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## Academic Staff Promotion Policy

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**Department Policy Number**

040 002

**Effective Date**

Revised May 2002

**Purpose**

This policy outlines the promotion process for AUFA Academic staff members.

**Definitions****Agreement**

Terms and Conditions of Agreement between The Governors of Athabasca University (the Board) and Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA).

**Section(s)**

Section(s) referenced from the Agreement.

**Committee**

Promotion Review Committee.

**Confidential Personal File**

The staff member's permanent confidential file maintained in Human Resources.

**Temporary Personal File**

A temporary file containing documents relating to the promotion review, maintained during the review and destroyed after the period of appeal.

**Supporting Documentation**

This includes a letter of application, an up-to-date curriculum vitae, a statement defining eligibility for promotion (direct reference shall be made to the guidelines in Section 3.8 and Criteria in section 3.7.3 of the AUFA/The Governors of Athabasca University (the Board) Terms and Conditions), and any elaborating statements or information the candidate wishes to provide.



## **Policy**

### **1.0 General**

The following procedures are based on key processes contained in Sections 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 of the Agreement. Where these procedures are inconsistent with the Agreement, the latter shall prevail.

The Agreement provides for the following:

- 1.1 Academic staff members holding a regular appointment and who have completed at least two years of their probation period are eligible for promotion. Academic Coordinators are not eligible for promotion (Section 3.6.2).
- 1.2 Academic staff members whose probation period has been extended are not eligible to apply for promotion.
- 1.3 Where a decision on tenure review is pending, the President reserves the right to withhold his approval regarding promotion.
- 1.4 An eligible staff member may be recommended for promotion, or may request promotion in writing to the appropriate Executive Officer.
- 1.5 The Promotion Review Committee is comprised of three (3) staff members of a rank at least equivalent to the rank to which promotion is being sought. One Committee member is chosen by the candidate, one by the appropriate Executive Officer and the third by the agreement of the two thus nominated.

### **2.0 Criteria**

- 2.1 The essential criteria for promotion are given in Section 3.7.3. In applying these criteria, the Committee is directed to consider the guidelines in Sections 3.8.1 and 3.7.2. These guidelines establish minimum formal requirements in several areas. Meeting these requirements establishes basic eligibility for promotion; it does not eliminate the need for thorough evaluation of the substance of performance under the criteria in Section 3.7.3.
- 2.2 Section 3.7.3 establishes three general criteria for promotion. Subsection 3.7.3.(a), Academic and Professional Effectiveness, clearly directs the Committee to consider the actual performance of the candidate in the position(s) held. Subsection 3.7.3.(b) Research and Creative Activity, requires in somewhat different ways evidence of professional growth and creativity. Subsection 3.7.3 (c), Service to the University and Society, establishes the need for wider participation in University affairs and in contributions related to one's profession in the community.
- 2.3 It is the fundamental responsibility of the Committee to marshal and consider such evidence, as it requires to judge performance in each of these areas.



### 3.0 Procedures and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 The Human Resources Officer:

- a) shall receive from the appropriate Executive Officer, a copy of the candidate's letter of application, all supporting documentation, and where applicable, the names of the two external referees;
- b) shall prepare, on behalf of the appropriate executive officer, the letters to the External Referees and provide them with any supporting documentation provided by the staff member requesting promotion, the candidate's curriculum vitae, the appropriate Sections (3.6, 3.7, 3.8) of the Agreement, the staff member's current role description, and a current Athabasca University Calendar. The referees shall be informed that under normal circumstances their response will be confidential, however, in the event of an appeal they will become public record. The candidate shall receive copies of these letters;
- c) shall ensure that a separate Temporary Personal File containing relevant documents is established and is available to the Committee, including:
  - i) a copy of the candidate's Confidential Personal File
  - ii) the candidate's current role description
  - iii) the candidate's current curriculum vitae
  - iv) all supporting documentation submitted by the candidate
  - v) all correspondence to and from external referees
  - vi) the employment history of the candidate at Athabasca University including date of appointment, rank held and designation (references to salary removed)
  - vii) an up-to-date performance assessment
- d) shall be the collecting point for information supplied to the Committee;
- e) shall set up or assist the Chair to set up Committee meetings;
- f) shall attend all meetings of the Committee;
- g) shall prepare the letters to internal referees and send them out according to the schedule set out by the Committee;



- h) shall make available to internal referees, for viewing in Human Resources, the candidate's curriculum vitae and all supporting documentation supplied by the candidate;
- i) shall provide the candidate with a list of documents reviewed and persons solicited;
- j) shall ensure that the Committee's summary report, the recommendation of the appropriate Executive Officer and the decision of the President are placed on the candidate's Confidential Personal File;
- k) shall ensure that all contents of the Temporary Personal file are destroyed after the appeal period.

