

**RESOLUTION TO REVISE CHAPTER FIVE OF THE FACULTY HANDBOOK:  
Employment Policies and Procedures for Non Tenure-Track Faculty**

**WHEREAS**, faculty members on the collegiate professor track have asked for clarification of the guidelines relevant to their employment series, particularly those regarding the appropriate range of duties and expectations for promotion; and

**WHEREAS**, based upon the shared belief of the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost that a revision to the collegiate faculty sections of chapter five in the Faculty Handbook was warranted, a Commission on Faculty Affairs working group, comprised mostly of collegiate faculty, was formed for this purpose; and

**WHEREAS**, the working group sought to simplify and standardize procedures, clarify and update requirements, and ensure the equitable treatment of faculty while maintaining Virginia Tech's high academic standards; and

**WHEREAS**, changes to the university's promotion and tenure guidelines needed to be carried over to the promotion guidelines for non-tenure-track faculty; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission on Faculty Affairs has periodically presented the revision to the Faculty Senate and department heads/chairs and incorporated many of the suggestions these groups have offered; and

**WHEREAS**, the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost believe that the revision, which includes clarification of the duties for faculty members on the collegiate professor track and changes to the requirements for departmental guidelines for the promotion of non-tenure-track faculty, improves upon the existing guidelines;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Faculty Handbook be revised according to the text included in Appendix 1; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that these revised guidelines will become effective beginning with faculty considered for promotion during the 2022-2023 academic year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board of Visitors approve this resolution to revise chapter five of the university's Faculty Handbook.

March 22, 2021

## **Appendix 1: Full text of Chapter 5 revision**

### **5.0 Employment Policies and Procedures for Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty**

The following policies address specific aspects of non-tenure-track instructional faculty appointments. Non-tenure-track faculty members fill critical roles in the learning, discovery, and engagement missions at Virginia Tech. They complement the qualifications and contributions of tenure-track faculty, provide access to specialized faculty resources, and allow flexibility to address programmatic needs. As valuable contributors to departmental and institutional missions, they are entitled to fair treatment and compensation, access to professional development opportunities, recognition for their accomplishments, and participation in the life of the university community.

Academic departments retain the authority to decide whether to employ non-tenure-track faculty to deliver aspects of their instructional program and will maintain Promotion Guidelines (see chapter three, “Promotion and Tenure”) that follow the university template and include all information regarding departmental procedures and expectations for reappointment, progress toward promotion, and the evaluation of non-tenure-track promotion cases. Nothing in these guidelines shall supersede or contradict the provisions of the Faculty Handbook. If a college elects to adopt guidelines that establish a college-wide standard for promotion of non-tenure-track faculty, departments may maintain a set of guidelines that interpret the college-wide standard within the context of the department’s disciplines and traditions. All guidelines will be approved by faculty (through department- and college-level governance), the college-level committee and the dean, and the provost’s office, and made available online. Revisions to these documents must also be approved by the faculty, the college, and the provost’s office.

Ordinarily a graduate or professional degree is required for appointment to one of these ranks. Appointments are made using established university search procedures. (See chapter two, “Faculty Search Processes,” and the Human Resources website.)

Tenure will not be awarded at any of these ranks and service at these ranks is excluded from the pre-tenure probationary period if the faculty member is subsequently appointed to a tenure-track position, except for visiting professors, whose full-time service may or may not be counted at the discretion of the faculty member.

In a few cases, faculty members with regular academic rank (assistant, associate, or full professor) hold non-tenure-track appointments because of unusual job responsibilities and historical lack of appropriate alternative ranks. Policies in this section also apply to those individuals.

All non-tenure-track faculty ranks provide for full- or part-time appointments.

### **5.1 Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty Series**

#### **5.1.1 Visiting Professor**

Appointment to the rank of visiting assistant, associate, or professor is for a restricted period to carry out learning, discovery, and engagement responsibilities within an academic department. Professional credentials required for the standard professorial ranks are required for appointment as a visiting assistant, associate, or professor. A visiting faculty member may not serve in such a position beyond six years. Tenure cannot be awarded to individuals in the visiting ranks.

Full-time service at this rank *may* or *may not* be counted as part of the pre-tenure probationary period if the faculty member is subsequently appointed to a tenure-track position. As with prior service credit from another institution, the decision to include all or some of the years of service from a visiting appointment is at the discretion of the faculty member. However, this decision must be

made at the time of appointment to the tenure-track position and documented as part of that initial contract.

### **5.1.2 Adjunct Professor**

Appointment to the rank of adjunct assistant, associate, or professor is reserved for persons whose primary employment is with another agency, organization, educational institution, or with a non-instructional unit of the university. Adjunct professors are usually compensated as wage employees using the university's P14 form. Procedures for processing P14 actions are available on the [Human Resources website](#).

Appropriate professional credentials are required for appointment as an adjunct assistant, associate, or professor. Appointments may be renewed annually. The professor of practice series titles may be used for wage adjunct faculty appointments in lieu of the adjunct assistant professor, associate professor, or professor titles, if appropriate for the assignment and credentials of the individuals. (See "Professor of Practice Series.")

