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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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## **Faculty Appointments and Designations Policy**

# **Policy Name: Faculty Appointments and Designations**

## **Policy Purpose**

The policy specifies the types of Faculty at East Tennessee State University and the Designations under which Faculty are appointed.

## **Applicability**

This policy is applicable to ETSU Faculty, Academic Unit chairs, and deans.

## **Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation**

The Office of the Provost is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Office of the Provost. The Provost in conjunction with the Office of University Counsel has the final authority to interpret this policy.

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## Defined Terms

*A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.*

### Academic Unit

Academic department, center, library, school, or unit within Academic Affairs and reporting to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academics.

### Academic Year Appointment

Appointments from August 15 - May 15.

### Affiliate Faculty

Volunteer Faculty who are not on a Regular or Renewable Term Appointment and are not eligible for Tenure.

### Appointment

A formal employment agreement between the university and an individual designating that person as a member of the Faculty.

### Designation

Position classification given to an individual Faculty member

### Faculty

Members of the personnel of each Academic Unit who carry out one or more of the following primary functions of the university: academic instruction/librarianship; research, scholarly, and/or creative activities; clinical or professional practice; and service to the Academic Unit, college, university, profession and/or community; clinical or professional practice and who commit to continue their professional development and active involvement in the primary function(s) of their Appointment.

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## Faculty Activity

Teaching, librarianship, research, scholarship, creative activities, service, clinical practice, and administrative assignments.

## Faculty Activity Evaluation (FAE)

The annual assessment of the Faculty member's performance on the Faculty Activities outlined in the Faculty Activity Plan (FAP) and reported in the Faculty Activity Report (FAR).

## Faculty Activity Plan (FAP)

The annual plan outlining the Faculty member's intended Faculty Activities. The Faculty Supervisor and dean (or designee) provide final approval of the FAP, except in cases of workload review procedures.

## Faculty Activity Report (FAR)

An annual report describes the Faculty member's Faculty Activities during the reporting period.

## Faculty Supervisors

Department heads, department chairs, Academic Unit directors, school directors, or any other administrative position officially authorized to direct Faculty activity.

## Fiscal Year Appointment

Appointments from July 1 - June 30.

## Majority Vote

More than half (half plus one) of the eligible members are present in person or virtually and voting at the appointed time to cast their vote. A quorum, defined as more than half of all eligible members being available to vote, Votes submitted by email, online meeting, in-person meeting, or other approved methods will count toward the total. Abstentions are not included in the vote count. Once quorum is established, a Majority Vote is established if more than half of the quorum votes to support the same outcome.

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## Offer Letter

Employment document provided at initial hire that includes terms of Appointment.

## Probationary Period

Period of time between the intital hire and the vote by the Board of Trustees awarding tenure and/or promotion.

## Professor of Practice

Practitioners who bring significant professional experience, leadership, and expertise from private, public or non-profit sectors to the university. In addition to instructional responsibilities, they may serve as a bridge between the university and relevant professional communities by fostering industry partnerships, supporting experiential learning, advancing applied scholarship, and contributing to other initiatives that support the university's mission.

## Rank

Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor. Ranks may also include descriptive terms such as Assistant Clinical Professor as warranted by the type of Appointment.

## Regular Appointment (Regular)

Appointments for employees with salaries and benefits budgeted on a recurring basis, whether through grant or state funds, who are employed on a continuing basis, and who are eligible for full benefits (pro-rated on percentage of effort).

## Renewable Term Appointment

Renewable Term Appointments are for Faculty with salaries and benefits in accordance with the percentage of employment that are budgeted on a recurring basis for a specified period, not to exceed five (5) years, and that can be renewed.

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## Renewable Term Faculty

Regular, full-time, or less than full time Faculty on a Renewable Term Appointment who are not eligible for Tenure but are eligible for promotion and Rank.

## Temporary Appointment

Appointments of employees who are initially appointed or expected to serve for less than one year. These Appointments can be renewed with approval and are subject to applicable state laws. Some Temporary Faculty are eligible for Affordable Care Act benefits.

## Temporary Faculty

Full-time or less than full-time faculty with a Temporary Appointment who may hold Rank, depending upon accreditation requirements of the hiring college.

## Tenure

An employment status subject to the laws of the State of Tennessee that provides a faculty member with continued employment in a specific Academic Unit until the award of tenure is terminated pursuant to the Termination of Tenure Policy or state law. Tenure is intended to protect academic freedom and may only be acquired after approval of the Board of Trustees.

## Tenured Faculty

Regular Faculty who are awarded Tenure by the ETSU Board of Trustees who engage in teaching/librarianship, professional practice, Clinical Practice, RSCA, service and/or administration.

## Tenure-track Faculty

Regular Appointment employees appointed to a Tenure-track position who have not been awarded tenure and who engage in teaching/librarianship, professional practice, Clinical Practice, RSCA, service and/or administration.

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## Volunteer

An unpaid worker who volunteers their time to perform a task or service for the university willingly with no expectation of payment or remuneration as defined in the Volunteer Approval Policy. Volunteer Faculty are not otherwise employed at ETSU.

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## Policy

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) is committed to recruiting, retaining, and developing Faculty members who are highly accomplished in their area(s) of Appointment and who are also committed to serving the university, their college, Academic Unit, region, and profession.

At the time of hire, Faculty will receive an Offer Letter that includes a Designation and, if appropriate, a Rank.

