

Revised: October 3, 2024

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GUIDELINE SUMMARY

These guidelines apply only to those positions that are administratively located in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (i.e., have an 02 adloc). Nothing in this guideline requires that current faculty members (those already holding appointments when this guideline is adopted by the College) must have their titles or current appointments changed. However, if a present faculty member is offered a new appointment, with a change in title, or when a new faculty member is hired, his/her appointment title should conform to these guidelines. It is desired that all faculty titles move toward alignment with this guideline over time. Nothing in this guideline supersedes the requirements for faculty recruitment, appointments, and promotions that are addressed in Texas A&M University System Policies or Regulations, or Texas A&M University Rules and Standard Administrative Procedures.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DEFINITION, CATEGORIES AND RANKS FOR FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

1. By definition, a position is considered to be a faculty appointment if the primary title includes the word “professor”, “instructor”, or “lecturer” in the title, regardless of other rank of appointment qualifiers associated with the title. However, not all faculty appointments are eligible to participate in all faculty shared governance activities in the University, College, or departments, but must adhere to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate or other approved College or department guidelines.
2. Categories for faculty titles are expected to align as follows (with exceptions requiring department head recommendation and approval of the College Dean, and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs:
 - 2.1 Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor are appointment titles of either tenured or tenure-track faculty members. All faculty members in these appointments are expected to make significant contributions in the areas of scholarly research or creative work, teaching, and service, with exceptions made for termed appointments to focus on fewer of these areas (such as administrative appointments).
 - 2.2 Instructor is a temporary title used for a person who was recruited to have a tenure-track or academic professional track appointment, but who has not finished all requirements for the appropriate terminal degree on the date predicted. Upon evidence of completion of the expected degree, the appointment title will be changed to the intended title. Instructors are expected to make significant contributions in the areas of scholarly research or creative work, teaching, and/or service, depending on their assigned areas of responsibility.
 - 2.3 [Adjective] Professor, [Adjective] Associate Professor, and [Adjective] Assistant Professor are non-tenure track appointments. This adjective modifier currently includes the words Adjunct, Clinical, Executive, Instructional, Research, Senior, and Visiting. Faculty in these appointments will be expected to make significant contributions to the department or college programs in teaching, scholarly research or creative work, or service depending on their assigned areas of responsibility. Visiting is normally used for appointments of faculty members whose long-term primary employment commitment is not to Texas A&M University and where the faculty appointment is expected to cease after no more than three years (although the appointments are one-year or semester appointments, reappointment is possible). Adjunct

appointments are non-paying appointments that can be approved by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs for up to 3 years with the possibility of reappointment. Adjunct appointments can be for individuals outside Texas A&M University or for faculty members who hold an appointment with another TAMU department. Departments may utilize any of these non-tenure accruing appointments for faculty members who consistently and significantly contribute to programs in scholarly research, creative work, teaching or service.

- 2.4 Titles used by non-tenured faculty administratively located in the Texas AgriLife Extension Service or Texas AgriLife Research (i.e. have an 07 or 06 adloc) who also may have joint appointments with the College are defined by those agencies. For Extension, appropriate individuals can be assigned the professorial title Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor and "Extension Specialist". For Research, appropriate people can be assigned the professorial title Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor preceded by the adjective "Research".
- 2.5 [Adjective] Professor of Practice are non-tenure track appointments. Faculty in these appointments will make significant contributions to teaching in an area where they have substantial professional credentials or experience. At the Assistant level, professors of practice will typically have practiced in their industry for a minimum of 3 years. These titles normally carry voting rights for shared governance.
- 2.6 Principal Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer are non-tenure track appointments for faculty members who teach but who are not required to consistently make significant contributions in scholarly research or creative work, or the area of service. These titles normally carry voting rights for shared governance on campus.
 - 2.6.1 Faculty in the Lecturer title series may be reclassified to the Instructional or Clinical title series at the equivalent rank if their appointment responsibilities are expanded beyond just the area of teaching. Reclassification requests must be approved by the Dean and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.
- 2.7 Graduate Assistant Lecturer and Graduate Teaching Assistant titles, although used on some State and Federal forms for the purpose of reporting, will not be considered as faculty titles or faculty rank, for the purposes of appointment in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

3. Tenure and Rank for Appointments

Tenure is granted by the Board of Regents. At the time of appointment of a faculty member in either the Professor or Associate Professor ranks, the department may recommend the faculty member for tenure review upon hire (TRUH). Such a recommendation must include an evaluation and vote by an appropriately composed departmental faculty promotion and tenure committee, and the Department Head's evaluation and recommendations. The process will also include external recommendations concerning tenure. The Dean must solicit the input of the College's promotion and tenure committee, and relay their recommendation for tenure, as well as his or her own recommendation for tenure. These recommendations will be processed through the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, for consideration by the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President. Upon their occurrence to recommend tenure on arrival, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Chancellor. If the Chancellor concurs with the recommendation for tenure, the recommendation will be placed on the next available Board of Regents' meeting agenda. The Board of Regents can consider tenure decisions at any of their Board meetings when the item has been appropriately processed to appear on their agenda.

