



McCausland College of Arts and Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

POLICY: Appointment, Review, and Promotion of FTE Professional-Track Faculty

DATE: August 16, 2025 (Revised)

I. POLICY

This policy provides the college-level framework for the appointment, annual review, and promotion of FTE professional-track faculty in the McCausland College of Arts and Sciences (MCAS). The professional-track designation is for faculty members who are engaged in research, instruction, service, and/or administration but who are not eligible for tenure. ***This policy does not apply to faculty in Research Grant or Time Limited positions.***

This policy applies to all MCAS units. This college policy is subordinate to related policies outlined in the [University of South Carolina Faculty Manual](#) [Approved June 19, 2024 and in the [University Policy and Procedures Manual](#)]. In cases of inconsistencies between this college policy and the university, state, or federal policies, the university, state, or federal policy rules are the final authorities.

II. POSITION APPROVAL AND APPOINTMENT

A. Position Approval

New or replacement FTE professional-track faculty positions, including the conversion of non-FTE positions to FTE positions, must have approval by the Dean's Office prior to initiating the hiring and search process.

Professional-track faculty positions include all positions defined and listed in [University Policy ACAF 1.16 Professional-Track Faculty](#).

B. Hiring and Search Process

The hiring process for FTE professional-track faculty follows the same policies and procedures as those for FTE tenure-track faculty, as outlined in [University Policy ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-track, and Professional-Track Faculty](#).

C. Credential Verification

All university faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction must meet the SACSCOC credential requirements for teaching at the appropriate level or have approved alternate credentials as outlined in [University Policy ACAF 1.20 Credential Verification for Instructors of Record](#).

D. Position Appointment

1. Appointment to a professional-track faculty position is made by the College. Each professional-track faculty member will receive a letter of appointment from the Dean specifying the beginning and end dates of the appointment, along with the unit assignment.

The appointment letter follows a specific format that conforms to College and University policies. Each letter defines the base teaching load, research and service expectations, start and end dates, and includes the statement that “This position may be renewable at the discretion of the Dean and is subject to satisfactory annual performance evaluations, programmatic need, and continued availability of funding.”

The base teaching load in the College is a 4:4 course load for Instructional and Teaching Faculty. With the approval of the College, units may assign instructional duties that qualify as course equivalencies, e.g., lab coordination, management of high enrollment multi-section courses, or direction of internship programs.

Research and service expectations may vary by unit or position. Units must address expectations for research and service in their unit-level promotion criteria and review standards.

2. Professional-track faculty may serve in administrative appointments or conduct activities that temporarily change their base appointment. The terms of any administrative appointment must be approved by the Dean’s Office and will be outlined in a separate letter of appointment
3. Appointment Length
 - a. Appointment lengths align with university and unit-level promotion criteria and review policies.
 - Faculty are hired on annual appointments for the first three years.
 - Upon a successful third-year review, faculty will be reappointed for a 3-year term.
 - Upon successful promotion, faculty may be reappointed for a 5-year term, subject to the unit head’s recommendation and the Dean’s approval.
 - b. All appointments are at the discretion of the Dean and, regardless of the appointment term, are subject to successful annual performance reviews, programmatic need and availability of funding.

III. REVIEW AND REAPPOINTMENT

A. Performance Review

Annual review of all professional-track faculty is required ([University Policy ACAF 1.16 Professional-Track Faculty](#)). The unit head is responsible for ensuring that all professional-track faculty members are reviewed annually in writing. The review is conducted as specified in unit policies. In cases where professional-track faculty hold joint appointments, the secondary unit must also be involved in the review per the [Faculty Manual](#). The annual review is submitted to the unit head. When there is a conflict of interest, the Associate Dean will serve in this role.

B. Reappointment

Reappointment is based on unit review, programmatic need, and availability of funds. Following a successful annual evaluation, unit reappointment requests are submitted to the appropriate Associate Dean.

For conversion to or renewal of a multi-year appointment, the unit head submits the following items to the Dean's Office for review and approval following the academic calendar set by the College and University:

1. One-page justification focusing on the professional-track faculty member's teaching, service, and/or research effectiveness as appropriate for the appointment.
2. The professional-track faculty member's curriculum vitae.
3. Faculty and student teaching evaluations of the professional-track faculty member since last reappointment, if applicable, and summarized in the [College's Teaching Table](#).
4. Evaluation and description of administrative duties, if applicable.

Once approved, the formal letter of reappointment will be sent directly to the professional-track faculty member by the Office of the Dean.

