

## Appointments, Rank, and Tenure

### A. Faculty Appointments

Appointments to the faculty are made by the President of the University upon recommendation of the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the appropriate Division Chair, discipline and other faculty. Processes and procedures involved in the selection and interviewing of prospective faculty candidates are developed and implemented by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the Human Resources Director and the Division Dean or Chair, and are approved by the President.

### B. Initial Faculty Appointment

Initial appointment to the faculty shall be made at a rank consistent with the level of preparation (earned degrees) and teaching or other related academic experience, recognized and relevant certifications, and related professional experience. Appointments to the faculty of the University are probationary, tenure, or special appointments, excluding coaches and administrators in their capacities as coaches or administrators, as outlined in SBHE policy 605.1.

Probationary appointments are renewable annually and yield credit toward tenure. The initial probationary appointment indicates the number of years (if any) that are credited towards earning tenure. The University may credit up to three years in transfer toward tenure from full-time service at other institutions. A determination with respect to the number of years of experience accepted in transfer from other institutions of higher education will be made at the time of the initial appointment. Any previous service credited towards tenure must have been full-time service at the rank of instructor or above.

Initial appointment with tenure occurs only in exceptional circumstances, as outlined below.

Special appointments, whether part-time or full-time, are made for a limited time (normally one year) and based upon scheduling requirements, enrollments, anticipated retirements and other institutional considerations as determined by the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. These appointments are non-tenure track positions and do not involve either tenure credit or status unless otherwise identified in the initial appointment contract.

The **Faculty Mentor Program** at Mayville State University is designed to provide new faculty members with a resource for success and to be productive members of the MSU Community. Providing new faculty with a mentor is one of the mechanisms for faculty to gain positive and corrective feedback about their performance, both in and out of the classroom. Incoming faculty members are assigned a faculty mentor in accordance with M605.1.1.B.

### C. Faculty Qualifications

Mayville State University considers the terminal degree and/or professional experience, and professional certification and licensure of the utmost importance when recruiting and hiring faculty. Significant professional credibility is brought by the faculty member with the completed terminal degree and is highly regarded by the university and external entities. The research and study required for this degree contribute to the depth and breadth of knowledge brought to the classroom. Professional experience, certifications, and licensure offer depth of knowledge and credibility which,

in certain fields, may be considered of equivalent value to the terminal degree. The terminal degree and professional experience are beneficial to the student and the university.

- The Terminal Degree as a general principle is required for tenure.
  - Faculty hired without the terminal degree receive a rank of instructor and meet with the division chair to develop an education plan during the first year of service. The education plan is provided to the Office of Academic Affairs.
  - Faculty hired with a terminal degree to be completed is documented on the letter of appointment and/or contract with no tenure or promotion to occur without completion of the terminal degree.
  - Established terminal degree requirements and/or any additional requirements such as certifications, licensure, or professional degrees within their academic area for faculty to be eligible for tenure and promotion are as follows.
    - Full-time faculty teaching in the Divisions of Education, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Science and Mathematics are required to obtain a doctorate prior to applying for tenure status.
    - Full-time faculty teaching in the Divisions of Business, and Health, Physical Education and Recreation are encouraged to attain a doctorate degree but require a master's degree in the field, which is considered a terminal degree for tenure and promotion.
    - For any Division, additional certification, licensure, and/or employment experience may be considered for faculty with a master's degree. This is particularly true of faculty specializations within academic programs wherein such certification, licensure, and/or experience is valued as equivalent to a terminal degree by related employers, industry, or program accreditors.
  - Faculty hired with a master's degree and K-12 teaching experience are not customarily eligible for tenure. These faculty may hold an academic rank of instructor or assistant professor on a special contract.
  - Academic rank shall include four categories: 1) Instructor; 2) Assistant Professor; 3) Associate Professor; 4) Full Professor.
  - The ranks of Associate Professor and Full Professor are reserved for faculty in probationary or tenured positions.
  - Any faculty with special appointments may hold the title of Instructor or Assistant Professor. In addition, faculty with special appointments, either full-time or part-time, may hold the title of Professor of Practice, in recognition of extensive professional work experience or special expertise.
  - MSU adheres to the Higher Learning Commission guidelines (November 2023) for the determination of qualified faculty. The following is used as the basis for determining minimum qualifications.
    - Graduate faculty hold a terminal degree within the instructional content area.
    - A master's degree or higher in the content area or a master's degree with a reasonable amount of graduate coursework, generally 18 credits, in the discipline or subfield in which they teach undergraduate coursework.

