

# **GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION**

**Division of Agriculture Faculty  
Non-Tenure Track**

**Revised September 3, 2025  
(Added Third-Year Review Section)**

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## **Guidelines for Appointment and Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Faculty**

**SUMMARY:** Establishes guidelines for Division of Agriculture non-tenure track faculty appointments and promotion.

The most important factor ensuring the successful future of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture involves employing and developing personnel of the highest quality. The Division of Agriculture must appoint outstanding, qualified faculty, facilitate their professional development, and provide annual performance evaluations. The promotion system is provided to reward those non-tenure track faculty who demonstrate sustained professional growth and significant programmatic accomplishments through time.

This document is intended to provide guidelines for appointment and promotion of nontenure track faculty consistent with the policies of the Division of Agriculture and the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees. Tenure track faculty within the Division of Agriculture falls under the appointment and promotion policies and procedures of the respective institutions where the faculty member's tenure resides. These guidelines are limited to those faculty not on a tenure track appointment within the Division of Agriculture.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services (including employment) without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, sexual preference, pregnancy or any other legally protected status, and is an equal opportunity institution.

### **Non-Tenure Track Faculty Rank**

Basic criteria have been established for the non-tenure track ranks of Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor and Distinguished Professor in order to maintain a degree of continuity.

**Instructor** - The minimum educational requirement for the rank of Instructor is a Master's degree in an appropriate field.

**Assistant Professor** - The educational requirement for the rank of Assistant Professor is a Doctoral degree or appropriate professional degree (D.V.M., J.D., etc.) in the appropriate subject matter discipline.

**Associate Professor** - The educational requirement for the rank of Associate Professor is a Doctoral degree or appropriate professional degree in the appropriate subject matter discipline. Persons at this ranking should have demonstrated an outstanding overall history of work performance. An excellent record of planning, developing, implementing and evaluating educational (teaching, research and/or extension) programs must have been demonstrated. In addition, they must be recognized for their leadership at the regional level.

Professor - The educational requirement for the rank of Professor is a Doctoral degree or appropriate professional degree in the appropriate subject matter discipline. Persons at this ranking must have distinguished themselves through long term outstanding performance at lower ranks or equivalent. Persons serving at this level should have matured within their areas of responsibility and have demonstrated excellence over a prolonged period. In addition, they must be recognized for their leadership at regional and national levels.

Distinguished Professor - The highest and most prestigious appointment for non-tenure track faculty in the Division of Agriculture. This appointment is to recognize exceptional performance and outstanding contributions to the missions of the Division of Agriculture. A non-tenure track faculty member may be nominated for Distinguished Professor by any faculty member in the Division of Agriculture. To be considered for this appointment, a faculty member is required to provide promotion documentation through the normal Division Non-tenure track promotion procedure. Candidates to be considered should normally have already achieved the rank of Professor or similar stature.

Distinguished Professors must have a Doctoral Degree or professional degree in the appropriate subject matter discipline. In order to be appointed to Distinguished Professor, individuals must have demonstrated sustained accomplishment in research, Extension and (or) teaching that is consistent with their job description as indicated in annual performance evaluations. In addition, Distinguished Professors should exhibit a high degree of professionalism in their respective discipline. Evidence of sustained excellent accomplishment and professionalism may be indicated by:

- Demonstrated exceptional and positive impact of their program on stakeholders, students and (or) the general public.
- State, national and (or) international recognition as authorities and leaders in their profession or academic discipline.
- Innovations including development of special projects, resource tools, publications (refereed or non-refereed), methodologies or technologies, creative techniques, or intellectual property.
- Clear recognition of their accomplishments by peers as indicated by awards, fellowships or offices bestowed by stakeholder groups or professional societies.
- Exceptional and meritorious service to the public in their area of academic or professional competence.
- Exceptional and outstanding contributions to the missions of the Division of Agriculture.

