



Guidelines for Promotion of Fixed Term System Faculty from Assistant to Associate Professor or from Associate Professor to Professor

This document specifies the criteria and procedures used by the College of Arts & Letters (CAL) and its affiliated units in reviewing applications for fixed term system faculty promotion. It follows the university policy on the *Promotion of Fixed Term Faculty*, which can be found at:

https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/fixed-term_promotion.html

While the procedures detailed below follow a process similar to the review process for the promotion of tenure system faculty, it is to be understood that promotion of fixed term system faculty will be based solely on an evaluation of the duties and responsibilities specified in the candidate's actual appointment and position description.

Candidates for fixed term faculty promotion from assistant to associate professor must have attained UNTF Designation B status before being considered for promotion. Candidates who are not eligible for UNTF or have a less than 50% teaching appointment should have been at MSU for six years before being considered for promotion. Candidates for fixed term faculty promotion from associate to full must have been in rank for an appropriate amount of time, usually equivalent to at least six years.

1. The promotion **criteria** for teaching excellence used by College of Arts & Letters and its affiliated units are the same as those used in evaluating those duties for tenure system faculty as described in the "[Guidelines for Faculty Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure in the College of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University](#)," for the corresponding promotion. As with tenure system faculty, these may be in the areas of teaching, research, and/or service/outreach depending on the position. The successful candidate for a fixed term system faculty promotion is expected to have demonstrated leadership excellence in the areas of their assignment.
2. The **procedures** that the College of Arts & Letters and its affiliated units will use for reviewing the promotion of fixed term faculty are as follows.
 - a. Each year, during the required annual performance review, unit administrators should discuss with eligible fixed term faculty the criteria for promotion in rank, the faculty member's progress toward promotion, and discuss whether he or she wishes to seek promotion in the coming academic year. The administrator shall provide a written copy of this review to the faculty member.
 - b. If the faculty member elects to seek promotion, the unit administrator will prepare a description of the candidate's assignment including, for example, the percentage of the appointment devoted to research, teaching, and/or service/outreach. This description will form part of the promotion review portfolio and will be distributed to all individuals of the unit's review committee who evaluate the candidate's materials.

At least one fixed term faculty member should be included in the review of the candidate at the unit level. The College suggests that the fixed term faculty member



of the unit review committee hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor rank if such an individual is available; if not, the College suggests a fixed term faculty member who has attained Designation B status instead or an academic specialist with continuing status.

- c. If teaching is a primary activity in the candidate's assignment, the College suggests that the unit assemble a Teaching Review Committee by having the unit chair work with the candidate to assemble a committee consisting of at least one tenure-system faculty member, one fixed term faculty member, and one other faculty member of any rank. If the candidate teaches online or hybrid courses, then at least one member of the committee should have experience in teaching online or hybrid courses as well in order to help with the evaluation of these courses.

The Teaching Review Committee should use the following general process in assessing the candidate's teaching performance:

- Meet with the individual to discuss course syllabi, assignments, philosophy of teaching, and methodologies and strategies. Prior to this meeting, the individual will provide the Teaching Review Committee with a teaching portfolio (as described in item 2.d.iii. of this document).
- Set two agreed-upon dates during one (preferably the fall) semester for classroom visitations when at least two of the three committee members can be present; the candidate can request additional visitations if they so desire.
- Meet with the candidate after the classroom visitations are completed for discussion, questions, clarifications, and feedback.
- Write a committee report focusing on:
 - organization and presentation of concepts, skills, and reading and discussion materials;
 - interaction with students; and
 - effective and productive use of class period in relation to instructional objectives.
- Submit a draft of the report to the candidate, who shall have the opportunity to respond to it in person or in writing, in order to make relevant comments regarding points of substance, emphasis, or neglect.
- Submit a revised and final report to the unit promotion review committee.

Teaching review committees should restrict their reports to the substance of the teaching and instruction according to the areas identified above and to the course and instructional materials made available to them. Committee members should also recognize a diversity of instructional methodologies and strategies that can be used to reach common curricular goals.

- d. In preparing materials for the review portfolio, the candidate is required to provide information or documents related to the activities that are part of his or her assignment, using the Recommendation for Reappointment, Promotion, or Tenure Action form (Form D, as implemented in the CAL RPT guidelines) as a guide. MSU guidelines specify that these materials must include:
 - i. A current curriculum vitae.



