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FACULTY PROMOTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Adopted by Academic Senate of AUCA

FACULTY PROMOTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PREFACE

The Faculty Promotion Policy and Procedures (Policy) regulates the promotion of faculty in the American University of Central Asia (AUCA). The purpose of this Policy is to recognize the achievements and professional development of AUCA faculty by rewarding success and building mutual trust and loyalty between faculty and the University.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy is to establish standards and procedures to be used in the promotion of faculty at AUCA.

PRINCIPLES

This Policy is based on principles of transparency and fairness to all faculty members at AUCA.

The purpose of promotion is to encourage the development of high performing faculty who contribute to AUCA's mission in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Promotion should reflect AUCA's recognition of diversity in the ways that faculty contribute to the University's mission and the wide arena of academic work appropriate to that mission. Applicants for promotion will be expected to demonstrate their contributions to teaching, research, and service to their program/department, the University, and the greater academic community.

Promotion will reflect the expectation that as faculty progress through the levels of academic appointment there will be an increase in:

- the quality and effectiveness of their teaching and their contribution to all aspects of teaching and learning;
- the quality and impact of their research output, including research related to teaching and learning;
- the quality and level of contribution of their service in their discipline, the University, and the community.

AUTHORITY FOR PROMOTIONS

Promotions of the faculty are made by the President and VPAA, under the authority of the Board of Trustees, following recommendation by the Faculty Senate.

FACULTY POSITIONS

The faculty appointments available at AUCA are to the positions of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor.

ELIGIBILITY

All employees with a faculty appointment at AUCA are eligible to apply for promotion. This includes full-time, part-time, and administrative personnel. Part-time and administrative faculty will be evaluated based on the same criteria as full-time faculty. Administrative personnel who apply for promotion must have a faculty appointment and must be engaged in teaching at least one course per academic year. Applications for promotion may only be submitted following two consecutive semesters of teaching experience at AUCA.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

General Criteria

Applicants for promotion are expected to have made contributions in three broad areas: teaching, research, and service.

Historically, AUCA is a teaching university. Initiatives have been undertaken to encourage and enable more faculty research.

All applicants must demonstrate a sustained and effective level of performance, appropriate to their academic position in all three areas, and outstanding achievement in one of these areas in which they indicate they have made the most significant contribution.

Teaching includes courses at all levels of the curriculum; work with students in the classroom and outside of it; tutorials, independent studies, orientation, internships, and senior projects; advising; innovation in course design and pedagogical methods; and preparation and administration of admissions tests, department tests, and state exam commissions.

Research consists of scholarly work (not limited to written work). The evaluation of research involves both work done prior to the evaluation and plans for future work that demonstrates an active scholarly engagement with the discipline at the professional level.

Service should be unpaid and is understood to be contributions beyond the expected contract related duty assignments. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they meet the promotion criteria based on activities in the period since their hire date or last promotion at AUCA.

Specific Criteria

Assistant Professor

Applicants for promotion or appointment to the position of Assistant Professor must have:

- Master's degree, Specialist or higher degree in their field;
- Minimum 3 years of teaching experience
- demonstrated a good performance in teaching;
- demonstrated service to the university and/or greater academic community and/or community in general;
- currently active in peer reviewed scholarship or research/ publications. At least one published paper in peer-reviewed journal.

Associate Professor

Applicants for promotion or appointment to the position of Associate Professor must have:

- PhD, PhD equivalent or higher degree, or terminal degree in their field;
- Minimum 6 years of teaching experience commensurate with the position of Associate Professor;
- significant peer reviewed scholarly publications (or equivalent). At least 2 published papers in international peer-reviewed journal (indexed in Scopus, Web of Science or equivalent).
- demonstrated service to the university and/or greater academic community and/or community in general;

Professor

Applicants for promotion to the position of Professor must have:

- PhD, PhD equivalent or higher degree, or terminal in their field;
- Minimum 10 years of teaching experience commensurate with the position of Professor;
- major internationally recognized and peer reviewed scholarly publications. At least 5 published papers in international peer-reviewed journal (indexed in Scopus, Web of Science or equivalent).
- demonstrated excellent research and other scholar activity appropriate with the position of Professor, including significant publications expected of faculty holding the position of Professor;
- demonstrated service to the department, university, and/or greater academic community;
- demonstrated involvement in assisting junior faculty research and teaching.