The following types of academic Faculty Designations, Ranks, and titles may be used at ETSU. Faculty members are usually appointed within a college and department. In certain circumstances, they may be appointed in an Academic Unit reporting to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice Provost for Research and Chief Research Officer. All references in this policy to departments also includes programs.

ETSU Faculty, regardless of Designation, Rank, title, Appointment term, and funding source, are subject to all ETSU policies. Approval by the Provost or designee is required to search for a vacant Renewable Term, Tenure Track, or Tenured Faculty position.

### 1. Designations for Faculty Appointments.

#### 1.1. Affiliate Faculty.

Volunteers who are not on a Regular or Renewable Term Appointment and are not eligible for Tenure. Affiliate Faculty may hold Rank. Descriptive terms (e.g., Affiliate Associate Professor of Surgery) may be used. A terminal degree is required, although highly qualified individuals with professional experience may be considered for Appointments. The primary function of Affiliate Faculty is teaching or clinical practice/supervision. These Appointments may be for the Academic Year or Fiscal Year.

#### 1.2. Renewable Term Faculty.

Faculty who are on a Renewable Term Appointment are not eligible for Tenure but are eligible for promotion. Renewable Term Faculty hold Rank. The primary function of a Renewable Term Faculty falls into one or more of the following areas: teaching/librarianship, research, clinical practice/supervision, and/or professional

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practice. Percentage effort is guided by ETSU's Faculty Workload Policy, Academic Unit and college mission, approved by the Faculty Supervisor and the dean, and described in the yearly Faculty Activity Plan, Faculty Activity Report, and Faculty Activity Evaluation. These Appointments may be for the Academic Year or Fiscal Year. Renewable Term Appointments can be made for a minimum of one (1) year and a maximum of five (5) years. Renewals are based on performance reviews and on Academic Unit and/or college need. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary or position, or employment during summer or winter sessions. Notification for non-renewal will follow ETSU's Involuntary Separation from Employment Policy. Salary for these positions is set by the terms in the Offer Letter and includes any adjustments through institutional across-the-board or merit-based raises.

## Types of Renewable Term Faculty:

- 1.2.1. Renewable Term Faculty who hold at least a master's degree or equivalent in an academic field related to the teaching/research specialization have the title of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, or Principal Lecturer as determined by the requirements in the Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty.. The initial Rank is specified in the Offer Letter. These appointments are made for a minimum of one (1) year and a maximum of three (3) years and can be renewed. Renewals are based on performance reviews and on Academic Unit and/or college need.
- 1.2.2. Renewable Term Faculty who hold a terminal degree or its equivalent in an academic area related to the position's responsibilities or who possess exceptional professional qualifications are appointed at the Rank of Assistant, Associate, or Professor in accordance with the requirements in the Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty with an optional descriptive term such as Teaching, Research, Clinical, or Professor of Practice (e.g., Teaching Assistant Professor; Clinical Associate Professor; Research Assistant Professor; Professor of Practice). The initial Rank is specified in the Offer Letter. These Appointments are made for a minimum of three (3) years and a maximum of five (5) years and can be renewed. Renewals are based on performance reviews and on Academic Unit and/or college need.

## 1.3. Temporary Faculty.

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Temporary Faculty may hold Rank, depending upon accreditation requirements of the hiring college. Temporary Faculty are not eligible for Tenure or promotion. Temporary Faculty must have an evaluation the process and timeline for which can be determined by each Academic Unit. A terminal degree is not required for Appointment; however, disciplinary accreditation and/or Academic Unit needs may necessitate a terminal degree or a demonstration of professional experience commensurate with the duties of the Appointment.

Descriptive terms may be used (e.g., Visiting Professor, Artist-In-Residence, Adjunct [subject area] Faculty). Temporary Faculty may be funded through normal budget lines or through external funding (i.e., grants and contracts). These positions are hired based on Academic Unit or college needs. Temporary Faculty may be hired to fulfill a specific function with the Academic Unit or college. Temporary Faculty may be eligible for Affordable Care Act (ACA) benefits, but do not receive university benefits such as paid leave, paid holidays, or Center for Physical Activity (CPA) access. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary or position.

## Types of Temporary Faculty:

### 1.3.1. Adjunct.

Adjunct Faculty members teach based on instructional demand each semester. They may hold Rank and are not eligible for Tenure. The exclusive function of adjunct Faculty is teaching. Descriptive terms (e.g., Adjunct Marketing Faculty) may be used. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary, position, or employment. Salary is typically determined on a per-course/credit-hour basis.

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) uses a different definition of adjunct. The College of Medicine will use the LCME definition.

### 1.3.2. In-Residence.

A category of Temporary, full-time, or less than full-time Faculty without a Renewable Term Appointment who do not hold Rank and are not eligible for Tenure or promotion. Descriptive terms should be used (e.g., Artist In-Residence, Scientist In-Residence) as specified in the Offer Letter. In-Residence Faculty may be funded through normal budget lines or external funding (e.g., grants or contracts). These positions may fall outside of the traditional semester. The exclusive function of In-Residence Faculty is teaching and/or research/creative

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activities. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary, position, or term. Salary and expectations for these positions are set by the terms in the Offer Letter.

### **1.3.3. Visiting.**

Full-time or less than full-time Faculty with a Temporary Appointment or Renewable Term Appointment who may hold Rank and are not eligible for Tenure or promotion. Descriptive terms may be used (e.g., Visiting Professor of Linguistics, Visiting Research Scientist) as specified in the Offer Letter. Visiting Faculty may be funded through normal budget lines or through external funding (i.e., grants or contracts). These positions may fall outside of the traditional semester dates. The typical function of the Visiting Faculty is teaching and/or research/creative activities. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary, position, or employment. Salary and expectations for these positions are set by the terms in the Offer Letter.

