

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Faculty Promotion Guidelines

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

Introduction and Explanation of Extension Faculty Roles

Faculty in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service perform a vital role in the Land Grant Triad—teaching, research, and extension—which form the basis of the land-grant university system, as authorized by the United States Congress in 1862 (Morrill Act of 1862), 1890 (Morrill Act of 1890), and 1914 (Smith-Lever Act). The last authorized creation of Extension as the final member of the Land Grant Triad. Members of any Extension faculty are responsible for extending the university system to the people of Texas through a variety of educational programs. Thus, Extension, in many ways, is the public face of the Land Grant University. Extension faculty are employees of a state agency, housed in an academic department, and as such, their duties differ from teaching/research appointments.

There are five main differences in the expectations for faculty who are appointed to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service versus faculty appointed to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Texas A&M AgriLife Research:

1. A core requirement is that there will be a strong record of service to constituents external to the university. This service should have a long-term impact on programs or clientele that can be documented and explained.
2. Academic activities are more applied than theoretical, with greater emphasis on Extension publications and development of resource materials as compared to refereed journal articles. Educational materials which have been developed for Extension bulletins, factsheets, production videos, instructional manuals, handbooks, websites, mobile applications, and computer software programs will be the greatest consideration in the evaluation of academic activities for those with a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service appointment. The evaluation is not limited to traditional materials, but also will consider the quality and originality of thought, innovation in outreach education delivery (e.g., mobile apps, social media, and other technology or methodology adoption), and the integration of educational concepts that have led to demonstrable increases in awareness, changes and/or adoption of management or conservation practices.
3. External program support is broader in definition to include not only financial support through grantsmanship but also cost-matching, donations of materials, and volunteerism. External monetary support for applied research activities should be considered as an additional activity, but external funding to support extension outreach and programming should remain the primary criteria of evaluation for Extension faculty.
4. The expectations associated with mentoring graduate students are lower than for those with research and teaching appointments. Undergraduate mentoring through internships

and employment should be equally valued for faculty with Extension appointments as these activities prepare undergraduate students for job opportunities through hands-on experience.

5. Extension appointments are not tenure accruing for promotion, nor are they subject to “the rule of 5” in reference to minimum number of years to promotion. This convention is often followed with newly graduated PhDs, but is not mandatory and there is no probation period associated with Extension appointments as per the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences guidelines.

Criteria for Promotion

There are five primary areas of performance evaluated for promotion of Texas AgriLife Extension faculty members. It is recognized that individual faculty may be stronger in some areas than others, and in many cases, their efforts are tailored to their subject matter and geographic area of responsibility. The following are general guidelines for promotion, based on:

- (1) Academic activities
- (2) Extension outreach
- (3) Program support
- (4) Service
- (5) Reputation and professionalism

Promotion to Associate Professor and Extension Wildlife or Fisheries Specialist

1. Academic activities

a. *Extension Publications and Resources*

Extension publications are defined but not limited to numbered bulletins, fact sheets, production videos, instructional manuals, handbooks, websites and computer software programs. Similarly, peer-reviewed applied research reports (Goldmine reports) and result demonstration reports should be considered.

Extension publications should each represent a novel contribution or major revision of outdated materials to the technical and/or outreach literature. "Recycling" of material in other publications will not suffice as new publications. Translations of earlier work into languages other than English are highly valued and represent a novel contribution to that language's literature and as such should be considered as a separate publication.

b. *Refereed Journal Articles*

Includes, but not limited to journal articles, symposia papers, book chapters, and proceedings.

It is expected that an Extension Specialist applying for promotion to associate professor may show considerable diversity of topic areas as they develop a focused program area of expertise. However, there should be some evidence in the publication record that a defined Extension program area of expertise is emerging by the time of application for promotion. The specialist should be recognized as a statewide expert in the faculty member's major area of expertise by the time of application for promotion.

2. Extension outreach

a. County and Specialist-Initiated Programs

One of the core extension outreach responsibilities of an Extension Specialist is to support county programs. By the time of application for promotion, the faculty member should show an emerging record of utilization by County Extension Agents in support of their county field days, tours, and educational programs.

These program efforts may be single county, multi-county, district, region or statewide educational events and may target adult or youth clientele. Metrics will be collected on selected programs to measure extension outreach effectiveness.

