

# **Guidelines for Establishing and Filling Positions in the Teaching Title Series**

- A. Introduction
- B. Definition
- C. Establishment of a Position
- D. Initial Appointment
- E. Academic Ranks and Titles
- F. Performance Evaluation
- G. Criteria for Appointment and Promotion
- H. Eligibility for Promotion
- I. Procedure for Promotion
- J. Terms of Appointment
- K. Renewal and Continuation
- L. Dismissal
- M. Noncontinuation
- N. Graduate Faculty
- O. Employment Conditions
- P. University Membership
- Q. Change from Non-Tenure Track Teaching Faculty to Tenure Track Faculty
- R. Change from Tenure Track to Non-Tenure Track Teaching Faculty
- S. AAUP Guidelines

## **A. Introduction**

The first responsibility of Auburn University is to educate our students and prepare them for life. To meet the increasing demand for skilled individuals to support instruction, the university has established a non-tenure track teaching faculty title series. This series is designed to attract and retain professionals with demonstrated expertise in their fields, who will contribute to the university's academic mission by providing high-quality instruction. A teaching title series for appointments and promotions without tenure is established as hereafter defined and described.

Any matter not delineated in this document should be decided at the college level in consultation with the provost.

## **B. Definition**

The non-tenure track teaching faculty title series is for appointment and promotion of appropriately qualified individuals who contribute to the University's mission by participation in projects that predominantly involve instruction.

At least 80% of the activity of all teaching faculty will contribute to the instructional mission of the university. This can include classroom instruction, advising, curriculum coordination, and other responsibilities supporting the instructional mission. Teaching faculty positions may additionally include other responsibilities for creative work, research, service, and outreach as specified by the department or unit. The proportion of a teaching faculty member's activity assigned to the instructional mission should be greater than that of the typical tenure-track faculty member in their department or unit.

## **C. Establishment of a Position**

To establish a non-tenure track teaching faculty position, the initiating unit shall (1) prepare a proposal demonstrating the need for such a position and indicate the source, amount, and term of funding; (2) prepare a job description; (3) identify any office space, laboratory space, material supplies, support services, and equipment that are needed for the performance of position responsibilities; and (4) obtain approvals of the proposal by the chief administrative officer of the concerned unit, the dean of the college, and the provost. The proposal shall be transmitted to the dean of the college by the department or unit head/chair with their indication of faculty approval for establishment of the position. The hiring of non-tenure track teaching faculty will follow normal university hiring procedures, except when impractical because of the provisions of the contract, grant, generated income or other designated funds funding the position. Joint appointments require the approval of all deans involved.

The doctorate is the terminal degree for most disciplines represented at Auburn University. A doctorate in the appropriate field is a minimum qualification for all non-tenure track appointments. Requests for exceptions must be presented to the provost with appropriate justification by the department or unit head/chair, with faculty concurrence, and the dean.

Non-tenure track teaching positions should not be created as a substitute or permanent replacement for tenure-track positions.

## **D. Initial Appointment**

Initial appointments are made as the result of normal recruitment procedures. Departments and units have some leeway in establishing the search procedures most appropriate for their particular circumstances. The department or unit might act as a committee of the whole or smaller screening committees might be

used; a recommendation by a search committee might be transmitted to the department or unit as a whole for further consideration and transmittal to the department or unit head/chair or it might be transmitted directly to the department or unit head/chair. Whatever the procedure, it should be established in advance of need by the department or unit as a whole. The department or unit head/chair, in consultation with the department or unit faculty, should decide on the positions needed and the qualifications a successful candidate must have. Together they should develop a position description to be supplied to the candidates.

The department head/chair or unit head and the search committee shall be guided by the Provost's Office and Affirmative Action Office in framing an advertisement for the position, in seeking permission to advertise, and in recommending an appointment. Guidelines from the Affirmative Action Office help ensure compliance with federal law and help ensure an open and fair search.

When making recommendations for appointments, the department or unit head/chair shall at minimum consult all available members of the department holding professorial ranks or, if the unit does not include professorial faculty, with those faculty holding continuing appointments. Additional department faculty should be consulted as described by department by-laws. They shall then transmit a written summary of the reactions of these faculty members along with appointment forms, through the appropriate dean and/or director, to the provost. Where the faculty members do not concur in a recommendation for initial appointment, the head/chair may submit a recommendation for appointment with their justification and a report of nonconcurrence of the faculty. An appointment made without the support of the faculty may jeopardize the new hire since the faculty will ultimately vote on promotion. The appointment cannot be made without the written approval of the Provost's Office.

