DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

Criteria for the Evaluation of Term Faculty
on the Professorial Lecturer Track

The purpose of this document is to establish department-wide promotion criteria for term faculty on the Professorial Lecturer track, which includes the ranks of Instructor, Professorial Lecturer, Senior Professorial Lecturer, and Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer. In the American University Department of Mathematics and Statistics, to qualify for reappointment, and/or promotion, term faculty members must document effectiveness in two areas: (1) teaching and (2) service and scholarship. A faculty member applying for promotion within the Professorial Lecturer track must submit a portfolio that exemplifies success in both of these areas.

Teaching

For the purpose of all faculty actions at American University, “effective teaching” is defined by the Faculty Manual as that which enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and become active participants in the learning process…. Faculty may demonstrate effective teaching in a variety of ways, including course design, development of new curricular initiatives, up-to-date course content, student engagement and achievement outside the classroom, and adherence to evaluation procedures that accurately reflect student accomplishments. Teaching units or academic units may also view publication and presentation of teaching materials and methodologies as a contribution to teaching. (section 10a)

Indicators of teaching effectiveness may include, but are not limited to: a wide variety of courses taught; innovative teaching methods; development of online and hybrid courses; supervision of student research (including master’s theses, honors capstones, independent study, and research projects); initiatives to encourage student research and community service work; mentorship of students for prestigious awards; and other forms of engagement with students outside the classroom.

So that the Department may efficiently review teaching performance, the candidate for any level of promotion must include a narrative statement of teaching approach and philosophy in the portfolio. This document may be supported by primary documents such as syllabi, assignments, lessons, and examinations. As a general rule, these documents should be included sparingly, as illustrative samples of general practice or of particularly noteworthy accomplishments. The candidate’s Student Evaluation of Teaching scores must also be included in the portfolio. SET scores should be generally in line with those of the Department. The candidate may request a peer classroom observation by a faculty member chosen by the Department. A written evaluation based on this observation would then be included in the candidate’s portfolio.

1 This and similar citations refer to sections of the Faculty Manual, adopted May 13, 2011.
Service and Scholarship

Any academic institution flourishes by blending a variety of abilities, interests, and commitments. In fulfillment of their duties, all term faculty on the Professorial Lecturer track are expected to demonstrate “a meaningful level of teaching unit, academic unit, or university service” and/or scholarship (section 10). A record of active engagement in the discipline outside of the classroom is expected. Examples include, but are not limited to: participation in faculty governance activities (such as service on committees); contributions to the broader professional community; a significant commitment to student advising and mentorship (in the classroom, in office hours, and online); organization and/or participation in events and functions at the department, college and university levels; research; publication; involvement in professional activities; mentoring of new faculty; and developing undergraduate research projects. Other elements of effective teaching that extend outside of the candidate’s assigned teaching load will also be considered as forms of service or scholarship. A candidate for any level of promotion must include a narrative statement in the portfolio that expounds upon the list of his/her contributions to service and/or scholarship. A faculty member’s service and scholarship profile is expected to broaden and deepen over time; those candidates applying for higher ranks will be held to a higher standard, as elaborated below.

Rank Criteria

The following section details specific requirements and performance expectations for each of the ranks within the Professorial Lecturer track. Please note that, although the Faculty Manual anticipates that Senior Professorial Lecturers and Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturers will hold multi-year contracts ranging from three to five years, the recommendation to confer a given rank and appointment to a multi-year contract are, strictly speaking, separate actions. As a general rule, the College only considers term faculty for a multi-year appointment when a) the faculty member has taught at AU on a full-time basis for three to five years, and b) the Dean’s and Provost’s offices deem long-term funding of the position to be secure.

Instructor

Instructors are term faculty members without terminal degrees. Reappointments at the rank of Instructor are typically subject to annual review (section 13). Instructors will be evaluated primarily on their teaching and secondarily on their service and/or scholarship, in accordance with the general principles outlined above.

Candidates for reappointment in the rank of Instructor should be successful teachers who have built well-thought-out courses that foster student learning and achievement and that reflect the current state of their academic field(s). Their course materials will state clear objectives that are informed by the goals of the department. Their professionalism will be displayed through their syllabi, assignments, evaluation of student work, advising or mentorship, and Student Evaluation of Teaching scores that are generally in line with those in the department. Candidates for reappointment as Instructor may also make contributions in service and/or scholarship, commensurate with the general expectations listed above.


**Professorial Lecturer**

The *Faculty Manual* states that “[t]erm faculty members are awarded the rank of Professorial Lecturer if they (1) have demonstrated successful teaching in the rank of Instructor for a period of three years, or (2) hold the terminal degree in the field, or (3) have professional experience and achievement equivalent to a terminal degree” (section 13). New hires may be appointed at this rank if they meet criteria (2) or (3). Candidates who were hired as Instructors and do not hold the terminal degree in the field may apply for promotion to Professorial Lecturer after a period of three years.

Candidates for promotion to (or reappointment in) the rank of Professorial Lecturer should be successful teachers who have built well-thought-out courses that foster student learning and achievement and that reflect the current state of their academic field(s). Their course materials will state clear objectives that are informed by the goals of the department. Their professionalism will be displayed through their syllabi, assignments, evaluation of student work, advising or mentorship, and Student Evaluation of Teaching scores that are generally in line with those in the department. Candidates for Professorial Lecturer will show initial contributions and potential growth in the area of service and/or scholarship as previously outlined.

**Senior Professorial Lecturer**

After five years of service at that rank, Professorial Lecturers are eligible for promotion to Senior Professorial Lecturer. Senior Professorial Lecturers are term faculty members who have demonstrated superior performance (in teaching as well as in service and/or scholarship). “An academic unit may also appoint to this rank those who have equivalent professional experience” as well as those with appropriate terminal degrees (section 13). Appointments at the Senior Professorial Lecturer rank typically “range from three to five years, depending on the needs of the teaching unit.”

Candidates for Senior Professorial Lecturer should be expert teachers whose courses foster, in challenging and motivating ways, student learning and achievement. Their course materials will promote the goals of their academic unit or program and demonstrate currency in their academic field. Their professionalism and expertise will be displayed through their course and curriculum development, syllabi, assignments, evaluation of student work, advising or mentorship, and Student Evaluation of Teaching assessments. They will make significant contributions in service and/or scholarship.

**Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer**

The *Faculty Manual* describes this rank as “a term appointment an academic unit awards to a senior professorial lecturer who has provided particularly meritorious performance to the university over a period of years or to a new faculty member whose previous career and experience are notably prestigious” (section 13).

Senior Professorial Lecturers who are candidates for Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer should demonstrate a consistent record of marked teaching excellence. Their professionalism and
expertise will be displayed through their course and curriculum development, syllabi, assignments, evaluation of student work, advising or mentorship, and Student Evaluation of Teaching assessments. Their application portfolios will show that they have continually refined their teaching, adapted to new student populations, and attended to innovations in the field. These candidates will also have demonstrated strong leadership in the department, have contributed to professional development initiatives in the department or in their field, and have engaged in notable service and/or scholarship.

**Assistant Professor**

After five years of service, Professorial Lecturers who hold the terminal degree in their field are eligible for promotion to the rank of (term) Assistant Professor (*Faculty Manual* section 13). Candidates for (term) Assistant Professor must “have demonstrated achievement in both scholarship and teaching.”