



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.17: Faculty Appointments and Titles

DATE: December 2, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding and a standardized approach to conferring faculty appointments and titles.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in April of odd-numbered years by the Vice Provost for Faculty Success with substantive revisions presented to the Provost and Senior Vice President (PSVP).

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Titles

- a. The titles for tenure-eligible appointments to the faculty of Texas Tech University are Horn Distinguished Professor; professor, librarian, or archivist; associate professor, librarian, or archivist; and assistant professor, librarian, or archivist. Titles for non-tenure-eligible appointments to the faculty are assistant professor of practice, associate professor of practice, professor of practice, research assistant professor, research associate professor, research professor, lecturer, senior lecturer, and instructor.
- b. The terms *adjunct* and *visiting* are used with the appropriate faculty rank for non-continuing, non-tenure-acquiring appointments. *Part-time* is used with the appropriate faculty rank for less than full-time academic appointments. The teaching assistant title and graduate part-time instructor title are reserved for graduate students who serve part time in the instructional role.
- c. Endowed chairs and professorships shall carry the designation in accordance with the conditions of the award and following [OP 32.22, Selection of Endowed Chairs and Professorships](#).

2. The following definitions should be considered with respect to appointments:

- a. Horn Distinguished Professor

Horn Distinguished Professorships, the highest honor the university may bestow on members of its faculty, are granted to professors in recognition of national or international distinction for outstanding teaching, research, or other creative achievement. The number is not limited and no attempt is made to maintain any fixed ratio among colleges or departments. See [OP 32.09, Selection of Paul Whitfield Horn Distinguished Professorships](#), for detailed information regarding appointment procedures.

- b. Professor/Librarian/Archivist

Individuals appointed to this rank meet the criteria for associate professors, librarians, or archivists and provide evidence of sustained achievement and productivity in the areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and service. These individuals should be outstanding teachers, contributing members of their disciplines, and provide substantial service to the institution. Criteria for appointment of professor, librarian, or archivist include maturity of thinking, demonstrated ability to communicate and inspire students and less experienced colleagues, continued respect of colleagues in their field of work, and evidence of ability for continued professional growth.

c. Associate Professor/Librarian/Archivist

The term *associate professor, librarian, or archivist* should reflect that the individual so appointed meets the criteria for the assistant professor, librarian, or archivist rank and, in addition, has demonstrated substantial achievement in teaching, research or creative activity, and service to the institution and the profession. The individual must have demonstrated the capacity for independent creative thinking and the willingness to participate as a respected colleague in deliberations concerning the department, college, and university.

d. Assistant Professor/Librarian/Archivist

The term *assistant professor, librarian, or archivist* is assigned to an individual employed full time. The individual ordinarily possesses the degree considered terminal for her/his field and has demonstrated prior experience in teaching, research or creativity, or the equivalent in professional accomplishment. This appointment anticipates distinct ability as a teacher with adequate educational and professional experience in the area(s) of specialization. Assistant professors, librarians, or archivists are expected to perform in the areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and service.

e. Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, and Professor of Practice

These appointments are subject to the following restrictions: *

- (1) For individuals with exceptional backgrounds and achievement in academic, business, government, or other professional practice for a decade or more. The appointment rank is to be based upon an evaluation of the level of responsibility to be assumed and should be supported by evidence of the level of experience and/or education required at another institution, in industry, or in a corporation or organization to support such rank.
- (2) Primary responsibilities normally will be to teach in an area of expertise, mentor students in professional and career preparation, and liaise with professional contacts and entities on behalf of the department or program.
- (3) In some instances, there may be opportunities and expectations for these individuals to produce research, publications, or creative expressions relative to their professional expertise.

* Unique to the School of Veterinary Medicine, an occasional appointment to “clinical” assistant professor of practice, associate professor of practice, or professor of practice may be for less than full time when the faculty member also maintains a professional practice. The faculty member would thus be ineligible for continuing appointment (see section 2.e.(5)).

