

Expectations for Tenure and Promotion

Department of Environment, Geography, and Geoscience (EVGG) 2025

Note: This EVGG policy applies only to faculty hired on or after November 1, 2025. For tenure and promotion guidelines for faculty hired before November 2025, please see the specific guidelines for the department or program in which the candidate was hired (Geology, Geography, or Environmental Studies). Those pre-November 2025 departmental policies are available as archived documents on the Faculty Review Committee's website.

These guidelines were adopted via unanimous departmental vote on September 18, 2026.

EVGG Faculty Organization, Leadership, and Merit Review Committees

According to the initial [2024 proposal for merging programs](#), the faculty of the Department of EVGG is organized into two groups for the purpose of hiring, mentoring, and merit reviews, and new faculty appointments shall specify one or both groups: Environmental Studies and Geography faculty forms one group, while Environmental Geology faculty forms the second group. This appointment shall be made by the provost after consultation with the candidate and the co-chairs according to the candidate's disciplinary interests and expertise. One departmental co-chair is chosen from each group, and "The co-chairs will divide responsibilities as they wish, except that each co-chair shall be responsible for mentoring junior colleagues in their respective section of the faculty." Further, "The tenured members of the Department shall be eligible to serve on review committees, except that a review committee must be chaired by the co-chair from the reviewee's section of the faculty (Geoscience or Environmental Studies and Geography)."

Tenure Expectations

Faculty in EVGG come from diverse disciplines with varied methodological commitments and goals. However all EVGG faculty at Augustana share the desire to lead a student-centered career. Whether we are in the classroom, lab, field, a meeting with local government officials, or just meeting colleagues in the hallway, we recognize this shared commitment to students as our guiding principle. Candidates for tenure in EVGG should demonstrate, through each part of their portfolio (teaching and advising, scholarship, and service) that they contribute to an environment that is student-centered.

Teaching and advising:

As faculty, we share the value that excellent teaching and advising are the most important criteria for tenure. Our shared expectation is that candidates for tenure will demonstrate each of the following:

1. Effective instructional delivery, course design, and course administration.

Coursework should be designed, delivered, and managed in clear, effective, and professional ways. Examples include, but are in no way limited to: well organized syllabi with clearly articulated goals that integrate college and program learning outcomes; timely feedback on student work; meaningful use of classroom, lab, and field time; effective use of Augustana facilities and resources; a program of assessments that allows a student to demonstrate growth, lively class participation; and an approach that is guided by proven pedagogical practices. The candidate's teaching portfolio should include clear evidence that this criterion is being met in ways appropriate for different classes and disciplines. Faculty members are expected to provide evidence of excellent teaching in the classroom and, as appropriate for their academic discipline, the lab, field, or geo-spatial analyses, or in projects that engage students in communities, local or distant. Demonstrated excellence in teaching in at least one of lab, field, geospatial analyses, or community-engaged teaching is required for tenure in the department. Effective course administration includes being available to assist and advise students outside of class during posted office hours and scheduled meetings.

The candidate should include, in their portfolio, a reflection on their IDEA course evaluations and what lessons they draw from those data. The department does not assume that IDEA scores speak for themselves, nor does the department believe that such scores are sufficient indicators, by themselves, of teaching effectiveness or ineffectiveness. Small enrollment sections and the use of novel (to the students) pedagogy can cause bias in IDEA scores. In addition, it has been well established in the literature that course evaluations are frequently biased against any faculty member who does not fit a college student's stereotype of what a college professor should look/act like. Any fair evaluation of IDEA data must proceed in a context where these limitations and biases are recognized. However, we do expect all candidates to thoughtfully engage with and respond to IDEA results and to maintain generally good scores and/or an upwards trajectory of scores approaching good by the time of tenure.

2. Documented student learning in their classes, as described in Chapter 3 of the faculty handbook and in the FRC committee's guidance on pre-tenure reviews.

Candidates are expected to provide evidence appropriate for their course goals and assessments, and this evidence may be quantitative or qualitative, as best fits the courses being assessed. Possible examples include, but are in no way limited to: Pre- and post-instruction tests, practical demonstrations of learned laboratory skills, feedback on multiple drafts of written work, analysis of student reflections on field trips, and student posters accepted at regional or national scholarly meetings. Care should be taken to ensure that both the claims made in the candidate's statement of teaching philosophy and the evidence collected from courses align with program and course goals.

