

Criteria for Promotion of Fixed Term Faculty
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

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This document lays out principles for assessing promotion of fixed term faculty in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR). This document applies to persons holding the title of assistant or associate professor, fixed term (FT). Some of CANR's FT faculty are members of the Union of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (UNTF). This document applies to both UNTF and non-UNTF individuals. The evaluation of FT faculty is broadly similar to tenure system faculty, with two important caveats.

CAVEAT 1: Assignment Differences. The CANR has a long tradition of strongly considering individual teaching, research, outreach/extension, leadership/service assignment percentages and disciplinary/topical differences in assessing whether faculty member merits promotion. The output profile of a high performing person who has a 75% research assignment is expected to be different than that of an individual with a 25% research assignment. It is common for a FT to have an assignment that is skewed more strongly into research, teaching, or extension than is usual for tenure system faculty. The fact that the assignment is heavily or completely loaded into one area should not be a barrier to promotion. Reviewers should take into account that there may be fewer opportunities for synergies across the missions among faculty with a very heavy assignment in one area. Similarly, some CANR fixed term faculty are hired overseas to work on MSU projects overseas and have fewer opportunities to network with faculty or take part in activities on the MSU campus. Tenure system faculty are automatically approved to advise graduate students while FT faculty must ask permission (see the MSU Graduate School web site for the approval process and the potential for blanket five-year approval).

CAVEAT 2: Funding Differences. Another consideration in promotion of FT faculty is funding source for the base salary. In the CANR, FT faculty may be supported by regular tuition dollars, legislatively appropriated funds, online or off-campus courses, grants, contracts, fees, or a combination of sources. In preparing promotion packages for FT faculty, the candidate and their unit leader should provide information on the source(s) of funds paying the person's base salary. The output of a person raising a high proportion of their own salary through program development is expected to be different from that of a person who has their salary provided by MSU. For example, many grants are capped at a maximum dollar value. All else equal, a self-funded faculty member might therefore support fewer graduate students even if they have the same total grant activity as a tenure system faculty member working on similar research topics. Finally, FT faculty may have less start up support or more limited lab space than other faculty.

The following are criteria that can be applied with the above-mentioned caveats in mind.

If there is a **research** assignment:

- Is there evidence that the individual is contributing to the body of knowledge in their field, consistent with persons holding the rank sought under similar appointments?
- Is there evidence that the individual is serving as a quality mentor for more junior researchers?
- Is there evidence of uptake of the individual's work, either by the discipline or by practitioners?
- If the position is externally funded, are funders supportive of promotion?
- Are DEI approaches appropriate to the research?

If there is a **teaching** assignment:

- Is there evidence of student satisfaction?
- Does the candidate integrate DEI into their teaching?
- Are teaching loads consistent with the assignment percentage?
- Is there innovation in teaching methods?
- Are the students achieving learning outcome goals?
- Are there outputs in the scholarship of teaching and learning?
- If the position is self-funded, are revenue trends consistent with promotion?

If there is an **outreach/extension** assignment:

- Is there evidence of engagement with stakeholders?
- Is there engagement with underserved groups?
- If there is an MSUE assignment, is there evidence of engagement with field staff?
- Are there tangible outputs associated with the assignment, e.g., assessments, bulletins, conferences, programs, curricula, workshops, podcasts, policy briefs?
- If the position is externally funded, are funders supportive of promotion?

If there is a substantial (>10%) **leadership/service** assignment:

- Are programs under the individual's leadership stable or growing?
- Is there innovation in program design or support?
- Has the candidate successfully instituted process efficiencies?
- Has the candidate advanced DEI?
- Is there evidence of external funding support?
- Are program staff (if any) supported and mentored?
- If the program being led is externally funded, are funders supportive of promotion?

Candidates for promotion to Associate or Full Professor, Fixed Term, are encouraged to review the CANR guidelines for promotion, to review their unit's and CANR's annual calendar for promotion activities and engage their mentors (unit leader and peer mentors) before embarking on a request for promotion. The unit leader and peer mentors will have insights on disciplinary standards associated with promotion.