Clinical Faculty Merit and Promotion Guidelines
School of Education

Expectations and Indicators

The expectations listed in this section for Learning (Teaching) and Engagement (Service/Outreach) are typical expectations, but they might vary based on assignment. The indicators listed in this section for Discovery (Research/Scholarship) are intended to provide examples of possible scholarship; the indicators are not intended to be a comprehensive or required list. Clinical faculty who intend to apply for promotion to the Associate and Professor levels should follow the written feedback provided by their department’s promotion and tenure committee with respect to the amount and type of discovery that is required for successful promotion. Overall, clinical faculty should perform duties in learning, engagement, and discovery at the Assistant, Associate, and Professor levels, but the quantity and quality of these duties, especially as they relate to discovery, will likely vary as discussed in the “Promotion Process” section of this document.

Learning (Teaching) Expectations
1. teaching three courses per semester (except for authorized course releases or reductions)
2. revising courses annually to ensure most current curriculum and technology
3. earning scores on the Student Perceptions of Testing (SPOT) evaluations at or above department average
4. earning satisfactory peer reviews of teaching (minimum of 2 reviews per 5 year period)
5. participating in student advisement
6. receiving satisfactory evaluations for student advising
7. chairing\(^1\) or serving on graduate student committees
8. incorporating diversity into instruction as appropriate

Engagement (Service/Outreach) Expectations
1. serving on committees
2. engaging in outreach activities, preferably with P-20 partnerships and funded by outside agencies
3. working to advance the status and goals of the School of Education
4. participating in professional service at the local, state, and national levels
5. participating in professional service at the program, department, school, college, and/or university levels
6. ensuring that all administrative activity related to accreditation and program evaluation is completed in a timely manner
7. working collaboratively within and across programs and departments

Discovery (Research/Scholarship) Indicators
1. publishing in refereed research or practitioner journals

\(^1\) Clinical Faculty need to be approved as “research active” by the graduate school in order to chair committees. See “School of Education Definition of Research Active for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty”: https://www.soe.vt.edu/Faculty_Staff/files/Research_Active_LT_approved.pdf
2. presenting at regional, state, and national conferences
3. publishing teaching material in articles, books, manuals, or other formats
4. organizing and supervising special projects or research by students or teachers
5. engaging in action research
6. providing briefings to educational leaders or policy makers

**Continued Contract Renewal and Merit Review Process**

Clinical faculty will complete an annual Faculty Activity Report (FAR) that has an emphasis on Learning (Teaching) and Engagement (Service/Outreach), but should also include Discovery (Research/Scholarship) as appropriate. Each clinical faculty will meet with the department chair yearly to discuss the FAR. The department chair will make a recommendation to the SOE Director regarding merit pay increases. The results of this FAR evaluation and recommendation will be used by the SOE Director to make decisions regarding continued contract renewal.

**Promotion Process**

Clinical faculty will follow the Virginia Tech and Department Guidelines for Promotion (excluding tenure) that include Discovery (Research/Scholarship), but with an emphasis on Learning (Teaching) and Engagement (Service/Outreach). As noted in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook: “While clinical faculty may conduct clinical research and present their findings in professional venues, there are no expectations for an extensive research program as is typical of tenure-track faculty appointments” (Section 5.1.5). If the clinical faculty member does not intend to seek promotion to Clinical Associate Professor (CAP) or Clinical Professor (CP), he or she does not have to submit a dossier to the Department’s Promotion and Tenure committee at any time.

The department promotion and tenure committee must add one clinical faculty member to the committee when evaluating a clinical faculty member (hereafter referred to as “applicant”) for promotion. The added clinical faculty member must be at a rank equal to or higher than the one to which the applicant is applying. For instance, for an applicant applying to be promoted to a CAP, the clinical faculty member on the promotion and tenure committee must be at the CAP or CP rank. If such a clinical faculty member is not available, then the committee must find a faculty member at this rank from another department at Virginia Tech. The added clinical faculty member will review only the applicant’s dossier and vote only on the applicant’s promotion case. The added clinical faculty member will not participate in any other activities of the promotion and tenure committee.

**Promotion to Clinical Associate Professor (CAP)**

Typically, if the contract of a clinical faculty member is renewed after five years, then the clinical faculty member will be eligible to be considered for promotion to CAP in year six or any year after that. However, a faculty member may apply for promotion at any time, as long as the faculty member’s credentials are consistent with those of a CAP.
When reviewing the applicant’s dossier, the promotion and tenure committee should review the applicant’s dossier in a manner consistent with the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook, which states that: “Credentials [for a Clinical Associate Professor] shall be consistent with those for appointment to associate professor, with an emphasis on clinical accomplishments.” (Section 5.1.5). Thus, although Discovery (Research/Scholarship) should be a consideration for promotion to the CAP rank, the primary focus of the review should be on Learning (Teaching) and Engagement (Service/Outreach). It is expected that the discovery activities will be at the state or regional level.

Promotion to Clinical Professor (CP)

After five years or more at the CAP rank, the faculty member is eligible for the promotion process to CP by submitting a promotion dossier, emphasizing Learning (Teaching), Engagement (Service/Outreach), and Discovery (Research/Scholarship). A CAP may request to be promoted to a CP prior to serving for five years at the rank of CAP; however, his or her dossier must provide evidence that he or she has met the department’s criteria for promotion to CP. As stated in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook: “Credentials [for a Clinical Professor] shall be consistent with those for appointment to professor, with an emphasis on clinical accomplishments” (Section 5.1.5). One of the important factors for consideration for promotion to the CP rank is Discovery (Research/Scholarship). It is expected that many of the discovery activities will be at the national level.

Application Procedure

To apply for a promotion to CAP or CP, the applicant must notify his or her department chair and submit a dossier to the department’s promotion and tenure committee at least one year prior to being considered for promotion. It is preferable that the applicant submit the dossier two or three years prior to being considered for promotion in order that the faculty member can obtain written feedback and guidance about his or her progress towards promotion from the promotion and tenure committee. The candidate should follow the department dates for submitting the dossier to the promotion and tenure committee. Upon receipt of the dossier, the promotion and tenure committee shall review it and provide written feedback to the candidate about his or her progress towards promotion in a timely manner. The committee shall focus its review on the strengths and weaknesses of the case and make it clear to the applicant what needs to be improved upon to be successful in achieving promotion.

Once the applicant is eligible for promotion, the applicant shall submit his or her dossier to the department’s promotion and tenure committee and the committee shall provide a written report of their recommendation to the SOE Director. The results of this review will be used by the SOE Director to make a decision about promotion. The positive recommendation from the SOE Director will be forwarded for review by the college committee, college dean, and provost (Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook, Section 5.2.4). For the consequences of a negative recommendation, refer to the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook (Section 5.2.4).