- Equivalent experience may be used as a basis for determining minimum qualifications either alone or in conjunction with graduate coursework. Classroom instructional experience does not alone constitute equivalent experience.
- Adjunct faculty and faculty at other entities teaching college courses for Mayville State University, including dual credit, must meet minimum faculty qualifications.
- Adjunct faculty are unranked part-time, non-tenure track faculty employed by MSU as temporary faculty.
  - MSU assigns a full-time faculty member as a mentor to work closely with the adjunct on curriculum development and other aspects of the course.
  - The MSU Mentor assists the on-campus or online adjunct as needed and conducts a formal evaluation at least once a year.
  - Dual credit faculty are required to attend an orientation in the summer. New faculty attend an orientation before the fall semester. An online orientation is available. All adjunct and dual credit faculty are invited to MSU Faculty Professional Development workshops and events.
- D. The title of Professor of Practice may be given in making an initial special appointment or in renewing a special appointment by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, in consultation with the division chairperson and/or search committee chair.

#### **E. Tenure or Permanent Appointment**

The purpose of tenure as defined by the State Board of Higher Education is to assure both academic freedom (NDUS Policy 605.1) and a degree of economic security (NDUS Policy 605.3) to make the academic profession attractive to people of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are extremely important to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society. Succession to tenure is not automatic. Tenure eligible faculty will be granted tenure only after demonstrating that they qualify via the process of evaluation of the Division Chair, the Tenure, Promotion and Awards Committee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President of the University, and the Board of Higher Education as shown below. All tenured faculty will undergo a post-tenure review within three years of receiving tenure, and at least every five years subsequently.

#### **F. Eligibility for Tenure**

Tenure may be granted by the Board of Higher Education, upon appropriate recommendations, to any full-time tenure track faculty member with the rank of Instructor or above. The faculty member must have completed six years of full-time service to Mayville State University in a tenure track position at the rank of Instructor or above. Faculty members are eligible to apply for tenure in their sixth year of their probationary appointment to become effective in their seventh year. For faculty transferring in previous credit towards tenure, the combined years (number of credited years plus the years employed at Mayville State University) must total six.

Annual review of probationary faculty, during year three, will include a review of Supplementary Data Report, Pre-Academic Year Goal Sheet, annual evaluation by supervisor, evaluations by students for at least the prior two years by Tenure and Promotion Committee including the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In addition, a letter by the chair of the probationary faculty is included for review. This additional review identifies whether probationary faculty are meeting expectations in advancing toward tenure eligibility. Year three, for this purpose, includes credited years for prior service.

## **G. Criteria for Tenure**

Probationary faculty, during year three, are notified by their Academic Division Chair and the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> that their review materials are due. Such materials are due for review by the pre-tenure evaluation committee no later than February 15. The pre-tenure evaluation committee is empaneled by the Vice President for Academic Affairs following the same guidelines as the post-tenure evaluation committee found below. If concerns are noted through the evaluation, the faculty member, in consultation with their chair and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, develop a plan to address those.

The office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall notify the respective Academic Division Chair and eligible faculty member for tenure that their application is due, and arrange a meeting between the faculty member and the administrative Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Completed applications are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by December 1 for consideration by the Tenure, Promotion and Awards Committee. If tenure is granted, it will become effective the following academic year in the fall.

It is the responsibility of the Vice President for Academic Affairs to assure that all non-tenured faculty members who are eligible for tenure are thoroughly reviewed for tenure at least six months before such faculty person begins his or her seventh year of service to the University, such service to include any prior credit from other institutions of higher education awarded at the time of initial appointment. Procedures and Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion below

The Administrative Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs will also notify Division Chairs and impacted faculty by October 1<sup>st</sup> of faculty members in their division that need to submit post-tenure written overview (within three years of receiving tenure, and at least every five years subsequently). Written post-tenure overviews are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by February 15 for consideration by the post-tenure evaluation committee.

