

RESOLUTION TO CLARIFY LANGUAGE ON INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY IN THE FACULTY HANDBOOK REGARDING TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

WHEREAS, the Faculty Handbook contains policies governing the employment of non-tenure track instructional faculty; and

WHEREAS, several academic departments employ non-tenure track instructional faculty; and

WHEREAS, the unique nature of classes and programs offered by some academic departments frequently require that the teaching assignments and work schedules of instructors differ from instructors teaching credit-bearing classes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that language be added to the appropriate sections of the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook (as attached) to clarify that unique teaching responsibilities and expectations for instructional faculty will be conveyed at the time of appointment in the Terms of Faculty Offer (new language is in red).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Visitors approve the above resolution.

June 5, 2017

- Under 5.1.7 add new language to Instructor rank.

5.1.7 Instructor Faculty Ranks - 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 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. 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.

Tenure is not awarded at any of these ranks and all service at any instructor rank is excluded from the pre-tenure probationary period if the faculty member is subsequently appointed to a tenure-track position. 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.

- Add new language to Section 9.1

9.1 Assignment of Academic Responsibilities - Assignments of teaching load and academic advising are the responsibility of the department head or chair and may vary from one term to the next depending on the departmental requirements. Assignments should involve consultation with the faculty member, and in cases involving non-routine assignments—such as those requiring extensive travel—consultation is required. Ultimately, authority rests with the department head or chair to make the final assignment. Although the usual load for those engaged only in teaching is 12 didactic hours, the loads vary widely and are usually adjusted to permit time for other scholarly activities—for outreach which is related to the mission of the university and the faculty member's disciplinary expertise, and for faculty development related to the quality of instruction. A didactic hour is defined here as one contact hour in a lecture course or 0.60 hour for each contact hour in a course designated as a laboratory course.

Faculty members are expected to be available two weeks prior to the first day of classes and two weeks following commencement. The discretion of the department head or chair is recognized in assigning duties during periods when the university is not in session. Faculty members are expected to inform their department heads or chairs of their whereabouts during such periods.

Instructors with distinctive assignments and work schedules will have these responsibilities conveyed in the Terms of Faculty Offer letter at the time of appointment.