

3.3.4 Academic Ranks and Promotion ‡

Academic rank is accorded to qualified individuals whose primary assignment is to any of the three major functions of the University: teaching, research/creative work, and outreach. The following general considerations apply to appointment or promotion to faculty ranks:

Assistant Professor: Assistant professor is the usual entry-level rank for a candidate who has completed the appropriate terminal degree (usually a doctorate) or has the equivalent in training, ability, and experience. While a terminal degree or the equivalent is required, an appointee is not required to have a minimum number of years in academic service to be eligible for the rank of assistant professor.

Associate Professor: Associate professor is a rank of distinction that is attained through successful performance of assigned duties. A candidate should hold the appropriate terminal degree (usually a doctorate) or the equivalent. Normally, a candidate must serve at least five complete years on full-time appointment at the assistant professor level before he or she may be nominated for promotion to associate professor. Prior faculty service at other colleges or universities or prior service in appropriate professional activities may qualify for consideration in meeting the requirement for years in rank for promotion. A candidate who is especially meritorious may be recommended for early promotion by the department head/chair with majority support of the faculty who hold rank superior to that of the candidate.

Professor: Professor is a rank requiring professional peer recognition of the individual as an authority in his or her field of specialization. A candidate must be recognized by associates as a capable teacher, scholar or artist, or outreach specialist. It is therefore expected that peers within and outside the University will attest to the candidate's high professional standing. A candidate should hold the appropriate terminal degree (usually a doctorate) or the equivalent. Normally, a candidate must serve at least four complete years on full-time appointment at the associate professor level before he or she may be nominated for promotion to professor. Only in exceptional and well-documented cases in which a faculty member has met requirements for promotion to professor in a shorter time should he or she be recommended for early promotion by the department head/chair, with majority support of the faculty members who hold rank superior to that of the candidate.

A candidate for professor should have demonstrated significant involvement in the teaching, research/creative work, or outreach functions of the University. He or she should also have participated in professional life and have been actively involved in departmental, college or school, and University affairs. For this rank it is essential that the candidate should have demonstrated a marked degree of scholarship appropriate to his or her assignment through work, typically publication or creative endeavor, subjected to peer review. By means of such activity, a candidate for the University's highest academic rank should have a respected national reputation.

3.6.4 Eligibility for Promotion and Tenure ‡

There is no fixed requirement for years of service at a given rank before a faculty member can be promoted or tenured. However, the qualifications for tenure or for promotion to associate professor generally cannot be demonstrated fully in less than five complete years of service; promotion to professor cannot be demonstrated fully in less than four complete years on full-time appointment at the associate professor level. Only in exceptional and well-documented cases, in which a faculty member has met all requirements for promotion and/or tenure in a shorter time, should he or she be recommended for promotion and/or tenure before meeting these standard expectations for completed years in rank.

The norm for consideration of candidates for tenure and promotion to associate professor is therefore during the sixth year of appointment. A candidate must be considered for tenure during his or her sixth year if he or she has not been granted tenure earlier and has not waived consideration. Under no circumstances should the length of the probationary period exceed seven years of full-time service except where the faculty member has agreed in writing that a year in which the faculty member qualified for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or took leave without pay will not count toward the probationary period. The written agreement must be received by the provost within the probationary year in which the extension is requested.

If a faculty member begins employment between January 1 and May 15, the partial academic or calendar year shall not count as part of the probationary period.

A faculty member who feels that he or she has not met the requirements for tenure by the sixth year can forever waive consideration by stating, in writing, that he or she does not wish to be considered by the department. In such a case, the dean will send the letter of noncontinuation to the faculty member.

A faculty member on leave of absence without pay need not count his or her leave time toward tenure and/or promotion. However, if such a leave is professionally related, the faculty member may wish to count that time. Except as otherwise required by law, a faculty member on leave without pay cannot be a candidate for promotion and/or tenure while on leave. A faculty member on leave with pay should count such time and may be a candidate.

A faculty member who has qualified for FMLA leave while holding a tenure-accruing appointment may request a one-year extension of the date on which the probationary period would end. Only two such extensions are allowed. Any request may be made only during the first five probationary years of the tenure process. The faculty member will retain the position of full-time employee.

Except in highly unusual circumstances, a faculty member holding the rank of assistant professor, librarian II, or archivist II recommended for tenure should be recommended for promotion to associate professor, librarian III, or archivist III as well. However, recommendation for promotion at this level does not necessarily entail recommendation for tenure, since the criteria for tenure, which include collegiality, are more exacting than the criteria for promotion. Recommendations for promotion and tenure must be voted separately.

There are no fixed quotas for tenured positions or for the various ranks established for colleges, schools, or departments.