Procedures for the appointment and promotion of probationary faculty members in the School of Human Ecology (SoHE) follow policies and procedures specified in Chapter 7 (Faculty Appointments) of Faculty Policies and Procedures (FP&P), the appropriate Divisional Committee’s annually issued “Tenure Guidelines,” and the procedures specified in this document.

Responsibility for oversight of a probationary faculty member’s progress is shared among the faculty member’s Mentoring and Oversight Committee, the Executive Committee of the Department (disciplinary division within School of Human Ecology in which the faculty holds his or her appointment) and the Executive Committee of the School of Human Ecology.

1. Appointment, Mentoring, and Oversight of the Probationary Faculty Member

Appointments and recommendations for tenure are made by the SoHE Executive Committee, which acts upon an advisory recommendation from the Department’s Executive Committee and a report from the Mentoring and Oversight Committee. Assistant Professors in the School of Human Ecology are normally appointed for an initial three-year term. Their progress is reviewed annually (see below). After the third year, reappointment at the assistant professor rank may be for terms of one, two, or three years until promotion or termination.

The Department Chair will make certain that each new faculty member receives an orientation to the policies and procedures of the Department and the School. This includes receipt of or referral to this document and the “Tenure Guidelines” document from the Divisional Committee selected by the faculty member as best suited to judge the tenurability of his/her professional work.

As part of the School’s annual review (P-FAR) process, the Department Chair will meet with each assistant professor. In this meeting, the Chair will discuss with the assistant professor the results of the annual review, as well as his or her own observations of the assistant professor’s work. The Chair will give particular attention to any real or perceived inconsistency between the advice of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee and the results of the annual review. If the Chair perceives such an inconsistency, he or she should attempt to resolve it in consultation with the Mentoring and Oversight Committee and the assistant professor.

As described below, the Mentoring and Oversight Committee has primary responsibility for advising and evaluating the work of the assistant professor based on the cumulative record, whereas each annual review focuses on a single year’s work. The Department Chair’s role is complementary to that of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee. It includes making his or her best effort to ensure that the annual review provides clear and useful feedback, to guard against conflicting advice, and to deploy departmental assignments and resources to support the assistant professor’s professional development.

The Mentoring and Oversight Committee. Section 7.05 of FP&P describes the requirements for the guidance and annual evaluation of probationary faculty members, including two functions: guidance/mentoring, and oversight/evaluation. The policy articulated in FP&P 7.05.C allows either for separate guidance and oversight committees or for a single committee that does...
both. The SoHE combines the mentoring/guidance and oversight/evaluation functions in one committee, hereafter referred to as the Mentoring and Oversight Committee.

The Mentoring and Oversight Committee is responsible for providing guidance to the probationary faculty member. The committee will meet with the new faculty member to answer questions and to offer advice on teaching, research, service and outreach, or other topics related to professional development and achieving tenure. This committee also will have responsibility for developing annual evaluations of the probationary faculty member and reviewing progress toward tenure.

In the first semester of the probationary appointment and upon the recommendation of the Department Chair, the Associate Dean of SoHE will appoint a Mentoring and Oversight Committee for the probationary faculty member. The Associate Dean will inform the probationary faculty member in writing of the membership of this committee. This committee will consist of at least three tenured faculty members including two members from the probationary faculty’s departmental faculty and one member from another SoHE department. The committee members will be selected based on their ability to judge the tenurability of the probationary faculty member’s professional work and may include one or more additional members from outside the School, if required for appropriate review of the faculty member’s achievement. For a member from outside the School to chair the mentoring and oversight committee, he or she must be granted voting rights by the SoHE Executive Committee. An effort will be made to keep the Mentoring and Oversight Committee the same throughout the period of the probationary appointment, but it may change upon the probationary faculty member’s request or recommendation of the Dean, Department Chair, or Department Executive Committee.

