

**The University of Alabama**  
**Personnel Policies**  
**Non-Tenure-Track, Renewable Contract (NTRC) Faculty**  
**at the ranks of Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor**  
**DRAFT DATE: March 30, 2016**

**Preface:** The purpose of this document is to establish a university-wide policy that will govern the promotion of non-tenure-track, renewable contract (NTRC) faculty from assistant to associate or associate to full NTRC professors, and to ensure a central review and standardization of their promotion procedures across colleges and schools. This policy applies to appointments of teaching, research, and clinical renewable contract faculty at the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor, collectively referred to hereafter as non-tenure-track, renewable contract (NTRC) faculty.

## **I. Introduction**

The University of Alabama has three general categories of faculty: tenured-tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track renewable contract faculty (NTRC), and temporary faculty. In all categories, faculty can serve in full-time or part-time positions.

For tenure-track faculty, expectations for hiring, evaluation and tenure and/or promotion, and specified procedures and schedules for such activities, are set forth in Criteria and Standards for Promotion and Tenure, as found in *The University of Alabama Faculty Handbook*.

The Non-Tenure-Track Renewable Contract Faculty (NTRC) Policy describes procedures and processes for hiring, evaluation and promotion of NTRC faculty appointed at the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor, to full-time 9- or 12-month, multi-year, positions. Consequently, this policy does not apply to part-time temporary appointments; full-time temporary, nonrenewable appointments (FTTI); adjunct appointments; visiting appointments; and appointments intended to be for one-year only.

The primary assignments of NTRC faculty can be teaching, research, or clinical responsibilities with the expectation of associated service and/or administrative assignments. NTRC faculty are not, in general, assigned the tripartite teaching, research, and service responsibilities that characterize tenure-track appointments.

## **II. Qualifications**

NTRC faculty at the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor should, at a minimum, possess the appropriate terminal degree for their field and requisite expertise, including knowledge of the discipline and specific subject area, classroom or clinical experience, and competence with current instructional pedagogy or research techniques. In exceptional cases, equivalent credentials can be approved by the department or division<sup>1</sup> in consultation with the dean of the respective college, and submitted for approval by the Provost.

## **III. Terms of Appointment**

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter we will use the term “department” to refer to both formal departments and other academic divisions within colleges or schools without a departmental structure.

Initial appointments for NTRC faculty are normally made for a period of three years, but appointments may range from two to six years. Initial appointments may be made at the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, or full professor, contingent upon qualifications, demonstrated expertise, and experience. The positions are subject to policies and procedures of The University of Alabama, the college, and the department, and they may be amended from time to time. Offer letters are issued by the office of the dean.

Unlike the appointments of tenured faculty, NTRC appointments are term appointments that, by definition, are not tenure-earning and do not convey any right or expectation of continued employment after the time specified. Continuation throughout the term of the appointment is contingent on satisfactorily meeting the departmental and college's performance standards (in accordance with the annual reviews defined in Section VII), compliance with all policies in the *Faculty Handbook*, and general UA employment policies. Additionally, continuation to the end of the appointment is dependent upon the needs and available funding within the academic unit. The University reserves the right to terminate employment immediately if, in the judgment of the department chair<sup>2</sup>, dean, and Provost, such action is warranted.

Consistent with appointments for tenure-track positions, an individual who has not completed requirements for a terminal degree may be offered an appointment as an assistant professor contingent upon completion of requirements for the degree. If the appointee fails to meet this contingency by the effective date of employment, the individual will be assigned the rank of instructor, and a revised appointment letter will be issued which specifies a period of time during which the individual is expected to complete requirements for the degree. Failure to complete all degree requirements by the specified time may serve as cause for non-retention. (See *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 2, Section II.) Written notification to the faculty member by March 1 of the decision to impose this contingency constitutes notice that the individual's employment at the University terminates at the end of the academic year unless all degree requirements are met by the specified date; however, the dean may set a later termination date. (See *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 2, Section VII.) Those holding the rank of instructor are not eligible for promotion under this policy.

#### **IV. Searches**

Procedures for searches for all NTRC faculty appointments follow those for tenured and tenure-track appointments.

#### **V. Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of NTRC faculty, which are determined at the discretion of the dean and department chair, include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. *Teaching/Research/Clinical Workload.* NTRC faculty will have the equivalent of a full-time teaching, research, or clinical practice load as specified in the appointment letter. Any variation in the assignment to teaching, research, or clinical practice of a NTRC faculty member from that defined in the appointment letter will be negotiated by the faculty member and department head, and approved by the dean.

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<sup>2</sup> Hereafter, we use the term department chair to include both those with the title of department chair as well as other dean's designees in divisions without departmental administrative sub-units. These titles can include director, area head, program coordinator and the like.

B. *Service*. NTRC faculty are expected to contribute to the life of the college through appropriate departmental committees and other forms of academic service consistent with policies of the department, college, and the University. These contributions will constitute a percentage of the total FTE.

## **VI. Evaluations and Evaluation Committees**

Evaluations of NTRC faculty fall into three different categories: annual evaluations, reappointment evaluations, and promotion evaluations. In all of these evaluations, the department chair will make a recommendation to the dean.

Departments or colleges/schools will create a committee or committees to work in conjunction with the chair or dean to evaluate NTRC Faculty for promotion. The evaluation committee will review NTRC faculty promotion applications and provide a recommendation to the department chair. Membership of the committee(s) may be comprised of tenured faculty and NTRC faculty who are at the associate or higher rank. The proportion of tenured versus NTRC faculty on the committee(s) is left to the discretion of the college/school. Committees for promotion to a given rank will consist of faculty who possess that rank or a higher rank. In cases in which there are fewer than three department members who are eligible to serve on the evaluation committee, the dean will appoint additional members with interests related to the NTRC faculty member's discipline from other Departments. However, if possible, the chair of the committee should be a member of the candidate's home department.

## **VII. Annual Evaluations**

NTRC Faculty will be evaluated annually. Each NTRC faculty will submit a record of activities for the year in accordance with the college's annual review policy. The chair will meet privately with the NTRC faculty member to discuss the activity report, the evaluation results from departmental committees (if applicable), and progress towards promotion.

## **VIII. Reappointment Evaluations and Contract Reappointment/Renewal**

When an NTRC faculty is being considered for reappointment after an initial contract term or for any subsequent reappointment to a term at the same rank (for example, in year three of a three-year appointment), this process begins with the departmental NTRC faculty evaluation committee communicating its evaluation results to the department chair who recommends either reappointment or non-reappointment to the dean. The dean will make the final decision regarding whether to renew the contract. Notification of the decision to reappoint or not to reappoint an NTRC faculty member for the next academic year will be made in writing to the candidate in a timely fashion, and no later than March 1. At no time will contract renewal be deemed de facto tenure.

Reappointment of NTRC faculty depends on annually documented meritorious teaching, research, or clinical performance; satisfactory service to the department and/or college; continued departmental need; and continued availability of funding, as determined by the dean. The final decision and notification of reappointment or non-reappointment will be made by the dean, except in cases where the dean determines that the non-tenure-track faculty member's appointment will not be continued to the contract end dates. Such cases will be reviewed by the Provost.

## **IX. Promotion Evaluations and Promotion**

Unless specified differently in the NTRC policy, the promotion process for NTRC faculty follows the departmental, college, and dean-level timeline and process for tenure-track faculty as described in Chapter 2, Sections VI and IX of the *Faculty Handbook*. As with tenure and tenure-track decisions for promotion, final authority lies with the Provost.

NTRC assistant professors are eligible to apply for promotion to NTRC associate professor during the sixth year in rank. NTRC associate professors are eligible to apply for promotion to NTRC professor after completing a minimum of five years in rank. On rare occasions, exceptional candidates may warrant early promotion consideration.

Promotions for NTRC faculty require submission of a dossier. The dossier will include a current curriculum vita; evidence of effective teaching/research/clinical practice from a variety of sources; evidence of service at the department, college/school, University, and/or professional levels; a statement of professional activities; and documentation of other relevant activities. Some departments may require that external letters evaluating the candidate's professional performance or research be included in the dossier. It is expected that the documentation of outcome measures and student learning will generate substantial data for evaluation of teaching/clinical competency.

