

**AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Policy Number: 5:061	Supersedes Policy Number: 5:061
Date: August 2, 2011	Dated: August 29, 2008
Subject: Policy on Academic Promotion	Mandatory Review Date: August 2, 2016
Initiating Authority: Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs	TBR Policy/Guideline Reference: 5:02:02:20
Approved: TBR policy provides a minimum standard for faculty credentials pertaining to faculty retention, promotion, and tenure. TBR policy also permits member institutions to establish criteria for faculty retention, promotion, and tenure that exceed the TBR minimum standards. In the event of conflict(s) between TBR and university due process standards, TBR policy shall control.	
Approved:	President: Signature on File

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Promotion in rank is recognition of past achievement of the individual being considered for promotion. In addition, the advancement in rank is recognition of future potential and a sign of confidence that the individual is capable of even greater accomplishments and of assuming greater responsibilities. The policy of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) is to make promotions strictly on consideration of merit tempered by University and fiscal considerations. The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that promotions are made objectively, equitably, impartially, and as recognition of merit in line with the following policy guidelines.

The President of APSU is responsible for the master staffing plan of the University. In developing such a plan, the President will consider the fiscal impact of each promotion recommended to the Tennessee Board of Regents, that is, resources allocated and distributed to the University.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this policy, academic assignment, scholarly and creative achievement and professional contributions and activities will be defined as follows.

#### **A. Academic Assignment**

Teaching applies to any strategy in which information is imparted so that others may learn, and may include, but is not limited to, a variety of techniques including instruction; student advising and/or mentoring; development of course materials and courseware; and development of innovative approaches to instruction.

#### **B. Scholarly and Creative Achievement**

Research applies to the studious inquiry, examination, or discovery that contributes to disciplinary and interdisciplinary bodies of knowledge. Scholarly and Creative Achievement may include, but are not limited to, disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities that focus on the boundaries of knowledge; field-based scholarship; creative activities (e.g. film-making, performances, or other artistic creations); and the development of cutting-edge teaching approaches.

#### **C. Professional Contributions and Activities**

Service applies to involvement within the community as defined by the University's role and mission; service to the University; and service within the bounds of the applicant's academic discipline and budgeted assignment.

A more detailed description of these activities and the criteria to be applied in assessing performance in these three areas may be found in APSU Policy No. 5:060 "Policy on Academic Tenure," Section IV (Criteria To Be Considered In Tenure Recommendations).

### **III. THE EVALUATION PROCESS**

The evaluation process for academic promotion at APSU will follow the guidelines established for academic tenure as identified in APSU Policy No. 5:060 "Policy on Academic Tenure," Section III.B (Consideration for Tenure; Tenure Process).

A faculty member (below rank of Professor) shall receive a promotion review at all levels of the University at least once every five (5) years unless such review is contrary to the wishes of the faculty member. Faculty members choosing not to go up for promotion are still required to participate in the annual post-tenure review procedures currently in place. Faculty who wish to apply for promotion should inform their chairperson/director of their intent in the semester prior to the one in which they will apply for promotion. The evaluation process for academic promotion at APSU will follow the guidelines established for academic tenure as identified in APSU Policy No. 5:060 "Policy on Academic Tenure," Section III.B (Consideration for Tenure; Tenure Process) with the following exceptions:

- A. Persons to be considered for Promotion. Every eligible faculty member shall be reviewed by the appropriate departmental promotions committee, unless the faculty member requests not to be reviewed.
- B. Committee Membership. No faculty member shall vote on or participate in promotion deliberations relative to colleagues seeking promotion to higher rank than those voting at the departmental level, that is, faculty members voting to promote a faculty member to Associate Professor, for example, must already be at the rank of Associate Professor or above it to be eligible to vote on the faculty member requesting to be promoted to Associate. Only tenured faculty members shall serve on a promotion committee at any level. At the college level, only tenured full Professors may serve on the college promotions committee.
- C. Recommendations. Recommendations shall be as follows: 1) Not Recommended at This Time; 2) Recommended; 3) Forwarded on a Tie Vote. Only those recommended or forwarded on a tie vote should be forwarded for college consideration. Only those recommended by the college or the Dean should be sent to the Provost. However, the department chair must notify the Dean in writing of the voting results of all negative recommendations. The Dean shall notify the Provost in writing of the voting results of all negative recommendations made at the department and college levels.
- D. Appeals. Faculty members may appeal a negative promotion recommendation as provided for in APSU Policy No. 5:060 "Policy on Academic Tenure," Section III.B (Consideration for Tenure; Appeals).

