**Departmental Guidelines for Non-Tenure-Track Appointments**

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The School of Medicine considers these appointments vital to its missions and so has extensive guidelines describing the use and administration of non-tenure-track appointments. This document interprets those guidelines for such appointments within the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics. Whereas it emphasizes some of the areas where the department has flexibility, it cannot conflict with the School of Medicine Guidelines, which have priority.

Among other benefits of this program, non-tenure-track positions can facilitate the professional advancement of appointees to tenure-track appointments at UNC and elsewhere.

Importantly, initial appointments, reappointments, and promotions are strictly contingent on funds, including those generated by the individual’s own research productivity.

# Purpose of non-tenure-track appointments

Non-tenure-track appointments provide the flexibility necessary for essential contributions to Departmental research and teaching functions by expanding what tenure-track faculty contribute, consistent with qualifications and service.

Whereas these appointments have in the past been preceded by the adjective (officially referred to as a modifier) “Research”, that is no longer customary in the working title for fixed-term faculty appointments; it is optional as appropriate. This modifier will still be in the official appointment and paperwork submitted for an initial appointment, reappointment or promotion. However, this modifier does not need to be used in day-to-day matters. Thus, titles generally parallel those of tenure-track appointments: Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor, in keeping with the expected services provided by appointees.

# Distinctions between tenure-track and non-tenure-track appointments.

Generally three categories can be distinguished: (i) full-time research, (ii) facility administration, and (iii) dedicated service teaching. Appointments can entail mixtures of these functions. Examples include that graduate student research mentoring is serious teaching, and several facility managers also teach extensively.

Such appointments are distinct from tenure-track/tenured appointments because they are contingent on funds. Appointments are usually made for one year when funds originate from a tenure-track PI, and may be renewable. In special cases, including serving as PI on a funded research grant, facility administrator, or dedicated teaching, appointments may be made for longer periods of time according to the term of a research grant or another fixed-term position.

# Promotion

Whereas tenure-track appointments adhere to a fixed schedule for promotions, non-tenure track appointments have no fixed schedule, and promotion is more clearly a matter of negotiation with the Chair. However, ideally non-tenure track schedules for promotion align closely with the schedules for tenure-track and tenured faculty and can be used as a guide. But, with the wide range of activities that fixed-term faculty participate in, adhering to these schedules is not always possible therefore it becomes a matter of communication between the Chair and faculty member as to when they will undergo review for promotion. This can be initiated either by the Chair, the sponsor, or the appointee him or herself. Given that there is wide variability in the activities of fixed-term faculty, it is important that the expectation for each faculty member be included in their appointment letter, so they are aware the expectations for future promotions.

Criteria for promotion all require sustained evidence, depending on functional role:

1. **Full-time research activity.** Whereas national recognition and evidence from scholarly publications are not necessary for initial appointments, they should be considered as part of the overall promotion package. Excellent local reputation as a researcher must be documented in letters of reference external to the Department.
2. **Facility administration.** User feedback and successful budgetary management are most helpful. Where appropriate there may be outside grants (e.g. equipment grants) and often external users, as well as authorship on scientific papers, which should also be considered as part of the overall promotion package.
3. **Dedicated teaching**. Student evaluations are key indicators of successful teaching. In addition if the faculty member is teaching as part of a specific program (e.g. Biophysics, Dental School) or as part of a team of faculty in a course, written input should by obtained from the leadership of the appropriate unit (e. course directors or program directors).
4. In cases where excellence in a single domain (i.e. administration, teaching), candidates “must document that their activities exceed what most faculty members do in their routine professional capacity”.
5. The Chair’s letter must include a paragraph documenting the faculty member’s service contributions and placing the candidate’s contributions (both their quality and quantity) into the overall context of the Department’s service responsibilities and activities.

# Miscellaneous

Whereas tenure-track (not tenured) faculty appointees require a one-year notification of termination, this requirement is more flexible for non-tenure-track appointees, most of whom currently have one year contracts. The committee recommends that where appropriate, fixed-term faculty be given longer appointments than the current standard one-year appointment. Examples might include: faculty who have funded salary support for multiple years on external grants; faculty with critical roles either in departmental teaching or direction of a research facility, based on their performance. Note that one-year appointments can be made and renewed each year by the Chair but multiple-year appointments require that the chair consult the faculty.

Although non-tenure-track appointments are inherently more flexible, incentives for increasing funded support should in general parallel those for tenure-track faculty.