PROMOTION PROCEDURE

The procedure for promotions includes the necessary documents to be submitted, the dates of submission and timeline for the promotion process, the manner in which each step in the promotion process shall be done, the responsibilities of the applicant and the reviewing bodies, and the appeal process.

General Rules

Application files can only be used in the year of submission.

Promotion files are kept in a specific folder of the FSPC on AUCA server in an electronic form during the time the candidate is employed at AUCA.

Incomplete applications submitted from an individual and department shall be dismissed and shall not be considered. Following such dismissal, the applicant may make application in the following academic year.

It is the applicant's and applicant department's responsibility to verify and provide evidence of service to the Department, University, greater academic community, nation, and/or world in a descriptive document.

All application documents should be submitted in paper and electronic forms by the appropriate date.

In order to ensure transparency and due process, applicants for promotion may not communicate with any member of the Promotions Committee, Faculty Senate, Appeals Committee, or President outside of the formal process established in this Policy. Any violation of this requirement or attempt to otherwise circumvent this policy shall result in the application for promotion being denied and dismissed.

Applicants may withdraw their application at any time during the application process.

Promotion Dates

Applications for promotion will be accepted from the beginning of academic year until March 1. Applications will be reviewed by the Promotions Committee between March 1 and March 20. Applications will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate between March 20 and May 1. Applications will be reviewed and acted on by the President no later than June 15.

Documents Necessary for Application

Letters of application:

- Applicant's letter to the Department
- Department's letter to the Committee with minutes of the faculty meeting

Current CV with a list of publications

Certified copies of terminal degree diplomas

Copies of all publications submitted for review

Proof of excellence in teaching:

- Course evaluations: student and peer-review

Each application file must include the above materials and may also contain other supporting evidence, such as special awards or recognitions, course materials developed or other appropriate documents.

Application Steps

1. Applicant

The Applicant is responsible for submitting to his or her Department a formal application letter requesting promotion together with all required and supporting documents.

2. Department

Following receipt of a complete application, the Department shall initiate a review of the application. The Department shall be responsible for the collection of and substantive review of the application file and shall ensure completeness of the application before its final consideration.

The Department shall meet with the Applicant, and shall review and make a decision to recommend approval or denial of the application using the general and specific criteria listed above. The decision of the Department shall be memorialized in a letter to the Promotions Committee.

Departmental Letter

The departmental letter must demonstrate why and how the Applicant is or is not a good candidate for promotion. The departmental letter should contain an evaluation of the Applicant's teaching, research, and service contributions in a narrative form, and the results of the departmental vote on the Applicant. If there is a substantial internal disagreement in the Department regarding a candidacy, such disagreement should be reflected in the departmental letter.

If the departmental vote on the applicant is negative, the department letter should explain the reasons for the negative vote. A version of this letter must also be made available to the Applicant.¹

¹ In most cases, the Applicant should receive an unedited version of the departmental letter explaining the reasons for the denial of promotion. However, there may be cases in which the Department wishes to produce a somewhat different letter for the Applicant. If this is the case, the text of the Department's letter to the unsuccessful Applicant should be approved by the Promotion Committee.

3. Promotion Committee

The Promotion Committee (Standing Committee of the Senate) bears the responsibility for a thorough substantive review of the Applicant's application. Each file shall be reviewed to ensure that the file represents a faculty member ready for promotion. As part of its review, the Committee must solicit at least one external review of the Applicant's file by a faculty member in the Applicant's field of study. While the Committee does not have to accept the recommendations of this external reviewer, it must take them into account in its letter to the Faculty Senate.

The Committee shall permit the Applicant to appear before the Committee, and shall review and make a decision to recommend approval or denial of the application using the general and specific criteria listed above. The decision of the Committee shall be memorialized in a letter to the Faculty Senate.

