Auburn University

Policy on Kinds of Faculty Appointment

Members of the faculty of Auburn University are appointed to temporary, probationary, tenured, or continuing positions. Joint-appointments, where half the appointment is a faculty appointment, fall under one of these classifications.

The professorial faculty includes the ranks of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor, and their equivalents of librarian and archivist I, II, III, and IV. The equivalent ranks for librarians and archivists apply here and throughout this document. Except for the ranks of instructor, librarian I, and archivist I, these are tenure track positions.

Other non-tenure track faculty includes such positions as visiting faculty, adjunct faculty, resident, intern, extension specialist, agent, program associate, clinical titles, research titles, and lecturer titles.

Academic administrators above the level of department head/chair hold temporary or continuing appointments and may also hold faculty rank. The department chair or head must hold faculty rank and should serve for a stated term but without prejudice to reelection or to appointment by procedures that involve appropriate faculty consultation.

A temporary appointment is granted to a faculty member whose service is required for a specific period of time (usually one academic year or less) identified on the appointment form and to all instructors and equivalent appointments. Except as noted in the next paragraph, a temporary faculty member is not eligible for the insurance, medical benefits, annual leave, sick leave, and other fringe benefits available to other faculty members unless the appointment is a full-time appointment and the employment period is for at least a full year (nine or 12 months as appropriate to the appointment). However, a temporary faculty member working at least half time and retained for more than one year must be enrolled in the Teacher's Retirement System. All part-time faculty members, regardless of rank, are temporary appointments. Adjunct appointments (whereby a regular faculty member serves in two departments) and affiliate appointments (whereby an individual external to the University provides specific service to the University) are also temporary appointments and are appointments without pay. Academic ranks apply to these appointments.

Appointment to the rank of instructor should be based on ability or potential in research/creative work and teaching and/or outreach. The candidate should have a master's degree or equivalent professional experience.

Appointments to the rank of instructor are temporary appointments. An individual holding the rank of instructor must demonstrate competence in his or her work assignments as a condition for reappointment. An instructor who has served on a full-time temporary appointment may be considered on the basis of highly meritorious performance and strong evidence of professional development for promotion to the rank of assistant professor.

Temporary and part-time faculty shall be provided the office space, material supplies, support services, and equipment needed to fulfill their assigned responsibilities. General departmental faculty meetings shall include the temporary and part-time faculty. Each department head/chair shall meet with temporary and part-time faculty as a group at least once a year to discuss their special concerns. Temporary and part-
time faculty shall have appropriate time to prepare courses, though the specific time may vary depending on circumstances. In determining mutually agreed-upon academic responsibilities for temporary and part-time faculty, a three-credit-hour semester course should be considered equivalent to ten hours of other academic responsibilities. When funds are available for merit raises, temporary and part-time faculty should not be excluded from individual consideration for salary improvement.

Non-tenure track faculty who have been on full-time appointments and enrolled in the University's health insurance program, but are forced into part-time appointments because of departmental policies, are eligible to continue their health insurance coverage in the University's group plan. The following conditions apply: the non-tenure track faculty member 1) must have worked full time for three years and carried the University's health insurance during the most recent year of eligibility, and 2) must be on at least a 50% appointment and the appointment must be continuous.

A continuing appointment is assigned to a non-tenure track faculty member who is recommended for continuing appointment. Such an appointment is non-tenurable; however, the employee is eligible for the standard benefit programs of the University.

A probationary appointment is granted to a faculty member who, because of scholarly or professional achievement, has demonstrated the potential to earn tenure. An individual holding the terminal degree from Auburn University normally is not eligible for permanent appointment and thus will not be placed on probationary appointment except in rare circumstances. An exception might occur if the individual has held faculty rank at another university or college, had a responsible position in industry or professional practice, is a qualified applicant in a field where there are national shortages, has an outstanding national reputation, or is certified in a discipline by a nationally recognized specialty board or college. Exceptions may also be allowed if such appointments would permit a department or unit to meet its affirmative action/equal opportunity obligations.

A tenured appointment is granted to a faculty member who has completed an appropriate probationary period and who, following recommendation and review in accordance with University policy and approval by the President, has been awarded tenure.

The President may also offer tenure to a faculty member or to an academic administrator holding faculty rank at the time of initial appointment provided that 1) the appointment is made at the rank of associate professor or professor, and 2) the tenure has been approved through the usual tenure review process. In the case of initial appointments involving tenure, the time of the tenure review may be altered.