



POLICY: Appointment, Review and Promotion of FTE Professional Track Faculty

DATE: September 10, 2020

This policy provides the college-level framework for the appointment, annual review and promotion of FTE professional track faculty (previously referred to as non-tenure-track faculty) in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

This policy applies to all CAS units. This college policy is subordinate to related policies outlined in the [University of South Carolina Faculty Manual](#) and in the [University Policy and Procedures Manual](#). In cases of inconsistencies between this college policy and the university, state or federal policies, the university, state or federal policy rules are the final authorities.

I. POSITION APPROVAL AND APPOINTMENT

A. Position Approval

1. Professional track faculty positions include all positions defined and listed in [University Policy ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty](#).
2. New or replacement FTE professional track faculty positions, including the conversion of Non-FTE positions to FTE positions, must have an approved [Academic Position Request/FTE form](#) prior to hiring or conducting a search.
 - a. The unit should submit the completed form to the Office of the Dean for approval.
 - b. The form will be reviewed and then submitted to the Provost Office for final approval.
 - c. Once approved, the Office of the Dean will notify the unit to begin the hiring and search process.

B. Hiring and Search Process

1. New Positions

- a. All professional track faculty position advertisements must be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Dean prior to posting.

Following position approval, units should submit draft advertisements in Microsoft Word format to the CAS Director of Human Resources and to the unit Associate Dean for review and approval.

- b. Once the advertisement has been approved, the unit will create the position posting using the university's People Admin system. All candidates for the position must apply using this system.
- c. Professional track faculty positions must be advertised for a minimum of five working days, preferably for ten calendar days.
- d. It is highly recommended that the department, program, school, center, or institute establish a search committee and formalize their hiring criteria. At least one member of the committee must be identified as the Affirmative Action Advocate during the search process.
- e. For new appointments, the unit must submit a request to make an offer to the unit Associate Dean before an offer is extended. The following application materials should be included with the request: the CV of the finalist, a minimum of three letters of recommendation and the position advertisement.
- f. Once approved, the formal appointment offer letter will be sent directly to the candidate by the Office of the Dean. See also Section I.D. Position Appointment.

2. Reappointment

Reappointment of the same person to the same position does not require an advertised search, however all reappointments must be approved by the unit Associate Dean. See also Section II. Annual Review and Reappointment.

Once approved, the formal letter of reappointment will be sent directly to the candidate by the Office of the Dean. See also Section I.D. Position Appointment.

C. Credential Verification

All university faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction must meet the SACSCOC credential requirements for teaching at the appropriate level or have approved alternate credentials as outlined in [University Policy ACAF 1.20 Credential Verification for Instructors of Record](#).

D. Position Appointment

- 1. Appointment to a professional track faculty position is made by the College. Each professional track faculty member will receive a letter of appointment from the Dean specifying the beginning and ending dates of the appointment along with a specific assignment to a unit for administrative and evaluation purposes.

The letter must define teaching load, including course title and level if available, research and service expectations, if applicable, and must state that the appointment is contingent upon the availability of funding.

2. Appointment Length

- a. The minimum duration for an initial hire is one academic year. If a one-academic-year contract is used, then the minimum duration for the next contract is also one academic year.

If a contract is renewed after two academic years of employment (either a single two-academic-year contract or two one-academic-year contracts), the minimum duration of the next contract is three academic years.

If a contract is renewed after eight years of employment, the minimum duration of that contract (and all future contracts) is five academic years.

- b. Promotion can be considered within this framework but is not required for multi-year contract eligibility. Appointments may not exceed five academic years and may be renewable, subject to availability of funding.

In multi-year contracts, the appointment letter must state that renewal for each subsequent year is contingent upon satisfactory performance and available funds.

II. ANNUAL REVIEW AND REAPPOINTMENT

The university requires annual review of professional track faculty. The unit head is responsible for ensuring that all professional track faculty members are reviewed annually in writing and that the reviews are included as appropriate in the promotion review process. Reappointment is based on satisfactory performance and the continued availability of funds.

A. Annual Written Evaluations

Each professional track faculty member will receive an annual written evaluation of their performance by the appropriate supervisor. The appropriate supervisor may be the faculty member who directly supervises the professional track faculty member under review or the faculty member who supplies most or all of the funding to support the position. In some cases, the unit head or Associate Dean will serve in this role.