- (4) A master's degree in the discipline or the substantiated equivalent in professional experience is a qualification.
- (5) These appointments are annually renewable contingent on successful annual and cumulative performance evaluations and a majority affirmative vote of the tenured faculty of the department/unit (see [OP 32.32, Performance Evaluations of Faculty](#)). Appointment for the fourth consecutive year would follow a successful third-year review. In the sixth consecutive year, an academic unit, by a majority affirmative vote of the tenured faculty, may recommend that a faculty member with one of these titles be considered by the dean for continuing appointment (see [OP 32.34, Continuing Appointment and Promotion of Faculty in Lecturer, Professor of Practice, and Research Professor Titles](#)) and, for assistant and associate professors of practice, promotion to the next rank. Criteria for continuing appointment and for promotion should reflect expectations and outcomes documented in the appointment agreement and the annual and third-year performance reviews.
- (6) The positions may be eligible for graduate faculty status, subject to a majority affirmative vote of the academic unit, in accordance with [OP 64.10, Graduate Faculty](#), section 3.b.

f. Instructor

The appointment as instructor (or graduate part-time instructor) designates a part-time, non-tenure-acquiring role with exclusive duties in teaching organized classes and/or instructional labs. As they are part-time appointments, instructors are not eligible for continuing appointment.

g. Lecturer/Senior Lecturer

The appointment as lecturer designates a full-time, non-tenure-acquiring role with primary duties in teaching organized classes and/or instructional labs. Lecturers are eligible for continuing appointment, in accordance with [OP 32.34, Continuing Appointment and Promotion of Faculty in Lecturer, Professor of Practice, and Research Professor Titles](#). Lecturers approved for continuing appointment are eligible for promotion to the rank of senior lecturer.

h. Visiting Professor, Visiting Associate Professor, and Visiting Assistant Professor

These appointments are subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) The positions are of limited duration, usually one semester or one academic year. Extension of an appointment in a visiting position beyond one academic year requires permission from the PSVP.
- (2) Tenure or credit for service toward tenure is not acquired during the visiting appointment.
- (3) The level of visiting rank is based upon an evaluation of the level of responsibility to be assumed and should be supported by evidence of the level of experience and education required at another institution, in industry, or in a corporation or organization to support such rank.

- (4) The visitors are expected to perform instructional duties that include teaching one or more regularly scheduled classes; supervising graduate research projects, theses, or dissertations; participating regularly in team teaching projects; or combinations of the above.

i. Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Assistant Professor

Research professor, research associate professor, research assistant professor, or comparable titles (e.g., visiting research professor) are special faculty titles and are to be assigned to individuals appointed, usually full time, to research positions. These appointments do not lead to tenure but may be eligible for continuing appointment and promotion to the next-higher rank after five years of full-time service. These appointments are under the control of the PSVP.

j. Adjunct

The term *adjunct* is used to indicate that appointees, because of their expertise, will be called upon by Texas Tech University for their opinions on matters of importance. The rank at which the appointment is made is determined by an evaluation of the previous achievements of the appointee. Individuals who already hold a faculty appointment in one academic unit of the university typically are not eligible for an adjunct appointment in another academic unit; rather, adjunct appointments recognize persons with appropriate expertise from outside the university, including those associated with TTUHSC.

k. Joint

The term *joint* is used to indicate that appointees, because of their expertise, will serve as support faculty to another department in addition to the primary department in which they hold tenure or are on a tenure-acquiring track. Such appointments must originate in the department and proceed through the dean of the college, Graduate Dean, and PSVP for final approval. Although the joint appointment provides for listing the faculty members in the budgets of two departments, the faculty members usually are paid from the budget of the primary department.

Joint appointments may be terminated at any time through the channels used for the appointment. The *Electronic Personnel Action Form* (ePAF) will be used in such cases (see attachment).

l. Principal Investigator and Co-principal Investigator

When tenure-eligible faculty members are supported by research for a portion of their salary, that portion of the appointment shall carry the title principal investigator or co-principal investigator. This designation should also be used for summer appointments when appropriate.

