

Commission on Faculty Affairs

RESOLUTION TO REVISE FACULTY HANDBOOK EXPECTATIONS GUIDELINES FOR NON-TENURE TRACK INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY

CFA 2025-26H

Resolution Proposal Form Sent to University Council Cabinet	November 20, 2025
First Reading by Commission on Faculty Affairs	February 13, 2026
Approval by Commission on Faculty Affairs	March 27, 2026
First Reading by Faculty Senate	March 6, 2026
Approval by Faculty Senate	April 3, 2026
Staff Senate Comment	February 6, 2026
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	March 4, 2026
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	April 3, 2026
Undergraduate Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	April 3, 2026
First Reading, University Council	April 20, 2026
Approved, University Council	May 4, 2026
Approved, President	May 5, 2026
Approved, Board of Visitors	Date
Effective Date	Upon Approval

WHEREAS, the Faculty Handbook includes policies for non-tenure track faculty; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech promotes faculty based on demonstrated accomplishments, competence, and merit, rather than on the mere passage of time; and

WHEREAS, with the removal of language regarding a time-in-rank requirement, it is important to provide additional clarity around expectations for promotion of non-tenure-track faculty; and

WHEREAS, additional clarity on promotion policies across all faculty series support fairness and consistency, and better recognize instructors for their achievements and contributions when they are ready for advancement; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook outlines a requirement that each department/school and college maintains and makes 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/or tenure, and the evaluation of promotion and/or tenure cases; and.

WHEREAS, reiterating that same language in Chapter 5 of the Faculty Handbook will emphasize and clarify the need for clear expectations for the promotion in non-tenure track ranks that is not tied solely to time in rank; and

WHEREAS, this change supports Virginia Tech's commitment to fostering faculty success, professional growth, and institutional excellence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that language be added to the Faculty Handbook, Section 5.0, as noted in **red**.

5.0 Employment Policies for Non-Tenure-Track Instructional Faculty

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 P14 form found at [Adjunct Faculty \(P14\)](#) . 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 Department, 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 department 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. Faculty members should contact the department head, chair or school director for guidance on college and department 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 department, 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.



Staff Senate Comments

CFA 2025-26H

February 6, 2026

Staff Senate has reviewed CFA 2025-26H noted that additional clarity of expectations for advancement of non-tenure track teaching faculty was reasonable and marked improvement.

Staff Senate has no further comment.

Thank you,

Gabe Petry, Chair, Staff Senate Policies and Issues Committee



AP Faculty Senate Comments

CFA 2025-26H- Promotion Expectations of non-Tenure Track Faculty

3/4/2026

The A/P Faculty Senate Policies and Issues Committee has reviewed and approves/endorsees CFA 2025-26H- Promotion Expectations of non-Tenure Track Faculty.

No additional comments were provided.