Adjunct faculty must present credentials appropriate to the level of the course they are teaching. It is the responsibility of the department to verify documentation of appropriate credentials for adjunct faculty members prior to the start of the course. (See chapter two, "Faculty Credentialing Guidelines," or the [provost's website](#).)

If deemed qualified and appropriate by the host department, authorization for an adjunct faculty member to serve as principal investigator on a sponsored project may be requested. The department, with the approval of the dean, submits a written request for such authorization to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation.

Wage adjunct faculty members do not typically submit an annual faculty activity report or have an annual evaluation because their employment is temporary. Although wage adjunct faculty may be hired repeatedly to teach a course or courses, they are not considered to be continuing faculty for the purposes of evaluation. Per course stipends paid to wage adjunct faculty are not fixed university-wide, but rather are determined on a departmental basis. Payments typically reflect the experience and credentials of the wage adjunct faculty member, the level of demand (market) for the necessary expertise, and general salary levels in the discipline.

### **5.1.3 Professor of Practice Series**

For disciplines where professional preparation of students is a major goal, the involvement of experienced practitioners in teaching the skills and values of the profession, overseeing internships and project experiences, and career advising, for example, are a vital aspect of a successful program. Professional programs often have a deep commitment to the on-going continuing education of practitioners in the field, resulting in a greater commitment to delivery of outreach programs than is typical of a tenure-track appointment outside of Extension. Programs in the arts may wish to attract resident artists or performers for a period of time to contribute to the program. The professor of practice rank series may be appropriate in these and other roles that typically do not reflect the same range of responsibilities required for tenure-track faculty members.

The professor of practice series provides for non-tenure-track faculty appointments for individuals who bring specialized expertise to the instructional programs of the university, thereby complementing the qualifications and contributions of tenure-track faculty. (These rank titles may also be used for wage [P14] appointments in lieu of adjunct assistant, associate, or professor, if appropriate for the assignment and credentials of the individual.) Individuals appointed to these ranks are expected to be successful and effective professionals in a given field. They must be effective

teachers of the profession or discipline and they are expected to be able to understand and evaluate the research that applies to their field and teach it to students. While professor of practice faculty members may conduct research and present their findings in professional venues, there are no expectations for an extensive research program as is typical of tenure-track faculty appointments.

Professor of practice faculty members are expected to remain active in their professions in ways that contribute to their assignment—teaching, consulting, or outreach, serving in technical and professional societies and associations, and similar activities. Where appropriate to their assignment, they may interact with graduate or professional students and interns and serve on graduate committees. To chair a graduate committee, professors of practice must have a terminal degree, active involvement in research, and the approval of the academic unit and the graduate school. They may also be expected to serve on departmental, college, or university committees as contributing members of their departments and the broader university community.

Individuals appointed to a professor of practice rank must have a graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline), professional certification(s) if relevant, and/or significant professional experience. Any appointment without the relevant *terminal* degree in the field must be certified by the department as appropriately credentialed for the faculty member's particular instructional assignment in accordance with guidelines for regional accreditation and university policy and procedures. Documentation supporting alternative credentials certification is required. Further information regarding appropriate credentials for the teaching faculty is found in chapter two, "Faculty Credentialing Guidelines," and on the [provost's website](#).

A record of significant professional achievement is expected for appointment at the associate professor or professor level; initial appointments at such ranks require approval of the appropriate departmental committee and head or chair. Appointment to one of these ranks may be from one to five years and is renewable without limit.

Promotion within these ranks may be pursued through procedures outlined in this section.

*Assistant Professor of Practice:* Persons appointed at this rank have a graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline), professional certification(s) if relevant, and/or significant professional experience. Experience and a demonstrated competence in practice of the profession are expected. Credentials must be relevant to the field and type of assignment.

*Associate Professor of Practice:* Persons appointed at the associate professor of practice rank have a graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline), professional certification(s) if relevant, and/or significant professional experience. Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant professional experience and accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment.

*Professor of Practice:* Professor of practice is the capstone rank in the series. Appointment to this rank denotes distinguished professional achievement, and regional, national, or international prominence in the field. Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant professional experience and accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment. External validation of such accomplishments and leadership in the field is expected at the time of appointment or promotion.

#### **5.1.4 Clinical Faculty Series**

General college faculty members with responsibilities primarily in instruction and/or service in a clinical setting, such as veterinary medicine are considered clinical faculty. The following clinical faculty appointments are intended to promote and retain clinical educators and to complement the

clinical activities of the university. The clinical faculty track provides for faculty appointments to individuals whose primary responsibilities are in clinical settings and in the instructional programs. While clinical faculty may conduct clinical research and present their findings in professional venues, there are no expectations for an extensive research program as is typical of tenure-track faculty appointments. The clinical faculty ranks include:

*Clinical Instructor:* Persons appointed to this rank must have the appropriate professional degree. Preference is given to individuals eligible for, or certified by, the most appropriate specialty college or organization recognized by the profession. Appointments at this rank are typically for one year and are renewable.

