

NUMBER: ACAF 1.00  
SECTION: Academic Affairs  
SUBJECT: Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track,  
and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty  
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Policy for: All Campuses  
Procedure for: All Campuses  
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## I. Policy

The University of South Carolina is committed to recruiting, retaining, and promoting an outstanding faculty who demonstrate excellence in teaching, research, service, and outreach. The University believes that the presence of a high quality and diverse community of scholars is necessary to achieve such excellence. To that end, the hiring practices adopted by the University are designed to seek out and welcome quality and diversity to its faculty ranks through search processes that are conducted in a fair and open manner.

These practices are in compliance with all pertinent state and federal laws that require adherence to equal opportunity and affirmative action provisions, and with all requirements of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

This policy addresses the advertisement, recruitment, and appointment of all tenured and tenure-track faculty positions including librarians and all non-tenure-track faculty positions.

### A. Academic Leadership Responsibility: Required Approvals

1. The term “hiring authority” is used throughout this policy to refer to the individual who decides which candidate to hire and who is responsible for ensuring a fair and open search for a particular faculty position in accordance with this and other University policies. This individual must be identified prior to the initiation of recruitment for a faculty position at any level and named in the official search record.
2. Appointments to tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty positions at the University may be awarded by a hiring authority. All faculty positions must

have an appointment in a campus, college or school regardless of the position's organizational home.

- a. On the Columbia campus, the hiring authority for faculty positions is the college or school dean unless otherwise specified by the provost. The dean may delegate this responsibility or specific aspects of this responsibility in writing.
- b. On the Regional campuses, the hiring authority for faculty positions is the vice provost and executive dean for extended university unless otherwise specified by the provost. The vice provost and executive dean for extended university may delegate this responsibility or specific aspects of this responsibility in writing.
- c. On the Senior campuses, the hiring authority for faculty positions is the executive/senior vice chancellor for academic affairs unless otherwise specified by the chancellor. The executive/senior vice chancellor may delegate this responsibility or specific aspects of this responsibility in writing.

3. Documented Search Process for Faculty Positions

A documented search process is required for all academic positions whether the search is internal or external. The hiring authority will determine the scope and structure of the search process prior to the initiation of a search, in consultation with the next highest administrative office when appropriate.

4. The term "campus chief academic officer" is used throughout this policy and defined for each campus as follows:

- a. For the Columbia campus, the campus chief academic officer is the vice president for academic affairs and provost.
- b. For the Regional campuses, the campus chief academic officer is the vice provost and executive dean for extended university.
- c. For the Senior campuses, the campus chief academic officer is the executive/senior vice chancellor for academic affairs unless otherwise specified by the chancellor.

5. Approval for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty Searches

- a. The approval of the campus chief academic officer is required prior to initiating a search for any tenured or tenure-track faculty position.

- b. The approval of the hiring authority is required for all advertisements prior to listing in any written or electronic publication.
- c. The written approval of the president is required before an offer can be extended for a hire with tenure and/or for a position at the rank of professor.

For a hire with tenure, offer letters must state that tenure is contingent on the approval of the Board of Trustees.

6. Approval for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Searches

- a. The hiring process for the non-tenure-track faculty positions listed below must follow the process outlined in this policy and adhere to the guidelines contained in University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions. On the Columbia campus, the process must also adhere to University Policy ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.

Non-Tenure-Track faculty positions include:

- research assistant professor, research associate professor, and research professor
  - clinical assistant professor, clinical associate professor, and clinical professor
  - clinical instructors or clinical lecturers
  - visiting or adjunct professors, regardless of rank
  - senior instructor or senior lecturer
  - instructors or lecturers
  - distinguished lecturer
  - legal writing instructor
  - instructor librarian
  - professor of practice
- b. The approval of the hiring authority is required at each stage of the process.
  - c. The hiring authority determines the scope of a search, including whether a search committee will be used. However, searches for new and replacement non-tenure-track faculty members must be advertised no less than five working days and preferably for ten calendar days. See also Section I.A.3 above.
  - d. Reappointment of the same person to the same position does not require an advertised search.

- e. When an emergency situation exists and a position must be filled immediately for continued operations and cannot wait for five working days for the position to be filled, a non-tenure-track faculty member may be placed in the position for one semester or for four and one-half months. If the position needs to be filled for additional time after the initial emergency time period, then a documented search, including advertisement, must be conducted.

## 7. Exceptions

In very unusual circumstances, the president, provost or chancellor may grant exceptions to this policy for their areas of responsibility, in consultation with the executive assistant to the president for equal opportunity programs.