Each initial appointment must be confirmed by the appropriate department or unit head/chair or dean in a written notice to the appointee after proper administrative approvals have been obtained. This notice should include determination of prior service at another institution to be credited toward possible promotion. This letter constitutes the faculty member's written terms of the initial employment.

The initial letter of appointment should clearly define the length of the appointment, benefits, and duties/responsibilities, with the written proviso that the continuation of appointment is subject to the availability of funds, the need for services, and satisfactory performance. Language that speaks to continuation beyond the initial appointment should include specific conditions. For example, the grant, contract, or income from which the faculty member is to be paid may be for multiple years, but rarely is funding for subsequent years guaranteed.

All appointments shall be consistent with university employment procedures. Letters containing promises not consistent with the university procedures are not enforceable unless authorized in writing by the president of Auburn University.

#### **E. Academic Ranks and Titles**

Non-tenure track teaching faculty positions are distinguished by academic ranks. In the non-tenure track teaching faculty series, the ranks and titles are Assistant Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor, and Teaching Professor.

With the approval of the dean, a department or unit may create a non-tenure track teaching faculty position with a title that deviates from the titles listed herein. However, the conditions of appointment, employment, and promotion for such a position must be equivalent to one of the titles listed, and any appointee to the position or potential appointee to the position must be made aware of that equivalence.

For university operational purposes, the position will be classified under the ranks and titles described in this document.

## **F. Performance Evaluation**

Performance evaluation, renewal, and promotion in the non-tenure track teaching faculty title series will be based on the evaluation of performance in assigned responsibilities and collegiality as described in chapter 3 of this *Faculty Handbook*.

Each department or unit will have an annual evaluation system that includes student, peer, and administrator input. The evaluation system should have performance improvement as its primary goal. Evaluation metrics should be parallel to department faculty with similar duties and should be determined by the individual department or college.

All department or unit heads/chairs shall conduct at least one annual review before April 30 with each non-tenure track teaching faculty to evaluate their performance and to discuss their future development. For the review, the faculty member will provide a current vita and any supporting material the head/chair or the faculty member deems appropriate.

In the case of non-tenure track teaching faculty members who have not achieved promotion to associate or full professor rank, particular care shall be taken by the department or unit head/chair to relate the faculty member's job performance to the promotion criteria set forth in this document and in the department or unit policy. Significant achievements or deficiencies that might enhance or impede the candidate's progress toward higher rank shall be noted.

The head/chair shall prepare a written report covering the major points of the conference. A copy of the report shall be provided to the non-tenure track faculty member within a month of the conference. The faculty member shall be asked to sign it as confirmation of having seen it. If the faculty member does not agree with material in the report, they may write a response to be appended to the report. One copy of the signed report and response, if there is one, is to be retained for the faculty member's departmental personnel file and copied to the Office of the Provost; another copy is to be given to the faculty member.

This report is to remain confidential, available only for the use of the concerned faculty member and any University officials who have supervisory responsibility over the faculty member.

## **G. Criteria for Appointment and Promotion**

Each discipline and each department or unit is responsible for the evaluation of their non-tenure track teaching faculty and must determine the criteria appropriate for appointment, evaluation, renewal, and promotion and judge its candidates accordingly. The criteria for appointment, evaluation, renewal, and promotion of non-tenure track teaching faculty are specific to each department or unit, and must be approved by the provost.

Although it is not feasible to specify exact criteria for evaluating the credentials of an individual for appointment and promotion in the non-tenure track teaching faculty title series, the following statements are provided as guidelines.

### **1. Assistant Teaching Professor**

Assistant Teaching Professor is the usual entry-level rank for a candidate who should have completed the appropriate terminal degree and meet appropriate credentialing requirements. An appointee should demonstrate potential for teaching expertise, but is not required to have a

minimum number of years in service to be eligible for the Assistant Teaching Professor title. Assistant Teaching Professor should primarily be assigned instructional duties.

## **2. Associate Teaching Professor**

Associate teaching professor is a rank of distinction that is attained through successful performance of assigned duties. Appointment or promotion to the rank of associate teaching professor should be made when the individual has demonstrated expertise, sustained effectiveness, and the potential for excellence in instruction in their designated field, as well as successful performance of all other assigned duties. A candidate should hold the appropriate terminal degree and meet appropriate credentialing requirements.

