

Employment Procedures and Promotion Policies of Non-Tenure Track Instructional Faculty

A. Scope

1. This document records Mississippi State University's employment procedures and promotion policies governing promotion of non-tenure track instructional faculty. These policies and procedures were drawn up by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate in accordance with the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) (sections 404.01-404.02) and have been approved by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate and the president.
2. This document becomes official on the day it has been signed by the president; all departments within the MSU system are expected to be in compliance with these guidelines within one year of that date. Furthermore, sections of this document, which were unaltered from the previous revision, remain in effect from that revision.
3. This document applies to all instructional faculty members in non-tenure track positions in the colleges in the MSU system.
4. Instructional faculty members in non-tenure track positions are not eligible for tenure, but may apply for open tenure-track positions.
5. Suggested changes and recommendations to this document can originate from either the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure, the deans, the provost, the Faculty Senate, or the promotion committees of the various colleges in the MSU system. The President of the Faculty Senate will distribute copies of the suggested change(s) and recommendation(s) to all Senate members and the Faculty Senate will prepare its own recommendation(s). The Faculty Senate's report on the recommended changes in the promotion document will be reviewed at two regularly-scheduled Senate meetings before a vote on the recommendations will be held. A copy of the Faculty Senate's decision will be sent to the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure. Final action on the recommendation(s) will be taken by the President and announced through all appropriate channels.
6. The procedure outlined in section A.4 will be followed, unless some extraordinary occasion should demand a more immediate change. In all cases, however, the Faculty Senate must vote to approve all changes and the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure will be a part of the process of consideration.
7. The policies and procedures in effect in any academic year must have been fully approved by the Faculty Senate and signed by the president by 1 July of that year.

B. Foundation

1. Instructional faculty, for the purposes of this document, include those who hold the following ranks: instructor, lecturer, adjunct professor, or visiting professor. Clinical, extension, and research faculty are not covered by this policy.
2. The University needs procedures to create rewarding career paths for non-tenure track instructional faculty whose primary responsibility is teaching.
3. Establishing such career paths is not intended to be a mechanism to replace tenure track faculty with non-tenure track instructional faculty. Accordingly, the level of full-time, non-tenure track faculty of instructor/lecturer rank should not exceed 20% of the total instructional faculty within any college.
4. The instructional needs of the University must dictate the number of individuals hired and retained in non-tenure track instructional positions.
5. Each position requires a position description.
6. Each faculty member will receive an annual performance review.
7. Years of credit from peer institutions may be considered for initial appointment level with the approval of the head and tenure-track faculty of the department.
8. Upon approval of these procedures, persons currently (as of --/--/--) in the Instructor or Lecturer positions may apply for whichever level they deem appropriate. Salary adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis to reflect higher rank. Faculty holding non-tenure track instructional positions at the time that this document is approved will receive credit for years of service at MSU.
9. Instructional faculty may request a review by tenure-track faculty and instructors of higher rank at any time.

C. Procedures

Application

To apply for promotion, instructional faculty should initiate the process by obtaining a promotion form from their department head. The faculty member should prepare a packet of information to support a claim of excellence in teaching. Service related to their course work and assigned responsibilities may be included as part of the information on teaching. The promotion packet should be presented to the head by October 15. The head shall make the promotion packet available to the promotion committee.

Teaching includes regular classroom and laboratory instruction; supervision of field work, internships, and performances; development of educational materials including books and web sites, including materials developed with educational grants; and conduct of other academic programs that confer university credit; and presentation of non-credit and off-campus public lectures and demonstration, and other teaching activities that could be defined by the academic units. Excellence in teaching includes the ability to impart the knowledge, methods, and standards of the discipline, the ability to communicate effectively with students by counseling, advising, or motivating them, and the ability to evaluate student work accurately and fairly according to prevailing academic standards of the discipline. Excellence in teaching may be documented by peer reviews, student evaluations, sample course materials, graded student work, recordings of teaching sessions, and any other documentary materials that demonstrate teaching effectiveness.

2. Review

By November 15, the department head will send to the dean a separate packet of materials for each candidate, consisting of:

1. The formal application of the candidate with attached teaching materials.
2. A letter concerning each candidate, giving the following information:
 - a. The head's evaluation of the candidate's teaching effectiveness and related service.
 - b. The summary vote of the department committee.
 - c. A summary of the procedures followed by the academic unit in evaluating the candidate.
3. The written recommendation of the departmental committee with supporting arguments.

