

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders
From: Dr. Antonio Tillis, Interim President
Subject: Tenured & Tenure Track Academic Appointments

UH-Downtown/PS 10.A.19
Issue No. 2
Effective Date: 01/05/2021
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1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) describes the titles and ranks used in tenured and tenure-track academic appointments at the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). Tenured and tenure track appointments are made using titles and ranks common throughout the University of Houston System.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Faculty: The faculty at UHD consists of full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members, full-time faculty members who are employed in non-tenure and no-tenure track positions, and part-time faculty members employed in non-tenure and non-tenure track positions.
- 2.2 Tenure-Track Positions: The following ranks are considered part of the tenure track: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.
- 2.3 Non-Tenure & Non-Track Faculty Employees: These faculty members include individuals who hold non-tenured and non-tenure track appointments of limited duration, such as appointments for a single semester, and appointments for non-reoccurring service. Non-tenure and non-tenure track faculty include: lecturers and senior lecturers, adjunct faculty, research associates and clinical faculty, visiting faculty, faculty in residence, and graduate assistants.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 Commitment to Diversity: This policy statement incorporates the provisions of PS 02.A.20 Affirmative Action Policy and PS 02.A.21 Equal Opportunity Policy, which applies to all employees and employment applicants. The University of Houston-Downtown is committed to a diverse academic environment that prepares students to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century workforce.

- 3.2 Commitment to Quality: The University is committed to recruiting and employing the most highly qualified individuals available for all academic appointments.
- 3.3 Commitment to Procedures: The University of Houston-Downtown will appoint faculty members in accord with the procedures established in all relevant UHD policy statements and University of Houston System Administrative Memorandum 06.A.09 Academic Personnel Policies.
- 3.4 Commitment to the System of Tenure: UHD remains committed to the system of tenure as delineated in 10.A.01, the Rank and Tenure System policy.
- 3.5 Ranks Used in Tenured and Tenure-Track Academic Appointments
- 3.5.1 Tenured and Tenure-Track Academic Appointments: The processes for hiring, evaluation and promotion, dismissal and non-reappointment, and grievance for all tenured and tenure-track appointments are outlined in this policy and other relevant UHD policies.

- 3.5.1.1 Instructor: The rank of instructor is intended to allow an individual completing their terminal degree to have a seamless transition into the rank of assistant professor upon awarding of their terminal degree. The rank of instructor is normally in the tenure-track with time spent as instructor counted in the probationary period. No instructor, however, is awarded tenure. Under special circumstances, the president may waive the inclusion of an instructor in the tenure-track by written mutual agreement.

Minimum Academic Preparation: A Master's degree or significant professional experience or preparation.

Minimum Experience: No experience is necessary as this is the first rank in the academic ranking system.

Minimum Criteria for Rank: The applicant for instructor has all of the qualifications for an associate professor position, with the exception of the terminal degree.

- 3.5.1.2 Assistant Professor: Assistant Professors are hired with a probationary period prior to tenure and promotion.

Minimum Academic Preparation: Appropriate terminal degree or appropriate preparation to serve the mission of UHD.

Minimum Experience: A minimum of two years as an instructor, or significant experience or training in subject area is preferred.

Minimum Criteria for Rank: The applicant for assistant professor has strong potential in teaching, service/professional activities, and scholarly/creative activities.

- 3.5.1.3 Associate Professor: In cases of new hires, associate professors may be hired with tenure with the approval of a majority of the full departmental rank and tenure committee, who will provide a written and signed recommendation to the appropriate administrators. Otherwise, they must serve a probationary period not to exceed four years.

Promotion to associate professor carries tenure unless otherwise justified by special circumstances.

Minimum Academic Preparation: Appropriate terminal degree or equivalent preparation to serve the mission of UHD.

Minimum Experience: Six years full-time college teaching experience, including two years at UHD for those being promoted.

Minimum Criteria for Rank: As an assistant professor, the applicant for associate professor has achieved and sustained a record of excellence in teaching, service/professional activities in both the department and university, and scholarly/creative activities.

- 3.5.1.4 Professor: In cases of new hires, professors may be hired with tenure with the approval of a majority of the full departmental rank and tenure committee who will provide a written and signed recommendation to the appropriate administrators. Otherwise, they must serve a probationary

period not to exceed two years.