C. Non-Reappointment and Termination

Appointments of professional-track faculty shall be in writing and shall specify the beginning and ending date of appointment. Appointments shall terminate on the date specified. Professional-track faculty with multi-year contracts, must be given notice of non-reappointment at least 180 days before the end of the contract. Consult the [Faculty Manual](#) for information regarding the circumstances under which employment may be terminated before the end of the contract period.

D. Change of Status

Change of status to and from the tenure-track faculty is governed by the USC Columbia Faculty Manual and policy [ACAF 1.18 Change of Status Between Tenure Track and Professional Track](#).

IV. PROMOTION

A. Unit Criteria

Promotion is not earned simply by years in rank nor is it an automatic process. Promotion is granted to individuals in recognition of their achievements in teaching, research, and service depending on the terms of appointment.

Review and promotion criteria are developed by individual College units and are based on position duties as outlined in faculty offer letters (i.e., a balance of teaching, research, and service or administrative duties). All criteria must be approved by the College and University prior to implementation per University policies and the [Faculty Manual](#).

When new unit criteria are approved, professional-track faculty have a two-year period from the effective date of approval during which they may apply for promotion under either criterion. After these two years, all faculty must apply under the most recently approved criteria.

B. Promotion Eligibility

Each year, the Office of the Dean will notify all unit heads of the opportunity for professional-track faculty to submit their files for promotion. Written notification will include the promotion review calendar.

Promotion eligibility is governed by approved unit criteria, the [Faculty Manual](#), and [University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#).

C. Promotion File Submission

1. Each professional-track faculty member pursuing promotion must submit a promotion file containing the documents outlined below (see Appendix A) by the date indicated by the Office of the Dean's schedule for promotion of professional-track faculty.
 - a. In departments, schools, academic programs, and centers and institutes affiliated with a department or academic program, promotion files are submitted to the unit head.
 - b. In centers and institutes not affiliated with a school, department, or program, promotion files are submitted to the appropriate Associate Dean, who will serve in the unit head role for review and recommendation.
 - c. The promotion files must be assembled in accordance with the type and rank of position as outlined below. See Appendix A: Professional-Track Faculty Promotion File Requirements for a summary list of the documents required for each type of professional-track faculty position under review.

This section may be revised pending University policy.

- d. Outside Letters of Reference for Clinical and Research professional-track faculty. The unit head must solicit three external review or referee letters to add to the promotion file of clinical research faculty. Additional letters from other commentators are also welcome as additions to the file.

None of the reviewers may be individuals who trained the candidate, served as a co-author with the candidate on publications in the last four years, or was a co- principal investigator with the candidate in the last four years. The request for review letters by the unit head must include a request for a one- page bio-statement describing the reviewer and a statement of non-involvement between the reviewer and the candidate.

D. Promotion File Review

Promotion files will be reviewed according to unit-level criteria. If the unit-level criteria is pending University approval, the following procedures govern professional-track faculty promotion review.

1. Professional-Track Faculty Promotion Review Committee: The Unit Head will appoint a professional-track faculty promotion review committee to review the faculty member's promotion file and recommend a decision on the promotion request. This committee must include at least one professional-track faculty member above the present rank of the candidate(s) under review. If the unit does not have an appropriately ranked professional-track faculty member for this service, a suitable substitute from another unit may be asked to serve on the committee, in consultation with the unit's Associate Dean.

Standing unit tenure and promotion committees may be used in lieu of an independent review committee, provided that at least one professional-track faculty member above the present rank of the candidate(s) is added to the review and assessment of professional-track faculty member promotion files.

Joint appointments must include input from the secondary unit as specified in unit criteria.

2. The Unit Head or Review Committee Chair, as appropriate, will add the following materials to the file and then provide copies of the file to the promotion review committee (See Appendix A):
 - a. Instructional and Teaching Professors
 - Peer reviews of teaching
 - Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table
 - b. Clinical
 - Peer reviews of teaching (if applicable)
 - Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table
 - External review letters (if applicable)

- c. Research
 - Peer reviews of teaching (if applicable)
 - Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table
 - External review letters
3. The Unit Head or Review Committee Chair, as appropriate, will provide copies of the complete file, including the review committee recommendation, if applicable, to the department or program's voting faculty for review along with the [Unit Promotion Ballots](#). See also Section IV. Voting Rights below.

The unit recommendation for promotion will be based *on a simple majority vote* by unit faculty.
4. In the cases where promotion is recommended, the Unit Head will add the Vote [Summary Form](#), the faculty ballots, and the Chair or Director's Letter to the file and then submit the complete dossier file to the Dean.