Extension Specialists should also exhibit the capability of expanding their program efforts beyond the county level. By the time of application for promotion they should have developed effective programming at the district or regional level, at a minimum.

Examples of broader programming would include but not be limited to symposia, seminars, web based programming, or workshops. Ideally, the Extension Specialist would have some grant-funded outreach programming that integrates all areas of performance under a single programmatic theme.

b. Agent Training

A second core extension outreach responsibility of Extension Specialists is agent training. Access to agents is restricted by county and state budgets, district, regional or state priorities, and agents time away from their assigned counties. Although a specialist's face-to-face time with agents is limited, by the time of application for promotion a faculty member should show an emerging record of training agents in their assigned area through formal training meetings, newsletters, training manuals, or other vehicles.

Training efforts conducted by Extension faculty members may include enhancing subject-matter expertise of county extension agents, other extension staff/faculty, other agency staff (e.g. TPWD, NRCS, Sea Grant, etc.), and/or volunteers (e.g., Texas Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, producers, landowners).

3. Program support

Extension specialists are expected to seek out additional support to fund and support their programmatic outreach, education, and applied research activities. Extension faculty members are tasked with pursuing programs that are important to their area of responsibility, regardless of the funding potential available. Thus, support may come in the form of extramural funds or partnerships, described below.

a. Extramural Funds

The acquisition of external support is an integral part of an individual's academic contribution. External support can be in the form of grants or contracts, materials, and volunteerism. Extramural funding opportunities for Extension activities are typically **much** more limited than for research activities. A faculty member's transition to Extension may make it difficult to acquire external funds in the first few years. This is a period in which networks have to be created, an extension program defined, and an understanding of the state and university culture to be learned.

However, by the end of the time of application for promotion, an emerging record of obtaining external support should be evident.

The extramural funding required to conduct Extension activities is much less than for research activities as funds required for materials and supplies, equipment, and personnel are greatly reduced for Extension activities. Thus, the accumulated extramural funding required for promotion could be much lower. Sources of funding may include private donors and foundations, state agencies, federal agencies, and international organizations.

b. Collaborative Activities

It is recognized that external funding may be more accessible to those working in some subject matter fields as compared to others, thus discrete guidelines are difficult to define. However, partnering or networking with other agencies, universities, academic departments, NGO's, businesses, and producers is indispensable to an Extension Specialist when leveraging available resources to produce broad, effective Extension programs. Partnering or networking should be considered when evaluating an Extension Specialists in terms of program support.

Intensive partnerships among agencies led by Extension Faculty to address issues of concern to Texas should be weighted heavily in this category.

4. Service

Service refers to responsively serving the needs of the university and of external constituents. Examples of service activities would include but not be limited to: (a) service on department, agency, and university committees, (b) leadership positions in professional societies, (c) serving on external agency boards, taskforces, and committees, (d) serving on graduate student committees, (e) serving in adjunct positions for other universities, (f) serving on Federal, regional, or State grant review committees, and (g) serving as an advisor for student clubs or activities.

5. Reputation and professionalism

A regional to statewide reputation in an area of expertise is expected by faculty applying for promotion to associate professor. This is likely to be exemplified by being in leadership roles in professional societies or associations, appointments or election to state and federal committees, invitations to speak or teach at professional meetings, agency meetings, NGO meetings or conferences, symposiums, and by awards or recognition from external groups or agencies.

Faculty members are also expected to maintain professional integrity and responsibility. Performance in this area is exemplified by showing respect for colleagues, and this respect being reciprocated; professional conduct conducive to a collegial work environment; adhering to expected standards of academic integrity'; and, being active in the department, college, and university by serving on committees, task forces, etc.

Promotion to Professor and Extension Wildlife or Fisheries Specialist

1. Academic activities

a. Extension Publications

Extension publications are defined but not limited to numbered bulletins, fact sheets, production videos, instructional manuals, handbooks, web-sites and computer software programs. Similarly, peer-reviewed applied research reports (Goldmine reports) and result demonstration reports should be considered.

Extension publications should each represent a novel contribution or major revision of outdated materials to the technical and/or outreach literature. "Recycling" of material in other publications will not suffice as new publications. Translations of earlier work into languages other than English are highly valued and represent a novel contribution to that language's literature and as such should be considered as a separate publication.

b. Refereed Journal Articles

Includes, but not limited to journal articles, symposia papers, book chapters, and proceedings.

