

# BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

## DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy Number: VI: 04:01

Date: Update May 2017

Subject: **Policy Guidelines for Promotion**

The Faculty Handbook contains a section (p. 9.1) on faculty ranks. It addresses in specific terms qualifications for appointments to each of the regular academic ranks, qualified academic ranks, and secondary appointments. This document is an elaboration of those guidelines.

Policy Guidelines for Promotion  
General Statement

Three major promotion criteria are outlined in the Board of Trustees Policies:

1. Effectiveness in Teaching
2. 2. Scholarly Ability
3. 3. University and Public Service

Scholarly ability will be evaluated in the context of the approved departmental statement on research, scholarship, and creative activity. The other two criteria, mastery of subject matter and continued growth, are interrelated with the major criteria in the forms of sustained contributions and demonstrated excellence.

### **Instructor**

The rank of "instructor" should be used for a full-time academic appointment when a regular (i.e., not "qualified") appointment is appropriate but the candidate is minimally short of the requirements for an assistant professor, i.e., absent of a finished terminal degree or absent minimal experience in fields traditionally requiring a terminal master's degree plus experience prior to the assistant professorship. The initial appointment may be for two years, but reappointment should normally be for not more than one year. Initial appointments for those who are some years away from the terminal degree might better be made in a lecturer rank so that the faculty member can have sufficient time after the terminal degree, but prior to the determination of continuing status, in which to build scholarly credentials.

### **Promotion to Rank of Assistant Professor**

Assistant professor is the normal beginning rank for a faculty member with a terminal degree or its equivalent and less than five years' experience elsewhere. A person promoted to the rank has established himself or herself as being qualified in the discipline/profession. In addition, there is the expectation that the person has the potential for achieving excellence in the discipline/profession and for attaining the highest rank in the department. The "terminal degree" is a doctorate in most fields but may be the master's in certain applied and studio fields. Some departments may require a doctorate for certain posts and less than a doctorate for others, depending on the particular teaching and scholarly expectations.

- I. Teaching - The person demonstrates knowledge of the discipline/profession, skills of pedagogy, including clear and precise communication and methods of instruction, and interest in the educational achievements of students. The person should provide the following evidence: syllabi which reflect the use of contemporary sources; a good correlation of method, content, and student interest and need; student evaluation appropriate to the course objectives and academic standards of the institution; and other appropriate indices of teaching effectiveness.
- II. Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity - In the area of scholarship, research, and creative activity, competency is demonstrated by successfully completing a doctoral dissertation or project that is required for the terminal degree. In addition, there should be some indication from the individual that he or she will continue scholarly/creative work.
- III. Public, University, and Professional Service (including Academic Advising) - The person demonstrates a willingness to serve the department, college, university, community, and discipline/profession by participating on departmental program and service committees, and by involvement in community service activities and professional organizations. The person applies effective academic advising principles (see Appendix I) and communicates current SUNY, departmental, and college policies and practices that help students navigate college processes, understand degree requirements, follow a meaningful path from matriculation through graduation, and evaluate graduate and career options. The person should provide evidence of effective advising from departmental advisement assessment data or other appropriate indices of effective advisement.

### **Promotion to Rank of Associate Professor**

Promotion to associate professor requires both a high and a consistent level of performance on all Trustees' Policies criteria. Evaluation and recommendation for promotion to associate professor and for continuing appointment will normally take place within the same cycle of departmental, faculty, and administrative considerations. Although the Trustees' Policies do not permit continuing appointment being made contingent upon promotion to associate professor, or vice versa, a recommendation for one substantially reinforces a recommendation for the other.

- I. Teaching - The person's teacher effectiveness dossier evidences continued excellence in the classroom in the rank of assistant professor. This is to be done in the following ways:
  - a. By demonstrating that courses taught are in a continuous state of development and reflect extensive and current resources.
  - b. By successfully undertaking new course assignments; by designing, developing, and successfully teaching new courses not previously part of a department's offerings; and by successfully participating in the collegewide instruction programs.
  - c. By providing whole-class student evaluations of teaching effectiveness in a variety of courses over a reasonable period of time since appointment or promotion to the rank of assistant professor.
  - d. By confirmation of teaching excellence by departmental colleagues who are directly familiar with the person's work.
  - e. By demonstrating consistent and successful involvement with independent studies, research projects, final major student works, and/or theses.