2. The Role of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee

The Mentoring and Oversight Committee will provide guidance and oversight as defined in FP&P 7.05. The committee has the following responsibilities:

a. Provide guidance to the probationary faculty member on effective performance consistent with the objectives of the appointment and progress towards tenure.

b. Meet with the probationary faculty member to discuss criteria for and progress toward tenure. Minimally, a meeting will take place following the written annual review prepared by the committee and reviewed by the Department and SoHE Executive Committees. A copy of that review is to be provided to the probationary faculty member. His or her department chair will participate in the annual meeting.

c. Establish a procedure for peer review of the teaching activities of the probationary faculty member. The objective of the review is to provide the Department with feedback on the probationary faculty member’s teaching beyond student evaluations. Plans should be made for classroom visits and a written assessment by a member of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee or other senior faculty designated by that committee. When feasible
and appropriate, visits to outreach teaching sessions will be conducted. The Mentoring and Oversight Committee will also evaluate teaching materials.

d. Prepare and provide an annual written report for the Department Executive Committee and SoHE Executive Committee evaluating the probationary faculty member’s progress toward tenure using the criteria of the appropriate Divisional Committee. The probationary faculty member is responsible for providing the Mentoring and Oversight Committee with the information needed to write the annual report, including an updated CV, teaching evaluations, and materials prepared for the SoHE’s Peer Faculty Annual Review (P-FAR).

e. Recommend the timing and scheduling of the tenure review by the SoHE Executive Committee.

f. If the SoHE Executive Committee decides to consider the case for tenure, prepare the tenure dossier (see below).

g. The Committee will have access to the P-FAR documents of the faculty member. However, the evaluation standards of those one-year reviews are distinct from those of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee’s cumulative reviews, which are aligned with Divisional Committee guidelines. When the latter reviews appear to differ from the former, the conclusions of the Mentoring and Oversight Committee with respect to promotion are determinative.

3. Review Process at the Executive Committee Level

The Mentoring and Oversight Committee is responsible for writing and presenting to the Departmental Executive Committee the annual review of the probationary faculty member.

Although reviews of probationary faculty shall be conducted each year, those in the third and fifth years of probation are normally more thorough in order to support recommendations for appointment renewal and in preparation for a tenure recommendation, respectively.

The annual progress report will be shared with the Departmental and SoHE Executive Committees. The SoHE Executive Committee discusses the Mentoring and Oversight Committee report and acts upon motions regarding acceptance of the report and its recommendation, including any made for the annual probationary report, the renewal of the probationary appointment or the consideration of promotion to tenure.

When a vote is taken, SoHE Executive Committee members must be present in person or via speakerphone or videoconference. (This policy is consistent with the current interpretation of the Wisconsin open meetings law.) Proxy votes are not acceptable. Motions regarding the granting of tenure or the renewal of the probationary appointment require affirmative votes from two-thirds of the committee members present in order to pass.

Upon acceptance of the report and its recommendations by the SoHE Executive committee, the probationary faculty member shall be given a copy of that report by his/her Mentoring and
Oversight committee. The probationary faculty member shall be offered an opportunity to comment in writing (FP&P 7.05 D), the comments being attached to the report and included in the faculty member’s permanent file.

4. Responsibilities of the Dean of SoHE

   a. Upon recommendation of the Department Chair, appoint the Mentoring and Oversight Committee and inform the probationary faculty member of the membership.

   b. Assure the correctness of the tenure clock, with appropriate adjustments for leaves of absence.

   c. In consultation with the Mentoring and Oversight committee, set dates for SoHE Executive Committee meetings to meet all deadlines for reappointment and promotion.

   d. As per FP&P 7.07A-D, send notice for action on probationary appointments (e.g., reappointment or promotion) in the semester preceding the semester in which action will be taken. When the Executive Committee meeting date for review has been set, notice shall be sent to inform the probationary faculty member of his/her right to require that the meeting be open no less than 20 days prior to the meeting. The SoHE Executive Committee’s decision will be sent to the probationary faculty member within five working days.

5. Guidelines for Promotion--Criteria for Tenure

The Mentoring and Oversight Committee may make a recommendation for tenure or termination at any time during the probationary period, but must do so no later than during the sixth year of probationary service. The Committee is responsible to recommend the timing and scheduling of the tenure review by the SoHE Executive Committee. The primary criteria for promotion are those specified by the faculty member’s Divisional Committee. In this section, we present some considerations of particular relevance within the School of Human Ecology.

A probationary faculty member is expected to demonstrate substantial scholarly progress, excellence, and promise in research, teaching and service (as specified in the appropriate Divisional Committee Tenure Guidelines for the Arts & Humanities, Social Studies, Physical Sciences, and Biological Sciences divisions). The School of Human Ecology, with its cross-disciplinary and applied mission, values (but does not mandate) activities that are in the spirit of the "Wisconsin Idea," including outreach research, outreach teaching, and outreach service.