B. Evaluation Process

1. On an annual basis, the appropriate supervisor will assess the professional track faculty member's performance based on the terms of the contract or letter of appointment that specifies the duties of the position. The review should occur no later than 90 days prior to the end of the appointment.

The review will indicate whether the faculty member's performance has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Where appropriate, the evaluation should be submitted by the supervisor to the unit head for further review.

2. After review by the unit head, a copy of the written evaluation will be provided to the professional track faculty member. In the case of unsatisfactory performance, the author

of the annual review will meet with the professional track faculty member to provide feedback regarding areas needing improvement.

3. The professional track faculty member will sign the evaluation to indicate that the document has been reviewed and read. The signature does not imply agreement with the evaluation, but only its receipt by the professional track faculty member.

The professional track faculty member may respond in writing to the annual evaluation and this response, along with the initial evaluation letter, will become part of the individual's permanent file. The unit head may also meet with the professional track faculty member upon request to discuss the review.

C. Reappointment Requests

Following a successful annual evaluation, reappointment requests should be submitted by the unit to the Associate Dean as indicated in Section I.B.2 above.

Once approved, the formal letter of reappointment will be sent directly to the candidate by the Office of the Dean.

III. PROMOTION

Professional track faculty members who have received positive reviews over the course of their appointment and have met the criteria below may be considered for promotion. Professional track faculty members are not eligible for tenure.

Promotion eligibility is governed by [University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions.](#)

A. Promotion Eligibility

Each year the Office of the Dean will review the eligibility of individuals in professional track faculty positions and notify each professional track faculty member eligible for promotion and their respective unit head. The written notification will include the promotion review schedule and required promotion file submission date. The eligible faculty member will inform the unit head in writing of their desire to proceed or not proceed with the promotion review process.

1. Instructional Faculty

Senior Instructor or Senior Lecturer: Instructors and Lecturers who meet the requirements below will be eligible to apply for promotion in their sixth year of appointment.

An individual promoted to the rank of Senior Instructor or Senior Lecturer must have held a regular, full-time appointment as an Instructor or Lecturer at the University of South Carolina for a minimum of six consecutive years. (University Policy ACAF 1.06, Section I.C.3.b.)

2. Clinical Faculty

- a. Clinical Professor: Clinical Associate Professors who meet the requirements below will be eligible to apply for promotion after the third year of service at the associate level.

An individual appointed as a Clinical Professor must have a record of outstanding clinical performance, and have at least nine years of effective, relevant experience. This rank is reserved for individuals with proven stature as a clinician. (University Policy ACAF 1.06, Section I.C.3.b.)

- b. Clinical Associate Professor: Clinical Assistant Professors who meet the requirements below will be eligible to apply for promotion after the fifth year of service.

An individual appointed as a Clinical Associate Professor must have a record of effective clinical performance and have strong potential for further development as a clinician. (University Policy ACAF 1.06, Section I.C.3.b.)

3. Research Faculty

- a. Research Professor: Research Associate Professor is eligible to apply for promotion after the third year of service at the associate level.

An individual appointed as a Research Professor must be recognized internationally/nationally in his/her field and have at least nine years of effective, relevant experience. This rank is reserved for individuals with proven stature in research. (University Policy ACAF 1.06, Section I.C.3.b.)

- b. Research Associate Professor: A Research Assistant Professor is eligible to apply for promotion after the fifth year of service.

An individual appointed as a Research Associate Professor must have an established reputation in his/her field. (University Policy ACAF 1.06, Section I.C.3.b.)

B. Promotion File Submission

1. Each professional track faculty member pursuing promotion will assemble and submit a promotion file containing the documents outlined below by the date indicated by the Office of the Dean in the notification letter.
 - a. In departments, schools, academic programs and centers and institutes affiliated with a department or academic program, promotion files should be submitted to the unit head.
 - b. In centers and institutes not affiliated with a school, department or program, promotion files should be submitted to the appropriate Associate Dean who will serve in the unit head role for review and recommendation.

