



Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.34: Continuing Appointment and Promotion of Faculty in Lecturer, Professor of Practice, and Research Professor Titles

DATE: January 24, 2024

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding of standards and procedures concerning continuing appointment and promotion of faculty employed in the non-tenure-acquiring ranks of lecturer, research professor, and professor of practice.

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 for Academic Affairs (PSVP) and to the Board of Regents for approval.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Non-tenure-acquiring position titles at Texas Tech University are defined in [OP 32.17, Faculty Appointments and Titles](#). [OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure](#), should be followed for searches and hiring of faculty in these positions. Faculty members whose duties are appropriate to tenured or tenure-track faculty shall not be appointed to these positions. Appointment of faculty in these positions is contingent on completed faculty credentialing as stipulated in [OP 32.36, Certification of Faculty Qualifications](#), and, as appropriate, [OP 64.10, Graduate Faculty](#). Reappointment will be determined on an annual basis up through the sixth year (see below), and any changes in teaching assignments may require re-credentialing according to OP 32.36 and OP 64.10.
2. Persons serving in the lecturer, professor of practice, and research professor position titles have academic freedom and, after six years and a positive vote for continuing appointment (see section 3 below), can only be dismissed for adequate cause (e.g., documented inadequate performance of job duties following remediation efforts, repeated violation of university policies and procedures, documented violations of university Title IX policies, conviction of a felony, a change in program budgeting or strategic priorities, a university financial exigency, and major restructuring or elimination of their academic unit). Individuals dismissed for adequate cause shall be entitled to due process in accordance with [OP 32.02, Faculty Non-reappointment, Dismissal, and Tenure Revocation](#), 3.b. Non-reappointment may be without cause within the first six years for these three position titles.

Non-tenure-acquiring appointments are annually renewable based on annual performance reviews and evaluations, enrollment demands, and budgetary considerations. Formal notification of reappointment or non-reappointment will be provided to faculty members in non-tenure-acquiring position titles no later than June 15 annually.

3. Faculty members appointed to lecturer, professor of practice, and research professor positions may seek continuing appointment by majority vote of the tenured and continuing-appointment

faculty of the academic unit (department/area, college, or school) in which the position exists. Final continuing appointment status is subject to approval by the responsible dean and the PSVP. If the faculty member does not opt to pursue continuing appointment, they may be reappointed on an annual basis at the discretion of the academic unit and the responsible dean.

The official vote of the tenured and continuing-appointment faculty should be made in the fall of the sixth year on the same cycle as occurs for consideration of tenure and promotion in the faculty member's academic unit and college. Criteria and procedures for evaluation of continuing appointment of faculty within these ranks are to be determined primarily by the faculty member's home unit, based on the expectations stated at the time of appointment and as continued or modified with annual reviews or reappointment. The report of a comprehensive third-year review and the subsequent annual reviews will be very important indicators in the consideration of continuing appointment. Although not as extensive, and probably focused primarily on one area of faculty responsibility (e.g., teaching or research rather than both), a dossier similar to that in applications for tenure and promotion of tenure-track faculty (see [OP 32.01, Promotion and Tenure Standards and Procedures](#)) should be prepared.

4. If the vote of the tenured and continuing-appointment faculty is positive, and if the responsible dean and the PSVP approve, the individual in a continuing-appointment status will be appointed for the subsequent years without the necessity of annual approval and notification.
5. Faculty in the following categories are eligible for promotion to the next higher rank within that category after six years in their current rank:

Lecturer (for promotion to Senior Lecturer)

Assistant Professor of Practice (for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice); Associate Professor of Practice (for promotion to Professor of Practice)

Assistant Research Professor (for promotion to Associate Research Professor); Associate Research Professor (for promotion to Research Professor)

- a. Criteria and procedures for promotion of faculty within these ranks are to be determined primarily by the faculty member's home unit based on the expectations stated at the time of appointment and as continued or modified with annual reviews or reappointment. The report of a comprehensive third-year review and the subsequent annual reviews will be very important indicators in the consideration of promotion. Although not as extensive, and probably focused primarily on one area of faculty responsibility (e.g., teaching or research rather than both), a dossier similar to that in applications for promotion of tenured and tenure-track faculty (see [OP 32.01, Promotion and Tenure Standards and Procedures](#)) should be prepared.
 - b. Whereas the awarding of continuing appointment culminates with the PSVP, faculty promotion is granted by action of the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents. Accordingly, applications for promotion of faculty with professor of practice or research professor appointments will follow the same cycle and general procedures as that for promotion of tenured and tenure-track faculty.
6. It is incumbent upon each unit employing persons under these faculty titles to conduct annual faculty evaluations for faculty members in these appointments following the guidelines of [OP 32.32, Performance Evaluations of Faculty](#). Likewise, a comprehensive third-year review is to be

conducted by the spring of the third consecutive year of appointment following procedures modeled after [OP 32.38, Third-Year Review of Tenure-Track Faculty](#). In case of non-renewal of contract, there will be no terminal year of appointment.

7. Faculty members in these positions who hold continuing appointment are subject to a comprehensive performance evaluation. The evaluation shall be conducted no more often than once every year, but no less often than once every six years after the date the faculty member was granted continuing appointment or received a promotion. Procedures described in section 2 of [OP 32.31, Comprehensive Performance Evaluations of Tenured Faculty Members and Faculty Members Who Receive an Academic Promotion](#), will serve as guidelines for conduct of these reviews.
8. It is expected that appointments under this section will be limited in number and the roles for such appointees specifically prescribed in the offer letter of appointment and documented should any changes in the roles ensue. Careful management, including goal setting by and with the faculty member, evaluation and advisement by chairs and deans, as well as care in making assignments within the policy, will be necessary for the long-range benefit of the unit and the faculty member.