PROV-029

Faculty Appointment Types and Titles

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Reason for Policy

Defines types of academic faculty appointments (tenured, tenure-track, academic general faculty, joint, courtesy, and visiting) and the ranks and titles that may be used for various appointments.

Definition of Terms

Terms

Description There are no terms that require definition.

Policy Statement

The following types of academic faculty appointments, ranks, and titles may be used at the University of Virginia. Faculty members are normally appointed within the University's schools. In certain circumstances, they may be appointed in a unit reporting to the executive vice president and provost (hereafter "provost") or the president. Such hires require the advance written approval of the provost. In this policy, all references to schools/deans are intended to refer also to units/unit heads that employ faculty members. All references in this policy to "department" include both departments and programs.

I. **Appointment Types:**
The Board of Visitors confers professorial rank by "electing" an individual to the faculty in a formal resolution. The term "election" therefore is used when action by the Board of Visitors is required. The board must approve the election of salaried members of the faculty holding professorial rank. All offers of faculty employment remain conditional until ratified by the board.

If the Board's election is for a defined period of time, it is an election with term. If no time limit is specified, the election is normally stated to be without term, the equivalent of tenure. The University of Virginia recognizes the importance of academic freedom to academic excellence. An election without term is one of the fundamental means of achieving academic freedom in the University community.

A. **Tenured/Tenure-Track Appointments:**
Tenure-track faculty members may be elected without term after a probationary period as assistant professor and promotion to a higher rank, as associate professor (with or without a probationary period), and as professor. Only full-time faculty members in tenure-eligible positions may be elected without term. Faculty members who have been elected without term hold tenured appointments. All part-time elections, all other faculty appointments, and all administrative appointments are made for limited periods. For additional information, see policy PROV-017: Promotion and Tenure.

B. **Academic General Faculty Appointments (Tenure-Ineligible):**
Academic general faculty members are not eligible for election without term. They provide important academic service to the University community, focusing primarily on teaching, research, integration of professional practice, or clinical service. Academic general faculty members may have part-time or full-time appointments. For additional information, see policy, PROV-004: Employment of Academic General Faculty Members (Tenure-Ineligible).

C. **Joint Appointments:**
Faculty members may be appointed to more than one department, program, school, or other unit when they will have significant, ongoing responsibilities for teaching, research, and/or service in more than one area. They may be tenure-ineligible, tenure-track, or hold tenure in one or both departments, programs, schools, or units.

Faculty members holding a joint appointment usually receive some portion of their salary from each appointing department or school. If the joint appointment involves more than one school, the participating schools must develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that details the terms of the appointment (see Related Information for MOU template). The MOU will be signed by the dean of each participating school and the provost. Specific distribution of the faculty member's responsibilities and the coordination of annual evaluations, salary recommendations, promotion review, and tenure review (if applicable) should be defined in the faculty member's appointment

letter, which should be signed by the dean or deans (if the joint appointment involves more than one school).

If the faculty member holds tenure or is tenure-eligible in both departments, both appointments are considered “primary” and the faculty member holds all voting and other faculty privileges in both departments (although one department may be designated “primary” for administrative purposes only). Otherwise, one department will be designated the faculty member’s “primary” appointment and the other department will be “secondary.” Faculty members with a joint appointment may hold voting or other faculty privileges in the secondary department if these privileges are expressly conferred by a vote of the faculty in the secondary department as part of the joint appointment.

Unless the faculty member serves without term in both departments (i.e., holds tenure in both departments), the secondary appointment will be for a limited term of up to five years and may be renewed with the agreement of the faculty member, the relevant chairs/directors, and deans. A secondary appointment may not last beyond the end date of a faculty member’s primary appointment.

Faculty members with a joint appointment hold the same rank in both the primary and secondary department. If the faculty member is promoted in his/her primary department, the secondary department must conduct the necessary review to determine if a promotion in rank is justified in the secondary department. If it is not or if the recommendation for promotion is not approved in accordance with relevant University policies, the secondary appointment will be terminated. Primary and secondary departments are encouraged to conduct reviews for promotion, tenure (if applicable), and salary recommendations for their joint appointments collaboratively.

Faculty members may be appointed jointly at the time of their hire or the relevant dean(s) may submit a faculty action request to the provost to amend a current faculty member’s appointment into a joint appointment. A joint appointment requires the agreement of the faculty member and the approval of all involved department chairs/directors and deans, as well as the provost. Joint appointments are submitted to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

D. **Courtesy Appointments:**
Faculty members who make a contribution to or have an affiliation with another department, program, school, or other reporting unit may be given a courtesy appointment.

