

## **Environmental Studies Program Expectations for Tenure and Promotion**

The Mission Statement of the college:

**Augustana College, rooted in the liberal arts and sciences and a Lutheran expression of the Christian faith, is committed to offering a challenging education that develops qualities of mind, spirit and body necessary for a rewarding life of leadership and service in a diverse and changing world.**

The Vision of the program:

**The world faces pressing environmental, social, and economic sustainability challenges. Augustana College's Environmental Studies Program equips students with the tools they need to understand and solve these challenges. We believe that:**

- **Sustainability demands improving human well-being for present and future generations while ensuring the resilience of the Earth's ecosystems**
- **Sustainable stewardship of social-ecological systems requires that such systems continue to provide the ecosystem services necessary to ensure human and community well-being of present and future generations**
- **Solving complex sustainability challenges requires using an interdisciplinary framework to evaluate interactions between the human and environmental dimensions of social-ecological systems**
- **Students should be capable of addressing complex, context-dependent problems that involve contested values, complex systems, and high uncertainty**
- **Students should solve problems practically, contextually, and cooperatively in ways that serve society's common interests**
- **The knowledge, skills, and values consistent with this vision are best taught by bringing students, to the degree possible in each course, into the real world of complex environmental problem solving.**

Consistent with this vision, our program emphasizes the process of synthesis, integration, and analysis across disciplines to create new knowledge in the form of practical, effective solutions to sustainability challenges. Graduates of the program will be able to make a substantial contribution towards solving complex, pressing problems within the context of helping a community address a sustainability challenge. Students will be capable of using an interdisciplinary, problem-based, solution-oriented perspective that integrates a diverse array of disciplinary knowledge, perspectives, methods, and skills. Students will be able to collaborate with academic colleagues, disciplinary professionals, and a diverse array of stakeholders to formulate alternative solutions to such problems. Students will construct knowledge and collectively apply this constructed knowledge, perspectives, methods, and skills within the context of real world sustainability problem solving.

### **Program expectations for tenure and promotion**

The purpose of this document is to clarify the Environmental Studies program's interpretation of the college's mission in terms of expectations and standards for tenure track and promotion eligible colleagues. All colleagues should read the relevant section of the faculty handbook (Chapters 3 & 4) on faculty advancement. All faculty are expected to present evidence that they are "professionally active teaching scholars who contribute to the well being of the institution in a number of ways: through their teaching, professional activity, campus service, and public service" (Faculty Handbook Ch. 3). Please note that in all cases, the faculty handbook is the official policy of the college. Faculty are encouraged to use the Faculty Welfare Committee's preparation documents and website.

Although departments/programs may vary in terms of their interpretation of specific types of activities and availability of resources, departments are not free to establish criteria that conflict with the letter or spirit of the

handbook. What follows, therefore, is not so much a discussion of policy, but rather of program culture and emphasis. This document addresses departmental expectations for tenure and promotion, and is intended to serve as a guide for the evaluation of candidates for tenure and promotion in the Environmental Studies Program.

### **Teaching and Advising.**

The Environmental Studies program holds the achievement of excellent teaching to be the *highest and best expression of our institutional values*. The work of developing qualities of mind, spirit, and body in our students is by far the most important work of the college. This work is the core of both the college's and the program's mission. *We seek, therefore, to hire and retain faculty who value teaching above all other professional aspirations.*

The evaluation of teaching, as laid out in the handbook, is based on the evidence of classroom performance drawn from various sources (e.g., colleague observations, colleague evaluations of syllabi, assignments, exams, labs, course assessment data, and other course material, interviews with students, and IDEA reports). Student rating of instruction (IDEA) can be a useful source of information but will never be considered to be more salient than a colleague's own assessment of student progress and reflection on their own progress as a teacher. High IDEA ratings are not synonymous with teaching excellence, nor do lower IDEA ratings automatically indicate poor quality teaching.

The Environmental Studies Program places a high priority on the development of scholarly teaching, a practice that we see as two-fold. First, scholarly teaching is connected to and uses the literature on teaching and learning to inform practice. Note that scholarly teaching, by itself, does not require faculty to contribute professionally to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), but rather that faculty become intelligent consumers of that literature. Second, scholarly teaching is evidence based. Faculty should be able to provide *significant evidence of student learning in their classes*. What are your goals and objectives for each class? What are your students learning about sustainability in your classes? What are they learning about themselves as learners or potential practitioners of a vocation? *How do you know they are learning these things?* The program does not mandate that this assessment be done in a particular way. Different courses will certainly benefit from different kinds of assessment. Both qualitative and quantitative measures can be useful. Faculty members are responsible for constructing their own strong, evidence-based, case for student learning in the context of specific course goals and objectives for their classes. The program recognizes that this is a large and time-consuming task. We expect faculty to apportion their energies towards professional activities, campus service, and public service in a way that does not conflict with (or better still augments) the central goal of scholarly teaching.