The post-tenure evaluation committee is empaneled by the Vice President for Academic Affairs no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>, and consists of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the faculty member's Division Chair, one tenured faculty member from outside the faculty member's division, and up to one additional tenured faculty. Tenured faculty serving on the post-tenure evaluation committee are appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the individual faculty, with consideration given to achieving mutual agreement on committee make up when possible. In cases where the faculty member under review is a division chair, the role of administrative supervisor will be filled by another division chair or dean who is selected by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the individual chair/dean, with consideration given to achieving mutual agreement on committee make up when possible.

The post-tenure evaluation committee reviews all required documentation, including any active improvement plans, and determines its preliminary recommendation. The committee will share the preliminary recommendation in writing with the individual under review. The individual under review will have five business days to file a response to the preliminary recommendation from the committee. Upon completion of the review, the committee submits its recommendation, along with all documentation, to the university President for review. If the faculty under review requests, the recommendation and any related documentation will be shared to the Tenure, Promotion, and Awards Committee for their consideration of an additional recommendation to the President. Upon review, the President will produce a letter affirming the faculty member's status relative to the University. Faculty in good standing initiate a new cycle of review. Should the President determine the faculty member to be in poor standing, the President may direct the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Division

Chair/Dean to initiate or modify an improvement plan. A faculty member who has failed to demonstrate progress on an improvement plan over at least one annual review, and under consideration for continuation of an improvement plan into a second year, may, at the President's direction, have the termination process initiated for adequate cause under NDUS Policy 605.3.

Probationary faculty, during year three, and tenured faculty due post-tenure review, are notified by their Academic Division Chair and the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> that their review materials are due. Such materials are due for review by the relevant review committee no later than February 15, with review by the relevant review committee occurring prior April 15. Feedback from the relevant review committee is included in with the current annual evaluation. If concerns are noted, the faculty member, in consultation with their chair, develop a plan to address those.

If the post-tenure review results in a written notice of intent to terminate for cause pursuant to Policy 605.3 or the imposition of a formal sanction pursuant to Policy 605.3, the faculty member may request a hearing before the Standing Committee on Faculty Rights in accordance with Policy 605.4. If the outcome of the post-tenure review results in a non-disciplinary action, such as the implementation of a performance improvement plan, the faculty member's rights are governed by N.D.C.C. § 54-06-21 and the institution's grievance procedures established under Policy 612.

#### **H. Early Tenure and Exceptional Circumstances**

SBHE Policy 605.1 allows the State Board of Higher Education to award tenure upon institutional recommendation to a person appointed to the faculty who has not met the eligibility requirements outlined in Board Policies (605.1), provided that the person has held a tenured appointment at another institution. Awarding of tenure under this circumstance must be in accordance with the "exceptional circumstances" as defined by Mayville State University.

"Early tenure" (SBHE Policy 605.1.4.b.2&3) is defined as being awarded tenure before the six-year probationary period of continuous academic service to the institution during which the faculty member is being evaluated annually. The guidelines for determining "exceptional circumstances" for awarding early tenure are the following (without prioritization): a. Prior tenure was granted at another institution or; b. Credit for prior service in a tenure-track position was granted at the time of initial employment.

An established record of outstanding achievements as a teacher or scholar within higher education, i.e., receiving fellowships and grants for acknowledged excellence within a discipline, publishing major works, serving an institution of higher education with distinction, establishing a record of outstanding service contributions to a discipline or university. The "outstanding achievements" will be cited in the tenure application and reviewed for merit by internal review entities according to standard tenure application procedures. As in all tenure applications, the University President will have final determination regarding the merits of applications requesting consideration of "outstanding achievements" for the purpose of being eligible for early tenure and will utilize the University review process in formulating their opinion.

