Faculty Letter of Appointment

UNIVERSITY POLICY #208

Authority:
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SECTION 1: Definition

1.1 The Letter of Appointment defines the general terms of the faculty member's major responsibilities and areas of contribution to the university.

SECTION 2: Process

2.1 No later than the Faculty Performance Planning meeting of the first semester of employment (*see* Policy 214, 3.1), the responsible University administrator (usually the Dean), with the approval of the Provost, shall establish and present the faculty member with the Letter of Appointment. The Letter of Appointment will define the general terms of the faculty member's major responsibilities in the areas of Teaching, Professional Activity, and Service, consistent with the job description given to the faculty member at the time of their hire. The letter also will include the faculty member's rank, program, highest degree earned, their tenure status, whether they have received credit for previous experience, the transition process and timing to be put on tenure-track (if the faculty member has been hired as non-tenure track) and the critical year for tenure decision (if the faculty member has been hired as tenure track faculty). A generic sample letter is provided in an appendix to this policy.

2.2 The terms of this appointment may be changed by mutual consent, consistent with this document, program needs, and other faculty personnel policies (*see* paragraph 2.3, below). Within the terms of this general apportionment of responsibilities, the details of a faculty member's specific assignments should be subject to joint consultation but are to be determined by the appropriate administrator. Teaching will normally be the faculty member's area of greatest responsibility. The degree of emphasis to be placed on the other areas will be determined by mutual consent between the Dean, the Chair, and the faculty member.

2.3 Since each program or department refines the definitions and standards for the three areas of effort (teaching, professional activity, and service) in ways that reflect the unit's disciplines and mission, as they support the University's mission, by developing guidelines or performance factors for annual faculty evaluation (per Policy 214, Section 3), how the unit criteria apply to a faculty member's own set of duties should be clear at the time they are presented with the Letter of Appointment. It is expected that for most faculty members there will be responsibilities established in all three areas.

SECTION 3: Modifying the Letter of Appointment

3.1 The criteria in the Letter of Appointment may be modified on an individual basis. Such a modification should be initiated primarily to assist the department or college in achieving its mission and goals, however it may also be made in response to a request by the faculty member. Proposed changes will be made in consultation between the faculty member and Department Chair or Program Director. These require the approval of the Dean of the college and the Provost prior to becoming effective. Any such modification must be made in light of the needs of the academic program. The Letter of Appointment should not need to be changed unless there has been a significant change in the status or responsibilities of the faculty member, for instance, the faculty member switches departments or takes on teaching duties in another department, takes on administrative responsibilities in a program, department, or college, etc., or if the needs of the program have changed.

3.2 Modifications to the Letter of Appointment will be noted in attachments to the initial Letter.

Appendix: Sample Letter of Appointment

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

Name: Joan Doe
Rank: Assistant Professor
Program: Music
Highest earned degree: Ph.D.
Is degree considered terminal for promotion? Yes (If not, specify what would be)
Tenure status: Tenure-track
Credit for previous experience towards tenure: None
If non-tenure-track, transition process and timing: N/A
If tenure-track, critical year (normally the 6th): 2025

Duties/Expectations

Percentages or descriptive terms should be used in this section to make clear the degree of emphasis to be placed on each area.

Teaching:

- Develop, maintain and teach appropriate MUS courses as assigned (include list, if appropriate)
- Participate in program and General Studies assessment
- Participate in curriculum updates / modifications as needed
- Provide accurate and effective academic student advising for up to 25 students

Professional Activity:

- Attend and present at a minimum of one professional conference each year
- Submit at least one article to a peer-reviewed journal every other year
- Maintain memberships in appropriate professional organizations (include list, if appropriate)
- Attend in-seat or electronic meetings of professional, technological and/or educational organizations as appropriate (specify frequency & include list of examples, as appropriate)
- Submit grant proposals (include frequency and list of examples, as appropriate)

Service:

- Serve on university / college and departmental committees
- Participate in recruitment and retention efforts (provide examples)
- Participate in campus and community engagement activities (provide examples)
- Support student and faculty activities (provide examples)

Faculty Member: _____
Chair / Program Dir: _____
Dean Approval: _____
Provost Approval: _____