#### **IV. ACADEMIC RANKS**

The following are criteria that distinguish between academic ranks.

##### **A. Instructor**

1. Demonstrated ability in academic assignment and/or scholarly and creative achievement, and/or professional contributions and activities.
2. Master's degree in the instructional discipline or related area.
3. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

##### **B. Assistant Professor**

1. Earned doctorate or terminal degree from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area.
2. Evidence of potential ability in academic assignment and/or scholarly and creative achievement, and/or professional contributions and activities.
3. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.

**C. Associate Professor (see NOTE at end of section)**

1. Earned doctorate or terminal degree from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area.
2. Documented evidence of high quality professional productivity at Austin Peay State University which may lead to national recognition in the academic discipline, and/or consonant with the goals of the University and of the academic unit to which the faculty member belongs. Any exceptions to this requirement will need the written approval of the President.
3. Documented evidence of ability in academic assignment and/or scholarly and creative achievement, and/or professional contributions and activities at Austin Peay State University. Any exceptions to this requirement will need the written approval of the President.
4. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity.
5. At least three (3) years of full-time faculty status at Austin Peay State University at the rank of Assistant Professor shall be required for promotion to Associate Professor. Any exceptions to this requirement will need the written approval of the President.

NOTE: At least three (3) years of full-time faculty status at Austin Peay State University at the rank of Assistant Professor shall be the normal expectation for promotion to Associate Professor. In addition to this minimum length of service, faculty members who wish to apply for promotion shall adhere to the standards prescribed in the current RTP criteria governing promotion in their department. Faculty members who are hired at the rank of Assistant Professor shall be eligible to apply for promotion to Associate as early as the spring semester of their third year, although the actual rank awarded shall not be in effect until the fourth year.

For example, a faculty member who begins employment at Austin Peay State University in the Fall semester of 2011 at the rank of Assistant Professor may apply for promotion to Associate Professor no earlier than the spring semester of 2014, although the faculty member may choose to apply for promotion simultaneously with the application for tenure or the faculty member may choose to apply for promotion to Associate post tenure at a later date.

Faculty who find themselves in anomalous situations (e.g. faculty on leaves of absence or faculty who have stopped the tenure clock) and are seeking promotion must consult with the Provost and the Office of Academic Affairs for a ruling on the appropriate date for application. Any exceptions to the minimum requirements described above shall require the written approval of the President.

**D. Professor (see NOTE at end of section)**

1. Earned doctorate or terminal degree from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area.

2. Documented evidence of sustained high quality professional productivity at Austin Peay State University and national recognition in the academic discipline or sustained high quality professional productivity in the academic discipline at Austin Peay State University that is consonant with the goals of the University and of the academic unit to which the faculty member belongs. Any exceptions to this requirement will need the written approval of the President.
3. Documented evidence of teaching excellence and superior contribution to student development or superior scholarly and creative achievement at Austin Peay State University will contribute to the positive record of the candidate for advancement to the rank of professor. Any exceptions to this requirement will need the written approval of the President. Since there is no higher rank, promotion to professor is taken with great care and requires a level of achievement beyond that required for associate professor. This rank is not a reward for long service; rather it is recognition of superior achievement within the discipline with every expectation of continuing contribution to the University and the larger academic community.
4. Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity, and a high degree of academic maturity and responsibility.
5. At least five (5) years of faculty status at the rank of Associate Professor at Austin Peay State University shall be the normal expectation for promotion to Full Professor. Any exceptions to this requirement will require the written approval of the President.

NOTE: At least five (5) years of full-time faculty status at Austin Peay State University at the rank of Associate Professor shall be the normal expectation for promotion to Professor. In addition to this minimum length of service, faculty members who wish to apply for promotion shall adhere to the standards prescribed in the current RTP criteria governing promotion in their department. Faculty members who are hired at the rank of Associate Professor shall be eligible to apply for promotion to Professor as early as the spring semester of their fifth year, although the actual rank awarded shall not be in effect until the sixth year.