Qualified individuals will be appointed to Distinguished Professor when there is clear evidence of sustained exceptional and outstanding contributions and a high potential for continued exemplary service to the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and the state of Arkansas.

## **Appointment Procedures**

The Vice President for Agriculture approves faculty recommendations after consultation with appropriate Associate Vice President (Research or Extension). The non-tenure track ranking will be communicated in the offer letter from the immediate supervisor.

### **A. Criteria for Appointment**

1. An appropriate degree and professional experience is an essential qualification for appointment to positions at non-tenure track academic ranks.

2. Other important qualifications include experience in teaching, research, extension or other scholarly or creative activities, and educational service either at other colleges and universities and/or in non-academic settings.
3. The non-tenure track academic rank awarded at the initial appointment shall be consistent with prior professional experience as well as U of A Board of Trustees policies and criteria adopted by the faculty and department head/section leader/state leader/center director of the appropriate unit.

B. Procedures - No later than 30 days after beginning employment in connection with a first appointment, each faculty member shall be advised in writing by his or her supervisor of their job description, criteria, promotion procedures, and instruments that are to be used in assessing his or her work.

## **Evaluation**

Annual performance evaluations are an integral part of the faculty member's professional development. The evaluation procedure is intended as a means of assessing the faculty member's performance. It provides the guidance necessary to ensure that the faculty member fulfills his/her potential and performs at a level commensurate with his/her rank. As such, evaluations are an important basis from which to consider a faculty member's candidacy for promotion in rank. Each faculty member shall be evaluated on the basis of achievement in the areas of their respective job description (teaching, research and/or extension).

## **Procedures for Third-Year Review of Non-Tenure Track Faculty with Majority University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture (UADA) Appointment**

A written review of progress toward promotion shall be made of each faculty in a promotable faculty title during their third year of employment. As a reminder, promotion is not automatic based on years of service or performance that is merely satisfactory. Rather, in the pursuit of excellence, promotion is based on high levels of achievement and a trajectory toward sustained success over a career.

Third-year review dossiers should follow the format of the [PMGS 03-09](#) Faculty Service Review Form. All dossiers should include material documenting the following:

1. Progress in scholarship appropriate to the faculty appointment, including research and/or extension program development with evidence of relevant deliverables (e.g., publications/presentations, external funding, stakeholder engagement and outreach, county agent support and training, media engagement, collaborative efforts).
2. Progress in all service activities, both institutional (e.g., departmental committees) and professional (e.g., professional association service and leadership).
3. Other scholarly achievements (e.g., resident instruction, graduate student advising, consulting).

Assessment of performance in the third-year review includes three options:

1. Currently making satisfactory progress. Appointment is continued for 4th and 5th years, subject to all Division policies.
2. Appointment is continued for the 4th year, subject to all Division policies and a required 4th year review. Department Head (and AVP, if Extension appointment) will address weaknesses.

3. Notice of non-reappointment, subject to procedures outlined in [Board Policy 405.1.IV.B](#), with the 4th year as the terminal year.

For faculty with primary UADA, non-tenure-track appointment, the third-year review will follow the procedures outlined below.

September 1: Department head identifies pre-promotion faculty and notifies them that a third-year review will be conducted.

January 31: Faculty submits a complete dossier following the format of the PMGS 03-09 Faculty Service Review Form and demonstrating their accomplishments to date from date of appointment to current position or date in offer letter. The packet will include (i) an Executive Summary summarizing significant accomplishments across all appointment areas and (ii) all previous annual evaluations. External letters will not be included in the third-year review. The dossier will be submitted to the department head, who will review for completeness. For faculty with an Extension appointment in an Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) department, the department head will consult with the Assistant Vice President (AVP) - ANR in review of the dossier. For faculty with Extension appointments in Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H/Youth Development, and Community, Professional, and Economic Development departments, the appropriate AVP is considered their department head.