"Extended probationary period" in accordance with State Board of Higher Education Policy 605.1, the probationary period "may be extended beyond six years or the continuous service requirement may be waived in exceptional circumstances." The "exceptional circumstances" defined by Board Policy and adopted by Mayville State University are the following (without prioritization): a. Maternity or Parental Leave; b. Accommodations for Disabilities; c. Family Emergencies; d. Extended Illness, and; e. Sabbatical Leave.

The “exceptional circumstances” will be cited and explained in the tenure application and reviewed for merit by internal review entities according to standard tenure application procedures. As in the case of all tenure applications, the President of the University will have final determination regarding the merit of applications requesting extensions or waivers concerning the six years probationary service requirement and will utilize the University review process in formulating his/her opinion.

#### **I. Additional Tenure Notes**

- Permanent initial appointment (with tenure) may be made by the Board of Higher Education when such an action is in the best interests of the University. In all other cases, tenured appointments must be recommended by the Tenure, Promotion and Awards Committee, including the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President before conferral by the Board of Higher Education.
- If a faculty member was tenured before entering the field of administration within the University, that person shall continue to hold rank and tenure while in administrative duties. If they were not previously tenured, the time spent in administrative duties will not be automatically counted toward tenure. Administrative Officers of the University are not eligible for tenure in their administrative roles.
- During the term of probationary service, a faculty member is to enjoy the same academic freedom as that enjoyed by tenured faculty.

#### **J. Definition of Regular Faculty Ranks**

The purpose of academic promotion at Mayville State University is to acknowledge and reward members of the faculty for professional competence and service to the institution. Academic rank shall include four categories: 1) Instructor, 2) Assistant Professor, 3) Associate Professor, and 4) Full Professor. An individual may apply for promotion and tenure at the same time. An Adjunct faculty member is a designation for unranked part-time non-tenure track faculty. A Professor of Practice is a designation for full-time or part-time faculty on special contract, in recognition of extensive professional work experience or special expertise.

##### **1. Instructor**

A Master's degree or equivalent experience is required. The rank of Instructor may include tenure track and non-tenure track positions and be awarded to full-time special contract faculty or staff at MSU.

##### **2. Assistant Professor**

Normally, promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor assumes an earned doctorate or terminal degree or highest degree ordinarily attainable in the discipline. An individual holding a master's degree with three years of full-time higher education teaching experience or directly related work experience may be granted the rank of Assistant Professor. The discipline faculty and the Academic Division Chair must describe the other educational experiences that are appropriate. Significant course work toward a terminal degree may be considered in lieu of higher education experience. Faculty with the rank of Instructor who complete a terminal degree will be automatically awarded the rank of Assistant Professor.

##### **3. Associate Professor**

An earned doctorate, terminal degree or highest degree ordinarily attainable in the discipline, and in their fifth year as an Assistant Professor, or six years of successful higher education teaching experience, are expected for promotion to Associate Professor. Probationary faculty in their fifth

year as an assistant professor, are encouraged to apply for promotion that, if awarded, would be effective in the following academic year. Normally, an earned terminal degree is required. In situations where other professional experiences are as appropriate as a terminal degree, such as, a master's degree and 30 semester hours of graduate work, this rank may be granted. The discipline faculty and the Academic Division Chair must describe the other educational experiences that are appropriate. The rank of Associate Professor shall require a demonstration of excellence in teaching, research, and/or service. As stated above, this rank is reserved for faculty in probationary or tenured positions.

#### 4. **Full Professor**

An earned doctorate, terminal degree or highest degree ordinarily attainable in the discipline and in their fifth year as an Associate Professor or eleven years of full-time higher education teaching experience is expected for promotion to Full Professor. Faculty in their fifth year as an associate professor, are encouraged to apply for promotion that, if awarded, would be effective in the following academic year. The rank of Full Professor shall be limited to persons with the terminal degree and an outstanding record or demonstrated excellence in teaching, research, and/or service. For faculty without a terminal degree, if other professional experiences are as appropriate as a terminal degree, promotion to Full Professor may be granted. The discipline faculty and the Academic Division Chair must describe the other professional experiences that are appropriate. Only in very exceptional cases involving superior achievement in four categories: 1) teaching effectiveness and fulfillment of job assignments; 2) scholarships activities and self-improvement (Master's degree and 45 semester hours of graduate work); 3) on-campus contributions to the University and; 4) off-campus contributions to the University; will the rank of Full Professor be awarded to a candidate who has not attained a terminal degree. As stated above, this rank is reserved for faculty in tenured positions.

