




Mary Anne Fitzpatrick
Dean of the Faculty &
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Memorandum

To: Academic Deans
Department Chairs/School Directors
Unit Professional-Track Faculty Committee Chairs

From: Mary Anne Fitzpatrick 
Dean of the Faculty and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Date: October 14, 2024

Subject: Professional-Track Faculty Promotions New Processes

The Office of the Provost is pleased to congratulate the Columbia Faculty Senate on the new [Faculty Manual](#), approved June 19, 2024 by the Board of Trustees. This new edition introduces a major section describing policies and procedures for professional-track faculty, along with new faculty titles. Our office has just been notified that these new faculty titles have now been approved by the State of South Carolina Department of Administration. USC's professional-track faculty are invaluable contributors to the university's teaching, research, and community engagement missions, and the publication of this new *Faculty Manual* and the addition of new promotional pathways are a major step forward.

The process of implementing these changes across the university will be iterative, beginning with academic units' development of new unit criteria consistent with the 2024 edition of the *Faculty Manual*. I look forward to continued partnership with the University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty as criteria development and approval moves forward. Indeed, unit criteria development is already well underway in most academic units. As many of you recall, last fall Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Donna K. Arnett wrote to all academic deans requiring units to develop revised criteria providing for a second promotional step for instructors beyond senior instructor, so work is already underway. With the updated *Faculty Manual* now in place, academic units can now move forward proposing criteria. Please note that new faculty titles and promotion pathways will be available *following approval* of new unit criteria; see below for additional details.

The *Faculty Manual* also requires several major changes that are effective immediately. This memorandum provides guidance on key elements of the new professional-track faculty process that are applicable this academic year.

Effective Immediately

These items are in effect now, before new professional-track faculty criteria are approved.

- **Website information:** The Office of the Provost [professional-track faculty website](#) includes information on policies, processes, and useful resources. These pages are updated regularly as additional guidance is developed, so please reference them and refer others as well. Refer to the Resources section at the end of this letter for the full URL for all links embedded here.
- **Professional-track faculty promotion calendar:** The Office of the Provost's [professional-track faculty promotions calendar and review checklist](#) provides new university-wide deadlines and a checklist of required dates for inclusion in local unit calendars (see below for additional details).
- **Deadline for professional-track faculty promotion files to the provost:** All promotion files are due to the Office of the Provost by **May 1**. While units may review promotion files during the fall semester and submit them early if desired, all promotion files will be reviewed in June and July, with promotions taking effect normally **August 16** of the new academic year. *Please ensure that faculty candidates in your unit are aware of this timeline for promotion review.*
- **New requirement to report candidate names and promotion committee chairs:** The *Faculty Manual* mandates that faculty members eligible for promotion be notified by the dean, department chair or other administrator by no later than **October 1** for the current academic year promotion cycle. They must communicate their intent in writing by no later than **October 15**. Each unit must provide the provost with a list of those faculty members who intend to apply for promotion. Candidate names should be reported to the dean's office, who will [submit the names online](#) to the provost by **November 5**. As we just received state approval for the titles, the deadline to report candidate names is extended this year to **November 15**. [Unit committee chair names](#) must be reported each year by **April 15** beginning in the Spring 2025 semester.
- **Promotions under extant unit criteria:** As new unit criteria are under development, professional-track faculty promotions will continue with the new deadlines outlined above under extant unit criteria. Faculty wishing to apply for promotion to a rank and title specified in their current unit criteria may move forward; those who wish to wait for new titles must wait. Please visit the provost's webpage for previously approved [unit criteria](#).
- **Ballots and vote justifications now required:** Previously, if unit criteria allowed, promotion files could be forwarded with a summation of the unit vote. The new *Faculty Manual* requires that "Written justification of all votes at the unit level shall be mandatory and shall state specifically how the candidate meets or does not meet the unit's criteria." Files

submitted without unit ballots and vote justifications, or without the recommendations of the unit chair (if applicable) and dean, will be returned to the unit.

- **Notice of non-reappointment:** For all faculty with three- and five-year contracts, notice of non-reappointment is required in writing from the dean of the college or school to whom the faculty member reports at least 180 days before the end of their current contract. In the initial one-year terms of any professional-track faculty appointment, notice of non-reappointment is recommended but not required.

Under Development

As new professional-track faculty criteria are under development, the following information may be of use.

