

### **UCF-3.0175 Promotion of Research and Clinical Faculty**

(1) **Policy.** The University of Central Florida (UCF) adheres to the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding the promotion procedures of faculty. There shall be sufficient disciplinary flexibility in interpretation of the standards for promotion so that individuals may have a reasonable expectation of fulfilling the requirements.

(2) **Eligibility.** Assistant professors, associate professors, and professors with the prefix of research or clinical (collectively, “research/clinical faculty”) are non-tenure-earning faculty appointments. To be eligible for promotion, faculty must hold a full-time, non-visiting, non-adjunct appointment at the time of application.

- (a) Research assistant professors and clinical assistant professors are eligible to apply for promotion to research associate or clinical associate professor following their 5th year of full-time service—that is, the beginning of their 6<sup>th</sup> year of full-time service at the research assistant or clinical assistant rank.
- (b) Research associate professors and clinical associate professors are eligible to apply for promotion to research or clinical professor following their 5th year of full-time service—that is, the beginning of their 6<sup>th</sup> year of full-time service at the research associate or clinical associate rank.
- (c) Faculty funded by contracts or grants or other soft money sources are eligible for promotion in rank/title like all other faculty. However, any compensation that may accompany promotion must be permitted by the terms of the grant or contract, the rules of the funding agency, and/or if adequate funds are available.
- (d) Service Credit. Prior years of service in previous employment or as time served in a visiting faculty title, but not an adjunct title, at UCF may count as years of credit toward promotion eligibility if credit is appropriately established. For faculty hired prior to and including August 8, 2026, credit for service toward promotion must be established through documented justification and approval from the chair/director/unit leader (“Chair”), dean, and provost or provost’s delegate. For faculty hired after August 8, 2026, credit for service toward promotion must be established at the time of hire in the written offer letter. Even if service credit is established, a minimum of three years of full-time service in a non-visiting, non-adjunct faculty appointment at current rank must be completed at UCF prior to applying for promotion. Service credit, if established, may only be applied once per faculty member. If service credit is not established, Sections 2. (a) or 2. (b) shall constitute the minimum time requirements for promotion eligibility.
- (e) Upon written approval from the department chair or school director, dean, and provost or designee, research or clinical faculty members may apply for promotion prior to their minimally eligible year. Applying for promotion early may only be done once per rank per faculty member. The final decision communicated by the provost regarding promotion status is inconsequential to employment at UCF, but faculty who do not achieve promotion are not permitted to reapply in the next consecutive promotion cycle.

### **(3) Research and Clinical Faculty Promotion Criteria.**

- (a) Expectations for the rank of associate professor. Promotion from research/clinical assistant professor to research/clinical associate professor calls for demonstration of substantial professional accomplishments beyond the doctoral or terminal degree level of the specific discipline. The amount of teaching, research or scholarly/creative activity, clinical expertise, and service shall be appropriate to the candidate’s home unit and assigned duties.

- (b) Expectations for the rank of professor. The rank of research or clinical professor reflects not only an individual's contributions within the institution, but also denotes a status and level of significant achievement among one's disciplinary peers on a national or international level. Substantial contributions of a continuing nature in each of the assigned areas beyond that expected of an associate professor are necessary components for the achievement of the rank of professor.
- (c) Department/School/Unit ("Department") criteria. Departments may supplement any college criteria with departmental-specific requirements. Department criteria shall be reviewed and voted upon by the full-time assistant professors, associate professors, and professors in the Department, the department chair, school director, or unit head ("Chair"), and approved by the dean, and the provost or designee.
- (d) College criteria. Colleges may supplement the university criteria outlined in this document with college-specific requirements. College criteria must be reviewed and voted upon by a majority of the full-time associate professors and professors in the college, and approved by the dean, and the provost or designee.

**(4) Research and Clinical Faculty Promotion Overview.**

- (a) Research or clinical assistant or associate professors are not required to apply for promotion.
- (b) Research or clinical assistant or associate professors who apply for and do not achieve promotion are not permitted to reapply in the next consecutive promotion cycle.

**(5) Dossier Instructions.** Eligible Research/Clinical Faculty who decide to pursue promotion must submit a completed online dossier for the period under consideration in the promotion system. This process will be initiated by the faculty member in consultation with the Chair. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their dossier is accurate, complete, and meets established deadlines for submission. Verification of publications and external funding shall be provided by the faculty candidate and signed off on by the Chair. The candidate's dossier shall include the supporting materials listed and described.