### **K. Criteria for Promotion**

1. ***Promotion is awarded in recognition of special achievement, excellent performance, and outstanding service to the campus and community, but is not automatic.*** Decisions concerning promotions within the faculty rest with the President of the University who acts upon the advice of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Tenure, Promotion, and Awards Committee.
2. Applications for promotion are initiated by the faculty member seeking advancement in rank. The eligible faculty member for promotion should arrange a meeting with the Administrative Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by October 1st. Completed applications are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by December 1 for consideration by the Tenure, Promotion and Awards Committee. If promotion is granted, it will become effective the following academic year in the fall. Although the Vice President for Academic Affairs participates in Tenure, Promotion and Awards Committee considerations concerning promotion, he or she does not vote in those decisions and is required to make a separate recommendation to the president relative to each application for promotion. Candidates seeking early promotion must demonstrate why their achievements merit early promotion.

### **L. Procedures and Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion**

1. In evaluating faculty for tenure and/or promotion in rank, all concerned will consider at least the following:
  - Intent and essential criteria (required)
    - Tenure and/or promotion letter of application
    - Written overview of materials in each section or table of contents

- Critical peer appraisal from within the candidate's specific discipline or division if there are no other discipline faculty
- Critical peer appraisal from outside the candidate's specific discipline
- Critical appraisal of the candidate's performance by the Academic Division Chair
- Tenure Only: at least one additional peer appraisal
- Evidence of outstanding teaching (required)
  - Vitae
  - Course syllabi from last two years
  - Student evaluations of teaching from the last two years
  - Annual self-evaluation of performance and Chair (or supervisor) annual evaluations for last five years
  - Supplemental data reports for the last five years
  - Peer evaluations of teaching (if performed in the department within the last two years)
- Additional evidence (optional or as requested by the committee)
  - At large peer appraisals – if submitted the candidate is notified and may review
  - Personal teaching philosophy
- Scholarship (as applies)
  - Advanced study, participation in institutes
  - Grants and fellowships
  - Professional development/conferences/workshops attended
  - Professional contributions: research, publications (including Open Educational Resources), and creative endeavors
  - Professional recognition and awards
  - Professional organizations and memberships
- On Campus Involvement (as applies)
  - Committee work, departmental and University-wide
  - Student advising
  - Student organization advising
  - Organizing/leading workshops for the University
  - Leadership roles
  - Other on campus contributions
- Off Campus Involvement (as applies)
  - Community organizations, volunteerism, and memberships
  - Service at the state, region and/or national levels
  - Leadership roles
  - Other civic contributions

#### **L. Procedures and Guidelines for Pre and Post-tenure Review**

Year three review for probationary faculty shall include:

- A written overview of accomplishments and goals going forward
- Pre-Academic Year Goal Sheet for at least prior two years
- Annual evaluation by supervisor for at least prior two years
- Evaluations by students for at least prior two years
- A letter from the Division Chair

The first post-tenure review shall occur in within three years of receiving tenure, and within at least every five years subsequently. In conducting the post-tenure review, all concerned will consider at least the following:



- o A written overview of accomplishments since most recent tenure or post-tenure review and goals going forward
- o Annual self-evaluation of performance and Chair (or supervisor) annual evaluations since the most recent tenure or post-tenure review
- o Supplemental data reports since the most recent tenure or post-tenure review
- o Identification of goals on most recent “Pre-Academic School. Year Goal Sheet”
- o Student evaluations from at least the prior three years

**Related Procedures and Forms:**

[MP605.1.1](#) Faculty Mentor Procedure  
MF605.1.1.B1 Human Resources New Faculty Checklist  
MF605.1.1.B2 Faculty Mentor Log

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**Sponsors: Vice President for Academic Affairs and Faculty Senate & Association**