## **3. Teaching Professor**

Teaching Professor is a rank of distinction requiring recognition of a sustained record of excellence in instructional practice in the field of specialization and successful performance of all other assigned duties. A candidate should hold the appropriate terminal degree and meet appropriate credentialing requirements.

## **H. Eligibility for Promotion**

There is no fixed requirement for years of service at a given rank before a non-tenure track teaching faculty can be promoted in rank. However, the qualifications for promotion to associate rank are generally demonstrated after multiple years of service at assistant rank. Qualifications for promotion to professor rank are generally demonstrated after several years of service at the associate rank. A recommendation for promotion to any rank must be based upon an assessment of the candidate's record since the last promotion, regardless of the institution that granted it. Credit for previous service at other institutions is determined at the time of initial appointment.

Except as otherwise required by law, a non-tenure track faculty member on leave cannot be a candidate for promotion while on leave.

## **I. Procedure for Promotion**

Promotion in rank will be specific to each department or unit, and criteria for promotion must be approved by the dean and the provost, pursuant to the general criteria are specified in this document. Promotion decisions will be determined by the faculty of the specific department, department or unit chair/head, and the dean of the college. As the chief academic officer of Auburn University, the provost retains the right to review all promotions and act appropriately.

Promotion decisions must adhere to the annual deadlines approved by the provost and be reported to the provost's office accordingly.

## **J. Terms of Appointment**

The initial appointment of non-tenure track teaching faculty at any rank is typically a one-year contract, but may be from one semester up to the limit associated with the rank of appointment described below. At the conclusion of the initial term, the term of renewal must follow the guidelines associated with rank, with the caveat that contract term should not exceed the duration of a contract, grant, or designated funds funding the position. Otherwise, appointments of shorter or longer duration are only permissible under

exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the provost. Upon promotion, faculty receive a new contract with a term appropriate to their new rank.

**1. Assistant Teaching Professors**

Before the completion of three years of continuous service, Assistant Teaching Professors are appointed for a term of one to three years. After the completion of three years of continuous service, Assistant Teaching Professors are appointed for a term of two to three years.

**2. Associate Teaching Professors**

Associate Teaching Professors are appointed for terms of three to five years.

**3. Teaching Professors**

Teaching Professors are appointed for terms of five to seven years.

**K. Renewal and Continuation**

All non-tenure track teaching faculty shall have written contracts of specified duration. For non-tenure track faculty on one-year contracts, the annual review shall serve as a renewal review. For non-tenure track faculty on multiple-year contracts, the annual review in the penultimate year of the contract shall serve as a renewal review.

If the candidate for renewal is to be offered an additional one-year appointment, the chair/head may offer the appointment in consultation with the dean. If the candidate for renewal is to be offered an additional multiple-year appointment, the department or unit head/chair shall refer the faculty member's annual review documents to the dean for review and may offer the appointment upon the written approval of the dean.

All renewals are contingent upon funding available, department or unit need, and upon performance. Where applicable, renewed appointments should not extend beyond the contract, grant, generated income, or designated funds funding the position. Otherwise, the renewal term should follow the guidelines according to rank specified herein.

All renewals shall be consistent with university employment procedures. Offers of renewal containing promises not consistent with university procedures are not enforceable unless authorized in writing by the president of Auburn University.

**L. Dismissal**

Termination of a non-tenure track teaching faculty member during the contract term shall be effected by the university only for lack of funding or adequate cause, including but not limited to lack of collegiality and unprofessional behavior.

Dismissal and threat of dismissal shall not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom, constitutional rights, or other applicable rights.

Chapter 3, Section 9.2 of this *Faculty Handbook* provides that "Rights of due process, as described in this statement, shall also apply to a non-tenured teaching faculty member dismissed before completion of their appointment." This shall be construed to apply also to non-tenure track teaching faculty dismissed before completion of their contractual term for reasons other than lack of funding.

### **M. Noncontinuation**

The university retains the right to continue or not continue a non-tenure track teaching faculty member's employment at the conclusion of their contract. If a faculty member whose contract is not to be renewed so requests, a written statement of reasons why the contract is not to be renewed shall be provided.

