

Non-Tenure-Line  
Administrative Guidelines

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## INTRODUCTION

These Non-Tenure-Line Administrative Guidelines are provided to implement the University’s policy on academic ranks, AC21, and specifically non-tenure-line ranks and promotion. The Guidelines supplement but do not alter basic policies set forth in AC21. These Administrative Guidelines are revised periodically to reflect recommendations of faculty committees and administrators for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the review process.

## HIRING NON-TENURE-LINE FACULTY AT THE SECOND OR THIRD RANK OR WITH CREDIT

Units may hire non-tenure-line faculty at the second or third ranks, or with credit toward promotion, when the hire’s accomplishments are in keeping with the criteria that the unit has developed for promotion to those ranks. Units should have in place guidelines for how these candidates are reviewed prior to being hired.

For credit toward promotion, the same principles that apply to tenure credit apply: units should determine the criteria that will guide the awarding of credit. No more than three years of credit should be awarded to those hired at the first rank.

## TRACKS FOR TERMINAL AND NON-TERMINAL DEGREES

### Defining Terminal Degrees

In specifying ranks and titles available to non-tenure-line faculty AC21 states that assistant, associate, and full professors should possess a terminal degree “or its equivalent.” Units should maintain a list of the degrees that are widely considered to be terminal in the academic fields that fall under the unit’s umbrella. Equivalent experience should not be considered a substitute for a terminal degree.

A note about Professors of Practice: The Professor of Practice title falls under AC21 but does not follow the standard title/track conventions for non-tenure-line positions. Professors of Practice need not have a terminal degree and because they have extraordinary experiences that qualify them for this title, their experience should not be considered to be “equivalent” to a terminal degree.

### Changing from Non-Terminal Degree Track to Terminal Degree Track

When a non-tenure-line faculty member attains a terminal degree, a change in “track” from the non-terminal degree track to the terminal degree track would not be considered a promotion, even if retitling occurs.

Non-Terminal Degree	Rank 1: Instructor/ Lecturer	Rank 2: Assistant Professor	Rank 3: Associate Professor	
Terminal Degree		Rank 1: Assistant Professor	Rank 2: Associate Professor	Rank 3: Professor

## COMPOSITION OF NON-TENURE-LINE PROMOTION COMMITTEES

*Department/Division/School/Campus.* Although Policy AC21 references only unit-level (i.e., college) promotion committees, the same principles should apply to department/division/school/campus-level committees.

*Number.* Although not required, it is recommended that review committees be limited to a maximum of seven members. To avoid tie votes, it is also recommended that committees have an odd number of members. A tie vote is considered to be a negative recommendation.

*Rank.* Faculty serving on school/department/division-level committees should be of a higher rank than the faculty whom they are reviewing for promotion. Specifically, AC21 states, “Only faculty of higher rank than the candidate should make recommendations about promotions. This implies, where unit-level guidelines permit, that faculty who do not have a terminal degree but who have been promoted to Associate (Teaching, Research or Clinical) Professor (i.e., the highest rank available to them) may serve on committees to consider promotion to (Teaching, Research or Clinical) Professor for candidates who do have a terminal degree.”

*Professors of Practice.* Units should determine whether professors of practice may serve on a non-tenure-line promotion committee.

*Exceptions.* Requests for exceptions to the composition of unit-level committees must be made to the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Exceptions will be made on an annual basis only and may not be part of a unit’s non-tenure-line guidelines. The unit executive should consult with the non-tenure-line faculty in the unit to determine how they would like to handle a situation where there are not enough non-tenure-line faculty in a unit to serve on the committee. Options might include asking tenure-line or tenured faculty to serve on the committee or asking non-tenure-line faculty from another unit to serve on the committee.

## GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION

Units should develop distinct, progressive criteria for promotion from rank to rank for teaching, clinical, and research professors.

Consistent with promotions for tenure-line faculty, non-tenure-line faculty may include in their dossiers research and creative accomplishments that span their careers. Unit promotion guidelines may, however, specify that recent research can be weighed more heavily by the unit’s promotion committee. Units may permit faculty to submit all teaching documentation from the date of the last promotion forward, but given that promotions from the second to the third rank do not occur on a fixed schedule, up to 10 years of data since the last formal promotion review may be included.

## WITHDRAWING A PROMOTION DOSSIER FROM CONSIDERATION

When a non-tenure-line faculty member is being reviewed for promotion to either the second or the third rank, once the dossier has been prepared, reviewed, and signed by the candidate and submitted to the first review committee for consideration, the dossier cannot be withdrawn before action by the dean, unless the candidate so desires. If the department/division/school committee (if there is one) and the department/division head/school director do not support a promotion after reviewing the

completed dossier, the candidate should be so informed and given the option of withdrawing their candidacy.

## EARLY PROMOTION

“Early” promotions, i.e, promotions from the first to the second rank that occur before five years has elapsed, are different from out-of-sequence promotions and may occur with the approval of the unit executive.

## OUT-OF-SEQUENCE PROMOTION OF NON-TENURE-LINE FACULTY MEMBERS

### Requests and Applicability

A request for an out-of-sequence review must be made by the dean to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. The dean should send the candidate’s CV along with a letter outlining the reason(s) why the review had not or could not be done in accordance with the regular timetable. Please note that out-of-sequence promotions occur primarily for retention purposes and at a time that differs from the standard promotion cycle.

### Procedure

If approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, then a dossier, along with a letter from the dean, must be presented to the unit’s non-tenure-line promotion committee, consistent with the College’s non-tenure-line promotion guidelines.

To the extent possible, the same college (and department/division/school review committees, if applicable) that were appointed at the beginning of the review process will be convened to make recommendations in cases of out-of-sequence reviews to the dean of the College. The dean will conduct their review of the out-of-sequence case keeping with their standard procedures. The candidate will receive a letter from the dean of the College awarding the new rank. In the event of a negative promotion review, the candidate will also receive a letter from the dean of the College.

### Implementation Date for New Rank

As is the case for promotion decisions made in the regular sequence, new rank would be implemented at the start of the next academic year following the decision.

## COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

Please refer to the document, “[Considerations for Non-tenure-line Promotions in the Time of COVID-19](#)” for information about documenting the impacts of COVID-19, alternative assessments of teaching, and the considerations for non-tenure-line promotion committees. Additional helpful documents/resources include:

[Guidance for Promotion and Tenure Narratives for 2021-2022](#)

[Guidance on the Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness for Calendar Years 2020 and 2021](#)

[Faculty Peer Review of Face-to-Face and Hybrid Teaching](#)