The clinical professor series is designed for clinical faculty members who have extended appointments and who are expected to interact with graduate or professional students, residents and interns, serving on committees or supervising their training. Appointment to one of these ranks may be from one to five years and is renewable without limit. Usually a national search is conducted for appointment at one of these ranks (or an approved exemption sought for exceptional skills or similar justification).

*Clinical Assistant Professor:* Persons appointed to this rank must have the appropriate professional degree and eligibility for, or certification by, the most appropriate specialty college recognized by the professional organization. Credentials shall be consistent with those for appointment to assistant professor, with an expectation for primary commitment to the instructional and clinical teaching setting.

*Clinical Associate Professor:* Persons appointed to this rank must have the appropriate professional degree and be a diplomate in the appropriate specialty college recognized by their professional organization. Credentials shall be consistent with those for appointment to associate professor, with an emphasis on clinical accomplishments.

*Clinical Professor:* Persons appointed to this rank must have the appropriate professional degree and be a diplomate in the most appropriate specialty college recognized by their professional organization. Credentials shall be consistent with those for appointment to professor, with an emphasis on clinical accomplishments.

Further detail on the duties and responsibilities of these ranks, criteria and the process for promotion, and the terms and conditions of employment for clinical faculty are established by the respective academic departments and approved by an appropriate college-level committee and the dean.

### **5.1.5 Collegiate Faculty Series**

#### Description of Collegiate Faculty Series

The primary purpose of the collegiate professor series is to provide departments the opportunity to employ faculty whose principal focus is on excellence in instruction, including teaching, pedagogy, and curricular reform. While collegiate faculty also have scholarship and service roles as laid out below, the extent of a collegiate faculty member's scholarly and service obligations will be balanced against their primary responsibility to focus on excellence in instruction. Collegiate faculty are expected to remain active in their disciplines in ways that contribute to their assignment. The following teaching, scholarship, and service parameters apply to collegiate faculty:

**Teaching:** The instructional involvement of collegiate professors can include but is not limited to classroom and online teaching, curricular updates, course transformations, and the adoption/integration of innovative and inclusive pedagogy. Working in collaboration with the

department's other faculty, collegiate faculty may take a lead role in enhancing the curricula and promoting teaching excellence and must have a major commitment to the instructional missions of the department. Collegiate faculty may teach graduate courses.

**Scholarship:** Scholarship—broadly defined at Virginia Tech as the discovery, transmission, and/or application of knowledge—takes many forms, including but not limited to research, creative activity, and extension activity. Collegiate faculty will engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning and/or disciplinary topics and present the results in a forum or manner consistent with their assignment. While one collegiate faculty member may have an extensive disciplinary research assignment and be expected to present findings in professional venues, another may be expected to develop curricular innovations and present them for local consideration or adoption. Examples of scholarship include but are not limited to designing or participating in training or professional development grants; presenting research at regional, state, national, or international conferences; and publishing research in refereed scholarly and/or practitioner journals. Though some scholarship is expected of all collegiate faculty, there are no expectations that they will conduct the extensive research programs typical of tenure-track faculty appointments.

**Service:** Collegiate faculty members have significant roles in the governance, development, and vitality of the university and academic professions and may be expected to serve on departmental, college, or university committees; engage in outreach or extension activities; and serve in technical and professional societies and associations and similar activities.

At the time of their appointment or reappointment, given the variability of collegiate faculty assignments, contractual details outlined in the Terms of Faculty Offer (TOFO) will be supplemented by a written work assignment negotiated between the faculty member and the department head or chair.

#### Initial Appointment Within the Series

Initial appointment at the rank of *Collegiate Assistant Professor* requires experience and demonstrated competence in teaching and the potential for professional and/or scholarly achievement appropriate for the field and assignment. This is a three-year appointment.

Initial appointment at the rank of *Collegiate Associate Professor* requires evidence that a candidate has significant instructional experience and professional and/or scholarly achievements relevant to the field and type of assignment. This is a five-year appointment.

Initial appointment at the rank of *Collegiate Professor*, the capstone rank in the series, requires evidence of distinguished professional achievement; regional, national, or international prominence in the field; and significant instructional experience and scholarly accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment. This is a seven-year appointment.

Individuals appointed to any collegiate professor rank must have a terminal graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline); professional certification(s), if relevant; and must be certified by the department as appropriately credentialed for their instructional assignment in accordance with guidelines for regional accreditation and university policy and procedures. Further information regarding appropriate credentials for the teaching faculty is found in chapter two, "Faculty Credentialing Guidelines," and on the [provost's website](#).

All appointments are renewable without limit.

#### Promotion Expectations Particular to the Series

After five full years in rank, collegiate faculty are eligible for promotion. While a faculty member may request promotion prior to serving five years in rank, their dossier must provide clear evidence that they have met the criteria for promotion.

Positive evaluations of a faculty member's accomplishments are required for promotion and may be provided by reviewers who are internal to the department, external to the department, or external to Virginia Tech, depending upon the nature of the faculty member's assignment and the Promotion Guidelines of the department.

Given that promotion is not mandatory, collegiate faculty are obligated to inform the department head or chair of their intent to apply for promotion at least one year prior to application.