- (a) Dossier additions may be made by the candidate at any time prior to the recommendation step of the provost or the provost's designee.
- (b) Candidates may withdraw the dossier at any time prior to the provost's final action on the dossier by requesting this action in writing to the administrative level where the dossier resides at the time of the request.

**(6) Committee Procedures Applicable to All Promotion Committees.** The evaluation format for recommendations completed by the department/school/unit ("Department") committee, department chair, school director, or unit head ("Chair"), college committee, dean, and university committee will be provided. Candidates will be evaluated successively by the Department committee, the Chair, the college committee, the dean of the college (or equivalent), and, if applicable, the university promotion committee, the provost or the provost's designee, and the president. Materials added or alterations made to the dossier by anyone other than the candidate shall be initialed, dated, and shared with the candidate, who must be given five calendar days from time of receipt to respond to the entry before the dossier moves forward. The dean of the college will initiate recommendations for promotion of Chairs, assistant deans, and persons occupying similar positions.

- (a) All committee members will be professional in their decision-making and will make their review based on consideration of the facts and supportive evidence contained in the candidate's dossier. Committee discussions and the materials reviewed must remain confidential and therefore not discussed or shared by committee members outside of the committee meeting(s). The use of recording devices is prohibited during committee

meetings and deliberations. Administrative support may be provided to the committee for the purpose of conducting a secret ballot vote.

- (b) Committees must include a minimum of three (3) qualified faculty members. In cases when there are fewer than three (3) eligible faculty available at the rank required from within the department/school/unit or college, appropriate faculty member(s) from outside the department/school/unit or college may be identified to serve. The administrator responsible for identifying committee members to serve should not be involved in the review process (i.e., assistant/associate dean or similar role). Once the committee is determined, the same committee members must serve on that promotion committee for all candidates seeking promotion for that cycle in that department/school/unit or college.
- (c) A quorum shall consist of the attendance of all committee members, when practicable, but not less than the majority of the committee members or fewer than three persons. Where appropriate, and only in special cases (i.e. professional development program appointment, sabbatical, medical leave, or similar), an alternate member may be identified to serve at the college committee level. The administrator responsible for identifying committee members to serve should not be involved in the review process (i.e., assistant/associate dean or similar role).
- (d) A written evaluation and recommendation of the candidate by the appropriate faculty shall be completed for each faculty member reviewed. Each committee member shall vote on each case considered, with the exception of those determined to have a conflict of interest or personal factors that may lead to lack of objectivity, and the result shall be recorded. A committee member shall be present to vote on the candidate being evaluated and may only vote on dossiers they have personally reviewed. The vote shall occur after committee discussion. Committee recommendations for promotion must be complete, concise, and include explanations for the recommendation based on evidence contained or explained in the candidate's dossier. Rationales for all votes, particularly for split votes, shall be provided along with the recommendation by the committee.
- (e) Committee chairs shall be a member of the committee elected by majority vote of its members and shall call the committee into session to transact such business as required. Committee chairs are responsible for providing clear rationales for recommendations made by the committees. Abstentions are not permitted.
- (f) Conflicts of Interest. Faculty serving on promotion committees at any level shall not render decisions or participate in review or discussion on any candidate where a conflict of interest exists. A conflict of interest is defined as a divergence between an individual's private interests and their employment obligations to the university such that an independent observer may reasonably question whether the individual's actions or decisions are partially or wholly influenced or determined by considerations other than the best interest of the university. Examples include but are not limited to when the committee member and the candidate are relatives (see University Policy 3-008.2 for the definition of relative); when the committee member has an outside financial interest in or with the candidate; when the committee member has a substantial publication record with the candidate such that the unique contributions of the candidate cannot be determined.
- (g) Notification of a conflict of interest. A faculty member serving on a promotion committee at any level should identify a conflict of interest with regard to a particular candidate prior to the review of the candidate's dossier. Where the faculty member knows there is a conflict of interest with the candidate, it is improper for the faculty member to review the candidate's dossier. There may be circumstances in which a

faculty member serving on a promotion committee may not know in advance of a conflict of interest. In such instances, as soon as the conflict of interest is identified, the faculty member must identify the conflict and remove themselves from the process and all discussions and votes pertaining to that candidate and may not further review the candidate's dossier.

- (h) Remote meeting attendance may be utilized at the discretion of the committee chair as long as all members have equitable access to the meetings and a process to ensure the secret ballot polling of members has been established. The chair of the committee shall be delegated authority to record the vote and submit the record of attendance for the members.
- (i) For faculty located in research centers or institutes within the Office of Research, here and below, "college" is taken to be the Office of Research, "department" is to be the research center, "dean" is to be the Vice President of Research, and "Chair" is to be the center director.