3. Decision

The dean shall decide whether to promote the applicant. The dean's decision may be appealed to the appropriate college promotion and tenure committee.

The candidate shall be advised in writing of the decisions made by the head, the promotion committee, and the dean.

4. Appeals

Grounds for requesting an appeal are:

1. That the decision was prejudiced, arbitrary, or capricious.

2. That the promotion procedures contained in this document were not properly followed.

The college promotion and tenure committee will review the entire case. The appeal will be heard by at least five members. Members should recuse themselves from appeals by candidates who are relatives or with whom they have some conflict of interest, if the committee member has served in the previous levels of evaluation of the appellant or if for any reason the committee member feels he/she cannot be objective. A committee member will not vote on an appeal unless he/she has heard all hearings pertaining to the case. If five members are not available because of absence or recusal, the chair may, with the concurrence of the committee, appoint substitutes from among the professors of the general faculty. In special circumstances potentially prejudicial to the appellant, the chair may, with the concurrence of the committee, appoint an ad-hoc committee to assist in the resolution of the appeal. This ad-hoc committee reports its findings back to the department promotion committee and to the dean.

The committee will review all available pertinent information and will conduct interviews with appropriate persons, i.e., appellant, chair of the departmental committee, and the head. The committee will render its recommendation to the dean, who will make the final on-campus decision. This decision will end the university appeals process.

If promotion is denied, the head and the promotion committee shall work with candidates to help them achieve the standards required for promotion.

D. Guiding Principles for Non-Tenure Track Teaching Faculty of Instructor Rank

1. Instructional faculty are teaching faculty hired through a specific faculty budget line to teach in a specific area of expertise. Instructional faculty shall have at least a masters degree or 18 hours in the field in which they are teaching. Generally, instructional faculty will teach courses on the 1000/2000-level. They should only teach 3000/4000-level courses when they hold unique technical, professional, or practical skills which are generally not available from tenure-track faculty. Instructors may only teach graduate courses if approved by the graduate faculty of the department.
2. Standards for non-tenure track instructional faculty should be confined to teaching and related service activities.
3. The assigned service activities of non-tenure track instructional faculty should be associated with their teaching responsibilities. Additional teaching-related service activities should not exceed 20% of the contractual obligations.
4. A full-time teaching load will normally be 12 credit hours per Spring or Fall semester. When departmental needs necessitates other configurations (e.g., lab courses), the credit hours may be adjusted.

5. Non-tenure track instructional faculty should not receive course release time from teaching for research or service activities unless specified in offering letters or annual reviews.
6. Non-tenure track instructional faculty are eligible to teach in summer school for additional pay.
7. Non-tenure track instructional faculty are eligible to teach one overload class per semester for additional compensation; however, they shall not be required to do so.
8. When appropriate, joint staff/instructor positions may be created to serve the needs of a department, school, college, or university. Specific responsibilities will be articulated in the offer letter or the annual review.
9. The tenure-track faculty, in cooperation with the appropriate department supervisor or department head, is responsible for creating and upholding the department's curriculum and standards of teaching and for ensuring that the department's teaching, research/creative achievement, and service activities meet the professional standards of the University. Accordingly,:
 - a. Non-tenure track instructional faculty generally will not serve on university, college, or departmental committees not directly related to their teaching responsibilities;
 - b. Non-tenure track instructional faculty will not serve on personnel committees, including promotion and tenure committees and faculty search committees above the rank of instructor;
 - c. Non-tenure track instructional faculty may choose, but are not required, to engage in research, service, or other scholarly activities, which are not directly related to their teaching responsibilities. These activities should be regarded as beyond the purview of their job assignments insofar as it relates to their performance evaluations and continued employment; and,
 - d. Non-tenure track instructional faculty will not participate in the decisions regarding allocation of research resources within a department.

C. Instructor Positions

1. Different levels of the instructor position are created; they include: Instructor I, Instructor II, and Instructor III.
2. Movement from one level to another is via promotion.
 - a. The general criteria for promotion are:
 - excellent teaching performance,

- length of service to the University, and
 - continuing need for that service
- b. Instructors at any level are not required to apply for promotion.
 - c. Instructors who apply for, but are not granted, promotion may remain at their current level.
 - d. The pay scale for instructors should be based on the following:
 - a. The pay increase an Instructor I should be about equivalent to 70% of the pay of the lowest paid assistant professor in the department.
 - b. The incremental pay increase for promotion to an Instructor II should be \$2000. The resulting salary shall not be more than 80% of the pay of the lowest paid professor in the department.
 - c. The incremental pay increase for promotion to an Instructor III should be \$4000. The resulting salary shall not be more than 80% of the pay of the lowest paid professor in the department.