**General expectations for promotion:** Promotion to the rank of *Collegiate Associate Professor* requires evidence that a candidate's teaching, including their pedagogy and curricular reform, has had impact within the department and has the potential for greater impact in the future; that a candidate's scholarship has had impact locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally, depending on their assignment; and that they have made significant contributions to service.

Promotion to the rank of *Collegiate Professor* denotes distinguished professional and/or scholarly achievement and requires evidence that a candidate's potential as a teacher, including their pedagogy and curricular reform, has been reached; that their scholarship has had impact regionally, nationally, or internationally, depending on their assignment; and that they have continued to make significant contributions to service.

A collegiate professor in a regular position who receives notice of non-reappointment may request a review of the decision by the college dean. If the dean sustains the non-reappointment decision, the faculty member may request, through the dean, a further and independent review of the decision by the properly constituted college committee on promotion and tenure in accordance with appropriate procedures. **If the committee concurs with the dean's decision, the decision is final. The dean notifies the faculty member in writing of the reasons for the committee's decision and no further appeal is provided. If the committee's recommendation varies from the dean's, the case is automatically sent to the provost for review. The provost's decision is final.**

### 5.1.6 Instructor Series

The responsibilities of a person appointed to one of the instructor ranks in an academic department are focused on undergraduate education, with minimal or no expectation for development of an independent program of research or scholarship. A master's degree is the usual minimum educational credential for an appointment to the instructor ranks, and generally a minimum of 18 graduate credits teaching in the discipline is required to meet accreditation standards. Further information regarding appropriate credentials for the teaching faculty is found in chapter two, "Faculty Credentialing Guidelines," and on the provost's website. Instructors with distinctive assignments and work schedules will have these responsibilities conveyed in the terms of faculty offer letter at the time of appointment.

While initial appointment is typically at the entry rank, prior experience may be considered for a recommendation of appointment at a higher rank with the approval of the appropriate departmental committee and head or chair. Up to three years of similar instructional service at another accredited American four-year college or university may be counted toward the designated period required prior to review for promotion in rank.

Faculty members within the instructor ranks may not chair a graduate committee.

*Instructor:* The instructor rank is the initial rank for appointment of a full- or part-time faculty member. Primary responsibilities are usually to the instructional program, but assignments vary depending on the faculty member's expertise and experience and departmental needs. Typically, they include teaching undergraduate courses, advising students, developing or revising courses and

curricula, and fulfilling other instructional, administrative, or service responsibilities. Appointment at this rank consists of a series of one- or two-year renewable appointments with a minimum of five years of completed service before consideration for promotion.

*Advanced Instructor:* Consideration for promotion to the rank of advanced instructor may be requested by the instructor or recommended by the department based on excellence in instructional responsibilities and significant evidence of related professional growth and development. Mentoring colleagues or graduate teaching assistants, student advising, course or curriculum development, or exemplary service or outreach are examples of ways in which instructors can make valuable contributions to the instructional programs in a department. Advanced instructors are expected to demonstrate mastery in teaching with significant impact on student learning and the department's undergraduate programs. Scholarship and publication are not typically an assigned responsibility of instructor positions, but such accomplishments may be considered as part of the evaluation for promotion. Promotion to the advanced instructor rank is generally accompanied by a renewable three-year contract.

A minimum of five years of completed service at the advanced instructor rank is required before consideration for promotion to senior instructor.

*Senior Instructor:* Senior instructor is the capstone rank in the instructor series and promotion to this rank denotes exemplary instruction, demonstrated continued professional development, and significant contributions to undergraduate education. In addition to teaching courses, senior instructors may have considerable responsibility in mentoring colleagues or graduate teaching assistants, overseeing course development or special instructional initiatives, student advising, or other responsibilities reflecting their role as instructional leaders. Promotion to the rank of senior instructor is generally accompanied by a renewable five-year contract.

### **5.2.2 Reappointment**

Non-tenure-track faculty members on restricted contracts whose appointments will be continued are issued a reappointment contract specifying the new ending date for their appointment. Reappointments typically occur on the anniversary of the hire date or are realigned to coincide with the academic year or other relevant appointment cycle. The practice of issuing repeated one-year restricted contracts for an individual faculty member over many years is explicitly discouraged, as it can be exploitative over an extended time.

Therefore, if a faculty member is to be reappointed into a restricted position when the faculty member has spent the preceding five years on restricted contracts, approval must be requested from the provost's office. The request should be supported by documentation demonstrating why the position cannot readily be converted to a regular appointment.

Reappointments for faculty members on regular contracts are usually effective July 1 (for calendar year appointments) or August 10 (for academic year appointments). Notice of non-reappointment is in accordance with periods identified in chapter two, "Retirement, Resignation, and Non-Reappointment."

### **5.2.4 Promotion Guidelines for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty**

Non-tenure-track faculty are eligible for promotion in accordance with guidelines and procedures maintained here and in each department's Promotion Guidelines. (See chapter three, "Promotion and Tenure," for information regarding the content of, and approval process for, departmental guidelines.)

Promotion in rank for non-tenure-track faculty is not a requirement of continued employment or



an entitlement for years of service without evidence of merit, continued professional development, and contributions in the assigned roles. Positive evaluations of a faculty member's accomplishments are required for promotion and may be provided by reviewers who are internal to the department, external to the department, or external to Virginia Tech, depending upon the faculty member's rank, the nature of their assignment, and the Promotion Guidelines of the department.

