

Commission on Faculty Affairs

RESOLUTION TO UPDATE COLLEGIATE FACULTY SERIES IN THE FACULTY HANDBOOK CFA 2026-27C

Resolution Proposal Form Sent to University Council Cabinet	September 8, 2025
First Reading by Commission	Date <u>September 4, 2026</u>
Approval by Commission	Date
First Reading by Senate	Date <u>September 11, 2026</u>
Approval by Senate	Date
Faculty Senate Comment	Date
Staff Senate Comment	Date
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	Date
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Comment	Date
Undergraduate Student Senate Comment	Date
First Reading, University Council	Date
Approved, University Council	Date
Approved, President	Date
Approved, Board of Visitors	Date
Effective Date	Upon Approval or Date

WHEREAS, the *Faculty Handbook* specifies all policies related to the employment of faculty; and

WHEREAS, the description of the Collegiate Faculty series has not been updated since the series was created; and

WHEREAS, there are inconsistencies across the university in terms of workloads, duties performed by, and expectations of those in the series; and

WHEREAS, specifying greater detail about the expectations for the Collegiate Faculty series will reduce these inconsistencies and ensure faculty in the series have clear, consistent, and fair expectations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the *Faculty Handbook*, sections 5.0, be revised to include an overall description of the various non-tenure track faculty types, including collegiate faculty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the *Faculty Handbook*, sections 5.1 include the statement on academic freedom that is included in chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that section 5.1.5 of the *Faculty Handbook* be revised to provide clearer and more consistently structured descriptions of each rank of the collegiate faculty series; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that descriptions of general expectations promotion of collegiate faculty in teaching, research, and service be added to the *Faculty Handbook* as section 5.1.5.1.

CHAPTER FIVE: NON-TENURE-TRACK INSTRUCTIONAL TEACHING & RESEARCH FACULTY

5.0 Employment Policies for Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Teaching & Research Faculty

Non-tenure-track instructional faculty play a vital role in advancing the university's academic programs, supporting student success, and contributing specialized expertise that enhances the quality and breadth of the curriculum. These faculty appointments provide academic units with the flexibility to meet programmatic needs, respond to enrollment demands, incorporate professional and clinical experience into the curriculum, and sustain high-quality instruction across undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.

Non-tenure-track instructional faculty include individuals appointed to the visiting, adjunct, practice, clinical, collegiate, and instructor series. Each series serves a distinct purpose within the academic mission of the university and includes defined expectations for appointment, evaluation, and reappointment or promotion. These appointments are made in accordance with university policy and reflect the specific needs of departments, schools, and colleges, centers, or institutes or other academic units. As movement between faculty categories is rare, it is important to assure that the faculty member is initially appointed into the appropriate category as described below.

- **Visiting Faculty.** Visiting faculty may contribute to instruction, research, or engagement activities as appropriate to the appointment. These appointments address temporary needs by bringing in individuals for a limited period of time to enrich programs, offer unique disciplinary perspectives, and/or foster scholarly exchange. foster scholarly exchange.
- **Adjunct Faculty.** Adjunct faculty support curricular offerings that supplement—but do not replace—the instructional responsibilities of full-time faculty. These are part-time appointments meeting identifiable instructional or programmatic needs that cannot be addressed by full-time faculty. Adjunct faculty may be practitioners, scholars, or professionals who contribute their expertise to specific courses or academic initiatives.
- **Faculty of Practice.** The primary responsibilities of faculty of practice are instructional or programmatic, bringing current professional knowledge, applied skills, and industry or organizational perspectives to the curriculum. These appointments may include limited service responsibilities or scholarly activity. Faculty of practice are professionals with significant accomplishments and expertise gained through practice in fields aligned with university programs, and connect theoretical learning to professional application.
- **Clinical Faculty.** The primary responsibilities of clinical faculty include direct instruction, clinical supervision, patient care, and the integration of clinical practice

with academic learning. These appointments may include service, outreach, or scholarship aligned with the faculty member's clinical assignment. Clinical faculty ensure that students receive training grounded in current standards of practice.

- **Collegiate Faculty.** The primary responsibilities of collegiate faculty are teaching and curricular leadership. These appointments also contribute to the tripartite mission of the university through disciplinary or pedagogical scholarship. These appointments may have limited service or outreach responsibilities. Collegiate faculty support sustained instructional quality and advance pedagogical innovation and scholarship appropriate to their field.
- **Instructor.** The primary responsibility of instructors is teaching, supporting programmatic needs through course delivery, instructional development, and student support. These appointments may have limited service or outreach responsibilities. Instructors have disciplinary expertise, and contribute significantly to the instructional mission of the university.
- _____

Together, these non-tenure-track instructional faculty series strengthen Virginia Tech's capacity to deliver a high-quality, responsive, and forward-looking academic experience. Their contributions are essential to the success of students, the advancement of academic programs, and the fulfillment of the university's land-grant mission.