A courtesy appointment usually does not involve additional salary and does not convey full faculty status (including voting privileges or space) in the courtesy department.

Faculty with a courtesy appointment may teach occasionally in the courtesy department or have their courses in another department recognized as meeting academic requirements in the courtesy department. They may advise students in the courtesy department whose research interests relate to their own and they may be invited by the courtesy department to serve on dissertation or thesis committees.

Courtesy appointments may be made at any time, are always for a limited term of up to five years, and are renewable with the agreement of the faculty member and all involved chairs/directors and deans. A courtesy appointment may not last beyond the end date of a faculty member’s primary appointment. A courtesy appointment does not require the approval of the provost or the Board of

Visitors.

Faculty members hold a courtesy appointment at the same rank they hold in their primary department. If a faculty member is promoted in his/her primary department, the courtesy department must approve the change in rank for the courtesy appointment or end the courtesy appointment.

E. **Visiting Faculty Appointments:**
Visiting faculty visit the University for a short term, usually one year or less, during which time they hold faculty rank as described in the appointment letter. Visiting faculty may serve with or without pay. See policy, PROV-013: Appointment of Visiting Faculty and Visiting Scholars for more information.

II. **Academic Ranks:**
Faculty members may hold only one academic rank at the University. All joint, courtesy, or temporary appointments must be at the same rank (e.g., a faculty member holding the rank of associate professor in one department may not be given a concurrent appointment as lecturer in another).

The School of Medicine uses different appointment designations (tracks) and titles, which have been approved by the provost. For appointment designations and formal faculty titles in the School of Medicine, see "Faculty Appointment Designations in the School of Medicine".

A. **Professorial Ranks:**
The professorial ranks, in their normal sequence, are assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. The professorial ranks are used for tenured, tenure-eligible, and academic general faculty (tenure-ineligible) appointments in accordance with the qualifications, promotion criteria and other provisions provided in policies, PROV-004: Employment of Academic General Faculty Members (Tenure-Ineligible) and PROV-017: Promotion and Tenure. In exceptional circumstances, and only with written approval of the provost, other types of employees may be eligible for a professorial rank when appointed to teach a course for academic credit, as provided in PROV-008: Teaching Courses for Academic Credit.

Faculty members in these ranks typically have responsibilities which require the qualifying terminal degree in their field from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (or, for institutions outside the U.S., an equivalent body). In exceptional circumstances, or in disciplines where commensurate experience is a typical qualification for teaching, deans may recommend that the provost award professorial rank to a faculty member who does not hold the qualifying terminal degree but has been recognized for outstanding achievements in his/her field. In such circumstances, the dean must present documentation to the provost justifying the faculty member's qualifications for appointment to professorial rank.

In addition to assistant professor, associate professor, and professor, the following qualified professorial ranks are recognized:

Acting Assistant Professor
In exceptional circumstances, acting assistant professors may be invited to join the faculty. Acting assistant professors are faculty members who have completed all requirements for the doctoral degree except the dissertation. Acting assistant professors are elected for a one-year term. They are expected to receive the doctoral degree (or other qualifying terminal degree) by the end of the initial

term of election, despite teaching commitments. When the degree is awarded, "acting" is removed from the title. For tenure-track appointments, the time spent as an acting assistant professor is included in the probationary period leading to consideration for an election without term. For academic general faculty, the time spent as an acting assistant professor is included as time served for promotion eligibility.

Chairholder
Chairholders are particularly distinguished professors who are elected to named professorships. See the policy, Appointment of Endowed and Eminent Scholars Chairs, for additional information.

University Professor
The University has established distinguished university professorships for tenured faculty members holding the rank of professor who teach and conduct research that crosses school boundaries in order to facilitate cross-university collaboration and recognize excellence in a broad field of study. University professors report to the president while remaining responsible to their dean or deans with regard to their teaching, research, and service responsibilities. With approval of the president, a University professor may teach or supervise research in one or more of the schools or departments. See policy, PROV-031: Appointment of University Professors for more information, including nomination procedures.

Emeritus Rank
The honorary rank of professor emeritus or associate professor emeritus is conferred upon retiring faculty following nominations made to the Board of Visitors by the president. See policy, PROV-018: Emeritus Faculty for more information regarding qualifications for and perquisites of emeritus rank.

