

Promotion Procedures for the Kansas Geological Survey  
Adopted by the KGS Promotion and Review Committee on February 9, 2016  
Approved by the Faculty Senate Committee on  
Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure on March 25, 2016

Purpose: To provide guidelines for the Promotion and Review process as it pertains to academic staff (faculty-equivalent) at the Kansas Geological Survey.

Applies to: Assistant, associate, and senior level scientists and research professors at the Kansas Geological Survey.

### General Provisions

*Scope and Purpose.* The award of academic promotion in rank is among the most important and far-reaching decisions made by the Kansas Geological Survey, hereafter referred to as KGS, because excellent academic staff is an essential component of any outstanding research center. Promotion decisions also have a profound effect on the lives and careers of researchers. Promotion in rank for unclassified academic staff follows the same general procedures as promotion for faculty members. Recommendations concerning promotion must be made carefully, based upon a thorough examination of the candidate's record and the impartial application of these criteria and procedures, established in compliance with the *Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations* (FSRR) Article VI. <http://policy.ku.edu/governance/FSRR>

The purpose of this document is to promote the rigorous and fair evaluation of unclassified academic staff performance during the promotion process by (a) establishing criteria that express the KGS's expectations for meeting University standards in terms of disciplinary practices; (b) providing procedures for the initial evaluation of professional performance, teaching, scholarship, and service (c) preserving and enhancing the participatory rights of candidates, including the basic right to be informed about critical stages of the process and to have an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations; and (d) clarifying the responsibilities, roles, and relationships of the participants in the promotion review process.

Each level of review, including the initial review, the intermediate review, and the University level review, conducts an independent evaluation of a candidate's record of performance and makes independent recommendations to the Chancellor. Later stages of review neither affirm nor reverse earlier recommendations, which remain part of the record for consideration by the Chancellor. It is the responsibility of each person involved in the review process to exercise his/her own judgment to evaluate a candidate's professional performance, teaching, scholarship, and service (as applicable to each position) based upon the entirety of the data and information in the record. No single source of information, such as peer review letters, shall be considered a conclusive indicator of quality.

*Academic Freedom.* All faculty and unclassified academic staff members, regardless of rank, are entitled to academic freedom in relation to teaching and scholarship, and the right as citizens to speak on matters of public concern. Likewise, all faculty and unclassified academic staff members, regardless of rank, bear the obligation to exercise their academic freedom responsibly and in accordance with the accepted standards of their academic disciplines.

*Confidentiality of the Review Process and Conflicts of Interest.* Consideration and evaluation of a faculty or unclassified academic staff member's promotion record is a confidential personnel

matter. Only those persons eligible to vote on promotion may participate in or observe deliberations or have access to the personnel file (except for the administrative staff authorized to assist in the preparation of documents under conditions that assure confidentiality).

No person shall participate in any aspect of the promotion process concerning a candidate when participation would create a clear conflict of interest or compromise the impartiality of an evaluation or recommendation.

If a candidate believes there is a conflict of interest, the candidate may petition to have that person recuse him/herself. If a committee member does not recuse him/herself, a decision about whether that person has a conflict of interest shall be made by a majority of the other committee members.

### Promotion Standards

*General Principles.* The University strives for a consistent standard of quality against which the performance of all faculty and unclassified academic staff members is measured. Nonetheless, the nature of a candidate's activities varies across the University and the candidate's record must be evaluated in light of his/her particular responsibilities and the expectations of the discipline. These criteria state the KGS's expectations of performance in the areas of **professional performance, research, and service** necessary to satisfy the University standards for promotion to associate or senior level.

Scientists, research professors, and curators are evaluated on the basis of professional performance, scholarship and service, and teaching (if applicable), with the relative weights of each component determined by unit policy and time allocations clearly articulated in writing at the time of appointment.

Unclassified academic staff should strive to develop a national and international reputation for their scholarship, one that enhances the recognition and reputation of their research center, survey, core lab, or academic department.

Reputation is based primarily upon publications, service, and external funding.

Expectations for KGS scientists and research professors:

The Kansas Legislature authorizes the University of Kansas ". . . to make as far as possible a complete geological survey of the state of Kansas, giving special attention to any and all natural products of economic importance . . . and to prepare reports on the same." The KGS, a research and service unit of the University of Kansas, is charged with fulfilling that role. The KGS mission is to conduct statewide geological studies and research and to collect, correlate, preserve, and disseminate information leading to a better understanding of the geology of Kansas, with special emphasis on natural resources of economic value, water quality and quantity, and geologic hazards. The following defines the expectations of KGS scientists within the context of this mission.