In all cases below, exceptions to the expectations for appointment at a particular rank may be made with appropriate departmental faculty consultation, plus Department Head recommendation, and the approvals of the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Expected qualifications for faculty appointment to various categories and ranks should be considered as follows.

- 3.1 All tenured and tenure track faculty members are expected to have a terminal degree for the field in which the faculty member will be primarily teaching. (These degrees may not be titled the same as the degree is titled at Texas A&M University, but the academic work toward the terminal degree should clearly have been within the field where the faculty member will primarily teach.)
- 3.2 All faculty members having positions administratively located in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with the word Professor in the title must meet one of the following criteria:

- a) Have a terminal degree (normally a Doctoral level degree, but in some fields a Master level degree) appropriate for the area in which the faculty member will teach.
 - b) Have a terminal degree in a related field to the one in which the faculty member will teach, and at least seven years of teaching at the college level in the field, or in a related field.
 - c) Have a Master level degree in the field in which the faculty member will be teaching, and at least five years of teaching at the college level in the field, or in a related field.
 - d) Have a Bachelor level degree in the field, or in a related field in which the faculty member will be teaching, and either seven years of practice in the field or special certification, or licensure related to the needs of the program in which the faculty member will teach.
- 3.3 All faculty members having positions with the word Professor in the title will have their rank qualifier (the descriptor of their rank) determined as follows:
- 3.3.1 Assistant as a qualifier in the title indicates a relative novice stature in academia, but with credentials evidencing both an expertise in the field, and a commitment to significantly contribute to the areas required by their appointment of scholarly research or creative work, teaching, and service.
 - 3.3.2 Associate as a qualifier in the title indicates experience in academia or substantial contributions to the field, and for tenured or tenure track faculty all of the following. For non-tenure track faculty members, a) and b) always apply, but c) and d) will be evidenced in alignment with the areas required by the individual faculty member's appointment:
 - a) an exemplary level of accomplishment, as measured against the contributions of others in the field;
 - b) professional conduct conducive to a collegial work environment and standards of professional integrity that will advance the interests of Texas A&M University;
 - c) an area of specialization germane to the programs of Texas A&M University, one not currently represented on the tenured faculty, or one that provides desired reinforcement in an area of priority; and
 - d) evidence indicating a commitment to maintain the level of competence in teaching and research expected of a tenured faculty member.
 - 3.3.3 The title of Professor with no other rank qualifier indicates substantial experience and national/international reputation in academia or industry (for Professor of Practice) and evidence of significant impact on the professions of college faculty and on the field in which the faculty member will teach and/or conduct scholarly research. In addition, such faculty members are expected to have demonstrated all of the required attributes listed in 3.3.2 for faculty members with the Associate qualifier as part of their title and rank.
- 3.4 Positions with the word Lecturer in the title are expected to meet one of the following requirements:
- a) Have a terminal or Master level degree in the field, or in a related field to the one in which the faculty member will teach, or
 - b) Have a Bachelor level degree in the field, or in a related field to the one in which the faculty member will teach, plus either three years of practice in the field, or special licensure or certification in the field that is supportive of the teaching goals of the program.
- 3.4.1 Furthermore, for ranks of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Principal Lecturer, the following criteria must be met:

- 3.4.1.1 Lecturers should possess a doctoral degree or a master's degree and either three years of teaching experience at the college level or three years of professional experience in the field in which they are teaching, or a combination of the two. (Teaching experience may have been acquired at the graduate assistant level.) This title is used for faculty who have proven competence in teaching. Lecturers may be recommended for promotion to the rank of Senior Lecturer upon attaining qualifications for that rank. Recommendation will be considered along with other promotion recommendations (but without a need for outside letters).
- 3.4.1.2 The Senior Lecturer title is used for faculty who possess the doctoral degree or who have wide experiential background and a record of successful professional achievement. They may qualify for graduate faculty status. Senior Lecturers are expected to make important contributions to a department's teaching mission. Appointment to the Senior Lecturer rank requires prior approval by the College Dean. Senior Lecturers may be recommended for promotion to the rank of Principal Lecturer upon attaining qualifications for that rank. Recommendation will be considered along with other promotion recommendations (but without a need for outside letters).
- 3.4.1.3 The Principal Lecturer title is used for faculty who possess the doctoral degree or who have extensive experiential background and a record of significant professional achievement. They may qualify for graduate faculty status. Principal Lecturers are expected to make important contributions to a department's teaching mission. Appointment to the Principal Lecturer rank requires prior approval by the College Dean.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Initial appointments to Texas A&M University tenure-track faculty positions, except for those faculty members who were granted tenure upon hire, are one-year appointments (unless an exception is requested by the Department Head and approved by the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs). Academic Professional Track (APT) faculty members may be offered fixed term appointments, which can be renewed. Fixed terms can be offered at a maximum of three years at the entry level and a maximum of five years at ranks higher than the entry level. It is recommended that a faculty member complete three years of continuous service with satisfactory or higher performance before being considered for a multiple-year fixed term appointment. All faculty members should be considered for appropriate promotions when they have evidenced the attributes expected for faculty in higher titles, but they all should have an indication of the normal timeframe for such promotion considerations. All faculty promotions must adhere to University Rule 12.01.99.M1, and the guidelines presented annually by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Other approved departmental guidelines and expectations must be followed in considering faculty promotions. The following expectations exist for all faculty appointments:

1. Tenure track appointments are for a probationary term of no more than seven years, although exceptional circumstances may warrant a probation period extension. All faculty in tenure-track appointments must have a mid-term review in the third year of their appointment unless an extension has been granted. Extensions for one-year adjustments are requested through the Department Head and College Dean to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Two-year extensions must also receive Executive Vice President and Provost approval. Thus, because of the set probation period for all tenure track appointments, these faculty members must be considered for promotion in or before the penultimate year of their probation. All appointments are annual appointments until the faculty member is granted tenure. In accordance with University Rule 12.01.99.M1, a faculty member in the first year of their tenure-track probationary period must be notified by March 1 if they will not be reappointed for the following academic year. If the faculty member is in their second year on tenure track, they must be notified by December 15 if they will not be reappointed for the next academic year. After the second year of appointment on tenure track, all tenure track faculty members must be given 12 months' notice if they will not be reappointed. Failure by the tenure track faculty member to be awarded tenure by the start of the final year of the probation will result in no further reappointment being made after the end of the final year of probation. (By rule, even if significant changes allow for exceptional reconsideration of tenure in the final year of probation, no reappointment is made after the probationary period unless tenure is awarded.)
2. Tenured faculty at the Associate Professor level may request that they be considered for promotion, or they may be invited by the Department to apply for promotion. There is no requirement that they be considered for promotion in a specified timeframe. Normal time in this rank is determined by not only the ability to contribute significantly and continuously in the areas of scholarly research or creative work, teaching, and service, but by a

period of service long enough to mount substantive evidence that their work in these areas is having an important impact locally, nationally and internationally.

3. Faculty members appointed to Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor, or Research Professor positions administratively located in the College (i.e. have an 02 ad loc) are subject to the guidelines established by the Texas A&M University Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.
4. Faculty members appointed to [Adjective] Professor, [Adjective] Associate Professor (exclusive in both cases of the adjectives research, visiting, or adjunct), and those appointed to Senior or Principal Lecturer will have one-year appointments for at least the first three years in that title, but will always receive 12 months' notice if they are not to be reappointed. These appointments do not need to be full-time appointments, but intent to change the percent effort of the appointment should either be by mutual agreement of the faculty member and the Department, or after 12 months' notice to the faculty member. All faculty members in these titled positions should be considered for multi-year appointments after the first three years in that title at Texas A&M University.
5. Faculty members appointed to [Adjective] Assistant Professor (excluding the adjectives research, visiting, and adjunct), and Lecturer will typically have one-year or semester appointments for the first three years of service in the titled position. In outstanding cases, a faculty member appointed to the [Adjective] Assistant Professor (excluding the adjectives research, visiting, and adjunct) may be offered a maximum 3-year fixed term appointment upon hire with approval by the Dean and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Notification of non-reappointment should be made as soon as possible, but in all cases, they should be notified no later than one month after the Board of Regents has approved the Texas A&M University budget for the next fiscal year. Faculty members who have continuously been in one of these ranks for five full-time-equivalent years during a continuous seven-year period are entitled to 12 months' notice if they will not be reappointed. Faculty in these ranks may be considered for multi-year appointments after they have served continuously in the position at Texas A&M University for three years.
6. Faculty with the word Visiting in their Texas A&M University faculty titles are always given one-year or semester appointments, although reappointment is possible. Notification of non-reappointment should be made as soon as possible, but in all cases they should be notified no later than one month after the Board of Regents has approved the Texas A&M University budget for the next fiscal year. Faculty with the word Visiting in their Texas A&M University faculty title should not be considered for multi-year appointments.
7. Faculty members appointed to [Adjective] Assistant Professor (excluding the adjectives research, visiting, or adjunct), and Lecturer should have a formative evaluation within the department during their third year of appointment to determine the timeline for promotion. Faculty members appointed to [Adjective] Assistant or Associate Professor (excluding the adjectives research, visiting, or adjunct), Lecturer and Senior Lecturer should normally be considered for promotion from these ranks after five years although this timeframe may vary. Failure to receive promotion does not affect reappointment consideration.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[University Rule 12.01.99.M1, University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure and Promotion](#)

CONTACT OFFICE

Questions regarding this guideline should be referred to the Executive Associate Dean at 979-845-3712.

REVISION HISTORY

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