Faculty members must be in a regular or restricted appointment to be considered for promotion. (See chapter five, "Reappointment," for information regarding promotion for faculty members on restricted appointment). An approved promotion in rank is recognized by a change in title, increasing length of appointment contract, and a base salary adjustment as identified in the annual faculty compensation plan approved by the Board of Visitors.

**Progress reviews (for Clinical and Collegiate Faculty only):** Reviews are substantive and thorough. At minimum, departmental committees must review the faculty member's relevant annual activity reports, peer evaluations of teaching, and authored materials. It is strongly suggested that faculty use the series-appropriate promotion dossier format (available on the provost's website) to organize and present information for review. The reviews should analyze the faculty member's progress toward promotion and offer guidance regarding future activities and plans. All reviews must be in writing, with the faculty member acknowledging receipt by signing and returning a copy for their departmental file. Whenever possible, reviews should be performed by promotion and tenure committees or other equivalent standing committees.

Since work assignments of faculty can change over time, the committee will also determine if assignments conform to the expectations for the appropriate series. Committees are expected to recommend adjustments in work assignments when the nature and/or amount of work faculty have been assigned hinders their opportunity for promotion. These recommendations will be included in the written evaluation and must be considered by department heads and chairs during annual evaluations and when renewing contracts.

Departments must schedule at least one review of every clinical or collegiate faculty member during the term of each multi-year contract. However, after two reviews, faculty who do not intend to seek promotion or who have reached the capstone level of their series can decline the review. Beyond the normal schedule of reviews, faculty have the right to request a review in order to determine if their assignment still conforms to the expectations of their series.

**Promotion process:** The responsibilities of non-tenure-track faculty are tailored to the needs of their departments, and candidates for promotion are not expected to have equal levels of commitment or equal responsibilities in teaching, scholarship, and service. Therefore, evaluators must take unique features of every faculty member's department, discipline, and work assignment into account. Thus, as part of their Promotion Guidelines, each department is required to have an "Expectations and Indicators for Promotion" section that accounts for disciplinary and programmatic differences unique to and within the department and specifies what is required of their non-tenure-track faculty for promotion. These distinctions are best clarified at the department level and must be adhered to by evaluators at every stage of the promotion process. Expectations and indicators will be selected with the participation of and approved by faculty in the department through department- and college-level governance. Departments should carefully assess and state the overall standards of professional performance and contribution they consider minimally acceptable for the conferral of promotion. In colleges that adopt a college-wide set of Promotion Guidelines, the "Expectations and Indicators for Promotion" section will account for differences within and across departments, schools, and ranks.

Promotion candidates will be evaluated according to the expectations and indicators in effect at the time of their application for promotion.

Consideration for promotion in rank requires preparation of a dossier. Dossier templates for Instructors, Clinical Faculty, Collegiate Faculty, and Professors of Practice are available on the [provost's website](#). A cover page is also required and available from the same website. The department head or chair, or the department committee, are responsible for ensuring that the dossier conforms to the appropriate format. Among other elements, the dossier includes the candidate's statement; documentation of performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, service, and other activities relevant to the candidate's assignment; and a list of work under review or in progress. The dossier is completed by the addition of letters of evaluation (internal or external) and recommendation statements as the dossier is reviewed at the department and college levels. Colleges and departments may request supplemental materials.

Progress reviews for clinical and collegiate faculty and promotion evaluation of all non-tenure-track faculty are carried out by standing committees on which faculty form the majority, such as promotion and tenure committees or executive/personnel committees. Given the wide variation in representation of non-tenure-track appointments, some latitude is provided in the nature and make up of department and college committees. For example, in departments with significant numbers of instructors, the committee charged with reviews of instructor promotions would consist of majority representation of advanced and senior instructors. In departments with very few such appointments, the existing departmental promotion and tenure committee may review the dossier(s) and make recommendations. Similarly, at the college level either a special committee may be formed to review promotions of non-tenure-track faculty with majority representation of those in the advanced level of such ranks, or the existing promotion and tenure committees may be assigned such review and recommendation responsibilities. While the procedures vary due to practical issues and varying numbers, they should be included in departmental [Promotion Guidelines](#) and adhered to for consistency and fair treatment of all candidates. A faculty member may not serve on any committee that is evaluating a spouse, family member, or other individual with whom the faculty member has a close personal relationship. (See chapter two, "Conflicts of Interest.")

Faculty being considered for promotion have their dossiers reviewed at as many as three levels: by an appropriately charged department committee and the department head or chair; by an appropriately charged college committee and the dean; and by the provost.

The department head or chair and dean make separate recommendations to the subsequent review levels. A positive recommendation from either or both the departmental committee and the department head or chair advances the dossier for promotion to the college committee level. Similarly, at the college level, a positive recommendation from either or both the college committee and the dean results in advancement of the recommendation to consideration by the provost.

The provost reviews the recommendations from departments and colleges and makes recommendations to the president, the president makes recommendations to The Board of Visitors, and the board makes the final decision.