### **1.4. Tenure-track Faculty.**

Regular Appointment Faculty holding an academic Rank with an employment agreement that specifically states the Appointment is Tenure-track. Tenure-track Faculty engage in teaching/librarianship, research, service, and clinical or professional practice (for some Appointments) with percent effort in each area guided by ETSU's Faculty Workload Policy, the Academic Unit and college mission, and as approved by the Faculty Supervisor and the dean each year on the Faculty Activity Plan, Faculty Activity Report, and Faculty Activity Evaluation. These Appointments can be made for the Academic Year or the Fiscal Year. A terminal degree is required, although highly qualified individuals with relevant professional experience may be considered for Tenure-track Faculty Appointments with the approval of the Provost and President. Faculty have a Probationary Period prior to consideration for Tenure as outlined in ETSU's Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty. Tenure-track Appointments do not include the right to permanent continuous employment and shall be subject to annual renewal by the institution. Such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary or position, or of employment during summer or winter sessions. Salary for these positions is set by the terms in the Offer Letter and includes any adjustments through institutional across-the-board or merit-based raises.

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## 1.5. Tenured Faculty.

Regular Appointment Faculty who have been awarded Tenure by the ETSU Board of Trustees pursuant to the ETSU's Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty. Tenured Faculty engage in teaching/librarianship, research, service, and clinical or professional practice (for some Appointments) guided by ETSU's Faculty Workload Policy, Academic Unit and college mission, and as approved by the Faculty Supervisor and the dean. These Appointments can be made for the Academic Year or the Fiscal Year. Tenured Appointments include the continued assurance of the Appointment for an indefinite period. Tenure can be voluntarily ended through relinquishment or retirement; Tenure can also be terminated pursuant to the Board of Trustees' Termination of Tenure Policy. Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty. For Faculty on Academic Year Appointments, such Appointments do not include assurance of continued employment at any specified salary or position, or of employment during summer or winter sessions. Salary for these positions is set by the terms in the Offer Letter and includes any adjustments through institutional across-the-board or merit-based raises.

## 2. Criteria for Initial Rank for Renewable Term, Tenure-track, and Tenured Faculty.

In the Offer Letter, Renewable Term, Tenure-track, and Tenured Faculty will be given an initial employment Rank. To determine the initial Rank, Academic Units will follow the general criteria for the Appointment or promotion to the Rank of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor by a Faculty member who has an eligible Appointment of either Renewable Term, Tenure-track, or is Tenured as described below.

### 2.1. Lecturer.

Faculty members hired at the Rank of Lecturer primarily focus on teaching, contributing substantially to the mission of their Academic Unit. They must demonstrate potential for high-quality professional productivity in teaching and, if required, a willingness to serve the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession in ways that are consistent with the goals of the university and of the Academic Unit to which the Faculty member belongs. Research, scholarship, creative activities, or clinical practice are not required. A master's degree, acceptable to the field, or substantial professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#) is required.

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Lecturers are not eligible for Tenure; they may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established by the Office of the Provost.

## 2.2. Senior Lecturer.

Faculty members hired at or promoted to the Rank of Senior Lecturer primarily focus on teaching, contributing substantially to the mission of their Academic Unit. They must provide documented evidence of high-quality teaching and contributions to student development, and if required, a willingness to serve the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession in ways that are consistent with the goals of the university and of the Academic Unit to which the Faculty member belongs as described in an Academic Unit's renewable term promotion policy. Research, scholarship, creative activities, or clinical practice are not required. A master's degree, acceptable to the field, or substantial professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#), is required. Senior Lecturers are not eligible for Tenure; they may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established by the Office of the Provost.

To be hired at the Rank of a Senior Lecturer, they must provide evidence that they meet or exceed the criteria established in ETSU's Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty. Senior Lecturers may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established by the Office of the Provost.

## 2.3. Principal Lecturer.

Faculty members hired at or promoted to the Rank of Principal Lecturer primarily focus on teaching, contributing substantially to the mission of their Academic Unit. They must provide documented evidence of teaching excellence and superior contribution to student development, and, if required, a willingness to serve the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession in ways that are consistent with the goals of the university and of the Academic Unit to which the Faculty member belongs. Research, scholarship, creative activities, or clinical practice are not required. A master's degree, acceptable to the field, or substantial professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#), is required. Principal Lecturers are not eligible for Tenure and may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established by the Office of the Provost.

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To be hired at the Rank of Principal Lecturer, the Faculty member must provide evidence that they meet and/or exceed the criteria established in ETSU's Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty.

## 2.4. Assistant Professor.

Faculty hired at or promoted to the Rank of Assistant Professor must provide documented evidence of the potential of high-quality professional productivity in teaching and/or research, scholarly, or creative activities, and/or clinical or professional practice, and willingness to serve the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession in ways that are consistent with the goals of the university and of the Academic Unit to which the Faculty member belongs. They must hold a terminal degree or the highest degree appropriate to the field or, where appropriate, the equivalent based on professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#). Assistant Professors eligible for Tenure must apply for Tenure and may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established in the Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty.

Faculty hired at the Rank of Assistant Professor are expected to maintain professional productivity in teaching/librarianship and/or research, scholarly, or creative activities, and service to the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession commensurate with the Faculty Activity Plan, Faculty Activity Report, and Faculty Activity Evaluation.

