

PROMOTION OF NON-TENURE TRACK TEACHING FACULTY

A. LECTURER PROMOTION PROCESS

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.

1. Expectations for Institutional Faculty. “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.” (*Faculty Handbook* Section 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: establishing, applying, and maintaining rigorous expectations for student performance; facilitating student learning through effective pedagogical techniques; 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.

2. Criteria for Promotion to Lecturer Ranks. The principal criterion for promotion is excellence in teaching; however, research and/or service may be considered when recommending a lecturer for 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.

a. **Promotion to 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 apply for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer:

- i. Evidence of excellence in teaching, typically of undergraduate courses, as documented in student evaluations, peer evaluations, annual supervisor / departmental evaluations;
- ii. Professional development, as evidenced by appropriate activities in support of the expected instructional practices listed in Section VI.A.1., above;

iii. Evidence notable contributions to the university’s instructional mission, within the faculty member’s assigned role.

b. **Promotion to 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 apply for promotion to the rank of distinguished lecturer:

i. Evidence of consistent excellence in teaching, typically of undergraduate courses, as documented by student evaluations, peer evaluations, annual supervisor / departmental evaluations;

ii. 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;

iii. Evidence of outstanding contributions to the university’s instructional mission, within the faculty member’s assigned role.

iv. Evidence of institutional or disciplinary service, within the faculty member’s assigned role, such as advising and mentoring undergraduate students, supervising GTAs, course coordination, or other forms of institutional service, such as serving on committees

3. **Process for Promotion.** An effective evaluation of a promotion candidate’s qualifications and professional contributions requires the academic judgment of both the candidate’s faculty colleagues and responsible administrators. When the faculty member’s position is in a department within a college, there are three levels of review: the department or other unit level, headed by the faculty member’s immediate supervisor; the dean of the college in which that unit sits; and the chief academic officer. 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 faculty member is appointed.

a. **Departmental Level Review and Recommendation.** The 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.

i. 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.). Typically, all tenure-track and tenured faculty members are eligible to be members of this group, as are non-tenure-track instructional faculty who hold higher rank than the candidate, unless otherwise specified by college or departmental bylaws. 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 or his/her designee.

ii. 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.

iii. 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 Section VI.A.5. below.)

b. **College Level Review and Recommendation.** The dean may establish a college-wide committee for review and recommendation regarding promotion of non-tenure-track faculty. The recommendation of any college-wide committee shall be advisory to the dean. 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. Candidates not recommended for promotion by their colleges may appeal that decision to the chief academic officer. If a candidate chooses not to appeal, the application is considered to be withdrawn and the promotion process ends. (See Section VI.A.5. below.)

c. **Campus Level Review and Final Promotion Decision.** The chief academic officer reviews recommendations forwarded by the dean and serves as the final decision maker regarding promotion to senior/distinguished lecturer. The chief academic officer will notify successful and unsuccessful candidates in writing of his/her decision regarding promotion. Candidates not recommended for promotion by the chief academic officer may appeal to the Chancellor.

4. **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.

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

i. A complete *curriculum vitae**

ii. Statement of teaching philosophy and professional goals*

iii. A summary of student evaluations and grade distributions (listed in chronological order, earliest to most recent) consisting of a table of responses to the first four questions from the SAIS from all classes taught during the five years prior to the date of the application for promotion and a table of final grade distributions from all classes taught during the five years prior to the date of the application for promotion.*

iv. Evidence of teaching excellence such as:

- Narrative comments from student evaluations (**Note:** If a candidate submits narrative comments, all comments received during the review period shall be provided to the department head or designee, 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.);
- a list of honors and awards for teaching, advising, and mentoring; a representative syllabus, ideally from the most recent instances of the candidate’s most frequently taught courses;
- evidence of course or curricular development; evidence of pedagogical innovation;
- an account of supervision of undergraduate research;
- a description of mentoring or coordinating GTAs for large-enrolling, multi-section classes;
- a description of participation in teaching workshops or pedagogical training.

v. Evidence of excellence in contributing to the university’s instructional mission such as:

- administrative responsibilities within the program or unit;
- program or course-coordination across multiple sections;
- support for extra-curricular student organizations and activities;
- participation in the unit’s governance activities and committees;
- professional outreach activities in the campus, community, or discipline;

- other evidence of professional excellence.

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

- i. Description of the candidate's responsibilities,*
- ii. Copies of annual evaluations during the review period (since the last promotion or for the last five years, as applicable),*
- iii. Copies of at least two separate 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,*
- iv. Any other annual evaluations.

5. Notification of Candidates during the Process and Candidate's Right to Respond.

- a. Candidates will be notified upon completion of review at each level (department, college, campus).
- b. 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.
- c. A promotion application that is 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.
- d. 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 any response within ten working days of notification. The response will be inserted in the dossier.
- e. Candidates not recommended for promotion must wait one academic year before re-applying.