## B. Equal Employment Opportunity and Equity in Hiring Practices

The campus chief academic officer is responsible for ensuring that policies, procedures, and practices in academic units are consistent and in compliance with federal and state equal employment opportunity and educational access laws, rules and regulations.

Deans, department chairs, center/institute directors, academic program managers, search committees and faculty members are responsible for implementing these policies and procedures at the campus, college, school, center, institute, and academic unit level.

1. It is the policy of the University of South Carolina to recruit, hire, train, promote, tenure, and otherwise make educational and personnel decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status (except where sex or age is a bonafide occupational qualification.) See University Policies EOP 1.00 Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action and EOP 1.04 Non-Discrimination Policy.
2. All searches must be conducted in a fair and open manner, with documented efforts to develop the strongest and most diverse pool possible. All applicants must be equitably evaluated.

## C. Freedom of Information Act

Search committees at the University are within the definition of a "public body" found in the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Therefore, all search committees must operate within with the requirements of FOIA. See also University Policy UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy.

D. Joint Appointments across Departments, Academic Programs, Colleges, Schools or Campuses

Jointly appointed faculty are faculty members whose tenure home is in one unit (the “primary unit”) and who have a part-time appointment, with some combination of teaching, research, and service obligations, in another unit or program (the “secondary unit”).

1. All joint appointments must be endorsed by all relevant hiring authorities.
2. Search committees for joint appointments within the same campus, college or school must be constituted by the hiring authority. Search committees for joint appointments across colleges, schools, centers or institutes must be constituted by the lead hiring authority, in consultation with the hiring authorities of all participating academic units.
3. Each joint appointment of a new hire or an existing faculty member should be formalized by a memorandum of understanding or charter that specifies the responsibilities of the faculty member to the primary and secondary units.
4. On the Columbia campus and the Regional campuses, all draft memoranda of understanding for joint appointments of new or existing faculty within the same college or school or across Columbia campus colleges, schools, centers, institutes or regional campuses must be reviewed by the Provost's Office prior to becoming final. Joint appointments on the Columbia campus must follow the USC Columbia *Faculty Manual* Section entitled “Faculty with Joint Appointments.”
5. Guidelines and procedures governing appointment, review and promotion of jointly appointed faculty can be found in each respective *Faculty Manual* within the USC system, if applicable.

II. Procedure

A. Search Committee Composition

Search committees must be representative of the University community’s diversity as it relates to race, gender, and tenure status whenever possible and practical. The proportion of tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty members will be determined by the hiring authority and should reflect the mission of the unit and the relative proportions of the faculty within the unit.

The hiring authority or his/her designee will select the search committee members, in consultation with departmental or unit faculty, and appoint a chair of the committee.

B. Search Process for Tenure-Track Searches

1. Search Committee Charge: Every search for a tenured or tenure-track faculty position must be conducted by a search committee. Every search committee must meet with the hiring authority, or his/her representative(s), before initiating the search to be charged and to discuss search guidelines and required procedures.
2. Equity and Diversity Advocate: All search committees must identify an equity and diversity advocate to assist with understanding and implementing University equal opportunity guidelines and procedures. The hiring authority may appoint the advocate or direct the committee to select the advocate. On some campuses, the equity and diversity advocate may be the Chief Diversity Officer. See "[Strengthening Academic Excellence Through Affirmative Recruiting: Academic Recruitment and Selection Guidelines](#)" (Published by Equal Opportunity Programs).
3. Advertising: Searches for new and replacement tenure-track faculty members must be advertised no less than five working days and preferably for ten calendar days in one or more written and/or electronic national publications. See also Section II. C. 3 below.

#### C. Required Hiring Documentation

All faculty hires must meet the guidelines below before the hiring process is completed.

1. Offer of Employment: An offer of employment must be in writing and must include the name of the hiring department, rank, salary and effective date. Employment expectations will state the responsibilities for teaching, scholarly performance, service, and extramural funding, as well as other specific criteria or service activities appropriate to the position. Information requirements such as the verification of degree(s) and background check(s) must be included, as well as contingencies such as moving or non-U.S. Citizenship requirements, as necessary. Criteria relating to all University, state and federal law requirements must be included as applicable. Sample letters and information links are available on the Office of the Provost website at [www.sc.edu/provost/forms](http://www.sc.edu/provost/forms).
2. Academic Titles: Tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty may only be appointed to a position using one of the academic titles specified in University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions. The hiring authority will confirm that the correct title is used and that the candidates meet the required criteria for appointment. All exceptions must be approved in writing by the campus chief academic officer. This written approval should accompany the related hiring and personnel forms submitted to the Division of Human Resources for processing.
3. Non-U.S. Citizens: If the proposed offer of employment will be to a known non-U.S. citizen, the Office of International Support for Faculty and Staff (ISFS) must be contacted prior to extending a verbal or written offer to ensure adherence to all

federal and state regulations regarding the hiring of non-U.S. citizens. Positions offered to non-U.S. citizens must have been advertised in a written national publication.