## 2.5. Associate Professor.

Faculty hired at or promoted to the Rank of Associate Professor must hold a terminal degree or the highest degree appropriate to the field or, where appropriate, the equivalent based on professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#). They must provide evidence that they meet or exceed the criteria established in ETSU's Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty for the Rank of Associate Professor. Associate Professors hired without and eligible for Tenure must apply for Tenure and may apply for promotion pursuant to the timelines established in the Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty.

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Faculty hired at the Rank of Associate Professor demonstrate a consistent record of excellence that may lead to national recognition in their academic discipline, or consistent, high-quality professional productivity that is consonant with the goals of the university and the Academic Unit to which the faculty member belongs. Faculty at the Rank of Associate Professor are expected to maintain professional productivity in teaching/librarianship and/or research, scholarly, or creative activities and service to the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession commensurate with the Faculty Activity Plan, Faculty Activity Report, and Faculty Activity Evaluation.

## 2.6. Professor.

Faculty hired at the Rank of Professor must hold a terminal degree or the highest degree appropriate to the field or, where appropriate, the equivalent based on professional experience consistent with accreditation standards, and as allowed by ETSU's [Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#). They must provide evidence that they meet or exceed the criteria established in ETSU's Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty for the Rank of Professor. Professors eligible for and hired without Tenure must apply for Tenure pursuant to the timeline established by the Office of the Provost.

Faculty hired at the Rank of Professor are expected to maintain a sustained record of excellences that demonstrates national recognition in the academic discipline or sustained, high-quality professional productivity that is consonant with the goals of the university and the Academic Unit to which the faculty belongs. Faculty hired at the Rank of Professor are expected to maintain professional productivity in teaching/librarianship and/or research, scholarly, or creative activities and service to the university, college, Academic Unit, and profession commensurate with the Faculty Activity Plan, Faculty Activity Report, and Faculty Activity Evaluation.

## 3. Appointments.

Faculty are members of the academic community who are either classified as employees of ETSU or Volunteers. Faculty Appointments are made in a department, or in its absence, school, college, or ETSU Libraries, through which a Faculty member has a primary academic affiliation. The Faculty Supervisor makes recommendations for Appointment, promotion, Tenure, termination, and other actions concerning a Faculty member. The dean (or designee) or unit leader for Faculty who hold an Appointment in a unit other than a department is directly responsible for making recommendations for Appointment, promotion, termination, and other actions concerning the Faculty of the unit. Faculty are

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Appointed based on the definitions in this policy and budgeted line, except for those positions that may be externally funded.

## 3.1. Tenure-track and Tenured Appointments.

Offers for Tenure-track or Tenured positions will occur after a hiring search has been completed pursuant to Office of Human Resources hiring policies. The Offer Letter will have an employment start date that serves as the point when the Probationary Period begins. When a Faculty member transitions from a non-Tenured Appointment to a Tenure-Track Appointment, the Faculty member's Appointment date is reset for the purposes of Tenure to align with the move to the Tenure-Track Appointment, unless otherwise stated in the Offer Letter.

If the selected applicant for a Tenure-track Appointment does not have a transcript showing the doctoral degree (or highest degree) has been conferred by the employment start date, the individual will be moved to a Renewable Term Appointment until the degree has been conferred. For example, if the applicant begins the position in August and the degree is conferred in December, the Faculty member would have one semester on a Renewable Term Appointment and move to Tenure-track Appointment in January. Typically, a newly hired Faculty member can have a maximum of one year as a Renewable Term Faculty pending degree conferral; if the degree is not conferred by the end of the one-year Appointment, the Provost or designee may choose not to renew the Appointment. The expectations for degree conferral, credit toward and relevant timelines for Tenure and/or promotion will be stated in the Offer Letter. Applicants hired for a Tenure-Track position and placed on a Renewable Term Appointment pending degree conferral will not need to follow the "Conversion of Renewable Term Appointments to Tenure-track Appointments" requirements of this policy.

## 3.2. Non-tenure Eligible Faculty Appointments.

The search process for non-tenure eligible Appointments follows the Office of Human Resources hiring policies.. The Appointment may be conferred on a/an Affiliate, Renewable Term Faculty, or Temporary Faculty appointment. The Faculty member's responsibilities have an expectation that may focus on teaching/librarianship, research, clinical practice/supervision, professional practice, and/or service. Non-tenure Eligible full-time Faculty may serve on college, Academic Unit, and university committees.

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- 3.3. Faculty who are not eligible for tenure are eligible for promotion in Rank as defined in the position type. Consideration of Rank must align with procedures set forth within this policy as well as the university's Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty. Conversion of Renewable Term Appointments to TenureTrack Appointments.
- 3.4. Any offer made after the effective date of this policy to a Faculty member who is not eligible for Tenure shall not include a provision of "convertible to Tenure-track or Tenured Appointment." A Faculty member who is not eligible for Tenure has two possible options for securing a Tenure-Track position at ETSU:
  - 3.4.1. If a Tenure-line position is approved and advertised, the individual may apply, and if selected for the position, the individual may request credit for prior service as outlined in the Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty; or
  - 3.4.2. Renewable Term Faculty may be considered for conversion to a Tenure-Track position if the Academic Unit has a demonstrated need for a Tenure Track Faculty in the unit, and there are funds available to support the position, and if the Faculty member meets all of the following criteria:
    - 3.4.2.1. Must have been appointed to the current position after a competitive search process. In exceptional cases, a Faculty member who was not hired through a competitive search process and has a three-year sustained record of effective performance in their current full-time position at ETSU, including demonstrated excellence in teaching and promise for on-going and future research/scholarly/creative activities in their field, may also be considered for conversion to a Tenure Track position;
    - 3.4.2.2. Must have been appointed as a full-time Faculty member for at least three academic years in a Renewable Term position;
    - 3.4.2.3. Must have a terminal degree in the field or its clear equivalent from an accredited institution of higher education and/or has strong professional experience/qualifications that supports the individual's role as a teaching and research Faculty member; and
    - 3.4.2.4. Must provide evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities, and positive evaluation of future potential to meet the criteria for Tenure and promotion at ETSU, as evaluated by the Academic Unit.

