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**Revision Responsibility:** Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**Responsible Executive Officer:** Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Source/Reference:** [TBR Policy 5:02:02:30](#)  
[TBR Policy 5:02:03:70](#)  
[TBR Policy 7:01:00:00](#)

## **PURPOSE**

To establish requirements for faculty academic rank and the criteria and procedures for promotion.

## **POLICY**

- I. Faculty academic ranks at Columbia State are Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. Rank for new faculty members is recommended at the time of employment by the Vice President of Academic affairs based on credentials and previous experience. The President must approve the rank upon appointment.
- II. Administrators and professional staff are not awarded academic rank. A faculty member holding academic rank who is promoted to an administrative position may negotiate retention of rank with the president. For a faculty member serving in a temporary administrative assignment, the time or prorated portion of the time spent in the administrative position, may be credited toward years of service for promotion.

Columbia State does not practice automatic internal awarding of promotion in academic rank. Recommendations for promotion in rank are based strictly on merit tempered by institutional and fiscal considerations. The decision to award promotion is made objectively, equitably, and impartially, and in recognition of past achievement and potential for greater accomplishments and responsibility in the future. The President is responsible for the Master-Staffing Plan of the College. In developing such a plan, the President will consider the fiscal impact of each promotion recommended to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR).

The faculty member must apply following the procedures outlined under the Procedures section of this policy and be recommended for promotion in rank by the President to the Chancellor. If approved, the Chancellor will forward the recommendations through the TBR Committee on Personnel to the Tennessee Board of Regents.

- III. To be considered for promotion in rank, a faculty member must:
  - A. Have an earned degree in an instructional discipline, or a related area, from an accredited institution as the minimum degree required for the rank;
  - B. Demonstrate effectiveness in teaching;

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- C. Demonstrate willingness to work effectively with colleagues to support the mission of the Institution and the common goals of both the Institution and the academic organizational unit;
  - D. Show evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity;
  - E. Demonstrate an appropriate level of performance relative to service/outreach and scholarship/creative activities/research; and,
  - F. Meet the minimum levels of education and equivalent work experience for the rank sought, as described below. Employment during summer terms and in part-time positions or time off during leaves of absence will not count toward minimum time requirements for work experience.
- IV. The following minimum levels of education and work experience distinguish among the academic ranks once employed. Promotion in rank must be sequential.

**INSTRUCTOR:**

1. Potential ability in teaching, service/outreach, and scholarship/creative activities/research.
2. As determined to be appropriate for the instructional discipline, either a minimum Associate or Baccalaureate degree for AAS and certificate programs, or an earned Master's degree or higher from an accredited institution in the discipline or related area for AA and AS programs.

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR:**

1. Documented evidence of ability in professional productivity in teaching, service/outreach, and scholarship/creative activities/research.
2. As determined to be appropriate for the instructional discipline, either a minimum Baccalaureate degree for AAS and certificate programs, or an earned Master's degree or higher from an accredited institution in the instructional discipline or related area.
3. Have completed all advisor training and maintained current advising skills.
4. Have been in rank as an Instructor at Columbia State for at least two (2) years.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR:**

1. Documented evidence of high quality professional productivity in teaching, service/outreach, and scholarship/creative activities/research.
2. As determined to be appropriate for the instructional discipline, either Baccalaureate degree for AAS and certificate programs, or an earned Master's degree or higher from an accredited institution in the discipline or related area for AAS and AS programs.
3. At least three (3) years in rank as Assistant Professor at Columbia State.
4. At least five (5) years collegiate teaching experience with a minimum of three (3) years at Columbia State.

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**PROFESSOR:**

1. Documented evidence of sustained high quality professional productivity in teaching, service/outreach, and scholarship/creative activities/research.
2. Earned doctorate or TBR recognized terminal degree\* from an accredited institution in the discipline or related area.
3. Documented evidence of teaching excellence and superior contribution to student development or superior scholarly or creative activity. The absence of such evidence may prevent advancement to the rank of Professor. Since there is no higher rank, promotion to Professor is taken with great care and requires a substantial level of achievement. This rank is not a reward for long service; rather it is recognition of superior achievement within the discipline, with every expectation of continuing contribution to the College and larger academic community.
4. At least seven (7) years collegiate level teaching experience, including three (3) years at Columbia State.
5. At least five (5) years in rank as an Associate Professor.
6. Evidence of a high degree of academic excellence and responsibility.

*\*Exceptions to the degree requirements may be made as specified in the Guidelines for Promotion by Exception to Professor Document of this policy and in TBR Policy 5:02:02:30.*

V. Promotion Criteria and Relative Weights

**A. Teaching (70%).**

Teaching applies to any manner in which information is imparted so that others may learn, and may include, but is not limited to, a variety of techniques including instruction, development, evaluation, and improvement of curriculum and courseware, and development of innovative approaches to teaching in order to increase overall effectiveness.

Teaching applies to the level of effectiveness within the classroom and may include, but is not limited to, the mastery and currency of discipline content, instructional and student assessment methodologies, classroom management techniques, the development, evaluation, and improvement of curriculum and courseware, and the development of innovation approaches to teaching.