### 3.2 The Candidate:

- a) should review his/her file in Human Resources prior to requesting promotion;
- b) shall request promotion in writing to his/her appropriate Executive Officer. A request for promotion must include the letter of application, all supporting documentation, and the name of the candidate's external referee (if applicable). It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that sufficient copies (three) of the supporting documentation is provided.
- c) shall nominate an external referee (when required). The external referee should be at a level equal to or superior to the rank being sought, in the same discipline or profession.
- d) shall nominate a staff member for the Committee, holding a rank at a level equal to or superior to the rank being sought;
- e) may suggest, via the Human Resources Officer, the names of colleagues to be consulted on his/her behalf;
- f) shall submit any additional documentation to the Committee through Human Resources.

### 3.3 Committee

The nominees of the appropriate Executive Officer and the candidate shall determine the third member of the Committee who shall take the Chair. The Committee:

- a) shall determine basic eligibility for promotion in accordance with the guidelines (Sections 3.8 and 3.7.2);
- b) shall solicit and review in confidence the written comments of at least three (3) academic staff members who are familiar with or affected by various aspects of the



candidate's work. For the rank of Associate Professor or above, at least five (5) academic staff members shall be approached for comments. This may or may not include staff members suggested by the appropriate Executive Officer and/or candidate. The Committee may seek further written comments from more staff if it is in the Committee's judgment appropriate to do so

Subordinate support staff may request to make verbal comments to the committee in lieu of a written submission.

- c) shall give all referees requested to make comment a minimum of one (1) weeks' notice to prepare and submit such comments;
- d) shall hold a second meeting to review in confidence all written comments received and any additional information added to the Temporary Personal File;
- e) may interview any referee to clarify written comments submitted;
- f) when the Committee interviews or receives verbal comments from a referee, the referee's comments shall be recorded in detail and signed by all members of the Committee and the referee attesting to the accuracy of the record;
- g) may see further comments from additional referees if it is, in the Committee's judgment, appropriate to do so;
- h) shall return any unsigned submissions (email responses are acceptable);
- i) may interview the supervisor or Centre chair on the basis of the assessments;
- j) may choose to meet with the candidate to gain further clarification; or may present in writing to the candidate any areas significant enough to affect the judgement of the committee, allowing at least one (1) week for the candidate to respond in writing or in person as the candidate wishes;
- k) shall present its findings to the appropriate Executive Officer in the form of a written summary report;
- l) each individual Committee member shall ensure confidentiality is maintained, including Committee decisions and recommendations.

#### 3.4 The Appropriate Executive Officer:

- a) shall acknowledge all requests for promotion in writing and inform Human Resources;
- b) for promotions to Associate Professor and above:
  - i) shall select a second External Referee



- ii) shall ensure that the External Referees are at a level equal to or superior to the rank being sought, in the same discipline or profession as the candidate, and shall advise Human Resources;
- c) shall collect the responses of the External Referees and forward all correspondence related to the external review to Human Resources for placement in the Temporary Review File;
- d) for the internal review, shall strike a Committee composed of three (3) staff members of rank at least equivalent to the rank to which promotion is being sought, shall choose one member of the Committee, and shall advise Human Resources accordingly;
- e) shall receive the results of the Committee's review and advise the President either for or against the promotion of the staff member;
- f) shall notify the candidate (copied to the supervisor where applicable) in writing of the nature of his/her recommendation to the President, together with a copy of the Committee's summary report within six (6) months of the original request for promotion (Section 3.6.4). Where the recommendation is against promotion, the Executive Officer shall provide the candidate with an indication of areas where further progress is required;
- g) shall forward a copy of his/her recommendation together with the Committee's summary report to Human Resources.

### 3.5 The President:

After reviewing the findings of the Committee and considering the recommendation of the appropriate Executive Officer, the President:

- a) shall advise the candidate in writing of his/her decision and, if the promotion is approved, shall advise the candidate of the effective date of the promotion in accordance with Section 3.6.7
- b) shall ensure a copy of his/her decision, together with all other documentation, is forwarded to Human Resources.

## 4.0 Access to Temporary Personal File

- 4.1 All Committee members, Human Resources, the appropriate Executive Officer and the President have access to the candidate's Temporary Personal File.
- 4.2 The appellant and respondent and their respective representatives have access to the Temporary personal file in the event of an appeal.



## **5.0 Appeal**

- 5.1 A candidate has the right to appeal a recommendation of an Executive Officer with respect to a staff member's promotion in accordance with the appeal process in Section 9.5.
- 5.2 The candidate shall provide the President with written notification within ten (10) working days of receipt of the decision.

### **Approved By**

Executive Group, June 2002

### **Amended Date/Motion No.**

Revised September 1, 2001

### **Related References, Policies and Procedures**

[Appeals With Respect to Probation, Salaries, and Academic Promotion Policy](#)

### **Applicable Legislation/Regulation**

[AUFA/The Governors of Athabasca University \(the Board\) Terms and Conditions Agreement](#)  
[Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

### **Responsible Position/Department**

This policy is maintained and administered by Human Resources. For further information, please contact the Human Resources Advisor or the Employment Services Advisor. Contact information is available on the Human Resources web-site at: <http://intra.athabascau.ca/hr/dept.htm>

### **Keywords**