

Memorandum

28 January 2022

SUBJECT: Teaching track position conversion and reappointment guidelines

1. Executive summary

Building on the recommendations of the Teaching Track Taskforce, these guidelines establish necessary timelines to ensure the feasibility of making conversions to positions (and associated reappointments of incumbent faculty) into the teaching track for academic year 2022-2023 and provides guidelines that balance broad applicability with promoting equity and consistency.

These guidelines are limited in their scope to guiding the one-time position conversion and reappointment criteria occurring in the remainder of academic year (AY) 2021-2022. In parallel, many additional other tasks need to be accomplished, including working with the Arizona Board of Regents to permit the teaching track within Board policy, develop long-term criteria for conducting teaching professor searches, add the teaching track in University and academic unit policies and Conditions of Faculty Service, refine Statement of Expectation and workload policies to anchor teaching track faculty efforts in unit expectations and culture, and develop appropriate annual evaluation, renewal, and promotion.

In the remainder of this document, Section 2 presents context from the Teaching Track Taskforce final report; Section 3 outlines college-level position conversions and reappointment criteria; Section 4 provides additional guidelines for determining the specifics of reappointments; and Section 5 establishes deadlines for implementation milestones.

2. Foundations

In its 6 December 2021 final report, the Teaching Track Taskforce recommended the creation of a teaching track at Northern Arizona University, comprised of assistant, associate, and professor ranks, with the following key responsibilities: "Teaching professors are primarily responsible for teaching, typically encompassing a wide range of courses or mentorship activities, and advancing curricular excellence in their disciplines." In addition, the taskforce recommended that the lecturer stream be centered on the following responsibilities: "Lecturers are primarily responsible for teaching, typically consisting of a narrow range of courses."

In its rationale for this high-level guidance, the taskforce further elaborated:

"Teaching stream faculty will (a) make broad contributions across our curricula and to critically-important student mentorship activities (e.g., capstone, independent study, and undergraduate and graduate student research) and (b) achieve curricular excellence through adoption and advancement of evidence-based pedagogical best-practices (e.g., active learning, experiential learning, multi-contextual learning), providing broad benefits to all students and especially supporting the learning needs of underserved students. Effectively advancing curricular excellence requires teaching stream faculty to apply pedagogical expertise in line with disciplinary understandings of effective instruction, including scholarly perspectives, and sustain this expertise through continued engagement in professional development."

Based on these recommendations, the Office of the Provost is proceeding with the creation of the teaching track. Alterations from the taskforce's recommendations include a small differential in the salary benchmarks between lecturers and teaching professors as well as a terminal degree requirement for future teaching track hires.

Recognizing the important contributions of long-serving faculty, lecturers without terminal degrees who have served for three years or longer in positions that otherwise qualify for the teaching professor track will be eligible for reappointment into teaching track positions on a one-time basis with the transition to AY22-23 through the position conversion and reappointment process outlined in these guidelines. During this process, similarly situated faculty with fewer than three years of service will be tracked and their positions reconsidered for conversion and reappointment, using these criteria and contingent on the recommendation of their dean, when the three-year milestone is reached.

3. Reappointment criteria guidelines

Position conversions and associated faculty reappointment nominations will be assessed based on college-defined criteria that define the responsibilities of teaching professor faculty. The guidelines presented are aimed to balance broad applicability with supporting consistency across academic units. Specific duties associated with a particular position should be shaped by the needs of the academic unit (as informed by recent history and an assessment of needs) rather than the qualifications or interests of the incumbent faculty member.

We anticipate it will be feasible to develop criteria at the college level for this position conversion and reappointment process, with department-level criteria only needed in areas where unit-level operational needs demand substantial deviations from college-level criteria. It is likely that most lecturer positions will be converted to teaching professor positions. In all instances, academic unit criteria must receive Provost approval before being used in the determination of position conversions and faculty reappointments.

These criteria are focused on providing operational definitions for the two key elements that compose teaching professor responsibilities: (a) Wide range of courses or mentorship activities; and (b) advancing curricular excellence. These guidelines provide a uniform structure with key variables that academic units specify values for based on their unique needs and context.

a. Time period

In order to establish sustained consistency between criteria and specific assigned duties, the criteria must establish a forward-looking time period over which they will be applied. As needs shift over time, staffing planning will, as always, include consideration of the most appropriate faculty classification to meet the foreseeable needs of an academic unit.

For example:

“College positions eligible for conversion to teaching professor are expected to meet the following criteria within the following three academic years.”

Where the number of years included in the time period (in this example, three) is a variable to be specified by each college during the development of college-level criteria.

b. Courses and mentorship

Key considerations in determining criteria that establish a wide range of course and mentorship activities are to (a) quantify the number, type, and academic levels of courses taught or coordinated in a leadership role and (b) the number of students mentored in high-impact experiences desired of teaching professor positions, with the ability to use an equivalent combination of the two in determining reappointment.

Course-related criteria should (a) only include teaching activities in the primary instructor role with lead responsibility for course design and management, (b) consider leadership in the coordination of multi-section offerings, (c) only relate to regular courses excluding individualized study and research, fieldwork, cooperative education, internship, and capstone project supervision, and (d) establish an acceptable range across lower-division, upper-division, or graduate-level coursework levels.

Mentorship-related criteria should (a) include the number of non-unique students mentored and (b) the types of mentorship activities relevant to the academic unit, such as individualized study and research, fieldwork, cooperative education, internship, capstone project supervision, or graduate student thesis/dissertation supervision.

For example:

“Breadth of contribution to teaching is established through (a) course instruction as primary instructor with lead course responsibility for at least three different courses across at least two academic course levels across lower-division, upper-division, or graduate-level coursework, (b) through leadership in coordinating at least eight sections of multi-section courses, or through (c) mentoring at least eight students in individualized study and research, fieldwork, cooperative education, internship, and capstone project supervision, or through an equivalent combination of course instruction and mentorship duties.”