Given that promotion decisions do not carry the same "up or out" consequences associated with tenure, a negative recommendation on a promotion request need not lead to the termination of employment. Indeed, a faculty member may remain at the initial rank as long as their performance warrants continued employment and serves departmental needs.

#### **5.2.4.1 Candidate Notification**

As a promotion case proceeds, the candidate must be notified in writing of the recommendations made by each committee and administrator. Any negative recommendations, whether by a committee or administrator, must include all substantive reasons for that recommendation,

including references to the relevant “Expectations and Indicators for Promotion” section of the Promotion Guidelines, as well as options for appeal. While notification letters may include excerpts from committee or administrator letters, they cannot include the results of any votes, the names of evaluators, or statements from their evaluations.

The department head or chair notifies the candidate of the department committee’s and the head’s or chair’s recommendations to the college. The dean notifies the candidate of the college committee’s and the dean’s recommendations to the provost. The provost notifies the candidate of the provost’s recommendations to the president. In cases with a final positive recommendation by the president, the provost notifies the candidate in writing that their case has been recommended by the president to the Board of Visitors for approval. In cases with a negative final recommendation by the president, the provost notifies the appropriate dean, who informs the candidate in writing of the reasons for the decision.

All notifications will take place within 10 university business days of the completion of the committee’s and administrator’s deliberations.

### **5.2.5 Appeals of Decisions on Promotion**

Following a negative recommendation by both the department committee and the head or chair, the decision may be appealed to the college committee based on the following claims only: department criteria in the relevant “Expectations and Indicators for Promotion” section were not appropriately applied; material from the dossier was unavailable to or disregarded by reviewers through no fault of the candidate; or information in the dossier was not considered in a fair and objective manner. The appeal must be filed within 10 university business days of official notification of the promotion decision. If either the college committee or the dean grants the appeal of a negative department decision, the case resumes normal consideration, beginning with the college committee and dean. A negative recommendation at the college level or by the provost cannot be appealed.

Additionally, faculty have the option to grieve procedural violations of the promotion process—including violations of the appeal process presented in this section—after a negative decision on an appeal or instead of filing an appeal in the first place. Since the grievance procedures allow the grievant to state both the grievance they believe they have experienced and the relief they seek, it has a wider range of possible outcomes than the appeal process. However, because it is a slower process that would likely not be completed until the promotion cases in a given year have been decided, and because faculty cannot grieve “items falling within the jurisdiction of other university policies and procedures,” a grievance should be thought of as a means for faculty to seek an outcome they cannot seek through the appeal process. The grievance process is described in chapter five, “Faculty Grievance Policy and Procedures.”

Appendix 2: Original Subsections 5.0, 5.15, 5.2.4, 5.2.4.1, and 5.2.5

## **5.0 Employment Policies and Procedures for Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty**

Non-tenure-track faculty members fill critical roles in the learning, discovery, and engagement missions at Virginia Tech. They complement the efforts and qualifications of tenure-track faculty, provide access to specialized faculty resources, and allow flexibility to address programmatic needs. As valuable contributors to departmental and institutional missions, they are entitled to fair treatment and compensation, access to professional development opportunities, recognition for their accomplishments, and participation in the life of the university community. The following policies address specific aspects of non-tenure-track instructional faculty appointments. In a few cases, faculty members with regular academic rank (assistant, associate, or professor) hold non-tenure-

track appointments because of unusual job responsibilities and historical lack of appropriate alternative ranks. Policies in this section also apply to those individuals.

Ordinarily a graduate or professional degree is required for appointment to one of these ranks. Appointments are made using established university search procedures. (See chapter two, “Faculty Search Procedures,” and the [Human Resources website](#).)

Academic departments retain the authority and responsibility to decide whether to employ non-tenure-track faculty members to deliver aspects of their instructional program. An appropriate departmental committee approves the departmental policies and practices related to the use of non-tenure-track rank

### **5.1.5 Collegiate Professor Ranks**

Academic departments retain the authority and responsibility to make decisions about whether to employ collegiate professors. Departmental policies and practices related to the use of non-tenure-track ranks must be approved by an appropriate standing committee in the department, such as a promotion and tenure or executive/personnel committee, the department head or chair, and dean.

Collegiate professors must have a major commitment to the instructional missions of the department. The involvement of collegiate professors can include classroom and online teaching, curricular updates, course transformations, and the adoption/integration of innovative and inclusive pedagogy. Working in collaboration with the department’s other faculty, collegiate faculty may take a lead role in enhancing the curricula and promoting teaching excellence.

The collegiate professor series provides for short- or long-term, full- or part-time, non-tenure-track faculty appointments for individuals who bring specialized expertise to the instructional programs of the university, thereby complementing the qualifications and contributions of tenure-track faculty. (These rank titles may be used for wage [P14] appointments in lieu of adjunct assistant, associate, or professor, if appropriate for the assignment and credentials of the individual.) Individuals appointed to these ranks are expected to be successful and effective professionals in a given field. They must be effective teachers of the discipline and they are expected to be able to understand and evaluate the research that applies to their field and to teach it to students. Collegiate professor faculty members may conduct research on the scholarship of teaching and learning related to their field and/or on disciplinary topics in their field and present their findings in professional venues, but there are no expectations for an extensive research program as is typical of tenure-track faculty appointments.