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Refer to the “Process for Conversion of Renewable Term Appointments to Tenure Track Appointments” in the Procedures section.

## 3.5. Conversion of Tenure-track Appointments to Renewable Term Appointments.

Tenure-track Faculty are hired because of an Academic Unit need for a tenure-line Faculty and with the expectation that the applicant hired can meet the requirements for teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service expected of an ETSU Faculty member. In rare and unusual circumstances, however, a Tenure-track Faculty member may need to request to convert to a Renewable Term Appointment. This request should occur no later than one month following the structured review (also known as the “mid-point review”) for Tenure-track Faculty member, the timeline and process for which is in the Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty. If the request is approved, salary and workload will be adjusted as appropriate for a Renewable Term Faculty in the Academic Unit. Once the conversion is made, the Faculty member cannot request to be converted to a Tenure-track Appointment in the future. Refer to the “Process for Conversion of Tenure-track Appointments to Renewable-Term Appointments” in the Procedures section.

## 4. Faculty in Administrative/Executive Appointments.

Individuals who hold Academic Unit chair, school director, assistant, or associate dean positions and who are in budgeted Faculty lines are classified as Faculty and maintain full Faculty rights and responsibilities in shared governance.

Individuals in administrative/executive positions (deans and above) may hold Faculty Rank but are not classified as Faculty since their budgeted lines are administrative or executive.

## 5. Faculty Appointments in More than One Academic Unit.

Faculty may hold an Appointment in more than one Academic Unit (e.g., a research center and an Academic Unit; within Academic Unit A and Academic Unit B). Each unit will recommend a joint Appointment. Joint Appointments require a Memorandum of Understanding that determines the distribution of costs and revenue, along with a Scope of Work that clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, workload, evaluation criteria, and review.

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## 6. Voting Eligibility.

Renewable Term, Tenure-track , and Tenured Faculty have voting rights within their Academic Unit and college as outlined in Academic Unit and college Bylaws. Other Faculty may have voting rights within an Academic Unit or college as specified in the College and/or Academic Unit bylaws. Eligibility for voting on Tenure and/or promotion will be governed by the Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty.

## 7. Graduate Faculty.

Faculty who teach graduate courses, and/or supervise graduate students, and/or serve on graduate capstone, thesis, or dissertation committees must be approved as members of ETSU's Graduate Faculty pursuant to the [requirements and timeline](#) adopted by Graduate Council.

## 8. Emeritus Faculty.

Faculty who retire from ETSU may be eligible for Emerita/Emeritus/Emerit status pursuant to ETSU's [Emeritus Policy for Faculty, Chairs, and Deans](#).

## 9. University School Faculty.

University School Faculty have a unique role as both members of the ETSU Faculty and members of a Local Educational Agency. Faculty Appointments to ETSU's University School will follow applicable state law and University School policies.

## 10. Accommodations for Less Than Full-Time Status.

In some circumstances, Colleges may need to hire new Regular Appointment Faculty to be less than full-time Status or change existing Regular Appointment Faculty to be less than full-time. Salary, workload, and benefits, and the timeline for Tenure and/or promotion (if applicable) will be adjusted accordingly.

Voting rights for less than full-time Faculty will be determined by the Academic Unit and/or college bylaws.

## 11. Termination of Faculty Employment.

Termination of a Tenured Faculty member is governed by the Board of Trustee's Termination of Tenure Policy. Termination of Renewable Term Faculty and Tenure Track Faculty will be governed by university policies and the terms of their contract.

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## 12. Financial Exigency.

If financial exigency is declared by the Board of Trustees, the President has the authority to determine reduction-in-force pursuant to the Board of Trustees' Financial Exigency Policy.

## 13. Accommodations.

The Provost (or designee) has the authority to make accommodations to the policy under exceptional circumstances.

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## Procedures

### 1. Search and Hiring Processes for New Appointments.

Faculty searches and hiring follow established Office of Human Resources procedures and processes. Provost approval is needed before a dean initiates a search for Renewable Term, Tenure-Track or Tenured Faculty positions.

The hiring process involves negotiation between the selected candidate and the Faculty Supervisor and/or dean who makes an initial offer.

### 2. Appointment to Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, or Principal Lecturer.

To be eligible for an initial Appointment at a Rank, the selected candidate's application documents is reviewed to ensure the candidate meets or exceeds the criteria for the Rank set forth in the "Criteria for Initial Rank for Renewable Term, Tenure-track, and Tenured Faculty" section of this policy.