- **Policy Revision:** With state approval of the new faculty titles, the Office of the Provost may now begin revisions of [ACAF 1.16 Professional-track Faculty](#), [ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions](#), and related policies as needed to reflect new processes and faculty titles, following standard university processes and procedures for policy review.
- **Recommended bookmark structure for candidate files available now with candidate forms under development:** The Office of the Provost will work with the University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty this academic year to create a candidate form and required bookmark structure. While this form is under development, it is recommended that units for this year use a modified version of the tenure-track primary file form. Please see the Professional-Track Faculty [Candidate File Preparation Guide](#) for guidance on standard file bookmarks and additional details. Given the diverse nature of disciplines and in order to best present candidates' scholarship, sub-headings under the standard headings may be created, or alternate headings may be used if those better describe the various activities. It is always up to candidates to decide how to best present their file in a way that demonstrates fulfillment of unit criteria.
- **Criteria development:** New unit criteria must be developed as described in the *Faculty Manual* on pages 44-48. Last year, the University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty issued preliminary guidance on developing unit criteria. The 2024 edition of the *Faculty Manual* supersedes some of this guidance, but as additional resources are under development, the [UCPTF Criteria and Procedures Recommendations](#) still provides useful information. Office of the Provost representatives have already met with leadership regarding this process; additional meetings are planned, and local unit representatives may request criteria development consultations by emailing Director of Faculty Affairs, Dr. Lisa Hammond at lhammond@mailbox.sc.edu.
- **Unit review calendars:** The *Faculty Manual* requires that "Each unit should publish a calendar of unit-specific deadlines and ensure that these deadlines are communicated to candidates well in advance" (page 49). Units should already have in place baseline calendars

for this academic year and will be required to publish review calendars beginning in 2025-2026.

- **New promotion pathways and instructional titles:** The *Faculty Manual* describes a second promotional step for instructors and lecturers—Principal Instructor or Principal Lecturer—and also creates a new track for teaching faculty with terminal degrees—Teaching Assistant Professor, Teaching Associate Professor, and Teaching Professor. Baseline requirements for these ranks are defined in the *Faculty Manual*; unit criteria will develop further the requirements for these titles and the distinctions between existing faculty titles. Once criteria are in place, faculty will only be transferred from one title track to another by direct request and following a unit review documenting that the candidate meets the requirements of the new title. These transfers, like promotions, require provost approval. Additional guidance will be forthcoming regarding transfers across professional-track faculty titles.

Please contact me or Dr. Lisa Hammond in the Office of the Provost (803-777-2808 or lhammond@mailbox.sc.edu) with any questions or concerns you have about the professional-track faculty promotion process. You may also reach out to the co-chairs of the University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty, Sheryl Mitchell and Kate Chapell.

This is an exciting time as we continue to build structures to support professional-track faculty advancement; a process this complex will require time, patience, and goodwill as we move forward in developing new criteria and refining new procedures and policies—work well worth our efforts.

cc: Donna K. Arnett, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Lisa Hammond, Director of Faculty Affairs
Wayne Outten, Chair, Faculty Senate
Sheryl Mitchell, Co-Chair, University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty
Kate Chappell, Co-Chair, University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty

Professional-Track Faculty Resources: Please remind candidates and committee members to refer to these documents in all promotion activities:

- University of South Carolina Columbia *Faculty Manual*
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/docs/faculty_manual/facultymanual_columbia.pdf
- ACAF 1.16 Professional-track Faculty (shortly to be under revision)
<https://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/acaf116.pdf>
- ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions (shortly to be under revision) <https://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/acaf106.pdf>
- Office of the Provost's Professional-Track Faculty website
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/professional_track_faculty/index.php
- Professional-Track Faculty Unit Criteria webpage
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/professional_track_faculty/unit_criteria.php
- University Committee on Professional-Track Faculty's Criteria and Procedures Recommendations
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/docs/professional_track/unit_criteria/unit_criteria_and_procedures_recommendations.pdf
- Professional-Track Faculty Promotions Calendar and Review Checklist
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/professional_track_faculty/ptf_promotions_calendar.php
- Professional-Track Faculty Candidate File Preparation Guide
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/professional_track_faculty/candidatefileprep.php
- Office of the Provost's Candidate Name Submission site
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/submit-candidates.php
- Office of the Provost's Unit Committee Chair Names Submission site
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/faculty/submit-unitchairs.php