

# Guidelines for UTK Lecturer Promotion Process

(February 2017)

*Note: Following upon Board of Trustees approval of the addition of the rank of “senior lecturer” and authorization of one, three, or five-year terms of appointment for non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF), UTK initiated a promotion process for lecturers during the 2011-12 academic year.<sup>1</sup> The original guidelines governing the lecturer promotion process were adopted in December 2011 after review and approval by the UTK Chancellor, Provost, Council of Deans, and the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Advisory Council. This revision was reviewed and approved XXXX*

## I. Introduction

According to the *Faculty Handbook*, “initial non-tenure-track teaching appointments will be made at the rank of lecturer for a definite term of one year or less.” A lecturer is eligible for promotion to senior lecturer typically after a minimum of five years of regular (full-time) service at the rank of lecturer. A senior lecturer is eligible for promotion to distinguished lecturer typically after three to five years of regular (full-time) service at the rank of senior lecturer. In addition to a change in title, promotion in rank may be recognized by a base salary adjustment. Promotion in rank may also include the offer of a three or five-year term appointment.

The purpose of this document is to establish expectations for performance, to make explicit the criteria and process for promotion, and to offer guidance to NTTF and departments regarding the assembly of a promotion dossier.

## II. Expectations for Instructional Faculty

The *Faculty Handbook* classifies lecturers as non-tenure-track teaching faculty and describes them in the following way: “Non-tenure-track teaching faculty are hired for specific teaching assignments. They generally are not expected to conduct research or perform public or disciplinary service as a condition of their employment. However, research or service activities may be included as part of their effort, depending on the needs of the department and the skills and desires of the faculty member” (4.2.1).

Lecturers at the University of Tennessee are expected to provide excellent instruction. Among the characteristics of excellent instruction are the following practices:

- Adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in the University of Tennessee *Teaching Guide*;
- Establishing, applying, and maintaining rigorous expectations for student performance;
- Facilitating student learning through effective pedagogical techniques;

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<sup>1</sup> The Board of Trustees authorized this professional development framework at its meeting of June 24, 2011, upon unanimous recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee. The Recommendation and approved text appear at Tab 17 in the Board materials for that meeting.

- Using instructional materials appropriate to the program and discipline;
- Providing current information and materials in the classroom and / or laboratory;
- Engaging students in an active learning process;
- Incorporating collaborative and experiential learning in regular classroom instruction;
- Constructing appropriate and challenging assessment activities;
- Providing timely and useful feedback to students;
- Revising course content and scope as required by advances in disciplinary knowledge or changes in curriculum;
- Revising teaching strategies in accord with innovations in instructional technology.

### III. Criteria for Appointment to Lecturer Ranks

Because a lecturer's principal responsibility is teaching, the primary criterion for appointment, continuation of appointment, and promotion is excellence in teaching. Because the *Faculty Handbook* allows that lecturers may perform research and / or service, as needed, however, research and / or service may be considered when recommending a lecturer for appointment, reappointment, or promotion. Even in cases where there is evidence of excellence in research and / or service, excellence in teaching will remain the principal criterion for evaluation of instructional faculty.

The UTK *Faculty Handbook* establishes three lecturer ranks, as follows:

Lecturer: An initial non-tenure-track teaching appointment is typically made at the rank of lecturer. A lecturer may hold this rank for a definite term of one year or less. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, a "non-tenure-track appointment (whatever its duration) may be renewed for a new term through the normal application and appointment process. Renewal decisions will include consideration of available funding and the faculty member's performance" (4.1).

Senior Lecturer: After serving at the rank of lecturer, typically for a minimum of five years, a lecturer who has satisfied the following criteria may be put forward by the department for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer:

- Evidence of "outstanding teaching," typically of undergraduate courses, as documented in student evaluations, peer evaluations, annual supervisor / departmental evaluations;
- Professional development, as evidenced by appropriate activities in support of the expected instructional practices listed in Section II, above;
- Evidence of notable contributions to the university's instructional mission, within the faculty member's assigned role.

Promotion to the rank of senior lecturer may be accompanied by an appointment that is automatically renewed for up to three years. Like all academic appointments, these multi-year appointments consist of annual appointments that are automatically renewed for the specified term, unless terminated for cause, or by operation of some other provision in the *Faculty Handbook* (such as relinquishment or forfeiture or other extraordinary circumstances, as those terms are defined in Board policy and in the *Handbook*).