5.0.1 General Policies

The following policies address specific aspects of non-tenure-track instructional faculty appointments. In a few cases, faculty members with an academic rank (assistant, associate, or professor) hold non-tenure-track appointments because of unusual job responsibilities and historical lack of appropriate alternative ranks. Policies in this section also apply to those individuals.

Authority for use of non-tenure-track positions. Academic departments and schools retain the authority and responsibility to decide whether to employ non-tenure-track faculty members to deliver aspects of their instructional program. An appropriate standing departmental or school committee, such as a promotion and tenure or executive/personnel committee, establishes the policies and practices related to the use of non-tenure-track ranks. The department head, chair, or school director and dean review and approve the policies and practices.

Graduate or Professional Degree Required. Ordinarily a graduate or professional degree is required for appointment to one of these ranks. Appointments are made using established university search procedures. (See chapter two of this handbook "Faculty Search Processes" and the [Human Resources Faculty Recruiting Guidelines](#).)

Teaching Qualifications. Non-tenure-track faculty must present credentials appropriate to the level of the course they are teaching. It is the responsibility of the department or school to verify documentation of appropriate teaching credentials prior to the start of the course. (For more information, consult [Faculty Qualifications for Teaching](#)). Any appointment without the relevant terminal degree in the field must be certified by the department or school as appropriately credentialed for the faculty member's particular instructional assignment in accordance with guidelines for regional accreditation and university policy and procedures.

Not Eligible for Tenure. Tenure cannot be awarded to individuals with non-tenure-track appointments.

Wage Employees. Non-tenure-track faculty can be employed as wage employees using the university's P-14 form found at [Adjunct Faculty \(P-14\)](#) . The titles in these series may be used for wage faculty appointments if appropriate for the assignment and credentials of the individuals.

Full or part-time employment. The non-tenure-track faculty tracks provide for short- or long-term, full or part-time appointments for individuals who bring specialized expertise to the instructional programs of the university, thereby complementing the qualifications and contributions of tenure-track faculty.

Participation in Graduate Committees. Non-tenure-track instructional faculty members with appropriate credentials may serve on graduate advisory committees and interact with graduate or professional students and interns where relevant to their assignment and with approval of the departmental or school graduate program, department head, chair, or school director and graduate school. A terminal degree, active involvement in research, and approval by the department or school and the graduate school is required to chair a graduate committee. Instructors may not chair a graduate committee.

Eligibility to Serve as a Principal Investigator. Faculty members in a non-tenure-track rank may serve as a Principal Investigator for a sponsored project or contract with the approval of the department head, chair, school director, the dean, and the Office of Research and Innovation. A written request for authorization (PI Status Request) may be submitted by the department or school with the approval of the dean to the Office of Research and Innovation.

Participation in Departmental, School, University Service and Governance. Salaried non-tenure-track instructional faculty members are eligible to participate in departmental, school, college, and university committees as appropriate for their assignments. Non-tenure-track faculty members should have meaningful engagement in program planning at the departmental or school level, especially as it relates to aspects of the curriculum for which they bear teaching responsibility. Although non-tenure-track instructional faculty

members cannot be involved in reviewing cases of promotion and tenure for tenure-track or tenured faculty members, they may otherwise be voting members of the departmental or school faculty in accordance with the policy set by individual departmental or school governance.

Expectations Guidelines for Promotion. Faculty members should ~~consult~~ the department head, chair or school director for guidance on college and departmental or school “Expectations Guidelines for Promotion and/or Tenure.” Each department/school and college is required to maintain and make available on-line “Expectations Guidelines for Promotion and/or Tenure” that follow the university template and include departmental or school (and college as appropriate) procedures and expectations for reappointment, progress toward promotion, and the evaluation of promotion. Nothing in these guidelines, procedures, and expectations shall supersede or contradict the provisions of this Faculty Handbook. If a college adopts guidelines that establish a collegewide standard for promotion, with the dean’s approval, departments or schools may maintain a set of guidelines that interpret the college-wide standard within the context of the department and school’s disciplines and traditions. All guidelines will be approved by the faculty (through departmental, school - and/or college-level governance), the college-level committee and the dean, and the provost’s office. Revisions to these guidelines must be approved by the faculty, the college, and the provost’s office.