February 15: The department head submits the dossier to the unit personnel committee (UPC) for committee review. For faculty with Extension appointments in Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H/Youth Development, Community, Professional, and Economic Development departments and for ANR faculty reporting directly to the AVP-ANR, the UPC will be constituted as a joint committee comprised of at least three faculty across these three departments appointed by the Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture - Extension.

March 15: The UPC submits to the department head a written letter acknowledging that the third-year review was conducted and summarizing the committee's evaluation of the faculty member's overall progress toward promotion, specifically commenting on the candidate's past performance record and on progress in all areas of the faculty appointment (i.e., research, extension, teaching, and/or service), including assessment of strengths and weaknesses in each relevant area. Note that for Extension-appointed faculty in ANR departments, the UPC's letter will be sent to both the department head and the AVP-ANR. The letter will include the committee's recommendation and result of a formal vote among committee members for one of the three assessment outcomes. Due to the developmental aspect of this review, both areas of excellence and areas needing improvement are to be identified within the UPC's letter, along with suggested plans of action to address areas needing improvement for the faculty member to be considered for promotion.

March 24: The department head prepares a letter concurring with or dissenting from the UPC's review recommendation, including a discussion of the basis for his/her recommendation. The department head provides a copy of the UPC's letter and the department head's letter to the faculty member and meets to discuss both letters. The faculty member may forward to the department head a written response to the letters within five working (5) days of that meeting. Note that for Extension-appointed faculty in ANR departments, the department head and AVP-ANR will jointly prepare their recommendation letter and meet with the faculty member to discuss UPC and department head letters.

April 8: The department head submits the faculty member's dossier, the UPC and department head letters, and the faculty member's response (if any), to the Senior Associate Vice President (SAVP).

A formal meeting will be scheduled, between the appropriate SAVPs based on appointment, department head/AVP, and the faculty member to discuss the faculty member's dossier and accompanying recommendation letters.

April 22: The appropriate SAVPs based on appointment prepares an assessment to be given to the faculty member that integrates the feedback from the process, noting areas of excellence, identifying performance areas needing improvement, and communicating the outcome of the review. If the third-year review results in non-reappointment, the appropriate SAVPs based on appointment shall notify the faculty member in accordance with the provisions of Board Policy 405.1. The written feedback by the UPC, the department head/AVP, and the appropriate SAVPs based on appointment, if any, shall become a part of the faculty member's permanent personnel record.

## **Non-Tenure Promotion**

Promotion shall be based primarily upon the accomplishments of the individual while in the most recent rank. Promotion is a distinct honor and is not based upon length of service. No minimum time is required before a faculty member is eligible for promotion. Each faculty member shall be evaluated on the basis of achievement in the areas of their respective job responsibilities (teaching, research and/or extension).

### **Promotion Procedures for Non-Tenure Faculty**

**August 1:** Each year, the Vice President for Agriculture solicits nominations for committee members from the Associate Vice President(s). Unit Heads are notified by the Associate Vice President(s) to remind faculty of the process timetable.

**August 25:** Letters are sent to committee members from the Vice President for Agriculture.

**August 30:** Faculty members shall be informed in writing by the department head/section leader/state leader/center director (Unit Head) of the promotion review schedule, criteria, procedures, requirements and instruments for the current year. Whenever there is a change in criteria, procedures or instruments, each non-tenure faculty member shall be informed by the Unit Head in writing within four weeks of the change. Each faculty member shall also be provided with any standard review forms upon which the faculty member is expected to submit information regarding professional activities.

**September 15:** Non-tenure promotion documents are due to the Unit Head. Once the Unit Head receives the promotion documents, they cannot be altered in any way without the mutual consent of the non-tenure faculty member and the Unit Head.