The Program also places a priority on integration of community-based experiential learning opportunities into courses. There is an expectation that all faculty incorporate a wide range of such opportunities (field trips, guest lectures, and simulations to introduce students to real-world challenges and project and problem-based projects where students tackle real-world challenges in interdisciplinary teams) into the courses they teach.

The Environmental Studies Program has high expectations for community engagement. Standards for evaluating community service are laid out in chapter 3 of the faculty handbook. Community service includes all uncompensated activities where disciplinary or teaching expertise is used to benefit the public. The expectation is that that project and problem-based learning experiences in courses will play in integral part of faculty satisfying this expectation. As described below, co-authoring, with students, substantial reports to communities that integrate and synthesize the findings of course-based projects can satisfy professional scholarship expectations.

The Environmental Studies Program plays a strong role in guiding tenure-track faculty in their development as teachers. The program chair and an assigned mentor provide written feedback based on in-class observations at least once each academic year (more optimally once a semester, but time constraints do not always permit this). By the time a colleague is up for tenure, all or nearly all of the tenured colleagues in the program should have observed and evaluated their teaching. A colleague's yearly program mentor will be happy to discuss problems or issues that arise in teaching and the mentor should be considered a good first source for information about the program's teaching expectations.

In the months before the tenure (or pre-tenure) review, probationary faculty will be asked to share a statement of teaching philosophy, syllabi, exams, summary IDEA reports, and assignments with tenured program colleagues for review. Chairs do have access to a candidate's IDEA data, but any use of them should be done so in collaboration with the candidate. As a final form of assessment, the chair, in consultation with the candidate, will interview selected students about the candidate's teaching at least before the tenure review. It is the obligation of the program chair to make any programmatic concerns about a tenure candidate's teaching known to that colleague as soon as practically possible.

The program expects that candidates for promotion or post-tenure reviews will demonstrate continued growth and investment in teaching. However, tenured faculty are expected to be able to "chart their own course" with respect to the development of excellent scholarly teaching as the program does not provide mentoring or annual reviews for tenured faculty. Tenured colleagues are encouraged to make full use of the college's resources available for faculty development in teaching.

The program recognizes that good teaching means more than just good student evaluations. We value colleagues who demonstrate rigor in their teaching and learning, including investigating, developing, and assessing new pedagogical models and styles of instruction, while keeping student welfare and learning as the ultimate goal. We also recognize that students can be resistant to new and unfamiliar pedagogies. We support faculty engaged in the assessment of new pedagogies, even those which may be initially unpopular with students, so long as faculty members remain centered on student welfare and learning and continue to take student concerns seriously.

The program requires that all faculty (tenured and tenure-track) construct their courses in a way that supports our shared curricular goals. This is especially important in our core classes but is significant throughout the curriculum. Faculty should have a solid working knowledge of the program's learning outcomes and be able to demonstrate how their classes implement and/or support these outcomes in addition to the College-wide Student Learning Outcomes.

The program stresses that it is the responsibility of each faculty member to build a portfolio of evidence that documents their development as a reflective and scholarly teacher who catalyzes real learning in their courses. While other faculty can provide guidance and advice to their peers, the motivation to innovate, assess, and reflect upon classroom practice must come from each colleague. Within the broad guidelines above, faculty members are free to develop, assess, and justify their own teaching styles and methods that are consistent with the overall curricular goals of the department.

The Environmental Studies Program stresses excellence in student-centered advising and mentoring as an important criterion for tenure and promotion. Faculty in the Environmental Studies Program are expected to lead a **student-centered career**. We recognize the deep relationship between classroom activities and a student's interactions with faculty outside the classroom. *Our future as a college rests on our ability to provide student-centered advising and mentoring.* Knowing how to read the college catalog and navigate through the general education requirements isn't enough. Excellent advising is far more than just assisting students with scheduling issues. Excellent advising involves a working knowledge of a student's (ever changing) goals and values, as well as serving as a catalyst for vocational and sometimes even personal reflection.

