



TEXAS TECH™

Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.17: Faculty Appointments and Titles

DATE: September 18, 2024

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 every two years after publication 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 professor, librarian, or archivist; associate professor, associate librarian, or associate archivist; and assistant professor, assistant librarian, or assistant archivist.
- b. The titles for non-tenure-acquiring 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.
- c. 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.
- d. Endowed chairs and professorships shall carry the designation in accordance with the conditions of the award and following [OP 32.22, Selection, Appointment, and Review of Endowed Chairs and Professorships](#).
- e. Horn Distinguished Professorships shall carry the designation in accordance with the conditions of the title following [OP 32.09, Selection of Paul Whitfield Horn Distinguished Professorships](#).

2. The following definitions apply with respect to appointments under this OP:

- a. Horn Distinguished Professor

Horn Distinguished Professorships, the highest honor the university may bestow on members of its faculty, are granted to tenured 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 must meet the criteria for associate professors, associate librarians, or associate archivists and provide evidence of sustained achievement and productivity in the areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and service. These individuals must 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, Associate Librarian, Associate Archivist

The title associate professor, associate librarian, or associate archivist must reflect that the individual so appointed meets the criteria for the assistant professor, assistant librarian, or assistant 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, Assistant Librarian, Assistant Archivist

The title assistant professor, assistant librarian, or assistant archivist is assigned to an individual employed full time. The individual ordinarily must possess the degree considered terminal for their field and demonstrate 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, assistant librarians, or assistant archivists are expected to excel in the areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and service.

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

The appointments listed above are subject to the following restrictions:*

- (1) These appointments are for individuals with exceptional backgrounds and achievement in educational, business, government, or other professional practice. The appointment rank is to be based upon an evaluation of the level of responsibility to be assumed and must 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.

* 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)).

- (2) Primary responsibilities will be to teach in an area of expertise, mentor students in professional and career preparation, and work 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.
- (4) A master's degree in the discipline or the substantiated equivalent in professional experience is a required qualification.
- (5) These appointments are annually renewable contingent on successful annual and cumulative performance evaluations (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 must 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. Part-Time 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 written permission from the PSVP.
- (2) Tenure or credit for service toward tenure is not earned during the visiting appointment.

- (3) The level of visiting rank is based upon an evaluation of the level of responsibility to be assumed and must 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) Visiting professors, visiting associate professors, and visiting assistant professors 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 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 direction and 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 experience 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 Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

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.

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 must also be used for summer appointments when appropriate.

3. Appointment of Full-Time Faculty

- a. [OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure](#), applies to positions of professor, librarian, and archivist; associate professor, associate librarian, and associate archivist; assistant professor,

- assistant librarian, and assistant 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 for four (4) weeks and open to multiple applicants.
- b. The request for appointment must be initiated by the department chairperson/area coordinator and recommended by the academic 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. The PSVP approves all full-time faculty appointments after considering recommendations from the dean of the college or school involved. All conditions of employment (including start-up resources) require written approval from the PSVP, documented through the issuance of the official offer letter of employment.
 - f. The initial appointment of a professor, librarian, or archivist or an associate professor, associate librarian, or associate archivist with tenure must receive the written recommendation of the PSVP, received through designated university procedures for consideration of a faculty member for tenure. The President reviews the recommendation and, if they agree, recommends the appointment with tenure to the Board of Regents. Only the Board of Regents may grant tenure.
 - g. 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.

4. Non-Tenure-Acquiring Reappointments

Faculty members in full-time, non-tenure-acquiring positions are subject to the provisions of [OP 32.34, Continuing Appointment and Promotion of Faculty in Lecturer, Professor of Practice, and Research Professor Titles](#).