During the hiring process, the Faculty have a role in reviewing applicants and making recommendations about Rank and credit toward promotion. The Faculty provide Faculty Supervisors with feedback on the applicants that informs the Faculty Supervisor's decision to hire. The Faculty Supervisor in the hiring unit writes a memo to the dean recommending that the selected candidate receive a hiring offer. The memo is to include the overview of the search process, the candidate's qualifications to meet specific needs in the unit, justification for the candidate's selection, and if any credit toward promotion is recommended, the Faculty Supervisor will also include the candidate's curriculum vitae, highest degree transcript, and application/cover letter. Deans may request an initial Appointment at the Rank of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, or Principal Lecturer. The Provost approves the Appointment and Rank.

### 3. Appointment to Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor.

Deans, with approval from and in consultation with the Provost, have administrative authority to approve recruitment for positions. Deans have administrative authority to make recommendations to the Provost for Appointments at a specific Rank with or without the conferral of Tenure and with or without credit toward Tenure and/or

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promotion after consultation with Academic Unit Faculty and the Faculty Supervisor as described in the “Faculty Review and Recommendation” section below.

## 4. Faculty Review and Recommendation for Tenure-track Appointments.

To be eligible for an initial Appointment at a Rank, candidates must meet or exceed the criteria for the Rank set forth in the “Criteria for Initial Rank for Renewable Term, Tenure-track, and Tenured Faculty” section of this policy. During the hiring process, Faculty play a role in providing feedback on applicants, and if applicable, in the recommendation of Rank and years of credit towards Tenure and/or promotion for an applicant. Typically, hires at any Rank are initiated without credit toward Tenure and/or promotion and without Tenure upon Appointment. However, for highly qualified candidates who meet or exceed the criteria for Rank at hire, the Faculty Supervisor may make a recommendation to hire with:

- 4.1 One or two years of credit toward Tenure only,
- 4.2. One or two years of credit toward promotion only, or
- 4.3. One or two years of credit toward both Tenure and promotion.

For exceptionally qualified candidates, three years of credit may be considered with a strong rationale.

Refer to the section “Consideration for Awarding Years of Credit.”

A recommendation of one or two years of credit toward Tenure and/or promotion requires a Majority Vote by the Faculty in the Academic Unit and approval from the dean and Provost. Board of Trustees approval is not required.

The Faculty Supervisor may also make a recommendation to hire above the Assistant or Associate Professor Rank. When recommending hiring above the Rank of Assistant Professor, a Majority Vote by Faculty in the Academic Unit and approval from the dean and Provost is required.

The Faculty Supervisor may make a recommendation to award: (1) Tenure upon Appointment with or without years of credit toward promotion, or (2) Tenure upon Appointment at a specific Rank.

When recommending Tenure upon Appointment, regardless of Rank recommended, a Majority Vote by Faculty in the Academic Unit at or above the Rank requested (e.g., for hiring at the Rank of Associate Professor, Associate and Full professors in the Academic Unit would vote) is required. In addition, approval of the dean, Provost, President, and the Board of Trustees is required.

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It is appropriate for Faculty Supervisors to establish deadlines for the review process so that offers can be extended in a timely manner.

## 5. Consideration for Awarding Years of Credit.

It is important for Faculty reviewing the candidate to consider a timeline for the candidate's potential success in meeting the criteria for Tenure and/or promotion in the Academic Unit.

To consider whether to award years of credit, the Faculty Supervisor are to :

- 5.1 Review the department criteria at the Rank they are recommending for hiring the individual;
- 5.2 Consider letters of recommendation;
- 5.3 Consider recruitment presentations, interviews, etc.; and
- 5.4 Review the curriculum vitae within the timeframe they are recommending to hire the individual (i.e., review accomplishments in teaching, research, and service within the previous one year if recommending to hire with one year of credit toward Tenure and/or promotion).

The Faculty Supervisor is responsible for making a recommendation to the Faculty in the Academic Unit to hire with:

- 5.5 One or two years of credit toward Tenure; (Refer to section "Recommendation to Award Credit Toward Tenure and/or Promotion.")
- 5.6 One or two years of credit toward promotion; (Refer to section "Recommendation to Award Credit Toward Tenure and/or Promotion.")
- 5.7 One or two years of credit toward Tenure and promotion; (Refer to section "Recommendation to Award Credit Toward Tenure and/or Promotion.")
- 5.8 Tenure upon Appointment with or without years of credit toward promotion; (Refer to section "Recommendation to Award Credit Upon Appointment.") or
- 5.9 Tenure upon Appointment at a specific Rank (Refer to section "Recommendation to Award Credit Upon Appointment.")

For exceptionally qualified candidates, three years of credit may be considered with a strong rationale.

The Faculty vote on the recommendation; a Majority Vote is required to grant credit toward Tenure, promotion, or to grant Tenure Upon Appointment.

## 6. Recommendation to Award Credit Toward Tenure and/or Promotion.

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When recommending to award a selected candidate credit toward Tenure and/or promotion, the Faculty Supervisor submits a written memo and the new candidate's curriculum vitae, and transcripts to the dean and Provost with the hiring recommendation. The memo should include a summary of the accomplishments of the selected candidate recommended for hire from the timeframe in which the recommendation is made (e.g., summary of the accomplishments from the past two years if requesting to award two years of credit toward Tenure and promotion) along with the results of the Faculty vote. A sample memo template with all required information is available from the Office of the Provost.

### 7. Recommendation to Award Tenure Upon Appointment.

When recommending to award a selected candidate Tenure upon Appointment, the Faculty Supervisor schedules a vote of the Faculty in the Academic Unit according to the requirements in the Tenure Policy on whether to: (1) Award years of credit toward promotion, and/or (2) Hire at Rank.

A Majority Vote is required for a recommendation to grant credit toward Tenure, promotion, or to grant Tenure Upon Appointment.

