

Proposed Change to Pre-Tenure Faculty Review Cycle

Current language:

2.2.3 Appointments

Before filling positions, the department chairperson shall consult with the faculty members of the department about the specific areas of teaching and research in which faculty expertise is to be sought and about the rank at which the appointment should be made. After candidates have been screened and interviewed, voting members shall again be consulted to secure their opinions on the relative qualifications of the candidates. Large departments may substitute a departmental personnel committee for this purpose. The chairperson shall forward the recommendation of the department including dissenting opinions, if any, to the dean of the college.

Initial full-time appointments are at the rank of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, as appropriate. The rank of instructor is reserved for persons who are working for a terminal degree or equivalent professional certification in their fields, who have not completed all of the requirements, and who are expected to complete those requirements within two years. Instructors must be promoted to the rank of assistant professor within three years of the date of initial appointment or else not be reappointed for a fourth year. Initial appointment at one of the professor ranks is appropriate for persons holding a terminal degree or equivalent professional certificate. In the absence of this, equivalent scholarship may be recognized. Persons who hold a terminal degree or equivalent professional certification may not be appointed as instructors.

The initial appointment at Lehigh is normally for one year as an instructor, for two years as an assistant professor, for three years as an associate professor or professor, and for one year at a visiting or adjunct rank.

Proposed Language:

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Rationale:

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Personnel Committee provide the following rationale to support this change:

- This recommended change enables more effective timing for the reappointment review. It is felt that the two-year review—which starts in the Fall of the pre-tenured faculty member’s second year only--offers little time and information upon which to evaluate progress. Moving to a review in year 3 would offer the faculty member a more sufficient amount of time (2+ years) on campus to launch their research program.
- A three year review further provides pre-tenured faculty more time to address reappointment feedback prior to tenure and promotion review.
- With the impending expansion of the size of the university faculty, there will be increased demand on departments, colleges, and the provost’s office to conduct reappointment, tenure, and promotion reviews. Thus, we are proposing a change for assistant professor appointments from 2 years (i.e., requiring two reappointment reviews prior to tenure and promotion review) to 3 years (i.e., requiring one reappointment review prior to tenure and promotion review).
- This recommended change does not involve any alteration to annual reviews of pre-tenure faculty (i.e., pre-tenure faculty will still receive annual performance reviews each year prior to tenure and promotion review).
- This recommended change is consistent with appointment and review procedures at larger universities.