- II. Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity - The person has advanced significantly in the area of scholarship beyond the level of assistant professor. This progress is demonstrated by providing the following evidence:
- a. Scholarly/creative work or performance record beyond that demonstrated for the terminal degree. (There should be evidence that the person promoted to the rank of associate professor has completed substantial work in new or continuing investigations that demonstrate a cohesive line of thought in the discipline.)
  - b. Scholarship, creative works, and performance record (documented in visual media or through reviews) should be national in scope. (Reputation of the journals, sources of reviews, and extent of the performance record will be an important consideration.)
  - c. Significant work or research conducted but not yet published can also be provided at this stage of professional development. (The significance of the creative research or work should be attested to by reputable and established individuals in the field. It is important in these cases to attain a number of objective evaluations that testify to the quality and the value of the research, product, or performance.)
  - d. Invitations (particularly if unsolicited) to give readings, presentations, exhibitions, demonstrations, or workshops at major conferences, institutes, or universities should also be included.
  - e. Grants, awards, and particularly the quality of the works resulting from them are important for promotion to associate professor.
- III. Public, University, and Professional Service (including Academic Advising) - The person ought to be able to demonstrate excellence on a continuous basis in the area of service during the period of tenure as assistant professor. This is demonstrated by providing the following evidence:
- a. Increased administrative responsibilities and major leadership roles. (The important point is that the assistant professor has consistently played an active and constructive role in departmental meetings and committees and in collegewide service, including recruiting and student service activities.)
  - b. Substantive letters of recommendation that cite and describe the success of specific contributions in providing initiative and direction in committee efforts.
  - c. Active role in the resolution of issues in professional and/or community organizations.
  - d. Applies effective academic advising principles (see Appendix I) during timely meetings with students and by sharing current SUNY, departmental, and college policies related to satisfactory academic progress toward graduation.

Those assistant professors already holding continuing appointments should be considered periodically for promotion, at least by their chairs and deans. Although not all of these assistant professors on continuing appointment can be expected to be promoted, chairs and deans should consider each case and discuss with the candidate whatever criteria are still being insufficiently met, to the end of facilitating the promotion to associate professor of those "tenured assistants" who are meeting our expectations for promotion and continuing status.

### **Promotion to Rank of Professor**

The promotion to professor should signal maturity and demonstrated excellence as scholar, teacher, and contributing member of the college. Promotion to professor demands substantial and sustained growth and evidence of contributions beyond the level upon which promotion to

associate professor was based. There are no hard and fast rules for time in rank or promotion to the next higher rank, and faculty may apply for promotion at any time.

- I. Teaching - The person must demonstrate continued excellence in the classroom in the rank of associate professor. This is to be done in the following ways:
  - a. By demonstrating that the courses taught are in a continuous state of development and provide students with extensive resources.
  - b. By successfully undertaking new course assignments and by designing, developing, and successfully teaching new courses not previously part of curricular offerings.
  - c. By providing whole-class evaluations in a variety of courses since promotion to the rank of associate professor.
  - d. Confirmation of teaching excellence by departmental colleagues who are directly familiar with the person's work.
  - e. Evidence of a major contribution to the department or collegewide instructional program.
  - f. External assessments/reviews of student accomplishments/creative works that have a direct link to the faculty member.
  
- II. Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity - Accomplishment in this area should be significantly greater than was expected to achieve the rank of associate professor. There should be evidence of new and more sophisticated levels of achievement. Successful research has led by now to publication or creative work that has been subject to further review. Furthermore, the significance of the person's accomplishment is attested to by peers and reputable figures in the field away from campus.
  - a. Recognition of the quality of the work (publications, works of art, or performance record) should be made evident and available in the form of reviews, comments, and citations in the works of others; direct letters of assessment by recognized authorities off campus solicited by the department and by the candidate; and such evidence as invitations from leaders in the field to contribute to publications, conferences, and exhibitions, to serve on editorial boards, to review books, etc. (Reputation of the place—journal, gallery, theater—in which the articles, research projects, poems, short stories, works, etc., have appeared will be an important consideration, as will the publishers or sponsors.)
  - b. Honors or awards serve to recognize the person's contributions for long-term work in the field and/or new interpretations and applications of research.
  