**Probationary Review:** All incoming KGS scientists must complete a probationary review period (six years for assistant scientists, three years for associate or senior scientists). Although the probationary review period has a defined maximum length, non-renewal of contract (i.e., termination) can occur before the end of the period. Failure to meet the following expectations at each rank will result in termination. Successful passage through the probationary period does not automatically insure promotion.

KGS academic staff on probation will be reviewed annually by the KGS Promotion and Review Committee for the duration of their probation after submission of their first performance evaluation. The committee should clearly address the academic staff member's progress toward promotion and recommend direction that will make him/her a strong candidate for promotion at the end of probation. The committee will provide feedback to the director in writing, and the director will then provide formal communication to the staff member on probation. Promotion is not automatic or simply the result of duration in rank. Promotion is, instead, recognition of meritorious performance. Excellence in research and service will always be the primary promotion criteria for KGS scientists.

KGS scientists should strive to develop a national and international reputation for research on geologic issues of relevance to the state of Kansas. That reputation should be based on the following:

**Scholarship.** The concept of "scholarship" encompasses not only traditional academic research and publication, but also the creation of artistic works or performances and any other products or activities accepted by the academic discipline as reflecting scholarly effort and achievement for purposes of promotion. While the nature of scholarship varies among disciplines, the University adheres to a consistently high standard of quality in its scholarly activities to which all faculty and unclassified academic staff members, regardless of discipline, are held. In the Kansas Geological Survey, scholarship is defined as:

Research Program (Leadership)--KGS scientists must develop an independent Kansas-based research program. Scientists are expected to lead research programs; while cooperation between scientists at the KGS and elsewhere is strongly encouraged, work that supports other programs should not be the primary objective for any KGS scientist.

Publications--KGS scientists are expected to generate formal publications in respected, peer-reviewed outlets. Publication in upper-tier, peer-reviewed outlets is required to demonstrate the soundness of research ideas and results, and to establish the stature of KGS research programs and scientists. Publication in KGS peer-reviewed outlets is particularly encouraged for issues that are especially relevant to the State.

External Funding--All KGS scientists should seek external funding to enhance their research programs. Although acquisition of funds through a competitive peer-reviewed process is an important and independent verification of the value of an individual's research program, external funding is no substitute for scientific publication.

Assistant Scientists and Assistant Research Professors at the KGS are expected to develop a strong Kansas-based research program.

Scholarship Criteria for Promotion to Associate:

Under the University standards for promotion to the associate rank, the record must demonstrate a successfully developing scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as the quality and quantity of publications or creative activities, external reviews of the candidate's work by respected scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate's regional, national, or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly agenda.

When appropriate to his or her duties, the individual is expected to successfully seek external funding to support his or her research program. The acquisition of competitive external funding is an important measure of the success and stature of the individual's research program.

In the KGS, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards apply for promotion to associate rank:

**Leadership**--The individual should have developed an independent, Kansas-based research program of national stature by the end of the sixth year at the KGS.

**Publications**--The individual should produce a sufficient number of high-quality peer-reviewed publications that will allow them to establish a national reputation. Publication in upper-tier, peer-reviewed outlets is particularly important.

**External Funding**--The individual should be successful in acquiring external funds for the further development of their Kansas-based research program. The acquisition of competitive external funding is an important measure that reflects directly on the stature of an individual's research program.

Associate Scientists and Associate Research Professors at the KGS are expected to lead Kansas-based research programs of national stature and of increasing visibility internationally. In addition, they are expected to play an increasing role of service to the KGS, State, and profession.

**Scholarship Criteria for Promotion to Senior:**

Under the University standards for promotion to senior rank, the record must demonstrate an established scholarly career, as reflected in such factors as a substantial and ongoing pattern of publication or creative activity, external reviews of the candidate's work by eminent scholars or practitioners in the field, the candidate's national or international reputation, and other evidence of an active and productive scholarly career.

When appropriate to their duties, the individual should have established a continuous, successful record of competitive external funding that enhances their research program.

In the KGS, the following scholarship expectations to meet University standards also apply for promotion to senior rank:

**Leadership**--The individual should lead a strong, Kansas-based research program that is recognized nationally and internationally.

**Publications**--The individual should produce a sufficient number of peer-reviewed publications that will allow them to establish a national and international reputation.