Collegiate professor faculty members are expected to remain active in their disciplines/professions in ways that contribute to their assignment—teaching, consulting, or outreach, serving in technical and professional societies and associations, and similar activities. Where appropriate to their assignment, they may interact with graduate or professional students and interns, serve on graduate committees, and chair graduate advisory committees with the approval of the academic unit and the graduate school. They may also be expected to serve on departmental, college, or university committees as contributing members of their departments and the broader university community.

Collegiate professors are appointed to 3-, 5-, or 7-year contracts. Contractual details outlined in the Terms of Faculty Offer (TOFO) may be complemented with a statement of work negotiated between the faculty member and the department head.

Individuals appointed to a collegiate professor rank must have a terminal or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline) and professional certification(s), if relevant, and must be certified by the department as appropriately credentialed for the faculty member’s particular instructional assignment in accordance with guidelines for regional accreditation and university

policy and procedures. Further information regarding appropriate credentials for the teaching faculty is found in chapter two, "Faculty Credentialing Guidelines," and on the [provost's website](#).

A record of significant scholarly and/or professional achievement is expected for appointment at the associate or professor level; initial appointments at such ranks require approval of the appropriate departmental committee and head or chair. Appointment to one of these ranks is for a specified number of years (see below) and is renewable without limit. Performance and promotion evaluations of collegiate professors is performed by department and college standing committees where faculty form the majority, such as a promotion and tenure committee or executive/personnel committee.

A collegiate professor in a regular position who receives notice of non-reappointment may request a review of the decision by the college dean. If the dean sustains the non-reappointment decision, the faculty member may request, through the dean, a further and independent review of the decision by the properly constituted college committee on promotion and tenure in accordance with appropriate procedures.

Promotion within these ranks may be pursued through procedures outlined in this section. Tenure will not be awarded at any of these ranks and service at these ranks is excluded from the pre-tenure probationary period if the faculty member is subsequently appointed to a tenure-track position.

**Collegiate Assistant Professor:** Persons appointed at this rank have a terminal graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline) and professional certification(s), if relevant. Experience and demonstrated competence in teaching are expected. Appointment to this rank is for three years and is renewable without limit.

**Collegiate Associate Professor:** Persons appointed at the collegiate associate professor rank have a terminal graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline) and professional certification(s), if relevant. Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant instructional experience and accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment. Appointment to this rank is for five years and is renewable without limit.

**Collegiate Professor:** Collegiate professor is the capstone rank in the series. Appointment to this rank denotes distinguished professional achievement, and regional, national, or international prominence in the field. Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant instructional experience and scholarly accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment. External evaluation of such accomplishments and leadership in the field is expected at the time of appointment or promotion. Appointment to this rank is for seven years and is renewable without limit.

#### **5.2.4 Promotion Guidelines for Instructors, Professors of Practice, and Clinical Faculty Ranks**

Non-tenure-track faculty members are eligible for promotion in rank in accordance with guidelines established by academic departments and approved by an appropriate college-level committee and the dean. Such guidelines should outline the process and criteria for promotion in rank; they should be widely available along with other departmental and college documents related to promotion and tenure. Faculty members may be in a *regular* or a *restricted* appointment to be considered for promotion.

Promotion in rank for any non-tenure-track position is not a requirement of continued employment, or an entitlement for years of service without evidence of exceptional merit, continued professional development, and contribution in the assigned role. An approved promotion in rank is recognized by

a change in title, increasing length of appointment contract, and a base salary adjustment as identified in the annual faculty compensation plan approved by the Board of Visitors.

Consideration for promotion in rank includes preparation of a dossier using a common university format, which may be based on relevant elements of the promotion and tenure dossier format for tenure-track faculty members. Typically such a dossier includes a statement of professional direction and accomplishment, a complete curriculum vitae, and documentation of contributions associated with the instructor's appointment. These contributions can be to instructional programs or administrative and/or service responsibilities. Colleges and departments may request supplemental materials. The appropriate college committee and dean approve guidelines for dossier development and departmental policies and procedures for the promotion process. External review of credentials are required for some – *but not all* – promotions in non-tenure-track ranks. Requirements are outlined in the promotion and tenure guidelines listed on Promotion and Tenure page of the [provost's website](#).

The promotion dossier is reviewed at three levels: (1) by an appropriately charged departmental committee and the department head or chair, (2) by an appropriately charged college-level committee and the dean, and (3) by the provost. The department head or chair and dean make separate recommendations to the subsequent review levels. The provost reviews college and dean recommendations and makes recommendations to the president. The Board of Visitors grants final approval.