Academic Freedom. The university recognizes the need to protect the academic freedom of non-tenure track instructional faculty members as their responsibilities include instruction, direct support of the academic programs of the university, and other activities in which academic freedom is respected. In these functions, non-tenure track faculty members share many of the professional concerns of their tenured and tenure-track colleagues, including the need for the protection of academic freedom in these responsibilities.

5.1 Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty Series

...

5.1.5 Collegiate Faculty Series

Collegiate ~~professors-faculty~~ must have a major commitment to the instructional missions of the department or school. The involvement of collegiate ~~professors-faculty~~ can include classroom and online teaching, curricular updates, course transformations, and the adoption/ and integration of innovative and inclusive pedagogy. Working in collaboration with the department or school’s faculty, collegiate faculty may take a lead role in enhancing the curricula and promoting teaching excellence.

~~Individuals appointed to these ranks are expected to be successful and effective professionals in a given field. They must be effective teachers of the discipline and they are expected to be able to understand and evaluate the research that applies to their field and to teach it to students. Collegiate professor faculty members may conduct research on the scholarship of teaching and learning related to their field and/or on disciplinary topics in their field, and present their findings in professional venues, but there are no expectations for an extensive research program as is typical of tenure-track faculty appointments.~~

~~Collegiate professor faculty members are expected to remain active in their disciplines and professions in ways that contribute to their assignment—teaching, consulting, or outreach, serving in technical and professional societies and associations, and similar activities.~~

~~Collegiate professors are generally appointed to 3-, 5-, or 7-year contracts. Contractual details outlined in the Terms of Faculty Offer (TOFO) may be complemented with a statement of work negotiated between the faculty member and the department head, chair, or school director.~~

~~A record of significant scholarly and/or professional achievement is expected for appointment at the associate or professor level; initial appointments at such ranks require approval of the appropriate departmental or school committee and head, chair, or school director. Appointment to one of these ranks is for a specified number of years and is renewable without limit. Performance and promotion evaluations of collegiate professors are performed by department or school and college standing committees where faculty form the majority, such as a promotion and tenure committee or executive/personnel committee.~~

~~A collegiate professor in a regular position who receives notice of non-reappointment may request a review of the decision by the college dean. If the dean sustains the non-reappointment decision, the faculty member may request, through the dean, a further and independent review of the decision by the properly constituted college committee on promotion and tenure in accordance with appropriate procedures.~~

Promotion within these ranks may be pursued through procedures outlined in this section and following departmental/college expectations. Service at Time in these ranks is excluded from the pre-tenure probationary period if the faculty member is subsequently appointed to a tenure-track position.

Collegiate Assistant Professor: Persons appointed at this rank have a terminal graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline) and professional certification(s), if relevant. Experience and demonstrated competence in teaching are expected. Appointment to this rank is for three years and is renewable without limit.

Collegiate Associate Professor: In addition to the requirements for collegiate assistant professor, appointment to this rank denotes substantial professional achievement, and regional or national prominence. Persons appointed at the collegiate associate professor rank have a terminal graduate or professional degree in the discipline (or a related discipline) and professional certification(s), if relevant. Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant instructional experience and accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment. The appointment to this rank is for five years and is renewable without limit.

Collegiate Professor: In addition to the requirements for collegiate associate professor, appointment to this rank denotes continued distinguished professional achievement, and regional, national, or international prominence. ~~Collegiate professor is the capstone rank in the series. Appointment to this rank denotes distinguished professional achievement, and regional, national, or international prominence in the field.~~ Credentials for appointment or promotion to this rank must document a record of significant instructional experience and scholarly accomplishments relevant to the field and type of assignment.

~~External evaluation of such accomplishments and leadership in the field is expected at the time of appointment or promotion.~~ Appointment to this rank is for seven years and is renewable without limit.

5.1.5.1 General Expectations for Promotion

Collegiate faculty members should consult their department head, chair or school director for guidance on college, departmental or school “Expectations Guidelines for Promotion and/or Tenure”. For additional information, consult Promotion and Tenure.

In accordance with their assignments and as outlined in the Guidelines, Templates, and Cover pages for Collegiate Faculty, candidates for promotion will be evaluated in the following categories: teaching, scholarship, and service. While candidates are not expected to have equal levels of commitment or equal responsibilities in all these areas, scholarship is expected of all collegiate faculty members, though not to the level of a tenure-track faculty member.