3. Continual professional development as a teaching scholar.

This development is evidenced by the ability to assess one's own teaching, diagnose problems, revise, and reassess. By the time a candidate is reviewed for tenure, their teaching statement/portfolio should also include scholarly citations relevant to their choices of pedagogies and assessments. While the department in no way requires that candidates contribute to the literature on teaching and learning, a candidate should be an intelligent consumer of that literature at the broad as well as discipline-specific level, and should be able to demonstrate effective and judicious use of the teaching and learning literature in their classroom.

4. Adoption of best current pedagogical practices, as seen through a disciplinary lens.

This includes engagement with high-impact practices, as tempered by available resources. This may include such practices as collaborative or team-based assignments, assignments that draw students into understanding other cultures, differences, and inequalities, mentored student research, community-based or service learning, field experiences, etc. While no candidate could embrace all of these methods of engagement, a candidate for tenure should have a documented record of including and assessing at least one high-impact practice in a disciplinarily appropriate way, for example, in field trips, labs, projects with community partners, or other disciplinarily appropriate modalities. Different programs within the department place special emphasis on different activities. Environmental Geology places special emphasis on organizing and leading field trips (local and distant) as well as field programs and courses, which are 1- to 2-week-long J-term or May-term, spring break or summer session programs which at least one faculty member must organize and lead. An Environmental Geology faculty member is expected to participate in and/or lead these trips at least one third of the time, with more involvement being of greater benefit to the program and candidate both. Participation in (and even co-leading) the ongoing summer field course (GEOL 105) and/or development of a new summer program is also strongly encouraged.

5. Clear understanding of the department's goals and curriculum and effective advising.

Candidates for tenure should have a clear understanding of the different majors offered by the department, the structure of the curriculum of those majors, as well as relevant areas of concentration within majors. Because there are multiple majors within the department, and because we seek to draw close connections between these majors, candidates should understand the structure and requirements of all departmental majors and programs so that they can ensure students are taking full advantage of the best opportunities available across programs. While we recognize that some of the best advising and mentoring conversations happen outside formal academic advising, a successful tenure candidate will keep accurate, formal advising records, meet regularly (at least once a semester) with willing advisees, and file all required Starfish and/or Arches reports. Finally, a candidate for tenure should

understand developing career paths in their program so that they can offer students broad vocational advice. First-year advising is encouraged (later in the tenure-track process) but does not supersede departmental advising needs.

6. Effective teaching and advising includes a demonstrated commitment to all students.

The EVGG department fosters an environment in which all students are welcome, safe, and given opportunities to grow and prosper. A demonstrated commitment to that goal is expected of a successful candidate for tenure. Faculty are expected to understand how to access and implement all of the college's relevant programs, for example, how to refer students to counseling, how to honor accommodation requests, avoid exclusionary language or conduct, and demonstrate the active pursuit of a safe, welcoming, and learning-centered student experience.

The Department strives to ensure academic success for all students by nurturing an atmosphere that is welcoming and learning-centered. This results in students feeling valued and supported in their learning process.

These principles acknowledge the wide range of ways faculty contribute to Augustana's educational mission--through teaching, advising, research, creative work, and service--while affirming our shared commitment to cultivating an environment where all students can thrive. Faculty are encouraged to interpret these principles broadly in ways consistent with their disciplines, pedagogical approaches, and professional identities.

Candidates for tenure, promotion, and review should include examples of engagement with the following principles in their Case Making Statements and provide supporting evidence of their efforts to:

- Embrace difference: Engage thoughtfully with a range of ideas, perspectives, cultures, or communities through teaching, scholarship, or service.
- Foster a sense of belonging: Enable a welcoming space where every student can feel seen, valued, and supported.
- Address needs with intention: Ensure that students have opportunities and resources to succeed in learning, advising, and professional and scholarly mentorship.
- Focus on student-centered learning: Prioritize the needs of students in and beyond the classroom by utilizing evidence-based teaching, advising, and learning strategies.