When recommending to hire with Tenure upon Appointment, the Faculty Supervisor submits a written memo and the candidate's curriculum vitae and transcripts are forwarded to the dean, Provost, and President (or their designees) for approval. (A sample memo is available from the Associate Provost of Faculty.) The approval memo should include:

- 7.1 A recommendation regarding Tenure upon Appointment, whether to award years of credit toward promotion, and/or a recommendation regarding Rank at time of hire;
- 7.2 Documentation of the vote of the Faculty in the Academic Unit;
- 7.3 A summary of the teaching, research, and service accomplishments of the individual recommended for hire within the last five years; and
- 7.4 Signatory lines for approval from the Faculty Supervisor, the dean, the Provost, and the President.

Any communication with the selected candidate should indicate that Tenure is only awarded only upon the approval of the Board of Trustees by recommendation of the President.

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If the dean agrees to make the recommendation, the dean signs the memo and forwards the memo to the Provost. If the dean disagrees with the recommendation, the dean writes a memo to the Faculty Supervisor informing them of the decision.

If the Provost agrees with the recommendation, the Provost or designee will make a recommendation and forward their decision to the President, copying the dean and HR. If the Provost disagrees and does not make a recommendation, the Provost will write a memo to the dean and Faculty informing them of the decision.

If the President agrees with the Provost's recommendation, the President makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees during its next regularly scheduled quarterly board meeting. The Provost's Office is responsible for preparing materials to submit for the recommendation to the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees grants Tenure upon Appointment, the President writes a memo to the Faculty informing them of the Board's decision. If the President disagrees with the Provost's recommendation and does not make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, the President or designee writes a memo to the Provost and dean, who communicates with the selected candidate and Faculty.

### **8. Appointment of Dean with Rank and Tenure.**

The Office of the Provost is responsible for the recruitment and hiring of all new Deans.

For candidates who do not hold Tenure and/or rank at ETSU, the Provost or designee will solicit input from the Faculty in the Academic Unit in which the candidate will hold Tenure and/or rank. Prior to the appointment, the Faculty of the Academic Unit review the candidate's curriculum vitae, available letters of recommendation, and available examples of research/scholarly/creative work. Faculty should have at least 10 business days to consider the candidate's credentials; however, in some cases the department may be given less than 10 business days, especially when a candidate may have multiple offers to consider. Because of the consultative role of Faculty in the process, Faculty are encouraged to participate in the on-campus interviews of candidates who may be appointed at Rank and/or Tenure in an Academic Unit. The eligible Faculty in the Academic Unit vote to determine if the Rank is warranted and provide a judgment of the appropriateness of making an initial offer that includes the conferral of Tenure. Eligible Faculty will vote on the Rank and awarding of Tenure upon Appointment. A Majority Vote is required to grant credit toward Tenure, promotion, or to grant Tenure Upon Appointment.

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The Faculty Supervisor from the unit provides a written statement to the chair of the dean search committee regarding the Rank and appropriateness of the conferral of Tenure. This statement should address how the candidate meets or exceeds (or as appropriate does not meet) the criteria for Rank and/or requirements for Tenure as described in Academic Unit and University policies. The memo should also include the results of the Faculty vote. It is appropriate for the chair of the search committee to establish deadlines for the review process so that offers can be extended in a timely manner.

The Provost, in consultation with the President, is responsible for issuing offers of Appointment to the new Dean contingent upon approval by the Board of Trustees. The Provost's Office is responsible for preparing materials to submit the recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

### 9. Appointment of Other Administrators with Rank and Tenure.

Administrators such as, but not limited to, a vice provost, Provost, vice president, or President may be hired with Rank and/or Tenure.

For candidates who do not hold Tenure and/or rank at ETSU, the search committee chair will seek input from the Faculty in the Academic Unit in which a candidate may hold Tenure and/or Rank. Prior to the appointment, the Faculty of the Academic Unit review the candidate's curriculum vitae, available letters of recommendation, and available examples of research/scholarly/creative work and provides input to the Faculty Supervisor. The Faculty Supervisor from the unit will provide a written statement to the chair of the search committee regarding the appropriateness of the Rank and the conferral of Tenure. It is appropriate for the chair of the search committee to establish deadlines for the review process so that offers can be extended in a timely manner.

The Offer Letter will convey the proposed rank and Tenure status, pending approval from the Board of Trustees. The Provost's Office is responsible for preparing materials to submit the recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

### 10. Process for Conversion of Renewable Term Appointments to Tenure Track Appointments

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This process is designed to establish a uniform procedure for Academic Units to follow when converting a current Renewable Term Faculty member to a Tenure Track Appointment.

Faculty members in a Renewable Term Appointment who meet the criteria to be eligible for conversion, noted in the policy section “Conversion of Renewable Term Appointments to Tenure Track Appointments,” can be considered for conversion to a Tenure Track Appointment. Base funding for the converted position must be identified and committed. The process has two primary steps: First, obtaining approval from the dean and the Provost, and second, if approval is received, Faculty in the Academic Unit will review the applicant. The process for conversion is as follows:

- 10.1 The dean writes a memo to the Provost stating that the candidate meets all the qualifications for the requested position and provides the following information in their recommendation:
  - 10.1.1 Demonstrated need for a Tenure Track Faculty in the Academic Unit;
  - 10.1.2 Justification for conversion instead of conducting a national search for the position;
  - 10.1.3 Impact of the conversion on teaching workload, clinical activity, and/or research productivity in the Academic Unit;
  - 10.1.4 Availability of funds in the Academic Unit and the college to support the position;
  - 10.1.5 A statement that all Renewable Term Faculty in the Academic Unit who meet the criteria for conversion and the qualifications for the Tenure-line position (e.g., sub-disciplinary expertise, etc.) were given the opportunity to apply;
  - 10.1.6 A statement that the applicant has been informed that if their application is successful, they must remain in Rank for at least three years before being considered for Tenure and/or promotion;
  - 10.1.7 A statement that the applicant has been informed of the Tenure and/or promotion requirements for teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities in the Academic Unit; and
  - 10.1.8 An acknowledgment that approval of the conversion request does not mean that the Academic Unit and college will receive an additional Renewable Term position as a replacement for the converted position.