- ii. A reflective essay about accomplishments during the reporting period (5 pages maximum), detailing the leadership activities undertaken in the areas where they have duties (teaching, research, and/or service/outreach). If, for instance, teaching is an assigned duty, this would include a reflective teaching statement, showing ongoing development of effective instructional practices.
- iii. A representative sample of the candidate's best work that corresponds to the candidate's assignment. The candidate should reference these in their above narrative to provide context.

If teaching is an assigned duty, the candidate must provide the unit with a "Teaching Portfolio" that must include the following items:

- Syllabi and instructional materials (heuristics, activities, multimedia learning materials, projects, assignments, etc.) consistent with the unit's pedagogical aims.
- Unit-approved Student Instructional Ratings Forms (or online equivalent) for all classes taught (every course, every section, every semester) to the unit review committee for analysis. (The College advises that reviewers should not afford undue weight to these SIRS forms and similar student evaluations. They should not be used as the sole source of data, but rather as one indicator of many in the portfolio.)
- If applicable, evidence of undergraduate and/or graduate student mentoring, including service on exam and thesis/dissertation committees, advising, and professional development.

The Teaching Portfolio may also include select examples of the following that are representative of the candidate's best work:

- Examples of student papers and projects.
 - Evidence of effective formative and summative commentary on student papers and projects.
 - Letters of commendation written by colleagues or peers.
 - Reflective statements or learning narratives written by students.
 - Honors or awards.
 - Evidence of course and curriculum development.
 - Evidence of participation in professional development workshops, seminars, and/or activities.
 - Evidence of teacher-research.
 - Evidence of work in the instruction and mentoring of other teachers as well as program and TA coordination.
 - Evidence of outreach, including outreach instruction, which might include credit-bearing courses offered off-campus; noncredit-bearing seminars, workshops, conferences, exhibits, and performances related to teaching.
 - Evidence of instructional materials and activities particular to online or distance education; such materials should be reviewed in the media for which they were intended.
- iv. Evidence of excellence in performing assigned duties, e.g., significance, impact, and innovation of instructional activities, research/creative activities, professional development, curriculum development, program coordination, or



administrative activities.

- e. In all cases, four review letters must be included and can come from within the College or University. Whenever possible these letters should come from outside of the unit. If research/creative activity is an assigned duty, at least one or more letters (depending on percentage of workload) external to MSU must be obtained evaluating said activity in accord with the CAL tenure-system RPT guidelines. In other cases, if the faculty member has worked with other partners external to the unit, whether in teaching, service, or outreach, a letter should come from one of those MSU or community or equivalent partners. A letter might also come from an officer or member of a scholarly pedagogical organization where the faculty member has been especially active. All letters must come from individuals who hold a rank above the candidate's current rank. The candidate is not informed of those individuals who provide letters of evaluation. (See also Confidentiality of Letters of Reference for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Recommendations" in the *Faculty Handbook*.)
- f. Units should review the promotion materials submitted by fixed term faculty candidates in the same manner in which they review tenure system promotion candidates, focusing only on their assigned duty categories. If a unit does not have an existing tenure review system, then the supervisor should consult with the Associate Dean for Personnel, Administration, and Undergraduate Education.
- g. **Unit administrators are encouraged to include these reviews in the regular RPT timelines of the unit. Promotion recommendations for fixed-term faculty must be sent to the CAL Dean by January 15 of a given year**, submitting Form D and supporting materials (those relevant for the assigned duties as described in the CAL RPT guidelines), and must include copies of the written annual reviews of the candidate (see item 2a in this document) during the reporting period. This recommendation should provide an analysis of the candidate's performance in their assigned duties, as well as the leadership activities in which they have been involved.
- h. The CAL Dean will consult with the CAL Fixed-Term RPT committee and make a final recommendation to the Office of the Provost, according to the timetable for the academic year in question. The committee should be made up of one fixed-term and two tenure stream faculty. The fixed term faculty member must be at the Associate or Full Professor rank. (A Senior/or Continuing Academic Specialist may serve if there are no fixed-term faculty at the Associate Professor rank available).