Promotions Committee Letter

If the Committee wishes to recommend an Applicant for promotion, it shall forward the Applicant's full file to the Faculty Senate together with a letter supporting the Applicant and explaining the reasons for its support. If there is a substantial internal disagreement in the Committee regarding a candidacy, such disagreement should be reflected in the Committee's letter.

If the Committee's vote on an Applicant is negative, the Committee's letter should explain the reasons for the negative vote. A version of this letter must also be made available to the Applicant.²

The Committee shall submit the Committee's letter together with the complete application file to the Faculty Senate no later than the last week of March.

4. Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate is responsible for a procedural review of the application guaranteeing that each Applicant received due consideration in the transparent and fair manner established in this Policy. The Senate does not conduct a substantive evaluation of the candidacy and cannot overturn the vote of the Promotions Committee unless it finds procedural grounds for doing so.

The Faculty Senate shall submit its decision in the written form together with the complete application to the President no later than the last week of April.

² In most cases, the Applicant should receive an unedited version of the Promotion Committee's letter explaining the reasons for the denial of promotion. However, there may be cases in which the Committee wishes to produce a somewhat different letter for the Applicant. If this is the case, the text of the Committee's letter to the unsuccessful Applicant should be approved by the Faculty Senate.

5. AUCA VPAA and President

The President of AUCA and VPAA have final review authority, granted by the Board of Trustees. Their decisions are final. The President and VPAA will notify the Human Relations office of AUCA, which will inform the Applicant about their decision in the written form.

If the President and VPAA choose to overturn a positive vote for promotion on the part of the Faculty Senate, they must provide a detailed letter explaining the reasons for denial to the Faculty Senate, the Promotion Committee, and the Applicant.

Appeal Process

Denial of promotion on any level will stop the Applicant's application from moving forward through the normal promotion steps. All appeals from a denial of promotion shall be heard by the Promotion Appeals Committee (PAC). Denials may only be appealed by submitting a written letter of appeal to the PAC within ten (10) business days following receipt of the letter of denial by the applicant.

The letter of appeal shall state in detail the reasons for the appeal and must be accompanied by substantial documented support. The responsibility for filing an appeal rests on the Applicant.

The PAC shall have five members consisting of the President of the University and four AUCA faculty members selected by the Faculty Senate and announced at the beginning of each academic year. The PAC shall be chaired by the President of the University.

An appeal may be based on substantive or procedural grounds or bias. If the appeal is on substantive or procedural grounds, the PAC is charged with fact checking for adherence to the policies stated herein. If the appeal is based on bias (particularly academic bias), the PAC is charged with establishing the supporting facts and indicators of bias. Since bias is more likely to be part of the substantive levels (i.e. department and committee), the PAC may call a person, or persons to interview as part of the decision process.

The Applicant shall have the right to address the PAC. Such presentations shall be limited in scope to the specific errors in procedure or judgment alleged in the appeal. New subject areas, not addressed in the appeal, may not be introduced.

The PAC may decide that it needs additional information or testimony and may call appropriate witnesses. It shall confine any such hearings to those questions or issues specified in the appeal.

After reviewing the record and hearing testimony, the PAC shall take one of the following actions and shall forward its recommendation to the President:

- vote to support the appellant's promotion;
- vote to deny the appeal;
- vote to remand the application for reconsideration.

If the PAC decides that the appellant's file should be reconsidered at a prior level of review, it shall remand the application together with a written explanation of its decision to the appropriate level for reconsideration.

Breaks in Employment

If a faculty member leaves the employment of the university, time in position and time of teaching experience begins on the first day of his or her return to employment. Other criteria, such as time at the university and total years of teaching, are cumulative.

Publications and research accomplished during any break in employment may be used for promotions.

Honorary Degrees

All honorary and emeritus degrees will be by vote of the Faculty Senate and presented to the President who will submit to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Effective Date

The Policy was adopted by the AUCA Faculty Senate on February 2, 2015. Any revisions to the Policy become effective five days after the date of approval by the AUCA Faculty Senate.

Updated by the AUCA Faculty Senate

On March 11, 2016

Updated by the AUCA Faculty Senate

On February 8, 2018

Amended by the AUCA Academic

Senate On October 13, 2022