**September 15 – October 15:** Unit Head will solicit three but no more than five external letters of evaluation for the applicant (e.g. who lack a familial relationship with the applicant, who lack a former student/teacher relationship with the applicant, who are outside the Division of Agriculture, and who lack any apparent or actual conflict of interest) to accompany the promotion document. Outside reviewers (persons who possess appropriate expertise to assess the applicant's professional accomplishments) at peer institutions will be included. During the outside reviewer selection process, outside reviewers suggested by the applicant will be considered. All reviewer letters should be included in the packet as well as a short vita from the outside reviewers. These responses should be based on the evaluator's knowledge of the complete record of the applicant,

including a description of responsibilities with a breakdown of teaching, research and extension assignments during the time period being evaluated.

The department/section/unit can select from the following promotion committee options to address the promotion of non-tenure faculty members.

Option 1: An elected department/section promotion and/or tenure committee consistent with the proportion of the tenure and non-tenure track faculty and off/on campus faculty will review promotion and/or tenure documents. Non-tenured members of the committee will not be allowed to vote on tenure issues but will vote on promotion issues.

Option 2: A separate department/section promotion committee would consist of faculty members with non-tenured status and achieved the rank of Associate Professor or higher. The committee should consist of a fair representative of off/on campus non-tenure faculty members.

The department/section will use its committee selected under Option 1 or 2 to provide a recommendation for membership to the Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion Committee. These recommendations will be submitted to both Associate Vice Presidents for Agriculture who, in turn will forward them to the Vice President for Agriculture with recommendations. The Vice President for Agriculture will appoint a seven (7) member Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion committee from this list of nominees.

**October 15 – November 15:** Department promotion and tenure committee sends to the Unit Head a copy of their recommendations (including vote) and statement of rationale. The Unit Head will inform the faculty member in writing of the department promotion and tenure committee's recommendation (including vote). The faculty member if appropriate will be given the opportunity to withdraw from further promotion consideration.

Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion Committee Chair, named by the Vice President, is announced to Unit Heads.

**November 15 – 30:** The Unit Head submits the promotion information which includes his/her letter of recommendation, the unit committee's recommendations and statement of rationale and the promotion documentation to the Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion committee. The complete promotion application must be in PDF format. Hard copies will not be accepted. (Note: In case of a split appointment, the Unit Head with the minority appointment will submit a letter of recommendation to be included in the promotion documentation.

**December 20:** The Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion Committee sends to the Unit Head a copy of their recommendations (including vote) and statement of rationale. The Unit Head will inform the faculty member in writing of the department promotion and tenure committee's recommendation (including vote). The faculty member if appropriate will be given the opportunity to withdraw from further promotion consideration.

Promotion documents including the Department's and Division of Agriculture Non-Tenure Promotion committee's recommendation and statement of rationale will be forwarded to the Associate Vice Presidents (Research and Extension). Both Associate Vice Presidents receive copies if the candidate is jointly appointed. In the case of a joint appointment, the Associate Vice President with the majority appointment will submit a letter of recommendation and be included in

the promotion documentation.

If the Associate Vice Presidents concur that the promotion document does not merit promotion, they shall notify the candidate and unit head of that decision and return the promotion documents. The candidate can elect to submit a request in writing within 5 working days that their document be forwarded to the Vice President in appeal of the Associate Vice Presidents' determination. In that event, the Vice President will review their document and provide a final determination.

**January 21:** The promotion documents including a letter of recommendation from the respective Associate Vice President (Research or Extension) will be forwarded to the Vice President for Agriculture by the Associate Vice President with the majority appointment. Candidates will be notified of the recommendation from the Associate Vice President for Agriculture. Only those applications approved by the Vice President for Agriculture will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

**March 1:** Vice President for Agriculture notifies candidates of recommendation.

**May:** Promotion recommendations are acted upon by the Board of Trustees.

**May 20:** Vice President for Agriculture sends letters to applicants informing them of the Board's decision. Promotion list is sent to Associate Vice President (Research and Extension).

**July 1:** Promotions approved by the Board of Trustees become effective.



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**Non-Tenure Promotion Process**