2. The promotion files should be assembled in accordance with the type and rank of position as outlined below. Please see Appendix A: Professional track Faculty Promotion File Requirements for a summary list of the documents required for each type of professional track faculty position under review.

a. Instructional Faculty

The instructional faculty member will assemble the following items for submission in a promotion file:

- Current curriculum vitae
- Personal statement including summary of teaching activities
- Sample of student evaluations
- Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- Other letters of support (optional)

The promotion file should be submitted to the faculty member's unit head by the date indicated in the promotion review schedule.

b. Clinical Faculty

- i. The clinical faculty member will assemble the following items for submission in a promotion file:

- Current curriculum vitae
- Personal statement including summary of clinical research and teaching activities
- List of clinical research and teaching activities (publications, presentations or other scholarly products produced during the present appointment as a clinical faculty member)
- List of submitted proposals if applicable (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during present appointment as funded, declined or pending, as well as the role of the clinical faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator or key personnel)
- Sample of student evaluations (if applicable)
- Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- Other letters of support (optional)

The promotion file should be submitted to the faculty member's unit head by the date indicated in the promotion review schedule.

- ii. Outside Letters of Reference: The unit head should solicit three external review or referee letters to add to the promotion file of the clinical faculty member. Additional letters from other commentators are also welcome as additions to the file.

Every effort should be made so that none of the reviewers are individuals who trained the candidate, served as a co-author on publications in the last four years, or was a co-principal investigator in the last four years with the candidate. The request for review letters by the unit head will include a request for a one-page bio-statement describing the reviewer and a statement of non-involvement between the reviewer and the candidate.

c. Research Faculty

- i. The research faculty member will assemble the following items for submission in a promotion file:
 - Current curriculum vitae
 - Personal statement including summary of research activities
 - List of research activities (publications, exhibits, performances, or other scholarly products produced during present appointment)
 - List of submitted proposals (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during present appointment as funded, declined or pending, as well as the role of the research faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator or key personnel clearly described)
 - Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
 - Other letters of support (optional)

The promotion file should be submitted to the faculty member's unit head by the date indicated in the promotion review schedule.

- ii. Outside Letters of Reference: The unit head should solicit three external review or referee letters to add to the promotion file of a research faculty member. Additional letters from other commentators are also welcome as additions to the file.

Every effort should be made so that none of the reviewers are individuals who trained the candidate, served as a co-author on publications in the last four years, or was a co-principal investigator in the last four years with the candidate. The request for review letters by the unit head will include a request for a one-page bio-statement describing the reviewer and a statement of non-involvement between the reviewer and the candidate.

C. Promotion File Review

1. Professional Track Faculty Promotion Review Committee: The unit head will appoint a professional track faculty promotion review committee to review the faculty member's promotion file and recommend a decision on the promotion request. This three-person promotion review committee must include at least one professional track faculty member above the present rank of the candidate(s) under review. If the unit does not have an appropriately ranked professional track faculty member for this service, a suitable substitute from another unit may be asked to serve on the committee, in consultation with the unit Associate Dean.

Standing unit tenure and promotion committees may be used in lieu of an independent review committee provided that at least one professional track faculty member above the present rank of the candidate(s) is added to the review and assessment of professional track faculty member promotion files.

2. The unit head will add the following materials to the file and then provide copies of the file to the promotion review committee:
 - a. Instructional
 - Peer review of teaching (supplied by the unit head)
 - Teaching summary (supplied by the unit head)
 - b. Clinical
 - Peer review of teaching (if applicable) (supplied by the unit head)
 - Teaching summary (supplied by the unit head)
 - External review letters (requested by and submitted to the unit head)
 - c. Research
 - External review letters (requested by and submitted to the unit head)
3. Committee Review and Recommendation: The committee will review the promotion file(s) and then communicate in writing its recommendation(s) on promotion to the unit head. The committee will report a recommendation, but not a vote count.

D. Unit Vote and Recommendation

1. The unit head will provide copies of the complete file including the review committee recommendation to the department or program's voting faculty for review, along with the [Unit Promotion Ballot](#). See also Section IV. Voting Rights below.

The unit recommendation for promotion will be based on a simple majority vote by unit faculty.

2. In the cases where promotion is recommended, the unit head will add the [Vote Summary Form](#) and Chair or Director's Letter of Support to the file and then submit the complete dossier file to the Dean.

