

## Appointments, Rank and Tenure

Persons joining the faculty for the first time are considered to have attained faculty status when they have concluded relevant contractual arrangements including tenure status with the University.

### 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 certification, significant life skills. Appointments to the faculty of the University are probationary, tenured, or special, as outlined in SBHE policy 605.1.

Probationary appointments are renewable annually and yield credit toward tenure. Special appointments, whether part-time or full-time, are made for a limited period of time (normally one year) on a yearly basis 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. The initial appointment also 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 fulltime service at the rank of instructor or above.

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.

All incoming faculty members, including adjunct faculty members, will be assigned a faculty mentor chosen by the Academic Division Chair. Mentor responsibilities are: 1) complete mentor checklist with new faculty member and be available for any questions posed by the new faculty member; 2) visit at least one class (face-to-face, distance, or online) per semester; they may choose to visit more than one time. After observing the new faculty member's teaching, the mentor is expected to provide opportunities for the new faculty member to meet and discuss teaching practices aligned with Higher Learning Commission standards and; 3) provide designated, 1-hour time periods for weekly contact with new faculty member in the first 3 weeks of the semester followed by once/month for the first semester of the academic year to answer any questions new faculty members might have. 4) there is no time limit to the faculty mentor program which may be important to continue with adjunct faculty members.

### C. Faculty Qualifications

Mayville State University considers the terminal degree and/or professional experience, 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 offers depth of knowledge and credibility which in some fields may be considered 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.
  - Academic Divisions will establish terminal degree requirements and/or any additional requirements such as certifications or licensure within their academic area for faculty to be eligible for tenure and promotion.
    - Full-time faculty teaching in the Divisions of Education, and Liberal Arts are required to obtain a doctorate prior to applying for tenure status.
    - Full-time faculty teaching in the Divisions of Business, Science and Mathematics, and Health, Physical Education and Recreation are encouraged to attain a doctorate degree but requires a Master's degree in the field which is considered a terminal degree for tenure and promotion. Additional certification and/or licensure are required to attain the rank of full-professor.
  - 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.
  - Promotion is contingent on tenure with the exception as stated for the rank of Assistant Professor.
  - Academic rank shall include four categories: 1) Instructor; 2) Assistant Professor; 3) Associate Professor and; 4) Full Professor.
  - MSU adheres to the Higher Learning Commission guidelines (March 2016) for the determination of qualified faculty.
    - A master's degree or higher in the content area or a master's degree with a minimum of 18 credits in the discipline or subfield that they teach.
    - Credentials are used as the basis for determining minimal qualifications.
    - 'Tested experience' may be used as a basis for determining minimal qualifications.

- Adjunct faculty teaching college courses for dual credit must meet the minimal faculty qualifications.
- Adjunct faculty must hold a Master's degree in the content area or a master's degree with a minimum of 18 credits in the discipline or subfield that they are teaching. 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.
  - Adjuncts who teach college courses for dual credit are required to attend an adjunct orientation in the summer. Other adjuncts attend a new faculty orientation before the fall semester. Also, an online orientation is available. All adjuncts are invited to MSU Faculty Professional Development workshops and events.

#### **D. 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 men and women 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.

#### **E. 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.

#### **F. Criteria for Tenure**

The respective Academic Division Chair shall inform the eligible faculty member for tenure that his/her application is due, and arrange a meeting between the faculty member and the administrative Assistant to the Vice President of 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 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 transfer credit from other institutions of higher education. In the absence of any determination of transfer years prior to the approval of this document, it will be assumed that no full-time service at other institutions of higher learning was accepted in transfer. Procedures and Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion below.

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

SBHE Policies 605.1.4.b.2&3 allow 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 (605.1.3.b&c and 605.1.4b.1&2), provided that the person has 1) held a tenured appointment at another institution, or 2) been a faculty member at the institution (Mayville State University) for at least one prior academic year. Awarding of tenure under this circumstance must be in accordance with the “exceptional circumstances” as defined by the institution.

“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 at MSU and; b. If 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 his/her opinion.

“Extended probationary period” in accordance with State Board of Higher Education Policy 605.1.4.C, 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.

### **H. 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, 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 he or she was 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 the tenured faculty.

## **I. 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.

### **1. Instructor**

A Master's degree 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. 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 is expected for promotion to Associate Professor. 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 doctoral 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.

### **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 and/or research. 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 educational 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.

**J. 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 once he or she has considered the recommendations of 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 of 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.

**K. 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
    - 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 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, 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

**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**