The evaluation committee reviewing NTRC faculty cases for promotion will base its recommendation on the contents of the dossier as well as: job descriptions as stated in appointment letters; department and college/school criteria for promotion as approved by the dean's office; annual departmental NTRC committee evaluations; and the annual chair/dean evaluations.

NTRC faculty members should indicate their intent to seek promotion to the next higher rank during their discussion with their chair/dean at the end of the academic year prior to the expected promotion application. The dossier for promotion will be forwarded to the department chair by October 1 in the year of application. At this point, the process follows the stages laid out in Chapter 2, Section VIII of the *Faculty Handbook*. The evaluation process includes reviews by the departmental NTRC evaluation committee, the chair, a college/school NTRC evaluation committee, and the dean. The permissible recommendations at each stage are to grant promotion or deny promotion. The candidate for promotion may terminate the review process at any stage by requesting that his or her dossier be withdrawn from consideration. The dean's recommendation will normally be received by the Provost by February 1. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, together with persons designated by him or her, reviews each dossier and recommendations from the committee(s), chair, and dean and makes the ultimate decision on promotion. The decision of the Provost will generally be forwarded to the candidate between March 15 and April 15; however, failure to meet this deadline by the Provost will not result in an automatic promotion for the candidate.

A. Promotion to NTRC associate professor will be based on evidence of effective activity in the areas of teaching/research/clinical practice and departmental, college, University, and/or professional service. Candidates applying for promotion to NTRC associate professor shall include strong evidence of professional development in teaching/research/clinical practice.

B. Promotion to NTRC professor requires compelling evidence of significant contribution to the department, to the college, to the University, and to the teaching/research/clinical aspects of one's field. NTRC professors are also expected to contribute to the understanding and practice of teaching, research, or clinical service by disseminating their contributions in national and regional conference presentations and/or publications. Documentation of high-quality service is expected.

Further information on methods for documenting the quality of research, teaching, and service required for promotion to each rank is laid out in Chapter 2, Section III of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Candidates for promotion who are successful will receive a notification from the dean of continued reappointment at the higher rank by May 15. Candidates for promotion who are unsuccessful will meet with their chair/dean to discuss continuation of employment at the existing rank for the following academic year. Notice of reappointment at the current rank will be given in writing no later than May 15.

Candidates whose promotion applications are not successful may, if re-appointed, apply again for promotion in future years. These candidates should be provided with clear guidance regarding the professional development steps needed to reach promotion in the future.

## **X. Support**

A. *Operating Support.* NTRC faculty will be provided with access to office and/or laboratory space and computer equipment, and to the same support for teaching/research/clinical and service roles as tenure-track faculty (e.g., technology support and teaching-related workshops).

NTRC faculty are eligible for department and college travel and professional development funds as available and approved by the chair and dean.

B. *Teaching and Curricular Proposals.* NTRC faculty are eligible to apply for internal curricular development support. NTRC faculty may, and are encouraged to, submit proposals for internal and external grants related to their appointment as approved by their chair and dean.

C. *Salary Enhancements for Promotion.* Unless otherwise modified by practice, NTRC assistant professors promoted to NTRC associate professors and NTRC associate professors promoted to NTRC professors will receive a 10% enhancement to their base salary.

D. *Merit Raises.* The raise process for NTRC Faculty will follow the raise process for tenured/tenure-track faculty.

E. *Voting Privileges.* As indicated in Chapter 2 of the *Faculty Handbook*, membership on faculty committees that make recommendations concerning tenure is limited to persons holding tenured positions. On all other issues, NTRC faculty have full voting privileges.

## **XI. Benefits**

All NTRC faculty positions are eligible for faculty benefits as described by their employee classification on the UA benefits website, and as amended from time to time.

## **XII. Termination**

NTRC faculty positions are subject to policies and procedures of The University of Alabama, the college, and the department. The University reserves the right to terminate employment immediately if, in the judgment of the department chair, dean, and Provost, reasonable cause and justification for such action is documented. For policies and procedures regarding termination, see Chapter 2, Section 14, of the *Faculty Handbook*.