*It is emphasized that this quantification range is a guideline and not a standard, since it is recognized that quantity of publications is not the only indication of academic contributions for Extension faculty.

An Extension Specialist applying for promotion to professor should clearly demonstrate a focused program in their area of expertise.

All Extension Specialists should have demonstrated considerable diversity of topic area expertise over their career; however, there should be evidence in the publication record that a defined extension program has been developed as an expert in the faculty member's major area of expertise in Texas and beyond. Evidence of speaking or programming across the United States or abroad on areas in the faculty member's program should be shown.

2. Extension outreach

a. County and Specialist-Initiated Programs

One of the core extension outreach responsibilities of an Extension Specialist is to support county programs. The Extension Specialist should show a clear track record of supporting county programs.

These program efforts may be single county, multi-county, district, region or statewide educational events and may target adult or youth clientele. Metrics will be collected on selected programs to measure extension outreach effectiveness.

Extension Specialists should also exhibit the capability of expanding their program efforts beyond the county level. When seeking promotion to professor, program efforts at **at least** a statewide level should be evident.

The Extension Specialist should have grant-funded outreach programming that integrates all areas of performance under a single programmatic theme.

b. Agent Training

A second core Extension outreach responsibility of Extension Specialists is agent training. Access to agents is restricted by county and state budgets, district, regional or state priorities, and agents time away from their assigned counties. Although a specialist's face-to-face time with agents is limited, faculty should have a proven record of training agents in their assigned area through formal training meetings, newsletters, training manuals, or other vehicles. Specialized training efforts for agents should be evident in the Extension Specialist's program.

Training efforts conducted by Extension faculty members may include enhancing subject-matter expertise of county extension agents, other extension staff/faculty, other agency staff (e.g. TPWD, NRCS, Sea Grant, etc.), and/or volunteers (e.g., Texas Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, producers, landowners).

3. Program support

Extension specialists are expected to seek out additional support to fund and support their programmatic outreach, education, and applied research activities. Extension faculty members are tasked with pursuing programs that address priority issues to the clientele, regardless of the funding potential available or scholarly appeal. Thus, support may come in the form of extramural funds or partnerships, described below.

a. Extramural Funds

The acquisition of external support is an integral part of an individual's academic contribution. External support can be in the form of grants or contracts, materials, and volunteerism. Extramural funding opportunities for Extension activities are typically **much** more limited than for research activities.

The extramural funding required to conduct Extension activities is much less than for research activities as funds required for materials and supplies, equipment, and personnel

are greatly reduced for Extension activities. Thus, the accumulated extramural funding required for promotion is much lower. Sources should include private donors and foundations, state agencies, federal agencies, and international organizations. At this rank, multi-year funding to pursue priority issues should be evident.

b. Collaborative Activities

It is recognized that external funding may be more accessible to those working in some subject matter fields as compared to others, thus discrete guidelines are difficult to define. However, partnering or networking with other agencies, universities, academic departments, NGO's, businesses, and producers is indispensable to an Extension Specialist when leveraging available resources to produce broad, effective Extension programs. Partnering or networking should be considered when evaluating an Extension Specialist in terms of program support.

Intensive partnerships among agencies led by Extension Faculty to address issues of concern to Texas should be weighted heavily in this category.

4. Service

Service refers to responsively serving the needs of the university and of external constituents. Examples of service activities would include but not be limited to: (a) service on department, agency, and university committees, (b) leadership positions in professional societies, (c) serving on external agency boards, taskforces, and committees, (d) serving on graduate student committees, (e) serving in adjunct positions for other universities, (f) serving on Federal, regional, or State grant review committees, and (g) serving as an advisor for student clubs or activities.

5. Reputation and professionalism

A national reputation in an area of expertise is expected by faculty applying for promotion to professor. This is likely to be exemplified by being in leadership roles in professional associations, appointments or election to state and federal committees, invitations to speak or teach at professional meetings, agency meetings, NGO meetings or conferences, symposiums, and by awards or recognition from external groups or agencies.

Faculty members at all ranks are also expected to maintain professional integrity and responsibility. Performance in this area is exemplified by showing respect for colleagues, and this respect being reciprocated; professional conduct conducive to a collegial work environment; adhering to expected standards of academic integrity'; and, being involved in the department, college, and university by serving on committees, task forces, etc.