- A. 1. Teaching Effectiveness: Effectiveness within the classroom as demonstrated by mastery and currency of discipline content, instructional and student assessment methodologies, and classroom management techniques. (60%)
- A. 2. Curriculum and Program Development: Contributions to enhancement of curricula as demonstrated by involvement in curriculum development, evaluation, and improvement of curriculum and articulation, and efforts to increase overall effectiveness of instruction at course/program level. (10%)

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**B. Service/Outreach (15%).**

Service applies to service within the community as defined by the College's role and mission; examples include service to the College, as in student advising and/or mentoring; and service within the bounds of the applicant's academic discipline and budgeted assignment.

B. 1. Service to Students: Effectiveness with students outside the classroom as demonstrated by involvement in advising, student assistance, and/or involvement in student extracurricular or class-related activities. (5-10%)

B. 2. College, Profession, and Community Service: Contributions to the College, profession/discipline, and community initiatives. (5-10%)

**C. Scholarship/Creative Activities/Research (5%).**

Research applies to actions taken to enhance the mastery of the subject/discipline and increased effectiveness and innovation in teaching. Scholarship/creative activities/research may include, but is not limited to, typical professional growth and development activities, disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities that focus on the boundaries of knowledge, community-based scholarship, creative activities (e.g., performances or other artistic creations), and the development of cutting-edge teaching approaches.

**D. Collegiality and Contribution to Goals (10%).**

Collegiality applies to the manner in which the faculty member exhibits evidence of good character, mature attitude, professional integrity, and willingness to work effectively with colleagues to support the mission of the Institution and the common goals of both the Institution and the academic area. A review of the Dean's evaluations and overall portfolio review provide evidence for this criterion.

*A more detailed description of these activities and the specific requirements for promotion are included in the **Guidelines for Consideration of Promotion in Rank Document**, Section IV under Portfolio Preparation and in TBR Policies 5:02:02:30 and 5:02:03:70.*

**PROCEDURES**

**I. Internal Review**

The internal review process is initiated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee through a memorandum to all faculty members, and conducted according to the procedures and calendar outlined in the **Guidelines for Consideration of Promotion in Rank Document** of this policy. Requests for promotion and supporting documentation are first reviewed independently by the appropriate Division Dean and the Division Promotion and Tenure Committee composed of tenured faculty. The Division Dean and the Division Promotion and Tenure Committee recommend approval or denial of the requests in writing to the Vice

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President for Academic Affairs, who, in turn, reviews all of the materials and makes written recommendations to the President. The President, after review of the recommendations from the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Division Dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, then recommends promotions to the TBR Chancellor.

## **II. Appeals**

A faculty member wishing to appeal the President's recommendation relative to his or her promotion request, must do so in writing by the time indicated in the calendar outlined in the *Guidelines for Consideration of Promotion in Rank Document*. The appeal must follow the appeal guidelines in the *Guidelines for Consideration of Promotion in Rank Document*.

## **III. External Review and Approval/Disapproval**

The TBR Chancellor and his or her staff review the President's recommendations and submit recommendations for promotion to the Committee on Personnel of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). The Committee's recommendation is then forwarded to the full Board of Regents for final approval.

## **IV. Approval/Disapproval**

Upon receiving notification of the TBR's decision from the Chancellor, the President notifies each faculty member in writing of the decision relative to his or her request.

## **V. Financial Remuneration**

Providing current fiscal year budget guidelines permit, and upon recommendation of the President after consideration of the fiscal impact of each promotion, base pay increases will be granted to promoted faculty members in the first academic year following approval of the promotion. The amount granted will be calculated as prescribed in the College salary structure established in accordance with TBR policies and guidelines.

## **VI. Records Retention and Disposition**

Once the review process is complete and TBR approves the promotion decision, each assembled portfolio goes to the Division Dean to return to its faculty owner. Documents related to the review process are maintained in the Academic Affairs Office. The Human Resources Office receives a letter of notification when the promotion is official in approval from TBR; this official letter becomes part of the faculty member's personnel file.

## **VII. No employee, even if permitted through [TBR Policy 7:01:00:00](#), is permitted to carry a handgun to any scheduled meeting related to promotion and/or tenure.**



**Policies and Procedures Manual**  
***Awarding of Academic Rank and Promotion in Rank***  
**Policy No. 05:12:00**  
**Page 6 of 6**

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*Revised: February 5, 1993; May 4, 2001 and approved by TBR staff on August 31, 2001 (revision of policy and new policy format); April 17, 2006 and approved by TBR staff on February 21, 2007 (to bring policy into compliance with TBR policy and procedures); February 20, 2009 (Error in assistant professor rank requirement corrected); September 21, 2011 (revised, new policy format and updated titles) April 20, 2017 and approved by TBR staff on June 12, 2017 (updated titles; revised to align with TBR policy and met accessibility standards); reviewed and accepted by Cabinet, approved and signed by the President upon approval by TBR, September 2021.*