E. Dean/Provost Decision

1. The Dean will review each professional-track faculty promotion file and render a recommendation to the Provost in writing.
2. The Provost will review the recommendation and notify the College of approval or disapproval.
3. The Dean will notify the faculty member of the final decision. If approved, the notification letter will include the effective date of the promotion in concurrence with the renewal of their appointment.

In the case that a professional-track faculty member is not recommended for promotion, the unit head will meet with the faculty member upon request to provide feedback regarding the decision.

F. Negative Decisions

Per the [Faculty Manual](#), upon written request of a candidate dissatisfied with any negative decision on promotion by the unit, the unit shall send that candidate's file through all appropriate channels for endorsement to the provost for appropriate action. Failure to recommend a candidate favorably for promotion is without prejudice with respect to future consideration. After the decision by the provost, candidates dissatisfied with the decision regarding promotion may submit an appeal to the University Faculty Appellate Panel.

V. VOTING RIGHTS

Voting rights of full-time professional-track faculty members at the university level of governance are specified in the [Faculty Manual](#). Voting rights for professional-track faculty at

the college/school level and in academic sub-units (e.g., departments) follow the university voting rights unless otherwise specified in the academic unit/sub-unit policies or bylaws. These rights govern action on matters at the level of the college/school or sub-unit.

VI. POLICY REVIEW AND DISSEMINATION

This policy will be distributed annually to all department chairs and directors of schools, academic programs, centers, and institutes. The policy will be reviewed and revised at least once every five years.

VII. RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES

[USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Professional-Track Faculty](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.16 Professional-Track Faculty](#)

[University Policy ACAF 1.18 Change of Status to and from Tenure-Track](#)

[Faculty](#) [University Policy ACAF 1.20 Credential Verification for Instructors of Record](#)



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APPENDIX A: Professional Track Promotion File Requirements

Promotion File for INSTRUCTIONAL AND TEACHING PROFESSOR FACULTY

Submitted by the faculty member:

- ✓ Current curriculum vitae
- ✓ Personal statement including summary of teaching activities
- ✓ Student evaluations
- ✓ Summary of service and administrative activities if applicable
- ✓ Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ✓ Other letters of support (optional)

Submitted by the committee chair or unit head:

- ✓ Vote [Summary Form](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ Peer reviews of teaching (supplied by the committee)
- ✓ Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table (supplied by the committee)
- ✓ [Unit Promotion Ballots](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ Chair or Director's letter (supplied by the unit head)

Promotion File for CLINICAL FACULTY

Submitted by the faculty member:

- ✓ Current curriculum vitae
- ✓ Personal statement including summary of clinical research and teaching activities
- ✓ Student evaluations (if applicable)
- ✓ Summary of service and administrative activities (if applicable)
- ✓ List of clinical research and teaching activities (publications, presentations, or other scholarly products produced during the present appointment as a clinical faculty member)
- ✓ List of submitted proposals if applicable (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during current appointment as funded, declined, or pending, as well as the role of the clinical faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, or key personnel)
- ✓ Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ✓ Other letters of support (optional)

Submitted by the committee chair or unit head:

- ✓ Vote [Summary Form](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ External review letters (if applicable)
- ✓ Peer reviews of teaching (if applicable) (supplied by the committee)
- ✓ Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table (supplied by the committee)
- ✓ [Unit Promotion Ballots](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ Chair or director's letter

Promotion File for RESEARCH FACULTY (FTE Only, No RGP)**Submitted by the faculty member:**

- ✓ Current curriculum vitae
- ✓ Personal statement including summary of research activities
- ✓ Student evaluations (if applicable)
- ✓ Summary of service and administrative activities (if applicable)
- ✓ List of research activities (publications, exhibits, performances, or other scholarly products produced during current appointment)
- ✓ List of submitted proposals (indicate the outcome of each proposal submitted during current appointment as funded, declined, or pending, as well as the role of the research faculty member in each proposal as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, or key personnel)
- ✓ Supporting materials (documents or artifacts demonstrating recognition of the faculty member during the present appointment, including special citations, awards, or other evidence indicating success)
- ✓ Other letters of support (optional)

Submitted by the committee chair or unit head:

- ✓ Vote [Summary Form](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ Peer review of teaching (if applicable) (supplied by the committee)
- ✓ Teaching summary with College's Teaching Table (if applicable, supplied by the committee)
- ✓ External review letters (requested by and submitted to the unit head)
- ✓ [Unit Promotion Ballots](#) (use College Template)
- ✓ Chair or director's letter