A candidate for tenure should include, in their portfolio, clear evidence that they uphold and further this departmental commitment. Examples might include, but are not limited to:

- Fostering a welcoming classroom environment that values all students, takes into consideration students from a broad variety of backgrounds and abilities while challenging students to their best efforts.
- Removing barriers that might otherwise prevent students from being able to participate.

- Developing courses or curricular materials that focus on themes of social justice, patterns and causes of injustice, and texts and authors from a variety of backgrounds and genders, including historically underrepresented groups.
- Mentoring and advising of students from groups underrepresented in our disciplines.
- Connect your teaching, scholarship, or service to Augustana's mission statement and/or Five Faith Commitments
- Identify how your course and/or advising strategies connect students with resources on campus to bolster their learning experiences and sense of belonging.
- Developing techniques of instruction that meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups (e.g. Implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies).
- Participating in CELTS and other workshops to promote inclusion and success for all students in the classroom and reflect on the implementation of learned strategies.

Scholarship

A candidate for tenure at Augustana is expected to be a productive scholar, and the department recognizes multiple activities and accomplishments as evidence of productive scholarship. Criteria 1-4, below, are essential for tenure and the successful tenure candidate will have done each of them. Criteria 5-6 are also considered evidence of professional expression, but are not required for tenure.

1. A publication in a peer-reviewed journal and an established Augustana Research program.

Prior to tenure, a candidate must have at least **one manuscript published or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal**. The candidate need not be the sole author of this paper, but the candidate should be able to demonstrate that their contribution to that paper is substantial. A peer-reviewed publication of work done while at Augustana fulfills this criterion. The candidate's publications stemming from their dissertation may also be used to fulfill this criterion. However, in this case a candidate must *also* present substantial evidence of public-facing and/or expert-reviewed work done while at Augustana, such as reports to stakeholder groups, professional presentations, or public performance/display/engagement of research products that are designed to be public-facing. Multiple publications or publishing in higher impact journals is more praiseworthy, but a single publication in any peer-reviewed journal fulfills this criterion. Scholarship of teaching and learning can be used to fulfill this criterion.

The candidate is further expected to have established a visible research program at Augustana, evidenced by active laboratory work, grant applications/awards, field studies, presentations at regional or greater professional meetings, presentations to relevant stakeholders, or other efforts.

2. Involvement of Augustana students in research.

One of the primary benefits of faculty research at a liberal arts institution is that it creates opportunities for students to meaningfully engage in research. A published paper with an Augustana-student co-author is an especially powerful way of demonstrating this commitment, but supervising student research that results in posters or presentations at scientific meetings or formal reports to local stakeholder groups also fulfills this requirement. Candidates for tenure are expected to adapt some elements of their research program to provide some research opportunities for our students. These research opportunities may or may not be nested within a formal course setting (for example, SI experiences) and may or may not result in student credits. This criterion does not mean that students must be involved in every project or at every stage of the research process. Supervising students in the scholarship of application (*sensu* Boyer, 1990. [Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching](#)) – for example, projects that involve students applying disciplinary knowledge and skills in providing data and data interpretation to local communities or stakeholders – is considered equal to the scholarship of discovery (*sensu* Boyer, 1990). Of course, many projects simultaneously do both application and discovery.

3. Application for internal and/or external grants.

Submission of at least one competitive grant proposal to an internal (Augustana College or the STEM division, not the department) or peer-reviewed external funding agency that seeks financial support for the faculty member's research at Augustana College is expected. The grant need not be funded to fulfill this requirement, but of course a funded grant is a more impressive achievement than an unfunded one.

4. Campus seminar.

A campus-wide presentation or seminar must be given prior to the tenure decision year. The presentation should showcase research performed with student(s). Symposium Day, Celebration of Learning, Udden Club, Map and Munch, or another meeting or speaker series would be an appropriate outlet for these presentations. The presentation or seminar must be advertised at least one week prior to the scheduled date.

5. Professional research presentations.

Attendance at and presentations of research at regional or national conferences/meetings and invited seminars at other institutions also demonstrate professional activity.