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- 10.2 If the Provost or designee approves the conversion process, the applicant is to provide the Academic Unit with:
  - 10.2.1 A current CV;
  - 10.2.2 A personal statement for the position;
  - 10.2.3 An abbreviated teaching portfolio that includes course evaluation data (if available); and
  - 10.2.4 Copies of research/scholarly/creative activities completed within the past five years.

The Academic Unit will follow the “Faculty Review and Recommendation for Tenure-track Appointments” section of the Procedures and any referenced sections. Converted Appointments may have no credit, one or two years of credit toward Tenure and/or promotion. It is important for Faculty reviewing the candidate to consider an appropriate timeline for the candidate’s potential success in meeting the criteria for Tenure and/or promotion in the Academic Unit.

## 11. Conversion of Tenure-track Appointment to Renewable Term Appointment.

This process is designed to establish a uniform procedure for Academic Units to follow when converting a current Tenure-track Appointment to a Renewable Term Appointment.

Faculty members in a Tenure-track Appointment can be considered for conversion to a Tenure Appointment if they meet the time requirement in the “Conversion of Tenure-track Appointment to a Renewable Term Appointment” section of the policy. To begin the process, written approval is needed from the Dean and the Provost or designee. The approval process for conversion is as follows:

- 11.1 The Faculty member writes a memo to the Dean requesting conversion from Tenure-track to a Renewable Term Appointment. The memo includes a strong rationale/justification for the conversion. The rationale should include a summary about how the Faculty Activities the faculty completes align with Faculty on a Renewable Term Appointment. The rationale cannot be exclusively based on the Faculty member not being able to meet the requirements for Tenure and/or promotion. Reasons to request a conversion include, but are not limited to: how the work the Faculty member completes is more aligned with Faculty Activities carried out by Renewable Term Faculty,

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changes in the Faculty member's career goals, etc. The Faculty member must also acknowledge that they understand that the salary, benefits, workload, and time-line for promotion will be adjusted and that they cannot request conversion to a Tenure-track Appointment later.

11.2 The dean reviews the memo, discusses with the Academic Unit chair/director and determines whether to recommend the conversion to the Provost. To recommend the conversion, the dean writes a memo to the Provost that the candidate meets all the qualifications for the requested position and provides the following information in their recommendation:

11.2.1 Impact of the conversion on teaching workload, clinical activity, and/or research productivity in the Academic Unit;

11.2.2 Needs of the Academic Unit for a Renewable Term Appointment rather than a Tenure-track Appointment;

11.2.3 Availability of funds in the Academic Unit and college to support the position;

11.2.4 A statement that the applicant has been informed that if their application is successful that they must remain in Rank for at least three years before being considered for promotion;

11.2.5 A statement that the applicant has been informed of the promotion requirements for the Renewable Term Appointments and timeline for the Academic Unit; and

11.2.6 An acknowledgment that approval of the conversion request does not mean that the Academic Unit and college will receive an additional Tenure-track position as a replacement for the converted position.

If the dean does not approve the request, the dean writes a memo to the Faculty member with the decision.

11.3 The Provost or designee reviews the dean's recommendation along with the Faculty member's request. If the Provost or designee supports the conversion process, the Provost makes a recommendation to the President. If the Provost does not support the request, the Provost writes a memo to the dean Faculty of the decision.

11.4 If the President receives a recommendation from the Provost, the President reviews the recommendation and makes a final determination to either accept the recommendation or deny the recommendation. The President writes a memo to the Provost and dean of the decision to accept or deny the recommendation.

**Policy Effective Date:** 08/24/20 • **Policy Revised:** 05/14/26  
**Procedures Effective Date:** 08/24/20 • **Procedures Revised:** 05/14/26

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## **12. Less Than Full-time Status Request.**

To request less than full-time status, a faculty member submits a written request to the Faculty Supervisor that includes the rationale for the request. The faculty member must also acknowledge the impact of the conversion on workload, salary, benefits, and timeline for promotion. The Faculty Supervisor reviews the written request and consults with the college dean. The Faculty Supervisor writes a recommendation to support or not support the request to the College Dean and provides a copy to the faculty member. The Dean makes a written recommendation with justification to the Provost with copies to the Faculty Supervisor and faculty member. The Provost reviews and approves or does not approve the request for less than full-time status and notifies the dean, Faculty Supervisor, and faculty. If approved, the Provost will notify Human Resources. The decision of the Provost is final.

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## **Applicable Forms and Websites**

[Certification of SACSCOC Faculty Qualifications Policy](#)

[Emeritus Policy for Faculty, Chairs, and Deans](#)

Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty.

Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty.

Termination of Tenure Policy

## **Authority and Revisions**

**Authority:** TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

**Previous Policy:** Definitions of Faculty and Types of Appointments

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.

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