

Faculty Minimum Rank Criteria and Promotion Policy

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria that distinguish the academic ranks

II. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty members.

III. Policy

Minimum Rank Criteria

I. The following are the criteria that distinguish between academic ranks. The minimum rank qualifications must be met in every recommendation regarding appointment to academic rank and for promotion in academic rank or exceptions requested as outlined.

II. The President will make all judgments regarding the appropriateness of the degree and equivalent work experience credit. The equivalent work experience credit may include relevant teaching experience or other experiences such as experience gained as an administrator, counselor, librarian, journeyman, or the like. When evaluating college-level instruction and service, the President will make his/her own determination whether or not the teaching or service experience from another institution is to be accepted in total or discounted in some manner. On initial appointments the President may elect to make an exception to these criteria as outlined below.

A. Instructor

I. Potential ability in instruction/learning, student interactions, college service, professional activities, and public service/outreach.

II. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

III. Sound educational background as outlined below for the applicable function:

a. Faculty teaching courses designed to transfer to a baccalaureate degree; a doctorate or master's degree in the instructional discipline or master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the instructional discipline.

b. Faculty teaching courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree: bachelor's degree and certification, where applicable, in the instructional discipline, or associate's degree and demonstrated competencies in the instructional discipline.

B. Assistant Professor

I. Documented evidence of experience in instruction/learning, student interactions, college service, professional activities, and public service/outreach.

II. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

III. At least three years in rank.

IV. Plus the following specific qualifications for the applicable function:

A. Faculty teaching courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree:

a. Earned doctorate from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area, or

b. Master's degree in the instructional discipline or related area of master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the instructional discipline plus four years equivalent work experience.

B. Faculty teaching courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree; bachelor's degree and certification, where applicable, in the instructional discipline, or associate's degree and five years of experience in industry, government, or other work experience area.

C. Associate Professor

I. Documented evidence of high-quality academic excellence in instruction/learning, student interactions, college service, professional activities, and public service/outreach.

II. Documented evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

III. Documented evidence of teaching success.

IV. Plus the following specific qualifications for the applicable function:

A. Faculty teaching courses designed for transfer:

a. Earned doctorate from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area and five years' experience, or

b. Master's degree in the instructional discipline or related area of master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the instructional discipline plus four years equivalent work experience credit and five years of college-level instruction.

B. Faculty teaching courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree; bachelor's degree and certification, where applicable, in the instructional discipline, or associate's degree and five years of experience in industry, government, or other work experience area and five years of college-level instruction.

D. Professor

I. Documented evidence of high-quality academic excellence in instruction/learning, student interactions, college service, professional activities, and public service/outreach.

II. Documented evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

III. Documented record of teaching success.

IV. Qualifications for instruction for both courses designed for transfer and courses not designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree are an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the instructional discipline or related area from an accredited institution, ten years of college-level instruction, and five years in rank.

V. The absence of such evidence may prevent advancement to the rank of the professor. Since there is no higher rank, promotion to professor is taken with great care and requires a substantial level of achievement. This rank is not a reward for long service; rather it is recognition of superior achievement within the discipline with every exception of continuing contribution to the college and the larger academic community.

VI. Minimum criteria may be waived if approved by the College President when a candidate offers extraordinary qualifications in lieu of the stated minimum rank criteria. Such approval must be supported by evidence of the extraordinary nature of the qualifications.

A. For example, a candidate with recognized, national prominence and expertise might qualify for such a waiver.

B. An exception to the minimum rank criteria must be recommended by the President to the Chancellor or designee.

VII. Terminal Degree Destination will be set by using the national discipline standards to determine which degrees are considered to be "terminal" within each discipline.

Exceptions to these minimum rank qualifications can be made by recommendation of the President to the Chancellor as an exception and approval by Tennessee Board of Regents.

General Process Guidelines for Promotion

So that a decision process can be as objective as possible, each recommendation (forwarded from the division to a higher administrative level in the institutional) must be accompanied by complete and careful documentation of the candidate's documented ability in instruction/learning, student interactions, college service, professional activities, and public service/outreach. Although these areas are all considered important, certain exceptions may exist where evaluation may occur in one or the other area exclusively based on an individual's current assignments. In these cases, as well as in the general case, appropriate supervisory personnel shall clearly and adequately document the facts which justify the individual's promotion. The initiating unit may, if it deems it desirable, include information relative to the candidate's exceptional administrative performance or other types of contributions.