Where the number of different courses (in this example, three), the number of course levels spanned (in this example, two), the number of sections coordinated for multi-section courses (in this example, eight), the number of students mentored (in this example, eight), and the types of mentorship duties to be considered (in this example, those listed) are variables to be specified by each college during the development of college-level criteria.

c. Advancing curricular excellence

Key considerations in determining criteria that establish expectations on advancing curricular excellence are the number and types of distinguishing responsibilities related to curricular excellence that are expected of positions eligible for conversion.

Distinguishing responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Developing, re-designing, or improving courses or curricular pathways (e.g., certificates, emphases, minors, or plans) to include methods or technology consistent with current evidence-based pedagogical best practices;
2. Disseminating the results of course development, re-design, or improvement work within the academic unit, college, institution, or professional communities;
3. Contributing to curricular assessment or accreditation-related analyses and assessments;
4. Developing or supporting co- and extra-curricular programs that foster academic student success or pursue diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice;
5. Engaging in activities supporting the scholarship of teaching and learning and contributing to associated dissemination work; and
6. Participating in professional organization meetings aimed to gain expertise contributing to improvements to teaching and student learning outcomes.

For example:

“Advancing curricular excellence is established through substantive involvement in at least three curricular excellence activities.”

The number of activities expected (in this example, three) is a variable specified by each college during the development of college-level criteria, which may also expand the list of

distinguishing responsibilities to include other activities that advance curricular excellence that are specific to the college's disciplinary areas.

d. Unified example criteria

A cohesive example of reappointment criteria, elaborated in more detail in the following sections, appears below:

“College positions eligible for conversion to teaching professor are expected to meet the following criteria within the following three academic years.

Breadth of contribution to teaching is established through (a) course instruction as primary instructor with lead course responsibility for at least three different courses across at least two academic course levels across lower-division, upper-division, or graduate-level coursework, (b) through leadership in coordinating at least eight sections of multi-section courses, or through (c) mentoring at least eight students in individualized study and research, fieldwork, cooperative education, internship, and capstone project supervision, or through an equivalent combination of course instruction and mentorship duties.

Advancing curricular excellence is established through substantive involvement in at least three curricular excellence activities.”

4. Criteria applications guidelines

In addition to the guidelines in the preceding section, additional criteria address other considerations.

a. Eligibility limitations

During academic year 2021-2022, positions eligible for conversion into the teaching track are lecturer positions of any rank. Conversions related to other faculty tracks will be considered separately in subsequent conversion and reappointment efforts.

Positions currently held by faculty without a terminal degree, as defined by the academic unit's discipline, for fewer than three years are not eligible for conversion to the teaching track. These positions and faculty will be tracked and reconsidered for conversion and reappointment, contingent on the recommendation of their dean, when the three-years oof service milestone is reached.

b. Workload scaling

The criteria developed through the guidelines in Section 3 apply to the expectations of a teaching professor with a workload allocation of 80% in student-related activities. In order to consider reduced teaching assignments, due to administrative workload allocations or reduced full-time equivalent status, criteria should be proportionally scaled to student-related workload allocations of less than 80%.

c. Rank determination

Faculty reappointments for converted positions will be made at an equivalent rank of the incumbent faculty member. For example, lecturers will be reappointed to assistant teaching professors, senior lecturers to associate teaching professors, and principal lecturers to teaching professors. Clinical and practice professors will be reappointed to equivalently-ranked teaching professor ranks.

d. Years of service toward promotion

Years of service toward the next rank are preserved during reappointment as teaching professor. Faculty members who have accumulated years in-rank toward their next expected promotion opportunity will preserve those years of eligibility toward their next promotion within the teaching faculty ranks.

e. Currently approved promotions

Faculty eligible for reappointment as teaching professor, who are approved for promotion in their current position during the academic year 2021-2022 promotion and tenure review cycle, will be reappointed into the equivalent position to their new rank. For example, a Lecturer approved for promotion to Senior Lecturer will be reappointed as Associate Teaching Professor, which is the teaching track equivalent to Senior Lecturer.

5. Timeline

This timeline enables reappointments for the succeeding academic year in alignment with fiscal year and notice of appointment timelines that must be adhered to.

10 January 2022

- Provost provides draft conversion and reappointment guidelines to deans

12 January 2022

- Discussion of draft guidelines during Deans' Council

21 January 2022

- Deans provide feedback on draft reappointment guidelines to Provost
- Deans confirm accuracy and completeness of eligible positions for reappointment to Provost

24 January 2022

- Provost presents draft guidelines to Faculty Senate

26 January 2022

- Provost presents draft guidelines to Academic Leadership Summit

28 January 2022

- Provost revises guidelines, as needed, and provides final reappointment guidelines to deans
- Provost provides a listing of positions eligible for reappointment nominations

11 February 2022

- Deans provide Provost with draft college conversion and reappointment criteria and associated nominations for reappointment
- In exceptional circumstances, deans provide department-level conversion criteria and associated nominations for reappointment to Provost

18 February 2022

- Provost provides feedback on draft college and department draft reappointment criteria to deans

25 February 2022

- As needed, deans provide revised college and department reappointment criteria and associated nominations for reappointment to Provost

4 March 2022

- Provost provides approval of college and, where applicable, department reappointment criteria

11 March 2022

- Deans provide final reappointment nominations to Provost

18 March 2022

- Provost notifies deans of approved reappointments

1 April 2022

- Provost finalizes planning for notices of appointment with updated position information and notifies affected faculty
- Provost finalizes fiscal year 2023 budget with feasible salary increases