Noncontinuation and threat of noncontinuation shall not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom, constitutional rights, or other applicable rights.

A non-tenure track teaching faculty member who is not to be renewed is afforded the opportunity to appeal their noncontinuation using the same procedure provided to tenure-track faculty members whom are given notice of noncontinuation.

In all cases, non-tenure track teaching faculty members should be notified of the university's intent not to renew their appointment as soon as practicable. For faculty on one-year contracts, notice of noncontinuation should be given at least three months before the end of the contractual term. For faculty on multiple-year contracts, notice of noncontinuation should be given at least nine months before the end of the contractual term.

### **N. Graduate Faculty**

Non-tenure track teaching faculty members may be proposed, recommended, and approved for membership in the graduate faculty as provided in this handbook. If a teaching faculty member is approved for membership, the faculty member's participation in the graduate faculty shall be in accordance with department policy and may include directing graduate theses and dissertations, teaching courses that they are qualified to teach according to accreditation guidelines, and to serving on committees appointed by the dean of the Graduate School in proportion to their other assignments.

### **O. Employment Conditions**

All non-tenure track teaching faculty shall have written contracts of specified duration. Appointments will be for academic years (nine months) or calendar years (twelve months) that may be renewed. Contracts will specify the term, benefits, and the duties/responsibilities of the appointment. Contracts will include the written proviso that the continuation of non-tenure track appointments are always based on the availability of funds, the need for services, and satisfactory performance. Language that speaks to continuation beyond the term of the contract should include specific conditions for such continuation. For example, the grant, contract, or income from which the faculty is to be paid may be for multiple years, but rarely is funding for subsequent years guaranteed.

All appointments shall be consistent with university employment procedures. Contracts containing promises not consistent with the university procedures are not enforceable unless authorized in writing by the president of Auburn University.

The department or unit shall provide office space, laboratory space, material supplies, support services, and equipment needed to fulfill the faculty member's assigned responsibilities.

All full-time non-tenure teaching track faculty are eligible for all employee and faculty benefits except tenure, de facto tenure, and professional improvement leave. Where applicable, university contributions toward these benefits will be funded by the contract, grant, generated income, or other designated funds that support the employee's position.

**P. University Membership**

All non-tenure track teaching faculty are members of the university faculty (as defined in Chapter 2 of the *Faculty Handbook*), are members of a department or unit, and are under the supervision of the department or unit head/chair.

As members of the university faculty, all non-tenure track teaching faculty have full rights of academic freedom and participation in shared governance. Non-tenure track teaching faculty may vote for and be elected as their department or unit representative in the University Senate.

Each department or unit shall specify which matters non-tenure track teaching faculty members are eligible to discuss and vote on, as well as procedures to do so, in their by-laws. Generally, non-tenure track faculty members should be afforded the opportunity to discuss and vote on all matters appropriate to their rank and responsibilities, including employment, and promotion, pursuant to the following guidelines: evaluation of candidates should be limited to those of higher rank than the candidate; non-tenure track teaching faculty members without assigned research responsibilities shall not vote on questions involving the evaluation of faculty research; non-tenure track teaching faculty members without assigned outreach responsibilities shall not vote on questions regarding the evaluation of faculty outreach. Non-tenure track teaching faculty members shall not be eligible to vote on tenure decisions.

**Q. Change from Non-Tenure Track Teaching Faculty to Tenure Track Faculty**

An appointment of a non-tenure track teaching faculty member to a tenure track appointment may only occur through normal, faculty-approved, department or unit head/chair and dean-approved, provost-approved, and AA/EEO-approved tenure-track recruitment. Any portion of the non-tenure track teaching faculty member's employment during which they were assigned research responsibilities may be treated as time in a faculty rank at another institution, as described in this handbook.

**R. Change from Tenure Track to Non-Tenure Track Teaching Faculty**

An appointment from a tenure track position to a non-tenure track teaching faculty appointment may only occur through normal, faculty-approved, department head/chair and dean-approved, provost-approved, and AA/EEO-approved recruitment and appointment.

**S. AAUP Guidelines**

Auburn endorses the AAUP guidelines stating that no more than 15 percent of the total instruction within an institution and no more than 25 percent of the total instruction within any department should be provided by faculty without tenure-track appointments. In Auburn University's efforts to adhere to these guidelines, any exceptions to these percentages must be approved in writing by the provost on an annual basis.