DSCC Promotion Criteria

I. Evaluation of the application shall be based on the following criteria:

- a. A letter addressed to the President that
 - I. Summarizes professional goals over the past 3 years and indicates how these goals have been met and tie in with the institutional goals.
 - II. Present professional goals for the next 3 years with a statement on how they relate to institutional goals.
- b. Summary of overall responsibilities including teaching, committee work, advising, etc.
- c. Current curriculum vitae
- d. Teaching materials
 - I. Describe the use of research-based teaching strategies, including learner-centered instruction
 - II. Samples of teaching materials
 - a. Course outlines
 - b. Syllabi and handouts
 - c. Laboratory handouts/manuals
 - d. Course assessment and a schedule of their use throughout the semester
 - e. Pattern of positive student evaluation
 - f. Positive peer and departmental evaluations
 - g. Supportive letters from students
- e. College Service
 - I. Evidence of effective service to the college
 - II. Evidence of leadership and innovation with regard to college affairs.
 - III. evidence of active and constructive participation in faculty governance.
- f. Three letters of recommendation
- g. Results of improvement initiative
 - I. Describe the results of using the research-based teaching strategy/strategies
 - II. Provide baseline data, assessment results, analysis of the results and improvement plan based on the analysis of the results.
- h. Evidence of advising effectiveness and required training.

I. Other material considered appropriate by the candidate or requested by the reviewers.

DSCC Promotion Process

I. The process herein described is intended to further redefine and amplify the DSCC procedures for award of promotion.

a. Promotion in rank may only be granted to full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty, who, after being employed at DSCC in an appropriate rank for a minimum of three years, meet those additional standards of excellence defined in the DSCC Faculty Evaluation System and its corollary.

DSCC Policy on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure, and its governing TBR Policy Statement, TBR 5:02:02:30.

I. Activation of the promotion process is as follows:

a. In early January and continuing through February, the promotion process shall be activated for those faculty members completing their third tenured, and/or tenure-track, year in their present rank. The process shall be initiated by the Vice President for the College. The Vice President shall determine eligibility from a report of faculty satisfying the time-in-rank condition described above, submitted by the Office of Human Resources.

II. The faculty member and appropriate Division Dean shall be notified of the faculty member's eligibility for promotion consideration. Faculty members considered shall submit appropriate documentation in support of their candidacy for promotion. The Division Dean shall hold a divisional recommendation vote of the tenure-track and tenured faculty. This is to be secured by secret divisional ballots. The ballots should provide recommending promotion, not recommending promotion, or abstaining. The casting of ballots shall be done electronically or in a called meeting of tenure-track and tenured faculty, with the results certified by those present. The faculty member shall be notified of the combined recommendation of the tenure-track and tenured faculty.

III. The vote administered shall be documented on a promotion process checklist form and shall be forwarded with the immediate supervisor's recommendation through sequential levels of administrators, with each administrator notifying the faculty member of the recommendation prior to forwarding to the next level.

IV. The Vice President for the College shall review the promotion process checklist form forwarded from the Division Dean and compare it with the eligibility list and make his/her recommendation to the President after notifying the faculty member of his/her recommendation.

V. The President shall review the promotion process checklist form, receive any faculty appeals considered appropriate, and notify the eligible faculty member as to whether

he/she will or will not be recommended to the Chancellor and the Tennessee Board of Regents for positive action.

VI. Following completion of action by the Tennessee Board of Regents, the faculty member shall be notified by the President of either promotion being granted or not granted by the Tennessee Board of Regents.

General Process Guidelines at Board Level

A letter of recommendation from the President with the “Institutional Promotion Report” as an attachment will be forwarded to the Chancellor for his/her review. The Chancellor’s recommendation will be forwarded to the Committee on Personnel and their recommendation forwarded to the Board.

IV. Compliance

All faculty members, Division Deans, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Success, and the President will comply with this policy.

V. Definitions

VI. Revision History

Updated and approved on April 27, 2023 at Administrative Council.