6. Professional expertise in community settings.

The use of disciplinary expertise to advise community groups or provide data and analysis to such groups is scholarship of application. Presentations, white papers, and reports to community groups that use the candidate's scholarly expertise are considered evidence of professional expression.

Service

Candidates for tenure in EVGG must demonstrate a commitment to meaningful department, campus and community service. Departmental and campus service are required for tenure. While community service is not required for tenure at Augustana, it is encouraged and fully considered as service by EVGG. A candidate with extensive community service may do less departmental and campus service, but a record including some departmental and campus service is essential for tenure.

1. Departmental service:

Department faculty are expected to support, develop, and promote the department's mission, curriculum and academic program, and participate in governance activities within the department, and support the activities of the department. Departmental service includes but is not limited to: mentoring, alumni engagement, outreach to prospective students, participating in admissions events, recruiting events, participation in local and distant field experiences, willingness to cooperate with and/or assist colleagues with discipline-related questions, regular attendance at and contribution to departmental seminars and department meetings, supporting (depending on the candidates disciplinary emphasis) the activities of the Fryxell Geology Museum, supporting (depending on the candidates disciplinary emphasis) the work of the Upper Mississippi Studies Center and/or the Center for the Advancement of Community Health and Wellness, and serving on departmental search committees. While the balance and mix of such service activities depends on the individual candidate's expertise and disciplinary interests, all EVGG faculty are expected to constructively contribute to the work and well-being of the department.

2. Campus service:

Campus service might include service on college committees and task forces, serving on Faculty Council, advising first-year students, participation in the development and teaching and assessment of General Education courses, working on college-wide curriculum development initiatives, advising student organizations, and serving in other administrative roles at the request of the Provost or President.

3. Public/community 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. For the EVGG department tenure candidate, this involves a commitment to engage the broader public. The ethic of the department is one which sees active engagement with local and regional government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local educational organizations as central to our role in the College. Examples of these types of activities could include: willingness to speak to community groups, developing and maintaining relationships with community and agency partners and internship opportunities, serving on local boards and task forces, participating in local conferences, and willingness to offer the services and expertise of the department and the Fryxell Geology Museum to local organizations.

The department recognizes that the nature of service contributions will differ widely from person to person and will be difficult to measure quantitatively, but we argue that the 'public/community' service component is especially important to the life of the department. Augustana College does not require community service for tenure, however, the College has a long established policy of recognizing such service as an exemplary component of a candidate's tenure portfolio.

Promotion from Associate to Full Professor

For promotion to full professor, the candidate is counseled to continue the efforts outlined above. It is assumed that the candidate will find their particular niche and balance in the life of the department and the College in the years following the awarding of tenure.

As teaching is still the central component of the College's mission, tenured colleagues should continue to demonstrate and model excellent student learning outcomes through the development of new courses, pedagogical approaches, and continued commitment to the department's curricular goals.

The candidate for promotion is expected to have a track record of professional expression that includes tangible research products. This requirement may be fulfilled in the following ways:

1. A peer-reviewed publication of research performed while at Augustana, in any journal, not including the publication used to support the tenure case.
2. Written reports of community-engaged research to relevant stakeholders.
3. Public performance/display/engagement of research products that are designed to be public-facing.

Candidates for promotion are also expected to continue mentoring student research throughout their career, and as is the case for tenure, this student-faculty research may occur within classes or outside of formal coursework. In addition to the requirement for tangible research products detailed above, all the other forms of professional expression considered for tenure (for example, Grant applications, presentations at professional meetings) are considered evidence of professional expression.

The candidate for promotion must also demonstrate continued commitment to departmental service. Apart from teaching, mentoring student research, and departmental service, the candidate may choose to emphasize scholarship, campus, and community service in ways that fulfill the particular niche that the candidate has crafted alongside of and continuing to fulfill their job description.

The rank of associate professor often comes with additional administrative duties such as department or program chair, Faculty Council, Division Dean, or special duties as assigned by the Provost or President. These important roles come with extra responsibilities, often without course release time. We value the importance of these roles and encourage our department members to take on these roles with the understanding that they may not be able to simultaneously show significant progress in all aspects of teaching, research, advising, and service. However, the candidate for promotion must still, by the time of coming up for promotion, produce a record of high performance in teaching, professional expression, and service.