This task goes well beyond the list of assigned advisees. Sometimes our most important mentoring work occurs with students in our classes or with students who choose to meet with us informally. This is a deeply rewarding task greatly valued by our students. We recognize that mentoring relationships include heavy investments of time whose product cannot easily be quantified; however, we conform to the College's ethos that one-on-one relationships built between faculty and students are often the most cherished product of an Augustana education. Because our program has an increasing major student to faculty ratios on campus, *faculty must specifically allocate considerable time and energy to student-centered advising and mentoring.* The program expects that a candidate for tenure or promotion will

demonstrate excellence as an advisor and mentor, and that they continue to develop their advising and mentoring skills over time.

Faculty should provide evidence and have the flexibility in choosing the most appropriate evidence to build their case. Examples of evidence may include:

- Senior Survey data comparing individual data to that of the Program and the College averages
- Results of a focus group of advisees run by a program colleague/mentor
- Data from a survey where advisees assess your work as an advisor
- Providing a checklist of various advising related activities demonstrating knowledge of advising (e.g., do you know how to use Starfish, do you know where to refer advisee for mental health issues vs sexual harassment issues, who in the program is a good advisor for specific post-graduate areas, what forms do students need to transfer credits to Augie)

It is the practice of the program to support faculty who make significant investments in student-centered advising and mentoring. We understand that this investment may necessitate the navigation of trade-offs in how faculty apportion their time and energy. The program expects faculty to manage investment in other forms of campus service, public service, and scholarship, in a way congruent with attaining the goal of a student centered career.

### **Professional Activity**

The faculty handbook sets policies for the evaluation of professional activity (Chapters 3 & 4). The handbook stipulates that professional activity is evaluated in two domains: Professional Expression and Professional Development.

The Environmental Studies Program seeks to foster an atmosphere where all faculty can engage in continual professional expression and development. Further, the program appreciates the potential synergy between professional expression and our core value of teaching excellence. The program highly values the direct involvement of undergraduates in the research process other than SI coursework, but understand that this can be highly variable given the scholarship goals of the candidate up for review. We expect tenure track faculty to develop a record of professional activity.

The faculty handbook (Chapter 3) recognizes a wide range of activities as evidence of professional expression including, but not limited to:

- Publishing a book (or book chapter), a monograph, an article in a scholarly journal.
- Publishing a review of an article or book.
- Presentation of a paper or poster at a professional meeting.
- Presentation of an invited lecture at another college or a museum or area school audience.
- Consulting work within the academic discipline or community.
- Election to a learned society or the earning of an honor or prize for academic distinction.

Further, the handbook clearly stipulates that professional expression involving the scholarship of teaching and learning (meeting the same criteria as above) fully counts as professional expression. In addition to the above, the Environmental Studies Program values serving as a peer reviewer for a professional journal or granting agency professional expression. Since such reviews are necessarily anonymous, colleagues preparing for pre-tenure or tenure review should obtain a letter from the relevant editor/program officer confirming that the reviews took place and, if the candidate wishes, commenting on the quality of the reviews.

We expect each faculty member to document evidence of their own achievement in these areas. The program will see as especially meritorious faculty members who develop a strong track record of mentoring students in scholarly endeavors. The difficult work of integrating project and problem-based experiences into courses and mentoring student research sit on the border between teaching and research. The program considers substantial reports to community stakeholders synthesizing findings and mentoring which results in a public presentation at

local, regional, or national meetings by students to be significant evidence of professional expression. We recognize that such an investment in experiential learning and student research is likely to slow the rate of faculty publication.

All faculty members are expected to develop a portfolio that demonstrates commitment to professional expression. The program recognizes peer-reviewed scholarship as being an important objective measure of professional expression. In this context, peer review would include traditional journal articles, but is not limited to them. We also include:

- Manuscripts, articles, or books approved by a single editor for a professional audience.
- Workshop proceedings or articles that are reviewed by participants as they are (collaboratively) written and are subsequently made available to a community of scholars.
- Co-authoring with students substantial reports to communities that integrate and synthesize the findings of course-based projects
- Submissions to electronic journals or communities that are open for criticism by a relevant community of scholars. Candidates must take care to demonstrate the rigor and scholarly nature of the review process.
- Presentations or posters at professional meetings if such presentation requires pre- presentation editorial review (i.e. some presentations are rejected because of limited quality).
- A submitted external grant proposal to a granting agency or foundation.
- Pedagogical materials such as original lab exercises, case studies, problem sets, or assessment tools if these materials are professionally reviewed (either pre-publication or by professional end-users, such as teachers).

