Public Communication Division

Guidelines for Promotion of Term Faculty

The American University Faculty Manual outlines the ranks for Term Faculty as Instructor, Professorial Lecturer, Senior Professorial Lecturer, Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. It stipulates that Professorial Lecturers are eligible for promotion, after five years, to one of two ranks: Senior Professorial Lecturer or Assistant Professor. Senior Professorial Lecturers can then be promoted to Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer. Assistant Professors can subsequently be promoted to Associate Professors and ultimately to Professor. (There is no specific stipulation in the Faculty Manual for promotion from Instructor rank to any other rank since that title is reserved for temporary one-semester or one-year appointments.) This allows Term Faculty the option to remain on a Lecturer path focusing on teaching or to move to a standard Professorial path (i.e. from Professorial Lecturer to Assistant Professor) that also includes scholarly activities. The guidelines for each of these two paths are presented below. For both paths, excellence in teaching is mandatory.

Professorial Path

The Faculty Manual indicates that “[t]erm faculty members who are promoted or appointed to Assistant Professor (or other standard professorial ranks) must hold the terminal degree in the field or have equivalent professional experience and have demonstrated achievement in both scholarship and teaching. Evaluation of faculty members holding this rank will include consideration of scholarship commensurate with the rank as defined by the teaching unit.” As such, Term Faculty seeking promotion on the Professorial path will be evaluated using the Guidelines for Scholarly, Creative, Professional Achievement already established by the Public Communication Division. In applying these guidelines, reviewers will take into consideration the Term Faculty member’s focus on teaching and the impact that this focus might have on the faculty member’s scholarly, creative or professional productivity. It is expected that the quality, significance, and impact of the faculty member’s scholarly, creative and professional achievement will be the same as for tenure track/tenured faculty, but that the quantity and/or timing of that achievement may be affected by the focus on teaching for Term Faculty.

Lecturer Path

The Faculty Manual indicates that the promotion from Professorial Lecturer to Senior Professorial Lecturer (after five years of service) is “primarily on the basis of teaching performance and, if applicable, service to the teaching unit.” As such, Term Faculty seeking promotion on the Lecturer path will be evaluated on the basis of teaching excellence. This will be measured through the development of new courses, innovation in the classroom, strong evaluations from students, participation in projects outside the classroom such as supervising honors capstones or student organizations, and success at teaching a variety of courses in the curriculum (for example, General Education courses as well as courses in the major and graduate courses). Term Faculty on the Lecturer Path will also be evaluated as to their commitment in connecting with students and the university community as demonstrated in their service to the Public Communication Division, School of Communication, the University, and/or externally to the community or public communication discipline.