**(7) External review.** In consultation with the Chair, each faculty member being considered for promotion shall prepare materials to be forwarded to external reviewers by the Chair. These materials will include department or school criteria, college criteria, this university regulation, a current curriculum vitae, and other research documentation as deemed appropriate by the department or school.

- (a) External reviewers must hold the rank at or above the rank being sought by the candidate. Typically, external reviewers will hold the rank of professor.
- (b) External reviewers primarily provide comments about the quality and impact of the candidate's record of research and creative activity within their common discipline or area of study. The preponderance of the external letters should come from individuals holding faculty appointments at very high research activity universities, as designated by the Carnegie Foundation.
- (c) While external review letters are mandatory for research assistant or associate professors seeking promotion, external review letters are optional for clinical assistant or associate professors seeking promotion. The decision to obtain external review letters for clinical faculty promotions shall be made by the Chair, in consultation with the department or school promotion committee and the dean. The decision should be based upon the candidate's assigned workload in research and creative activity. Consequently, this section on external review may not apply to clinical assistant or associate professors seeking promotion who are not required to obtain external review letters.
- (d) External letters of evaluation must be available to the candidate for review unless the candidate waives their right to view them. Candidates must complete and provide their Chair documentation of their waiver before external letters are solicited. External reviewers must be notified in the solicitation letter whether the candidate chose to waive their right to review the letter.
- (e) A complete dossier for promotion will contain at least four independent external review letters. The process of selecting external reviewers and soliciting their evaluation is as follows:
  1. The faculty candidate being considered for promotion will provide a list of external reviewers (minimum of four). The Chair, in consultation with the department or school promotion committee, will also provide a list of external reviewers (minimum of four). The candidate will rank reviewers from the department's or school's list. The Chair, in consultation with the department or school promotion committee, will rank reviewers from the candidate's list.

2. The goal is to obtain a total number of external reviews (at least four), where half originate from the faculty candidate's list and the other half originate from the Chair / promotion committee's list.
  3. Reviewers should not be selected where a potential conflict of interest exists. Examples of conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, relatives of the candidate, external reviewers having served as the candidate's dissertation advisor, post-doctoral mentor, or close collaborative colleague. All potential reviewers with whom there is no conflict of interest should be ranked to compensate for potential reviewers who decline or fail to provide a letter of evaluation.
  4. All letters that are received must be included in the dossier.
- (f) Only the Chair shall contact the selected reviewers to ascertain their willingness to review the candidate's materials for promotion. Should a potential reviewer agree to undertake the review, a standard letter shall be used by the Chair for the purpose of providing review materials to the external reviewer. Should any decline, the Chair shall contact the next ranked reviewer. If the declining reviewer is from the candidate's list, then the next reviewer on that list would be contacted. If the declining reviewer is from the department's or school's list, then the next reviewer on that list would be contacted. If at any time too many potential reviewers on either list have declined so that there will not be enough external letters for the candidate's application, the process outlined above starts over to identify new reviewers to add to the corresponding list.
- (g) Once the promotion review process has started, the candidate is not to have any unnecessary contact with the external reviewers until the requested review letter is received by the university.

**(8) Department promotion committee procedures.**

- (a) A department promotion committee shall be established within each department/school/unit to function as an advisory group to the Chair. The committee shall review the promotion dossiers of candidates under consideration and provide promotion recommendations to the Chair.
- (b) Faculty members serving on the college or university research and clinical promotion committees, the Chair, and the evaluating dean may not serve on the Department research and clinical promotion committee, attend meetings, participate in committee discussions related to candidates, or vote on candidate dossiers.
- (c) When possible, all full-time associate professors and professors within the Department shall make recommendations regarding promotion to research or clinical associate professor. All full-time professors in the unit shall make recommendations regarding promotion to research or clinical professor.
- (d) The Department promotion committee chair shall forward the record of attendance, the record of the vote, the committee's written evaluation and recommendation, and the promotion dossier to the Chair.
- (e) Within five calendar days, the faculty candidate shall be notified of the committee's evaluation and recommendation.
- (f) Candidates may review and, if desired, provide written comments related to the committee's evaluation and recommendation within five calendar days after receipt of the notice of the committee's report. Any response will become part of the candidate's dossier.