Distinguished Lecturer: After serving at the rank of senior lecturer, typically for a period of three to five years, a senior lecturer who has satisfied the following criteria may be put forward by the department for promotion to the rank of distinguished lecturer:

- Evidence of consistent “excellence in teaching,” typically of undergraduate courses, as documented by student evaluations, peer evaluations, annual supervisor / departmental evaluations;
- Continuing professional development, including some or all of the following activities:
  - Attendance at campus, regional, national, or international meetings directed at improving instruction;
  - Development of new courses and / or revision of existing courses;
  - Incorporation of innovative course materials or instructional techniques;
  - Scholarly or creative work in the scholarship of teaching as well as in the discipline;
  - Awards or other recognition for teaching;
- Evidence of outstanding contributions to the university’s instructional mission, within the faculty member’s assigned role.
- Evidence of institutional or disciplinary service, within the NTTF member’s assigned role, such as
  - Advising or mentoring undergraduate students;
  - Supervising GTAs;
  - Course coordination;
  - Other forms of institutional service, such as serving on committees.

Promotion to the rank of distinguished lecturer may be accompanied by an appointment that is automatically renewed for up to five years. Like all academic appointments, these multi-year appointments consist of annual appointments that are automatically renewed for the specified term, unless terminated for cause, or by operation of some other provision in the *Faculty Handbook* (such as relinquishment or forfeiture or other extraordinary circumstances, as those terms are defined in Board policy and in the *Handbook*).

#### **IV. Process for Promotion**

An adequate evaluation of a promotion candidate’s qualifications and professional contributions requires the academic judgment of both the candidate’s faculty colleagues and responsible administrators. Typically, there are three levels of review: the department or other unit level, headed by the NTTF’s immediate supervisor; the dean of the college in which that unit sits; and the provost. For colleges without departments, the review should follow the same procedure used for the promotion and tenure process. In the description below, the department head is understood to refer to the supervisor of the unit in which the NTTF is appointed.

##### **A. Departmental Level Review and Recommendation**

1. The non-tenure-track teaching faculty member and department head or designee should discuss promotion as part of the annual performance review, well in advance of the suggested dates for

submission of the application for promotion in order to give the candidate sufficient time to gather the required materials and assemble the dossier.

2. The promotion process begins when a dossier is submitted for consideration for promotion to senior or distinguished lecturer. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, "A departmentally designated group of faculty will review and evaluate appointments to the rank of senior [and distinguished] lecturer, in accordance with departmental and college bylaws" (4.2.1.). This designated group of departmental faculty must be at the same or higher rank than the candidate under review. They shall review the candidacy and record a vote in favor or against promotion by majority vote (unless some other voting mechanism is established by college or departmental bylaws). The vote of the departmentally designated faculty group is advisory to the department head.
3. After making an independent judgment on the promotion candidacy, the department head shall either
  - Insert a positive written recommendation in the dossier and advance it to the next level of review, OR
  - notify the candidate in writing that the department declines to recommend promotion.
4. Candidates not recommended for promotion by their departments may appeal that decision to the next level. If a candidate chooses not to appeal, the application is considered to be withdrawn and the promotion process ends. (See VI.3, below.)

#### B. College Level Review and Recommendation

1. The dean may establish a college-wide committee for review and recommendation regarding promotion of NTT teaching faculty. The recommendation of any college-wide committee shall be advisory to the dean.
2. After making an independent judgment on the promotion candidacy, the dean shall either:
  - Insert a positive written recommendation in the dossier and advance it to the next level of review, OR
  - notify the candidate in writing that the college declines to recommend promotion.
3. Candidates not recommended for promotion by their colleges may appeal that decision to the Provost. If a candidate chooses not to appeal, the application is considered to be withdrawn and the promotion process ends. (See VI.3, below.)

#### C. Campus Level Review and Final Promotion Decision

1. The Provost reviews recommendations forwarded by the dean and serves as the final decision maker regarding promotion to senior/distinguished lecturer.
2. The Provost notifies successful and unsuccessful candidates in writing of his/her decision regarding promotion.

3. Candidates not recommended for promotion by the Provost's may appeal to the Chancellor. If a candidate chooses not to appeal, the application is considered to be withdrawn and the promotion process ends.