Teaching (Includes advising/mentoring and curricular leadership). Teaching is the central responsibility of collegiate faculty. Both the quality and the quantity of a faculty member’s contributions should be considered in assessments of teaching effectiveness. Collegiate faculty are expected to employ evidence-based and innovative pedagogical practices and to integrate developments in their discipline into their instruction. Teaching loads are typically greater than those for tenure-track faculty but less than those for instructors. Teaching activities may include: classroom, online, hybrid, laboratory, studio, clinical, or field-based instruction; formal and informal advising or mentoring; and leadership in curricular initiatives. Contributions may also include the design or revision of courses and curricula, development of instructional materials and learning

technologies, program assessment, and participation in activities that promote teaching excellence within the department or school. Teaching loads are typically greater than those for tenure-track faculty but less than those for instructors.

Scholarship (Includes the scholarship of teaching and learning, disciplinary research, creative activity, and Extension-related scholarship). Collegiate faculty contribute to the university's scholarly mission through forms of scholarship appropriate to their disciplines. Collegiate faculty are not expected to maintain an extensive research program typical of tenure-track appointments; however, they are expected to demonstrate a sustained record of scholarly contributions appropriate to their field and rank and at a level consistent with departmental/college expectations. Scholarship may include research and dissemination related to the scholarship of teaching and learning; disciplinary or interdisciplinary research or creative activity; development or dissemination of innovative pedagogical methods; applied or practice-oriented scholarship; and Extension-related scholarship. Evaluation of scholarly achievement emphasizes the quality, significance, and impact of the work. Collegiate faculty are not expected to maintain an extensive research program typical of tenure-track appointments; however, they are expected to demonstrate a sustained record of scholarly contributions appropriate to their field and rank and at a level consistent with departmental/college expectations.

Service (Includes engagement, university service, professional service, outreach, and relevant Extension activities). Collegiate faculty are expected to contribute to the governance, development, and vitality of their departments, colleges, disciplines, and communities. Service may include participation in departmental, school, college, or university committees; contributions to student success initiatives; leadership or participation in professional organizations; and outreach or engagement efforts aligned with the land-grant mission. Service expectations are similar to ~~that~~ those of tenure-track professors and consistent with the department's, school's', or college's Expectations Guidelines for Promotion and/or Tenure. Service contributions are evaluated for their quality, effectiveness, and significance.

...

5.2 Initial Appointment

Non-tenure-track faculty positions are term appointments eligible for renewal based on quality of performance, continuing need for services in the unit, and available funding.

All initial non-tenure-track faculty appointments are usually for a period of one year, including appointments at the more senior ranks. Subsequent reappointments may be multi-year, as appropriate for the rank. Appointments may be regular, restricted, for either a calendar year (CY) or academic year (AY), and full or part-time depending on responsibilities and available funding.

Appointments may be regular, which are renewable term appointments with a presumption or consideration of reappointment.

Restricted appointments may be made for which there is no presumption or consideration of renewal. Restricted appointments are designated with start and end dates in the terms of faculty offer (TOFO).

Visiting and adjunct appointments are intended to be temporary in nature and are almost always restricted.

5.3 Reappointment

Non-tenure-track faculty members on restricted contracts whose appointments will be continued are issued a reappointment contract specifying the new ending date for their appointment. Reappointments typically occur on the anniversary of the hire date or are realigned to coincide with the academic year or other relevant appointment cycle.

The practice of issuing repeated one-year restricted contracts for an individual faculty member over many years is explicitly discouraged, as it can be exploitative over an extended time. Therefore, if a faculty member is to be reappointed into a restricted position when the faculty member has spent the preceding five years on restricted contracts, approval must be requested from the provost's office. The request should be supported by documentation demonstrating why the position cannot readily be converted to a regular appointment.

Reappointments for faculty members on regular contracts are usually effective July 1 or August 10, reflecting either calendar year or an academic year appointment. Notice of non-reappointment is in accordance with periods identified in chapter two of this handbook "Retirement, Resignation, and Non-Reappointment."

5.4 Annual Evaluation and Salary Adjustments

The Board of Visitors delegates the authority to the president or the president's designee for selected faculty appointments and compensation actions as outlined in the Amended Delegation of Authority for Selected Personnel Actions dated June 11, 2024.

The Board of Visitors annually approves a faculty compensation plan, including the authorization of an annual merit process guided by the university's Faculty Handbook and processes provided by the [Commonwealth](#). The faculty compensation plan provides information about the promotion and tenure process; the annual evaluation and salary adjustment process for teaching and research (T&R) faculty, administrative and professional (A/P) faculty, and research faculty; salary adjustments within the evaluation period, and the pay structure.