3. Appointment of Faculty

- a. [OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure](#), applies to positions of professor, librarian, and archivist; associate professor, librarian, and archivist; assistant professor, librarian, and archivist; professor of practice (at all professorial ranks); and research professor (at all professorial ranks) at Texas Tech University. Although the specific procedures set out in OP 32.16 are not required for other faculty titles such as instructors, lecturers, or visiting

- professors, these positions must nonetheless be posted, at a minimum, on the TTU website and open to multiple applicants.
- b. The request for appointment is initiated by the department chairperson/area coordinator and recommended by the dean of the instructional school or college and by the Graduate Dean. In the case of research personnel, the principal investigator recommends the appointment to the chairperson. At the time of appointment, official faculty transcripts, curriculum vitae, and proof of authorization to work in the United States must be sent with the ePAF to Human Resources. It is the responsibility of the department chairperson or area coordinator of the department/area to which the faculty member is appointed to obtain the transcripts and the vita from the faculty member. Official transcripts for all tenure-track and tenured faculty are required to be on file in Human Resources.
 - c. Faculty appointments of individuals who have completed all requirements for the doctoral degree except the dissertation must be made in accordance with [OP 32.28, Faculty Applicants Not Holding Doctoral Degrees in Departments/Areas Requiring the Doctorate](#).
 - d. The initiation of the appointment form (ePAF) is a culmination of the establishment of a position and search and selection procedures. Procedures for recruitment and selection of faculty members are detailed in [OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure](#). Initial appointment of all faculty, including visiting faculty, adjunct appointments, teaching assistants, and graduate part-time instructors, must be accompanied by a *Certification of Faculty Qualifications* as specified in [OP 32.36, Certification of Faculty Qualifications](#).
 - e. Appointment to an academic position must be reviewed by the PSVP, who considers the recommendation of the dean of the instructional school or college involved. Approval by the PSVP of all conditions of employment (including start-up resources) is required.
 - f. Appointment to a research position must be reviewed by the PSVP, who considers the recommendation of the instructional school or college involved.
 - g. The PSVP approves non-tenure-acquiring appointments after considering recommendations from the dean of the college or school involved.
 - h. The initial appointment of a professor, librarian, or archivist or an associate professor, librarian, or archivist with tenure must receive the recommendation of the PSVP, received through designated university procedures for consideration of a faculty member for tenure. The President reviews the recommendation and, if he/she agrees, recommends the appointment with tenure to the Board of Regents. Only the Board of Regents may grant tenure.
 - i. The PSVP will notify the appointee, the Secretary of the Board of Regents, the chairperson, and the appropriate dean of the approval of faculty appointments.
 - j. If the appointment is accepted, the Office of the PSVP shall send a copy of the ePAF to the appointee.
 - k. When the account distribution section of the appointment form indicates that the appointee is to be paid from a research account, the Budget Office, upon receiving its copy of the appointment form, will make a copy of the form and send it to the Office of Research Services.

- l. In the case of a continuing appointment, reappointment will occur unless the appointee is notified of termination. Full-time faculty members who are not reappointed must be notified as outlined in [OP 32.02, Faculty Non-reappointment, Dismissal, and Tenure Revocation](#).

4. Non-tenure-acquiring Reappointments

In the case of a non-tenure-acquiring reappointment, an ePAF must be processed indicating reappointment for the new budgetary period.

Individual responsibilities are as follows:

- a. The signature of the principal investigator indicates that a research appointee is qualified to perform the duties required on the project involved and that the position has been approved at the designated salary level.
- b. The signature of the department chairperson requesting the appointment certifies that the appointee is fully qualified to hold the rank and perform the duties indicated and that the position has been approved in the budget. The chairperson further certifies that the appointment, if offered, will be accepted by the appointee at the rank, salary, and time indicated on the appointment form.
- c. The signature of the dean of the instructional school or college certifies that the recommended appointment does not exceed the number of authorized positions for the department concerned, nor for the funds budgeted. The dean further certifies approval of the rank and salary to be offered.
- d. The signature of the Graduate Dean certifies that the appointee is qualified to teach graduate-level courses and to participate on graduate student committees if the appointment is for any of the professorial ranks. If the appointment is for a rank below that of assistant professor or a research appointment other than research scientist, the appointee is not to teach graduate-level courses or to participate on graduate student committees, unless specifically approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- e. The signature of the PSVP officially approves the appointment of academic personnel other than those acquiring tenure with initial appointment. In the case of academic personnel acquiring tenure with initial appointment, the signature of the PSVP serves as a recommendation to the President that the faculty member be approved for tenure. This signature also verifies that the position has been reviewed and approved for continuation or creation. Only the Board of Regents may grant tenure.
- f. The signature of the PSVP officially approves the appointment of research personnel or personnel appointments to sponsored projects.

[Attachment: ePAF \(Electronic Personnel Action Form\)](#)