In evaluating faculty with integrated appointments combining UW-Extension and UW-Madison resident appointments, where outreach is a primary responsibility, the School will be attentive to the guidelines published by the UW-Madison Council on Outreach, “Commitment to the Wisconsin Idea: A Guide to Documenting and Evaluating Excellence in Outreach Scholarship,” and “UW Extension: Defining Excellence Among Integrated Cooperative Extension Specialists in Wisconsin” and any guidance provided by the relevant divisional committee.
Research: By the time of review for tenure, the probationary faculty member should have established a national reputation for excellence in a particular area of expertise. There is no predetermined arena in which the probationary faculty member’s scholarly endeavor must proceed, but he or she must have established an identifiable, programmatic area of scholarly endeavor or creative work that he or she can articulate and that is consistent with his or her appointment. In turn, the Mentoring and Oversight Committee must be able to articulate and demonstrate this to the Executive Committees and the broader scholarly community. (It is this arena that will be evaluated by external reviewers in the tenure process, as required by Divisional Committee guidelines.)

The School and its departments are diverse and value a range of different types of scholarly activities. Faculty work in a variety of media, producing different forms of scholarship. (This could include, but is not limited to, books and/or peer-reviewed journal articles, exhibitions of creative work, outreach publications, or a recognized record of professional projects.)

Whereas the Executive Committee believes that no specific number of creative projects, published articles or public lectures, etc. can be specified as fulfilling the needs of a positive tenure vote, it nonetheless realizes that specific criteria appropriate to the probationary faculty member’s work can be defined. To this end, each project, exhibition, presentation or article (and the like) will be evaluated concerning its merits, weighted accordingly within the entire picture of the probationary faculty member’s developing career, and evaluated according to the criteria understood mutually by the faculty member and his or her Mentoring and Oversight Committee. The Executive Committee is looking for excellence in terms of quality journals, exhibition venues, or equivalent outlets. The quality of venues for publishing and exhibitions is a continuing dialogue the probationary faculty member is expected to have with the Mentoring and Oversight Committee.

To the extent that a trajectory of increasing accomplishment, professional recognition, and intellectual growth can be demonstrated, the tenure case will be that much stronger.

Teaching: By the time of review for tenure, the probationary faculty member should demonstrate excellence as a teacher (including teaching undergraduate students, graduate students, Extension educators and other professionals, and community members, as appropriate) as indicated by peer teaching reviews, learner evaluations, course materials, outreach materials, and other evidence of teaching performance such as student accomplishments (including theses and dissertations).

Service: By the time of review for tenure, the probationary faculty member should have contributed significantly to the departmental and school service load, and have demonstrated a trajectory indicating potential leadership in community, university (including school and department) and professional service.

Faculty with integrated or joint appointments. Except as noted below, the School and Department will follow the same procedures in monitoring, assessing and encouraging the progress of probationary faculty part of whose tenure home or budgetary appointment is shared across one or more other departments, including Cooperative Extension, as it does for
probationary faculty whose tenure home is entirely within a single department. Whenever possible, annual reviews of probationary faculty with joint appointments will be conducted by a Mentoring and Oversight Committee that includes at least one member from the other department or division. The committee may be expanded to four persons, if necessary to reflect the proportional share of the faculty member’s tenure homes. The Department Chair will consult regularly with the chair or chairs of other departments or with Extension in which the probationary faculty member has part of their tenure home or budgetary appointment in order to insure that the combined teaching and service commitments of probationary faculty members are reasonable.

6. The Tenure Decision

Upon recommendation by the SoHE department that the candidate be reviewed for tenure, the candidate will be asked to assist in the development of the tenure dossier, including provision of requested documents. The probationary faculty member will prepare materials as indicated in the Divisional Committee tenure guidelines.

The tenure dossier is prepared and compiled by the Mentoring and Oversight Committee with input from the probationary faculty member as requested. That Committee will submit the dossier to the Departmental Executive Committee, which will review it and make an advisory recommendation to the SoHE Executive Committee. The SoHE Executive Committee will in turn review, comment, and vote on recommending the candidate for tenure. As provided by FP&P 7.06.A, the Dean may establish deadlines for the steps in this process. If the SoHE Executive Committee vote is positive, the tenure dossier will be forwarded to the appropriate Divisional Committee for consideration. The vote of the SoHE Executive Committee is reported to the Divisional Committee with the final dossier. See FP&P Section 7.15, for a description of the roles of the Divisional Committee, Dean, Provost, Chancellor, and Board of Regents in the granting of tenure.

Normally the dossier remains a confidential document, but if it is shared with the candidate, all confidential material from reviewers will be removed and the chair’s letter shall be redacted.