Annual Faculty Activity Report (FAR). All faculty are required to report annually on their research and scholarship, creative works, teaching, Extension, outreach, and service

activities, as applicable. Guidance on annual faculty reports is provided by department, school, college, or administrative unit, as appropriate. Submission of a faculty activity report (FAR) may be required for consideration for a merit adjustment.

Virginia Tech uses an electronic faculty activity data system to collect and manage information about research and scholarship, creative works, teaching, Extension, outreach, and service activities. This system supports the production of annual faculty activity reports, promotion and tenure dossiers, and CVs, as well as department, school, college, and university level reports. The system also enables deposit and claiming of scholarly works in the [VTechWorks](#) institutional repository and will feed public web profiles using [VT Experts](#). Training for faculty is available through [Virginia Tech's Professional Development Network](#) and for departments on request. Faculty members should consult with their department head, chair, school director, or supervisor on the use of electronic faculty activity reporting.

-Continuing faculty members must submit an annual faculty activity report in accordance with departmental or school and college procedures and timelines. Timely submission of the annual faculty activity report is required for consideration for a merit adjustment. Annual evaluation of performance by the department head, chair, school director, or supervisor (or appropriately charged committee) and feedback to the faculty member are required and should be consistent with university policies and practices for annual evaluation of faculty members.

5.5 Promotion Guidelines

Non-tenure-track faculty members are eligible for promotion in rank in accordance with any expectations described above by faculty series, and by the guidelines established by academic departments or schools and approved by an appropriate college-level committee and the dean. Such guidelines should outline the process and criteria for promotion in rank; they should be widely available along with other departmental, school, and college documents related to promotion. Faculty members in a regular or restricted appointment may be considered for promotion.

Promotion in rank for any non-tenure-track position is not a requirement of continued employment, or an entitlement for years of service without evidence of exceptional merit, continued professional development, and contribution in the assigned role. An approved promotion in rank is recognized by a change in title, increasing length of appointment contract, and a base salary adjustment as identified in the annual faculty compensation plan approved by the Board of Visitors.

For more information, consult [Promotion and Tenure](#). Consideration for promotion in rank includes preparation of a dossier using a common university format. Typically, such a dossier includes a statement of professional direction and accomplishment, a complete curriculum vitae, and documentation of contributions associated with the appointment.

Colleges and departments or schools may request supplemental materials. The appropriate college committee and dean approve guidelines for dossier development and departmental or school policies and procedures for the promotion process. External review of credentials is required for some –but not all– promotions in non-tenure-track ranks.

The promotion dossier is reviewed at three levels: (1) by an appropriately charged departmental or school committee and the department head, chair, or school director, (2) by an appropriately charged college-level committee and the dean, and (3) by the provost. The department head, chair, or school director and dean make separate recommendations to the subsequent review levels. The provost reviews college and dean recommendations and makes recommendations to the president. The Board of Visitors grants final approval.

Given the wide variation in representation of non-tenure-track instructional appointments some latitude is provided in the nature and make up of departmental, school and college committees. For example, departments or schools with significant numbers of instructors, the committee charged with reviews would consist of a majority representation of advanced and senior instructors. In departments or schools with very few such appointments, the existing departmental or school promotion and tenure committee may review the dossier(s) and make recommendations. Similarly, at the college level either a special committee may be formed to review promotions of non-tenure-track instructional faculty with majority representation of those in the advanced level of such ranks, or the existing promotion and tenure committees may be assigned such review and recommendation responsibilities.

While the procedures vary to recognize practical issues and varying numbers, the guidelines for review should be in writing and adhered to for consistency and fair treatment of all candidates. A faculty member may not serve on any committee that is evaluating a spouse, family member, or other individual with whom the faculty member has a close personal relationship.

Given that promotion decisions do not carry the same “up or out” decision associated with tenure decisions, a negative recommendation on a promotion request need not translate into termination of employment. Indeed, a faculty member may remain at the initial rank if their performance warrants continued employment and serves departmental or school needs. If the promotion request is not supported on the first submission, it may not be appealed until at least a second review has taken place in a subsequent or later year.

A positive recommendation from either or both the departmental or school committee and the department head, chair, or school director automatically advances the dossier to the college committee level. Similarly, at the college level, a positive recommendation from

either or both the college committee and the dean results in automatic advancement for consideration by the provost. The decision of the provost is final and cannot be appealed.

Faculty members should be provided with written feedback in the case of a negative recommendation at either the department, school or college level so that they might improve their performance or dossiers for a later submission.