Environmental Studies Program faculty members are free to craft their own portfolio of professional expression consistent with the faculty handbook. While the program does not mandate peer-reviewed publication, we stress that peer-reviewed publication, regardless of the impact value of the journal or venue (regional or national), constitutes objective, tangible evidence of professional expression. The program recognizes as evidence of professional expression publications at any stage of development that were completed while employed at Augustana. While this of course includes the publication of work initiated while employed by Augustana, it is not limited to this. We include publications for which all or part of the manuscript preparation, or data analysis, or response to reviewers was performed while employed at Augustana. We recognize that other factors may make the achievement of a pre-tenure publication impossible, such as limited infrastructure and internal funding, exceptional commitments to programmatic, campus, or public service, or the catastrophic loss of data. In any event, each faculty member must present significant evidence of professional expression to achieve tenure.

Incoming faculty are eligible for extra bridge funding (or other benefits) from the Dean of the college to assist in getting research programs up and running. The Dean may attach publication expectations to those additional resources. The program expects tenure track faculty to abide by whatever agreements they may make in such negotiations. The program will be informed of such negotiations, but it is the tenure track candidate's responsibility to understand and abide by whatever agreements they may have made.

Faculty hired after 2005/06 may be offered a pre-tenure leave (see handbook Ch. 7). The handbook stresses that the purpose of such leave is to work on significant scholarly endeavors. It should be emphasized that the pre-tenure leave is only for research-related activities as detailed in the leave proposal submitted by junior faculty and approved by Faculty Welfare Committee and the Dean. Junior faculty are in no way obligated and should be discouraged from, work related to teaching and service, including program meetings during their leave. Faculty are expected to produce peer-reviewed professional expression based on the work proposed and completed during the leave.

As with teaching, junior faculty are obligated to keep the program and program chair informed of research agendas and progress. Written documentation of this should be included in portfolios submitted for pre-tenure reviews and the tenure hearing. Junior colleagues should provide annual updates to the program as part of the

annual review process.

Professional development is critical to the success of every colleague. The handbook defines (Chapter 3) professional development to include:

- Service on a committee or board or elective office of a professional organization.
- Attending, organizing, or presiding at a professional meeting.
- Pursuit of additional course work, or a program of reading and study in the discipline.
- Preparation of a grant proposal. A highly rated, but non-funded proposal should be considered significant evidence of professional development and professional expression.
- Attendance of teaching related conferences.
- Participation in on-campus activities such as Teaching Observation Groups, Faculty Development Academy, Center for Faculty Enrichment Programming, Friday Conversations, etc.

We note that the handbook stipulates that development that contributes to either disciplinary or teaching expertise is considered valid professional development. The Environmental Studies Program supports and encourages both disciplinary and teaching based professional development.

The Environmental Studies Program holds candidates for promotion to the same standards for professional development and expression as tenure-track candidates. That is, associate professors are expected to continue to develop a scholarly portfolio and mentor research students. However, the program acknowledges that associate professors are often called upon to shoulder heavy service loads such as program chair, division chair, and/or heavy involvement in campus wide committees, etc. Since associate professors are often expected to take on extraordinary campus leadership (i.e., Department, Program, or Division Chair, Associate Dean) roles at this point in their career, they may not be able to invest as much time and energy in scholarship as they did as an assistant professor. Publication expectations for promotion candidates must be tempered by an understanding of individual candidate's service commitments.

### **Campus Service**

The college policies on the evaluation of campus service are in Chapters 3 & 4 of the faculty handbook. Campus service includes, but is not limited to:

- Serving as a Departmental mentor
- Service on Department and campus committees.
- Service on Faculty Council.
- Serving in student recruitment activities.
- Serving as a peer-reviewer of faculty.
- Participation in FYI, Honors, or off-campus/study away programs.
- Advisor or guest speaker for a student groups.
- Outside-of-Department representative on faculty searches
- Involvement in assessment planning or procedure.

Beyond mentoring and active engagement with student welfare, all faculty members are expected to invest in the life and work of the program. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to share pedagogy, advising/mentoring, and research ideas with their colleagues. Engagement in the life of the program includes regular meeting attendance, participation in curricular discussions, other program subcommittees, interviewing job candidates, as well as full participation in assessment activities and the advising of student clubs. Associate professors may be called upon to perform service such as program chair, division chair, or other heavy service commitments. The program sees such commitments, if performed well, as constituting strong evidence of campus service.