen teaching quality and to increase student learning.

Citizenship – Committee Work and Similar Contributions

Candidates for promotion should have contributed to Department and University governance by serving on appropriate committees or performing similar service activities. Since Assistant Professors are normally assigned relatively light committee work loads, candidates for promotion to Associate Professor will typically have less of these activities than a candidate for promotion to full Professor.

External Letters

Letters from external evaluators are crucial to the promotion and tenure process; they provide a critical assessment of whether the candidate has established a good national or international

reputation. The evaluators should normally be full professors, or the equivalent, at other institutions, and will frequently include members of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and other leaders in the candidate's discipline. A promotion dossier will include documentation that a reviewer is appropriately qualified to evaluate the candidate.

I received a copy of the Plant Biology Department's Promotion and Tenure Advisement and Criteria document.

_____ date _____

Appendix II – Post-Tenure Review

In accordance with College and University Policies, the Plant Biology Department shall conduct a post-tenure review of faculty every 5 years after they are tenured. The review accompanying a promotion in rank suffices to reset the post-tenure review clock to 0.

Normally, the post-tenure review process will be carried out in February of each year. The departmental post-tenure review committee will consist of the executive committee minus the department head. Any faculty member may request a special review committee of 3 tenured faculty instead, whose composition would be chosen by the executive committee in consultation with the faculty member being reviewed.

The annual activity reports for the last 5 years and the accompanying reviews by the department head are the minimum materials required for the post-tenure review process. The faculty member being reviewed may supplement this information with additional documentation.