**(9) Department Chair/School Director/Unit Head (“Chair”) Review.**

- (a) Once the review period for candidate’s optional response has passed, the Chair reviews the dossier to recommend in favor or against promotion and forwards the recommendation and comments to the candidate for review and potential comment.
- (b) Candidates may review and, if desired, provide a response to the Chair’s evaluation and recommendation within five (5) calendar days after receipt of notice of the evaluation and recommendation. Any response will become part of the candidate’s dossier.
- (c) Once the review period for candidate’s optional response to the Chair’s recommendation has passed, the dossier is forwarded to the college research and clinical promotion committee for review and recommendation.

**(10) College promotion committee procedures.**

- (a) A college promotion committee consisting of one full-time faculty member at the rank of professor, when possible, from each Department shall be established within each college to function as an advisory group to the dean. The college promotion committee shall review the promotion dossiers of faculty candidates under consideration and provide promotion recommendations to the dean or equivalent VP.
- (b) Faculty members serving on the department or university promotion committees, department chairs or unit heads, ranked deans (e.g. assistant deans and associate deans), and the dean shall not serve on the college promotion committee or participate in committee discussions related to candidates.
- (c) Each department/school/unit may elect a representative to the college promotion committee. A college with fewer than three departments/schools/units shall elect a minimum of three eligible faculty to serve as the college promotion committee. If no professor is available in a department/school/unit, then an associate professor may be elected. A representative who is an associate professor shall not vote on candidates seeking promotion to professor.
- (d) The committee chair shall forward a copy of the record of attendance, the committee’s written evaluation and recommendation, and the promotion dossier to the dean.
- (e) Within five calendar days, the faculty candidate shall be notified of the committee’s evaluation and recommendation. Evaluated candidates choosing to provide comments on the committee’s evaluation and recommendation may do so in writing within five calendar days after receipt of notice of the committee’s decision, and this response shall become part of the candidate’s dossier.
- (f) Candidates may review and, if desired, provide a response to the college promotion committee evaluation and recommendation within five calendar days of receiving the college promotion committee evaluation and recommendation. Any response will become part of the candidate’s dossier.

**(11) Dean Review.**

- (a) Once the review period for candidate’s optional response has passed, the college dean reviews the dossier to recommend in favor or against promotion and forwards the recommendations and comments to the candidate for review and potential comment.
- (b) Candidates may review and, if desired, provide a response to the college dean’s evaluation and recommendation within five calendar days after receipt of notice of the college dean’s evaluation and recommendation. Any response will become part of the candidate’s promotion dossier.

- (c) Once the review period for candidate's optional response to the college dean's recommendation has passed, the dossier is forwarded to the provost or the provost's designee for review and recommendation.

**(12) University promotion committee procedures.**

- (a) The university promotion committee, a reporting committee of the Faculty Senate, shall consist of one faculty member at the rank of professor from each college and function as an advisory group to the provost. The university promotion committee shall review the promotion dossiers of faculty candidates under consideration and provide promotion recommendations to the provost or provost's designee.
- (b) Faculty members serving on a department or college promotion committee, Chairs with faculty under consideration, ranked deans (e.g. assistant deans and associate deans) and deans with faculty under consideration may not serve on the university promotion committee, participate in committee discussions related to candidates, or vote on candidate files. Also exempted from service are faculty who are candidates for promotion. If a college lacks a professor, the college will not be represented on the university promotion committee.
- (c) One faculty representative shall be elected to the university promotion committee by eligible faculty from each college. Vacancies are filled during the term in which they occur from the area of the vacating member for the remainder of that person's term. University promotion committee members must not participate in the voting on a candidate if there is a conflict of interest or if personal factors might impair their objectivity regarding an individual applicant.
- (d) The university promotion committee shall review the evaluation materials of faculty under consideration; except that those dossiers that have received unanimously positive votes from all prior levels of review shall move directly to the provost for review.
- (e) The provost may request review of a dossier by the university promotion committee prior to the Provost making a final recommendation. The committee shall, upon request of the provost, review the dossier of faculty under consideration for promotion.
- (f) The committee chair shall forward a copy of the record of attendance, the committee's written evaluation and recommendation, and the promotion dossier to the provost or designee.
- (g) Within five calendar days, the faculty candidate shall be notified of the committee's evaluation and recommendation. Evaluated candidates choosing to provide comments on the committee's evaluation and recommendation may do so in writing within five calendar days after receipt of notice of the committee's report, and this response shall become part of the candidate's application.

**(13) Provost Review.** The provost will review the candidate's dossier and make their recommendations regarding the application for promotion. Applications of all candidates whose applications are not withdrawn in writing before reaching the stage of final review will be reviewed by the provost and president.

**(14) Promotion decision and notification.** Final decisions shall be made by the president and rendered in writing. Promotions become effective at the beginning of the succeeding academic year.

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