B. **Non-professorial Ranks:**
The following ranks are used for certain types of academic general faculty appointments and other term-limited employees as described below. They are not eligible for election without term.

Instructor
The instructor ranks are instructor, senior instructor, and distinguished instructor. The instructor ranks are used only when the primary teaching responsibilities associated with the position do not require the qualifying terminal degree and the position's primary function is to deliver instruction to individual students (e.g., clinical supervision, musical instruction, etc.). See policy, PROV-004: Employment of Academic General Faculty Members (Tenure-Ineligible) for more information regarding qualifications for and use of the instructor ranks.

The instructor ranks may also be used for faculty wage and other types of employees who assume teaching responsibilities (see policies, PROV-026: Faculty Wage Employment and PROV-008: Teaching Courses for Academic Credit).

Lecturer
The lecturer ranks are lecturer, senior lecturer, and distinguished lecturer. The lecturer ranks are used only when the primary teaching responsibilities associated with the position do not require the qualifying terminal degree and the position's primary function is to deliver instruction to a class or group. See policy, PROV-004: Employment of Academic General Faculty Members (Tenure-Ineligible) for more information regarding qualifications for and use of the lecturer ranks.

The lecturer ranks may also be used for faculty wage and other types of employees who assume teaching responsibilities (see policies, PROV-026: Faculty Wage Employment and PROV-008: Teaching Courses for Academic Credit).

Administrative and professional general faculty members also have historically held the rank of lecturer and a functional working title. See policy, HRM-003: Employment of Administrative or Professional General Faculty Members for detailed information on this category of employment. Effective January 3, 2017, the University does not hire A/P General Faculty Members.

III. **Faculty Titles:**

A. **Formal Faculty Titles:**
Formal faculty titles must be used when presenting faculty actions for approval to the University's Board of Visitors and in all school communications related to a faculty member's employment (including appointment letters, performance evaluations, recommendations for promotion, etc.). Schools may determine in their policies how and when formal faculty titles will be used in other contexts.

The formal faculty title must identify the faculty member's rank and their academic discipline or area and are contingent on provost and Board approval. For academic general faculty members, the formal faculty title will also reflect their track as described in PROV-004: II.F Tracks.

Faculty members holding a joint appointment may cite both appointments in their formal faculty title (e.g., Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies). A courtesy appointment may also be cited, but should be identified as such (e.g., Professor of Chemistry and, by courtesy, Chemical Engineering).

The School of Medicine uses different appointment designations (tracks) and titles, which have been approved by the provost. For appointment designations and formal faculty titles in the School of Medicine, see "Faculty Appointment Designations in the School of Medicine."

B. **Working Titles:**
Schools may permit faculty to use working titles in instances when the formal faculty title is not required. Working titles are often used to shorten a formal title or better reflect a faculty member's area of specialization or administrative duties. Working titles are generally established at the discretion of the school/dean, consistent with school policy. Faculty members may not hold a working title that implies a rank or track other than that which they hold.

Procedures

When a person is invited to join the faculty, the relevant designated hiring official (usually the dean) writes a conditional offer letter specifying the expectations of employment, in accordance with the Provost's policy, PROV-006: Extending Offers of Employment to Faculty in Academic Areas. If accepted by the candidate and if approved by the Board of Visitors, these conditions are the basis of formal action by the Board of Visitors, which passes a resolution stating the title, salary, and term of the election.

Deans wishing to recommend professorial rank for a faculty member who does not hold the qualifying terminal degree must submit their recommendation to the provost for approval, including documentation that justifies the faculty member's exceptional qualifications for appointment to professorial rank.

Related Information

HRM-003: Employment of Administrative or Professional General Faculty Members
HRM-021: Terms and Conditions of University Staff Employment
PROV-004: Employment of Academic General Faculty Members (Tenure-Ineligible)
PROV-006: Extending Offers of Employment to Faculty in Academic Areas
PROV-008: Teaching Courses for Academic Credit
PROV-013: Appointment of Visiting Faculty and Visiting Scholars
PROV-017: Promotion and Tenure
PROV-018: Emeritus Faculty
PROV-026: Faculty Wage Employment
PROV-031: Appointment of University Professors

Appointment of Endowed and Eminent Scholars Chairs
Faculty Appointment Designations in the School of Medicine
MOU template for Joint Appointments

Major Category Executive Vice President & Provost Policies

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Supercedes Policy Text

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