4. Tenure Clock Start Date for New Tenure-Track Faculty: Tenure-track faculty will normally begin employment at the University on either January 1 or August 16. All new faculty not beginning employment on January 1 or August 16, regardless of basis or hiring date, can be assigned official tenure-track status only on January 1 or August 16, whichever is the next date following the faculty member's hiring date. The hiring authority will ensure that the appropriate date, specifying when the faculty member's official tenure-track status will begin, is included in the individual's offer letter.
5. Required Job Reference & Background Checks for Faculty Positions: A job reference and criminal background check must be conducted for the final candidate for a faculty position at any level. An acknowledgement and an authorization for the background check to be conducted must be signed by the final candidate and sent to the Division of Human Resources prior to the completion of the final hiring documents. All faculty hires are contingent upon satisfactory results from the job reference and criminal background check. See also University Policy HR 1.90 Job Reference and Background Checks.
6. The Electronic Verification of Employment Eligibility (E-Verify): Federal Law requires that all employers verify the identity and employment eligibility of all new employees (including U.S. citizens) within three days of hire. Employers are required to complete a Form I-9, and employees must provide employers with documents establishing both identity and eligibility to work in the United States.
7. Letters of Reference: All faculty hires require three letters of reference. The letters must be received by the hiring authority before the job offer is made.
8. Written Acceptance: The final candidate's signed acceptance of offer of employment must be received by the hiring authority prior to completion of the final hiring documents.
9. Credential Verification and Faculty Roster
  - a. The final candidate for a faculty position at any level must provide certified copies of academic credentials (i.e. official transcripts) to the hiring authority, as required by SACS. All University faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction must meet SACS credential requirements for teaching at the appropriate level.
  - b. Individuals appointed to a tenure-track faculty position must have obtained a terminal academic degree appropriate to the field. See also

ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions.

- c. Official records of faculty credentials must be maintained by the office of the hiring authority. Additionally, all faculty and instructional personnel must be included on the campus, college or school's Faculty Roster, as required by SACS.

C. Maintenance of Official Search File

The office of the hiring authority or its designee has the responsibility for maintenance of the official search file for each position, including all materials submitted by applicants, documentation of advertisement when applicable, all search committee documents including meeting minutes when applicable, and any other documents related to the search. This file must be maintained for five years. In cases where a search process included known non-U.S. citizens as applicants, the file must be maintained for 6.5 years.

IV. Related Policies

- A. This policy supersedes the following policies:

University Policy ACAF 1.03 Appointment of Unclassified Academic Personnel  
University Policy ACAF 1.07 Appointment of Tenure-Track Faculty with Terminal Degree, and Tenure-Track Appointment Dates  
University Policy ACAF 1.09 Award of Tenure and/or Senior Faculty at Time of Appointment

- B. See also the following related policies:

USC Columbia *Faculty Manual*

USC Regional Campuses *Faculty Manual*

USC Aiken *Faculty Manual*

USC Beaufort *Faculty Manual*

USC Upstate *Faculty Manual*

University Policy ACAF 1.01 Recruitment and Appointment of Principal Administrative Personnel and Academic Administrators

University Policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions

University Policy ACAF 1.16 Non-tenure-Track Faculty

University Policy ACAF 1.18 Change in Status to and from Tenure-Track Faculty

University Policy EOP 1.00 Equal Opportunity Policy

University Policy EOP 1.04 Non-Discrimination Policy

University Policy UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy

University Policy HR 1.90 Job Reference and Background Checks

University Policy RCAM 1.03 Regional Campuses--Academic Employment

"Strengthening Academic Excellence Through Affirmative Recruiting: Academic Recruitment and Selection Guidelines" (Published by Equal Opportunity Programs).

V. Reason for Revision

This revision consolidates University Policies ACAF 1.00, ACAF 1.03, ACAF 1.07 and ACAF 1.09 into one updated policy and related procedures for the recruitment and appointment of all tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty positions. Guidelines and procedures for joint appointments across departments within one college/school or across colleges/schools were also added.