For example, a faculty member who begins employment at Austin Peay State University in the Fall semester of 2011 at the rank of Associate Professor may apply for promotion to Professor no earlier than the spring semester of 2016, although the faculty member may choose to apply for promotion simultaneously with the application for tenure or the faculty member may choose to apply for promotion to Professor post tenure at a later date.

Faculty who find themselves in anomalous situations (e.g. faculty on leaves of absence or faculty who have stopped the tenure clock) and are seeking promotion must consult with the Provost and the Office of Academic Affairs for a ruling on the appropriate date for application. Any exceptions to the minimum requirements described above shall require the written approval of the President.

## **V. EXCEPTIONS TO MINIMUM RANK QUALIFICATIONS**

The minimum rank qualifications should be met in every recommendation regarding appointment to academic rank and for promotion in academic rank. In extraordinary circumstances, if the faculty member receives recommendations by the departmental and college promotions committees and Provost that clearly state the recommendation is by exception as part of the regular evaluation process, the President may recommend to TBR an approval to the exception to minimum rank. However, such exceptions are not favored and should be granted only upon a showing of a candidate's exceptional merit and/or other extraordinary circumstances, such as an objective need to deviate from these minimum qualifications in filling positions and/or retaining otherwise qualified faculty within certain academic disciplines.

Petitions for exceptions to promotional criteria may include consideration of the appropriateness of the degree or extraordinary qualities that the candidate may possess. The equivalent work experience credit may include relevant teaching experience or other experiences such as experience gained as an administrator, counselor, librarian, journeyman, or the like.

## **VI. TERMINAL DEGREE DESIGNATION**

The TBR will use national discipline standards to determine which degrees are considered to be "terminal" within each discipline and will provide APSU with a list that delineates these degrees. The TBR affords APSU the opportunity to request blanket exceptions to these standards by classification based upon its mission and hiring practice. APSU may also petition the Board for "equivalent work experience credit" when a candidate has not obtained a terminal degree, but has a record of extraordinary achievement in a given field. The equivalent work experience credit may include relevant teaching experience or other experiences such as experience gained as an administrator, counselor, librarian, journeyman, or the like.

## **VII. PROMOTION CRITERIA**

The academic departments and programs of APSU must develop written guidelines with specific criteria for evaluating the faculty in academic assignment, scholarly and creative achievement and professional contributions and activities. The departmental and program guidelines cannot be less rigorous than University guidelines. These departmental and program guidelines should be distributed to all new faculty members and should be easily available at all times, preferably via the Web. Whenever the guidelines are revised, the faculty should be notified of the availability of the revised guidelines. The University promotion guidelines for evaluation should use the same criteria as those identified for tenure and located in APSU Policy No. 5:060 "Policy on Academic Tenure," Section IV (Criteria To Be Considered In Tenure Recommendations).

## **VIII. GENERAL PROCESS GUIDELINES AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

So that the decision process can be as objective as possible, each recommendation (forwarded from the department or program to a higher administrative level in the University) should be accompanied by complete and careful documentation of the candidate's performance in academic assignment, and/or scholarly and creative achievement, and/or professional contributions and activities. Although the three areas of evaluation—academic assignment, scholarly and creative achievement, and professional contributions and activities—are all considered important, certain exceptions may exist where evaluation may occur in one or the other area exclusively.

In these cases, as well as in the general case, appropriate supervisory personnel shall clearly and adequately document the facts which justify the individual's promotion. The academic department or program may, if it deems it desirable, include information relative to the candidate's research activities, publication record, exceptional administrative performance, or other types of contributions. Additional procedures may be used by APSU with approval of the TBR. For example, APSU may wish to establish an interdisciplinary, University-level promotion review committee to review the individual unit recommendations.

## **IX. GENERAL PROCESS GUIDELINES AT BOARD LEVEL**

A list of promotional recommendations should be forwarded by the President of the University to the Chancellor for his/her review. The Chancellor's recommendation will be forwarded to the Committee on Personnel and their recommendation forwarded to the Board.