E. Dean/Provost Decision

1. The Dean will review each professional track faculty promotion file and render a recommendation within 60 days of receipt. The Dean will transmit this recommendation to the Provost in writing.

In the case that a professional track faculty member is not recommended for promotion, the unit head will meet with the faculty member upon request to provide feedback regarding the decision.

2. The Provost will review the recommendation and notify the College of approval or disapproval.
3. The Dean will notify the faculty member of the final decision. If approved, the notification letter will include the effective date of the promotion in concurrence with the renewal of their appointment.

F. Appeals of Negative Decisions

Appeals of negative decisions regarding promotion of professional track faculty will be made in writing to the unit head within 14 workdays of receipt by the faculty member of the promotion decision. The appeal letter will be an explicit, evidence-based explanation of why the candidate disagrees with the promotion decision. The unit head will evaluate the appeal, and provide a written response within 30 workdays. If the candidate wishes to appeal the decision of the unit head, the candidate will outline his or her appeal to the Dean in writing within 14 workdays of receipt of the unit head's decision. The Dean will review the entire record, including the appeals, and will provide a written final decision within 30 workdays.

IV. Voting Rights

Individual departments, programs, institutes, schools, and centers specify voting rights, if any, for professional track faculty members. These rights govern action on matters at the level of the department, program, institute, school, or center. As with tenure-track faculty members, voting rights of professional track faculty members at the university-level of governance, including matters of tenure and promotion, are specified in the [USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#).

V. Change of Status

The change of status to and from the tenure track is governed by the [USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#) and [University Policy ACAF 1.18 Change of Status to and from Tenure-Track Faculty](#).

VI. Policy review and dissemination

This policy should be distributed annually to all department chairs and directors of schools, academic programs, centers and institutes. The policy should also be reviewed and revised at least every five years.

RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

[USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.18 Change of Status to and from Tenure-Track Faculty](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.20 Credential Verification for Instructors of Record](#)

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APPENDIX A: PROFESSIONAL TRACK PROMOTION FILE REQUIREMENTS

(An asterisk (*) indicates items submitted by the faculty member; **items in garnet should be added by unit head**)

Promotion File for INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY

- ☐ **Vote [Summary Form](#)** (please use College template)
- ☐ Current curriculum vitae*
- ☐ Personal statement including summary of teaching activities*
- ☐ Sample of student evaluations*
- ☐ Supporting materials* (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ☐ Other letters of support* (optional)
- ☐ **Peer review of teaching** (supplied by the unit head)
- ☐ **Teaching summary** (supplied by the unit head)
- ☐ **[Unit Promotion Ballots](#)** (please use College template)
- ☐ **Chair or director's letter** (supplied by the unit head)

Promotion File for CLINICAL FACULTY

- ☐ **Vote [Summary Form](#)** (please use College template)
- ☐ Current curriculum vitae*
- ☐ Personal statement including summary of clinical research and teaching activities*
- ☐ Sample of student evaluations* (if applicable)
- ☐ List of clinical research and teaching activities* (publications, presentations or other scholarly products produced during the present appointment as a clinical faculty member)
- ☐ List of submitted proposals* (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during current appointment as funded, declined or pending, as well as the role of the clinical faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator or key personnel)
- ☐ Supporting materials* (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ☐ Other letters of support* (optional)
- ☐ **External review letters** (requested by and submitted to the unit head)
- ☐ **Peer review of teaching** (supplied by the unit head)
- ☐ **Teaching summary** (supplied by the unit head)
- ☐ **[Unit Promotion Ballots](#)** (please use college template)
- ☐ **Chair or director's letter** (supplied by the unit head)

Promotion File for RESEARCH FACULTY

- ☐ **Vote [Summary Form](#)** (please use College template)
- ☐ Current curriculum vitae*
- ☐ Personal statement including summary of research activities*
- ☐ List of research activities* (publications, exhibits, performances, or other scholarly products produced during current appointment)
- ☐ List of submitted proposals* (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during current appointment as funded, declined or pending, as well as the role of the research faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator or key personnel)
- ☐ Supporting materials* (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ☐ Other letters of support* (optional)
- ☐ **External review letters** (requested by and submitted to the unit head)
- ☐ **[Unit Promotion Ballots](#)** (please use College template)
- ☐ **Chair or director's letter** (supplied by the unit head)