- III. Public, University, and Professional Service (including Academic Advising) - Accomplishment in this area should be significantly greater than was expected to achieve the rank of associate professor. Not only has the person consistently played a constructive role in departmental meetings, committee, and in collegewide faculty governance since the last promotion; he or she is now accepting leadership roles in the department, the college, and the profession. This is demonstrated by providing the following evidence:
  - a. Increased complexity in administrative duties (for example, the person has chaired a variety of committees, both inside and outside the department).
  - b. The excellence of his or her contributions to the committees is testified to by colleagues and can be illustrated in tangible ways.
  - c. The work/product of the committees is exemplary and significant to the college or organization.

- d. Applies effective academic advising principles (see Appendix I) during timely meetings with students and by sharing current SUNY, departmental, and college policies related to satisfactory academic progress toward graduation.

As a general guideline, from associate to professor could come as quickly as four or five years after promotion for the most exceptional faculty, i.e., those who are clearly outstanding on all promotional criteria. Most associate professors should aspire to and seek promotion to full professorial status from six to 10 years after their promotion to associate status. Those associate professors whose further growth is undistinguished or poorly balanced (i.e., very strong on some promotional criteria but undistinguished on others) may expect to serve longer as associate professor before promotion to professor. Some associate professors can be expected never to become professors.

## **Appendix I**

### **IV. ACADEMIC ADVISING AT BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE**

- a. Definition: Academic advisement at Buffalo State College is a relationship between students and advisers that prepares students to successfully navigate college processes; understand the parts and purpose of degree requirements; follow a meaningful, experience-rich path from matriculation to choosing majors to timely graduation; evaluate postgraduate career options; and become positive, contributing members of the Buffalo State alumni community.
- b. Mission Statement: Academic advisement serves as inspiration, motivation, and support for all students in their academic and professional goals as they develop as members of the Buffalo State community and transition to being active alumni leaders of a diverse society.
- c. Values Statement: The values associated with advising at SUNY Buffalo State resonate with the values of the college. Academic advising exemplifies the profitable learning that can occur outside of the classroom and the fulfillment that is found in intellectual discovery.
  - i. Access: We are committed to offering accurate, purposeful advising to help all students develop meaningful academic and career plans that address their goals in a timely manner.
  - ii. Diversity: We respect the individuality of our students. Advising services are available in a variety of ways that meet the diverse needs of our campus populations and help individuals realize their full potential.
  - iii. Service to Society: We foster habits required for critical thinking and social awareness so that students make informed choices consistent with their academic, career, and life goals.
  - iv. Integrity: We seek to build meaningful academic relationships between advisers and students in a process that demonstrates a commitment to professional ethics and moral integrity, and that thereby affords students the opportunity for self-reflection and authentic inquiry.
- d. Academic Advising Commitments: Academic advising at Buffalo State reflects the college's strategic position as a transformational learning environment focused on student success. Academic advisers and students at Buffalo State share responsibility for quality academic advisement. Students must commit to taking responsibility for actively, regularly, and honestly engaging with their academic advisers to develop their personal and professional plans. Buffalo State College will:

- i. provide students with advisers who care for students' experiences, respect their life choices and plans, and serve as advocates when problems need resolution;
- ii. mentor students as they explore and clarify their values, educational path, career plans, and life goals;
- iii. offer timely information and accurate guidance about degree requirements, extracurricular educational activities and research opportunities, policies, and procedures to assist students in navigating and maximizing their college experience;
- iv. guide students to maximize academic success, complete graduation requirements in a timely manner, and transition smoothly to future academic or professional work;
- v. conduct ongoing assessment of collegewide academic advising to maximize effectiveness.