**External Funding**--The individual should have a strong track record of acquiring competitive external funding to enhance their research program.

Senior Scientists and Research Professors at the KGS should be internationally recognized leaders in their respective specialty areas and must maintain an active program of research to remain so.

**Scholarship Expectations at the Senior Rank:**

Leadership--The individual should lead a well-developed, Kansas-based research program that maintains a strong national and international reputation.

Publications--Individuals should produce a sufficient number of high-quality peer-reviewed publications that will allow them to maintain a national and international reputation. In addition, they have a critical responsibility to archive their collective knowledge and experience through various written communications. These will likely become information legacies that reflect decades of important work to the State, and must be preserved for posterity.

External Funding--The individual should maintain a strong record of acquiring competitive external funding.

**Service.** Service is an important responsibility of all faculty and unclassified academic staff members that contributes to the University's performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a candidate's particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being a good citizen of the University. The KGS accepts and values scholarly service to the discipline or profession, service within the University, and public service at the local, state, national, or international level.

Service to the State and profession is expected of every KGS scientist. The degree of service should increase as the scientist advances in rank and gains experience. Representative service activities include providing technical advice to the legislature, State agencies, and the public; performing technical reviews for scientific journals and funding agencies; serving as an editor for professional journals; and serving as an officer in a professional society

Service Criteria for Promotion to Associate:

Under the University standards for promotion to associate rank, the record must demonstrate a pattern of service to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the KGS, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for promotion to associate rank:

Service--The individual's research program should serve as the basis for significant service contributions to the State and profession. In the latter years at this rank, the individual must begin to build a record of this service.

Service Criteria for Promotion to Senior:

Under the University standards for promotion to senior rank, the record must demonstrate an ongoing pattern of service reflecting substantial contributions to the University at one or more levels, to the discipline or profession, and/or to the local, state, national, or international communities.

In the KGS, the following service expectations to meet University standards apply for the promotion to senior rank:

Service--The individual should have a strong record of service to the KGS, State, and profession.

## Service Expectations at the Senior Rank:

Service--Individuals should be recognized leaders in service activities at the KGS, State, and professional levels, and should be role models and mentors for junior staff. Their most critical service responsibility is to use their experience and knowledge to help position the KGS, State, and their subdiscipline to meet the challenges of the future.

**Ratings for Performance.** Using the criteria described above, the candidate's performance in the areas of research, service, and teaching (if applicable), (as applicable to each position) will be rated using the terms "excellent," "very good," "good," "marginal," or "poor," defined as follows:

- (a) "Excellent" means that the candidate substantially exceeds expectations for promotion to this rank.
- (b) "Very Good" means the candidate exceeds expectations for promotion to this rank.
- (c) "Good" means the candidate meets expectations for promotion to this rank.
- (d) "Marginal" (Needs Improvement) means the candidate falls below expectations for promotion to this rank. A performance improvement plan is required for an 'overall' marginal rating.
- (e) "Poor" (Unacceptable) means the candidate falls significantly below expectations for promotion to this rank. A performance improvement plan is required for an 'overall' poor rating.

Absent exceptional circumstances, no candidate may be recommended for promotion without meeting standards in all applicable areas of performance.

## Promotion Procedures

The KGS conducts the initial review of academic promotion candidates who do not report directly to the Vice Chancellor for Research. The review is conducted pursuant to the procedures and requirements of section 5 of Article VI of the *FSRR* in connection with the candidate's responsibility in the KGS.

*Purpose:* The KGS Promotion and Review Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the administration, providing peer review and recommendations concerning promotion of unclassified academic (faculty-equivalent) staff.

*Joint Appointments.* Guidelines for the handling of joint appointments have been established by the Provost's Office and will govern the interaction between Office of Research initial and intermediate level reviews and those conducted by the other unit in which appointment is held. These guidelines can be found at:

<https://policy.drupal.ku.edu/provost/joint-appts-guidelines>

Each unit (either within the Office of Research or in the Office of Research and a College or School) in which the candidate holds appointment conducts its own initial review and makes an independent recommendation regarding promotion (or promotion and tenure). However, the various units in which a candidate holds appointment must consult closely about the review since only one set of promotion and tenure materials will be prepared and one set of external evaluations be solicited.

The primary unit as designated at the time of appointment is responsible for initiating the consultation, soliciting external evaluations, and sharing the evaluations with the other unit(s).

(Note that for candidates who hold both an academic staff appointment and an appointment in an academic department, the academic department will always be the primary unit.)

*Promotion Committee.* The KGS review committee shall evaluate the candidate's professional performance, teaching (if applicable), research, and service. In the KGS the initial review committee will consist of three academic staff members of the KGS (from different sections and both gender representation, when possible), at least two members will be senior scientists. The committee members should have significant length of service at the KGS (five-year minimum). Committee members serve for three-year terms with one member rotating off while one new member is added. A member serving in the second or third year of their term will chair the committee. Recommendations for new members should be made by the committee with final appointment made by the KGS director.

No students or untenured faculty members, except unclassified academic staff with the rank equivalent to or higher than associate professor, shall serve on the KGS Promotion and Review Committee or vote on any recommendation concerning promotion.

*Initiation of Review.* Candidates for promotion may be nominated by their direct report, by the administrative principal investigator of a major project, by the director of KGS, or by the KGS Promotion and Review Committee. The number of years elapsed in rank before nomination depends upon the progress made by the individual and the KGS promotion guidelines. Except in rare or unusual circumstances, the normal time in rank prior to a nomination is five years. Candidates may also self-nominate.

In addition, candidates who hold also a tenure-track appointment in an academic unit will go through review in the KGS when they go through mandatory review in the corresponding academic unit. Prior to the beginning of the spring semester, the Provost notifies all tenure-track faculty whose mandatory review year will be the following academic year, with copies provided to the unit administrators. Upon receipt of this notice or if a faculty member requests it prior to the mandatory review year, the KGS shall initiate procedures for evaluating the candidate for the award of promotion.

As part of the annual staff evaluation process, the KGS shall consider the qualifications of all unclassified academic staff members below the senior rank, with a view toward possible promotion in rank during the following academic year. After considering a staff member's qualifications, if the KGS determines that those qualifications warrant promotion in rank, it shall initiate procedures for reviewing the staff member for promotion.

#### Initial Departmental Review.

Nominations are received by an established deadline for promotion of KGS academic staff. These are reviewed by the KGS Promotion and Review Committee and recommendation is made to the director to either proceed with the promotion process or recommend otherwise. The candidate(s) for promotion will work with the committee to provide all the necessary materials for completion of the promotion forms for submission to the Office of Research and the KU Promotion and Tenure Committee within established deadlines. The candidate(s) will also provide a list of names of persons the committee can contact for reference letters along with a list of peers who can be asked to review and comment on the quality of publications.

*Administration Support.* The KGS Human Resources will provide support to the KGS Promotion and Review Committee in announcing the process, requesting nominations, developing the

process timeline, accepting nominations, and final completion of candidate(s) promotion package.

*Preparation of the Promotion Materials.* It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the appropriate portions of the promotion form and provide necessary documents and information in accordance with the Provost's guidelines; assistance from the KGS Human Resources is available.

The KGS Promotion and Review Committee shall receive the candidate documents and accompanying materials from the candidate and finish compiling the record of the candidate's professional performance, scholarship, and service in accordance with the Provost's guidelines.

The KGS review committee shall conduct the solicitation of outside reviewers to assist in the evaluation of the academic staff member's scholarship and in accordance with the Office of Research procedures located at:

<http://www.policy.ku.edu/provost/promotion-procedures-research-graduate-studies>

Emphasis shall be placed on selecting independent reviewers in the same or related discipline who hold academic rank or a professional position equal to or greater than the rank for which the candidate is being considered. Unit procedures related to the solicitation and handling of external evaluations may vary, but they must conform to the general guidelines and requirements for external evaluations established by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and elaborated at:

[http://facultydevelopment.ku.edu/sites/facultydev.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/external\\_eval.docx](http://facultydevelopment.ku.edu/sites/facultydev.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/external_eval.docx)

*Confidentiality Policy.* When soliciting external reviews of a candidate's scholarship, the KGS Promotion and Review Committee shall inform prospective reviewers of the extent to which the candidate will have access to the review. The Office of Research's confidentiality policy regarding soliciting external reviewers for the promotion review process is as follows:

“As part of the promotion process, we are soliciting assessments of [title] [name]'s, research contributions from academic colleagues and distinguished professionals. These letters will become part of the candidate's promotion dossier and are treated as confidential by the University to the extent we are permitted to do so by law.”

*Letters to External Evaluators.* Letters from external evaluators form an important component of the promotion review for faculty/academic staff. Ultimately six letters from scholars and professionals in the same discipline should be solicited, a list of six names is provided by the candidate and a list of six names is provided by the promotion committee. The committee shall also give the candidate the opportunity to suggest individuals to be excluded from the list of reviewers. Whenever possible, at least three of the six reviewers will be selected by the KGS Promotion and Review Committee from the list provided by the candidate, if he/she provides one. In some cases, however, the decline to review or unavailability of several external reviewers may make it impossible to select at least three reviewers from the candidate's list. External evaluators should *not* include dissertation advisors, postdoctoral supervisors, former professors, graduate school colleagues, co-authors, KU faculty, or personal friends of the candidate. If the specialized nature of an individual's work makes it necessary to draw on such persons, a special request will need to be made to the Vice Chancellor for Research as soon as possible.



Refer to University guidelines on requirements for external evaluations of candidates:  
[http://facultydevelopment.ku.edu/sites/facultydevelopment.ku.edu/files/docs/external\\_eval\\_guidelines.pdf](http://facultydevelopment.ku.edu/sites/facultydevelopment.ku.edu/files/docs/external_eval_guidelines.pdf)

*Recommendations.* Upon completion of the external reviews, the committee conducting the initial review shall evaluate the candidate's record of professional performance, scholarship, and service in light of the applicable standards and criteria and make recommendations in accordance with the voting procedures detailed below.

The KGS voting procedures are as follows: Each committee member provides his/her vote verbally to the committee chair. Votes are not confidential within the committee and will be shared with the other committee members. Negative votes require justification, positive votes do not require justification but may volunteer comments.

The committee shall prepare the initial evaluation and summary evaluation sections of the promotion forms. The forms and recommendations shall be forwarded to the Director, who shall indicate separately, in writing, whether he/she concurs or disagrees with the recommendations of the review committee. The KGS director shall communicate the recommendations of the initial review, and his/her concurrence or disagreement with the recommendation, to the candidate and provide the candidate with a copy of the summary evaluation section of the promotion form. Negative recommendations shall be communicated in writing and, if the review will not be forwarded automatically, the director shall inform the candidate that the candidate may request that the promotion dossier be forwarded for further review.

Favorable recommendations, together with the record of the initial review, shall be forwarded to the committee(s) conducting the intermediate review. Negative recommendations resulting from an initial review shall go forward for intermediate review only if it is the candidate's mandatory review year for a candidate holding also a tenure-track appointment or if the candidate requests it.

*Timeline:* Promotion and Review, administered by KGS Human Resources

March: Review committee membership and invite new academic members to serve as member's terms end.

April: Announce the beginning of the promotion and review process by instructing academic staff that they may nominate themselves or others for promotion.

Mid-May: Provide the promotion committee with a current curriculum vita and position description for each nominated candidate.

Late-May: Promotion committee makes a recommendation to the director either in support of the nomination(s) going forward or recommends otherwise with justification. The names of those candidates supported by the KGS director will be submitted to the Office of Research.

End-May: The candidate(s) are to be informed he/she is being considered for promotion. The candidate(s) prepare a list of the names and addresses of six outside scholars and professionals in their discipline. The promotion committee also submits a list of six outside reviewers for each candidate. The committee begins working with the candidate(s) to complete the official 'Candidate Documents' required by the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure and submits them to KGS HR. <http://facultydevelopment.ku.edu/promotion-tenure>

Mid-June: A list of 12 proposed external evaluators is submitted to the Office of Research for each promotion candidate by KGS HR. The promotion committee sends out request for letters

of recommendation and peer review of publications. The committee should contact the potential outside scholars to determine if they can respond by established deadlines. Letters should be received by early September.

Early October: The promotion committee chair should complete the official Initial Review material according to the detailed instructions and submit the completed package(s) to KGS HR by the established deadline for review before forwarding to the director.

Late October: After the director's review and concurrence, or non-concurrence, the promotion material is forwarded to the Office of Research by the established deadline.

Intermediate Review:

The candidate may submit a written response to a negative KGS recommendation, or to a final rating of professional performance, research, or service below the level of "good" included in the evaluation section of the recommendation. The written response goes forward with the dossier to the next level of review by the Office of Research Committee on Promotions.

A request for information by the Office of Research Committee on Promotions and/or UCPT shall be sent to the KGS director who shall immediately provide a copy to the candidate and inform the KGS Promotion and Review committee. The director and/or promotion committee shall prepare the KGS's response in accordance with the initial review procedures.

The candidate shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the KGS's response and/or to submit his/her own documentation or comment to the Office of Research Committee on Promotions and/or UCPT as applicable.