3. **Instructor I** level

- a. Upon being hired, instructors shall receive a one-year contract. There is no guarantee of employment beyond the contract period.
- b. After six years of satisfactory performance, an Instructor I may apply for promotion to Instructor II. A committee of the faculty, as specified by the department, shall review the Instructor I's performance and the needs of the department. The tenure-track committee and the head shall submit assessments of the candidate's qualifications for promotion in separate letters to the Dean (See Section C). The committee shall have a majority of tenure-track faculty, but should include at least two instructors of higher rank than the applicant.

4. **Instructor II** level

- a. 2-Year Contract – The initial contract is for two-years of employment. If the individual receives a less-than-satisfactory annual evaluation, the contract will not be renewed and the individual has one year remaining of the last renewed contract. If reviews are satisfactory, the contract may be renewed annually. Every two years the chair and a tenure-track committee shall review the instructor's performance.
- b. After four additional years of satisfactory performance, an Instructor II may apply for promotion to Instructor III. A committee of the tenure-track faculty, as specified by the department, shall review the Instructor II's performance and the

needs of the department. The tenure-track committee shall submit its assessment of the candidate's qualifications for promotion in a separate letter to the Dean. The committee shall have a majority of tenure-track faculty, but should include at least two instructors of higher rank than the applicant.

5. Instructor III level

- a. 4-Year Contract – The initial contract is for four-years of employment. If reviews are satisfactory, the contract may be renewed annually. If the individual receives a less-than-satisfactory annual evaluation, the contract will not be renewed and the individual has the years remaining since the last renewed contract. Two less-than-satisfactory annual reviews require a full evaluation. This review shall include a committee of the tenure track faculty and two Instructor IIIs, which will report its findings to the dean. Upon receiving two satisfactory annual reviews, the Instructor III may receive a new four-year contract.
- b. Every four years the chair and a tenure-track committee shall review the instructor's performance.
- c. The head at any time may request a review of the individual by a committee of tenure-track and Instructor III faculty.

D. Other Non-Tenure Track Instructional Positions

1. Lecturers

- a. Lecturers are hired on a full-time or part-time, as-needed basis on a temporary faculty budget line when changes in enrollment, faculty exigencies, or other temporary situations create short-term needs for additional faculty.
- b. After three continual years of full-time employment, a lecturer's position must be reviewed by the dean to decide if the position should be abolished, converted to an instructor's line, or remain temporary.
- c. Annually, the head and a committee of the tenure-track faculty of the department shall review the lecturer's performance and the needs of the department. They shall submit their assessments in separate letters to the Dean.
- d. If they meet requirements of appropriate accreditation bodies and if approved by the graduate faculty of the department, lecturers may teach graduate courses.

2. Adjunct Faculty

- a. Adjunct faculty are non-paid associates of a department.

- b. The adjunct faculty's association with the department may be continuous, but shall not be converted to a full-time, tenure-track budget line without an appropriate search.
- c. At least every three years, the head and a committee of the tenure-track faculty of the department shall review the adjunct faculty's performance and the needs of the department. They shall submit their assessments in separate letters to the Dean.
- d. When an adjunct faculty teaches a class, the person should be classified as a lecturer during the teaching period of time.

3. Visiting Professors

- a. Visiting professors shall hold terminal degrees in the discipline.
- b. The appropriate supervisor and tenure-track faculty shall consider each hiring situation independently.
- c. Contracts shall be only for one year.
- d. No visiting professor appointments shall exceed three continual years of employment.
- e. Annually, the head and the tenure-track faculty of the department shall review the visiting professor's performance and the needs of the department. They shall submit their assessments in separate letters to the Dean.

4. In-Residence Positions

- a. From time-to-time, individuals whose unique skills, academic reputation, or real world experiences would bring credit and standing to the university may be appointed to the faculty with the consultation of the faculty. In these cases, the terms of the contract, if any, will be specific to the individual.

E. Notice of Non-Reappointment and dismissal

- 1. Non-tenure-track faculty members will be notified in writing of the university's intention not to renew their contracts:
 - a. not later than March 1 before the date of contract termination during the first year of service.
 - b. not later than December 1 before the date of contract termination during the second year of service.
 - c. not later than September 1 before the date of contract termination after two or more years of service.

2. This schedule of notification does not apply to persons holding temporary, part-time, or adjunct positions.