## V. Contents of the Dossier

A cover sheet that records the decisions at the various levels of review must accompany the dossier. Candidates for promotion must provide a complete *curriculum vitae* and assemble a dossier in advance of the process. The candidate will work with the department head or designee to assemble a promotion dossier according to the guidelines listed below. This dossier must describe the responsibilities assigned to the lecturer/senior lecturer and must include an appropriate subset of the following materials. The dossier, excluding the cover sheet and the candidate's *curriculum vitae*, should not exceed 50 pages.

Items to be supplied by the candidate (Asterisks indicate required items):

1. A complete *curriculum vitae*\*
2. Statement of teaching philosophy and professional goals\*
3. Student evaluations and grade distributions (listed in chronological order, earliest to most recent) \*
  - 3.1. Table of responses to the first eight questions from the End of Course Survey or EOC Survey (fall 2016 to the present), or the first four questions from the SAIS (spring 2016 and prior), from all classes taught during the five years prior to the date of the application for promotion;
  - 3.2. Table of final grade distributions from all classes taught during the five years prior to the date of the application for promotion.
4. Evidence of teaching excellence, such as:
  - 4.1. Narrative comments from student evaluations. (**Note:** If candidates submit narrative comments, they must submit all comments received during the review period to the department head, who will make a selection that includes both "best liked" and "least liked" qualities. The selection should be broadly representative of the entire body of student comments.);
  - 4.2. A list of honors and awards for teaching, advising, or mentoring;
  - 4.3. A representative syllabus, ideally from the most recent instance of the candidate's most frequently taught course;
  - 4.4. Evidence of course or curricular development;
  - 4.5. Evidence of pedagogical innovation;
  - 4.6. An account of supervision of undergraduate research;
  - 4.7. A description of mentoring or coordinating GTAs for large-enrolling, multi-section classes;
  - 4.8. A description of participation in teaching workshops or pedagogical training .
5. Evidence of excellence in contributing to the university's instructional mission:
  - 5.1. Administrative responsibilities within the program or unit;
  - 5.2. Program or course-coordination across multiple sections;
  - 5.3. Support for extra-curricular student organizations and activities;
  - 5.4. Participation in the unit's governance activities and committees;

- 5.5. Professional outreach activities in the campus, community, or discipline;
- 5.6. Other evidence of professional excellence

Items to be supplied by the department head (Asterisks indicate required items):

- 6. Description of the candidate's responsibilities\*
- 7. Evaluations
  - 7.1. 1 Copies of annual evaluations during the review period (since the last promotion or for the last five years, as applicable);\*
  - 7.2. Copies of at least two peer/faculty evaluations of instruction during the review period for promotion to senior lecturer. For promotion to distinguished lecturer, one peer/faculty evaluation performed after promotion to senior lecturer is required.\*
  - 7.3. Any other annual evaluations.

#### **VI. Notification of Candidates during the Process and Candidates' Right to Respond**

- 1. Candidates will be notified upon completion of review at each level (department, college, provost).
- 2. A candidate whose application for promotion is denied will be provided a written explanation of the grounds for the denial at the time of notification.
- 3. Promotion applications that are not approved will not be forwarded to the next level of review unless the candidate submits a written appeal to the next level within ten working days of the date of the written notification of a negative promotion decision. The appeal must make an explicit request for further review of the application and give reasons for that request.
- 4. A candidate has a right to submit a written response to each level of review, whether the recommendation is positive or negative. The candidate must submit the response within ten working days of notification. The response will be inserted in the dossier.
- 5. Candidates not recommended for promotion must wait one academic year before resubmitting the application. Resubmission can occur only with the consent of the department head, who will consult with the departmentally designated review committee.

#### **VII. Review Calendar**

The following is a recommended calendar for the lecturer promotion review process. The due dates for department and college review may be adjusted as needed to accommodate the specific needs of the units. The campus due dates are firm and final.

- 1. Department / School / Program (recommended):
  - **January 30:** Eligible Lecturers submit dossiers to their units. (See above for dossier requirements)
  - **February 28:** Units submit recommendations to the College.
- 2. College (recommended)
  - **March 1-March 31:** College Lecturer Promotion Committee reviews candidate dossiers
  - **April 1:** College Lecturer Promotion Committee submits recommendations to Dean of the College
  - **May 1:** Dean makes recommendations to the Provost.

3. Campus (firm and final)

- **May 1:** Provost's Office receives recommendations from the Deans
- **June 1:** Provost notifies candidates of outcome of the process