Given the wide variation in representation of non-tenure-track instructional appointments some latitude is provided in the nature and make up of department and college committees. For example, departments with significant numbers of instructors, the committee charged with reviews would consist of majority representation of advanced and senior instructors. (or associate and clinical professors). In departments with very few such appointments, the existing departmental promotion and tenure committee may review the dossier(s) and make recommendations. Similarly, at the college level either a special committee may be formed to review promotions of non-tenure-track instructional faculty with majority representation of those in the advanced level of such ranks, or the existing promotion and tenure committees may be assigned such review and recommendation responsibilities. While the procedures vary to recognize practical issues and varying numbers, the guidelines for review should be in writing and adhered to for consistency and fair treatment of all candidates. A faculty member may not serve on any committee that is evaluating a spouse, family member, or other individual with whom the faculty member has a close personal relationship. (See chapter two, "Potential Conflicts Involving Spouses and Immediate Family Members.")

Given that promotion decisions do not carry the same "up or out" decision associated with tenure decisions, a negative recommendation on a promotion request need not translate into termination of employment. Indeed, a faculty member may remain at the initial rank as long as their performance warrants continued employment and serves departmental needs. If the promotion request is not supported on the first submission, it may not be appealed until at least a second review has taken place in a subsequent or later year.

Following the same pattern as review of tenure-track faculty members, a positive recommendation from either or both the departmental committee and the department head or chair automatically advances the dossier for promotion to the college committee level. Similarly, at the college level, a positive recommendation from either or both the college committee and the dean results in automatic advancement of the recommendation to consideration by the provost. The decision of the provost is final and cannot be appealed.

Faculty members should be provided written feedback in the case of a negative recommendation at either the department or college level so that they might improve their performance or dossiers for a later submission.

#### **5.2.4.1 Promotion Guidelines for Collegiate Professor Ranks**

Non-tenure-track faculty members are eligible for promotion in rank in accordance with guidelines established by academic departments and approved by an appropriate college-level committee and the dean. Such guidelines should outline the process and criteria for promotion in rank; they should be widely available along with other departmental and college documents related to promotion and tenure. Faculty members must be in a regular or restricted appointment to be considered for promotion. (See chapter five, "Reappointment," for information regarding promotion for faculty members on restricted appointment).

Promotion in rank for any non-tenure-track position is not a requirement of continued employment, or an entitlement for years of service without evidence of exceptional merit, continued professional development, and contribution in the assigned role. An approved promotion in rank is recognized by a change in title, increasing length of appointment contract, and a base salary adjustment as identified in the annual faculty compensation plan approved by the Board of Visitors.

Consideration for promotion in rank includes preparation of a dossier using a common university format for collegiate professors, which may be based on relevant elements of the promotion and tenure dossier format for tenure-track faculty members. Typically such a dossier includes a statement of professional direction and accomplishment, a complete curriculum vitae, and documentation of contributions associated with the collegiate faculty's appointment. These contributions can be to instructional programs or administrative and/or service responsibilities. Colleges and departments may request supplemental materials. The appropriate college committee and dean approve guidelines for dossier development and departmental policies and procedures for the promotion process. External review of credentials is required for promotion to collegiate associate professor and professor

The promotion dossier is reviewed at three levels: (1) by an appropriately charged departmental committee and the department head or chair, (2) by an appropriately charged college-level committee and the dean, (3) by the university promotion and tenure committee. The department head or chair and dean make separate recommendations to the subsequent review levels. The provost reviews the recommendations from the three levels and makes recommendations to the president. The Board of Visitors grants final approval.

Given the wide variation in representation of non-tenure-track collegiate faculty appointments in the various academic colleges, some latitude is provided in the nature and make up of such committees. For most departments, the existing departmental promotion and tenure committee may review the dossier(s) and make recommendations. Similarly, at the college level, the existing promotion and tenure committees may be assigned such review and recommendation responsibilities. While the procedures vary to recognize practical issues and varying numbers, the guidelines for review should be in writing and adhered to for consistency and fair treatment of all candidates. A faculty member may not serve on any committee that is evaluating a spouse, family member, or other individual with whom the faculty member has a close personal relationship. (See chapter two, "Potential Conflicts Involving Spouses and Immediate Family Members.")

Given that promotion decisions do not carry the same "up or out" decision associated with tenure, a negative recommendation on a promotion request need not translate into termination of employment. Indeed, a faculty member may remain at the initial rank as long as their performance

warrants continued employment and serves departmental needs. If the promotion request is not supported on the first submission, it may not be appealed until at least a second review has taken place in a subsequent or later year.

Following the same pattern as review of tenure-track faculty members, a positive recommendation from either or both the departmental committee and the department head or chair automatically advances the dossier for promotion to the college committee level. Similarly, at the college level, a positive recommendation from either or both the college committee and the dean results in automatic advancement of the recommendation to consideration the university promotion and tenure committee.

The faculty member should be provided written feedback in the case of a negative recommendation at either the department, college, or university level so that they might improve their performance or dossiers for a later submission.

### **5.2.5 Appeals of Decisions on Promotion**

Following a second negative review by both the departmental committee and department head or chair, the decision may be appealed to the college committee, but only on grounds that relevant information was not considered or that the decision was influenced by improper consideration. The appeal must be filed within 14 days of official notification. A negative recommendation from both the college and the dean ends the process. There is no appeal available when both the college committee and dean vote “no.”

Significant *procedural* violations may be grieved under the faculty grievance process described in chapter five, “Faculty Grievance Policy and Procedures.”