Minimum Academic Preparation: Appropriate terminal degree or equivalent preparation to serve the mission of UHD.

Minimum Experience: In recognition of the wide range of accomplishments and other qualifications that may be possessed by applicants, no specific time sequence is required for promotion from associate professor to professor.

Minimum Criteria for Rank: Leadership in teaching, service/professional activities in both the department and university, and scholarly/creative activities is the defining Characteristic of the professor rank. Leadership in scholarly/creative activities is defined as significant contributions to the field. As an associate professor, the applicant for professor has achieved and sustained a record of leadership and excellence in teaching, service/professional activities in both the department and university, and scholarly/creative activities. Based on accomplishments as associate professor, and additionally as indicated by current work in progress, the applicant exhibits the potential for sustained continuation of leadership and excellence in teaching, service/professional activities in both the department and university, and scholarly/creative activities. Each department is required to articulate minimum criteria for promotion to professor separate and distinct from the criteria for promotion to associate professor.

- 3.5.2 **Academic Administrators:** Academic administrators appointed in tenure-track or tenured positions also hold faculty positions. However, their tenure and promotion is subject to the Rank and Tenure Policy ([PS 10.A.01](#)), and is held within a particular department or discipline in compliance with rank and tenure policies and does not apply to their administrative position

4. PROCEDURES

This section addresses hiring, evaluation, promotion, non-reappointment and dismissal, and grievance procedures for all tenured and tenure-track faculty positions. The policies and procedures for the rank and tenure system at UHD apply to all tenured and tenure-track

appointments, as outlined in PS 10. A.01 Rank and Tenure System policy.

4.1 Hiring

4.1.1 Tenured and Tenure-track Appointments: Searches and employment offers for all tenured and tenure-track faculty appointments, including endowed faculty positions that are offered with a tenure/tenure-track appointment, shall follow policy and employment process guidelines established in PS 10.A.13 Faculty Employment Policies. Specifically, the search and employment processes shall follow the “Guidelines for the Faculty Employment Process” contained within PS 10.A.13.

4.1.2 Joint Appointments: When a faculty member holds a joint appointment in two or more academic units within UHD or with two or more academic institutions, it must be clearly indicated at the time of the appointment which academic unit will bear the primary responsibility for the evaluation, promotion, and tenure. The academic unit in which a jointly appointed faculty member holds tenure or is on the tenure track must also be specified. In all cases of joint appointment, the appointment letter must stipulate the division of responsibility and the weight assigned to such responsibilities in the reviews for tenure, promotion, and/or merit salary increases.

4.2 Evaluation: The evaluation procedures of all tenured and tenure-track academic appointments, including endowed positions, is addressed in PS 10.A.05 Faculty Performance Evaluations.

4.3 Non-Reappointment and Dismissal of Faculty: Tenured and tenure-track faculty may be dismissed for reasons described in PS 10.A.06 University of Houston-Downtown Faculty Dismissal Policy and Procedures. The guidelines in PS 10.A.06 and the timelines established in Texas Education Code Section 51.943 Renewal of Faculty Employment Contracts must be followed. Tenure-Track faculty may be non-reappointed as described in PS 10.A.07 Faculty Non-Reappointment policy.

4.4 Grievance: Tenured and tenure-track faculty members may avail themselves of the Grievance process, as outlined in PS 10.A.02 Faculty Grievance Policy, if they believe they have been injured as a result of violation of university policies.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every five years.

Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 04/11/17

7. REFERENCES

Texas Education Code Section 51.943 – Renewal of faculty Employment Contracts
SAM 01.D.04 – Affirmative Action Policy
SAM 06.A.09 – Academic Personnel Policies
SAM 08.A.04 – Naming Opportunities
PS 02.A.20 – Affirmative Action Policy
PS 02.A.21 Equal Opportunity Policy
PS 10.A.01 – Rank and Tenure System
PS 10.A.02 – Faculty Grievance Policy
PS 10.A.05 – Faculty Performance Evaluations
PS 10.A.06 – University of Houston-Downtown Faculty Dismissal Policy and Procedures
PS 10.A.07 – Faculty Non-Reappointment Policy
PS 10.A.13 – Faculty Employment Policies
PS 10.A.16 – Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty