

**Guidelines for Professional Track Faculty Employees Who Report Directly to the Office of
the Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
Updated May 2026**

For the purposes of these guidelines, Professional Track (PTK) Faculty is defined by the university as “faculty members in promotable title series with non-tenure-eligible appointments equal to or greater than 50% full-time equivalent (FTE).” Faculty at an FTE below 50% should review the USM and UMD policies for Adjunct Faculty. PTK faculty with primary appointments in the Office of the Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS) may have duties that are primarily instructional, primarily administrative, or a combination of instructional, administrative, and research. PTK faculty titles for instructional or research faculty may be used, depending on the primary responsibilities of the faculty member. Appointment, evaluation, and promotion of PTK faculty with primary appointments in the BSOS College Office of the Dean will reflect all of the appointment duties.

PTK faculty appointed by the College follow the [ranks outlined](#) in the University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Faculty and follow [the procedures outlined in the UMD AEP Manual and Guidelines](#). Faculty with the instructional faculty titles may be appointed at the rank of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Principal Lecturer. These ranks do not carry tenure. The minimum appointment and promotion criteria for these ranks are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Minimum Criteria for Appointment and Promotion of Instructional Faculty

	Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Principal Lecturer
Academic Degree	The normal requirement is a Master's degree in the field of instruction or a related field, or equivalent professional experience in the field of instruction. Ph.D. (or highest degree in relevant discipline) is preferred.	The normal minimum requirement is a Master's degree; PhD (or highest degree in relevant discipline) strongly preferred.	The normal minimum requirement is a PhD (or highest degree in relevant discipline).
Professional Experience	The title Lecturer will ordinarily be used to designate appointments of persons who are serving in a teaching capacity for a limited time or part-time.	In addition to having the qualifications of a Lecturer, the appointee shall have an exemplary teaching record over the course of at least five years of full-time	In addition to the qualifications required of the Senior Lecturer, appointees to this rank shall have an exemplary teaching record over the course of at least

		instruction or its equivalent as a Lecturer (or similar appointment at another institution) and shall exhibit promise in developing additional skills in the areas of research, service, mentoring, or program development.	5 years full-time service or its equivalent as a Senior Lecturer (or similar appointment at another institution) and/or the equivalent of 5 years full-time professional experience as well as demonstrated excellence in the areas of research, service, mentoring, or program development.
Contract Term	Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable	Appointments to this rank may have an initial one year contract, but (renewal) contracts typically should be 3-5 years.	Appointments to this rank may have an initial one year contract, but (renewal) contracts typically should be 5 years.

Faculty with research faculty titles may be appointed at the rank of Assistant Research Professor, Associate Research Professor and Research Professor. These ranks do not carry tenure. The minimum appointment and promotion criteria for these ranks are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Minimum Criteria for Appointment and Promotion of Research Faculty

	Assistant Research Professor	Associate Research Professor	Research Professor
Academic Degree	The normal minimum requirement is a PhD (or highest degree in relevant discipline).	The normal minimum requirement is a PhD (or highest degree in relevant discipline).	The normal minimum requirement is a PhD (or highest degree in relevant discipline).
Professional Experience	This rank is generally parallel to Assistant Professor. Appointees shall have demonstrated superior research	This rank is generally parallel to Associate Professor. In addition to the qualifications required of the Assistant Research	This rank is generally parallel to Professor. In addition to the qualifications required of the Associate Research

	ability and potential for contributing to the educational mission through teaching or service. Appointees should be qualified and competent to direct the work of others (such as technicians, graduate students, other research personnel).	Professor, appointees shall have extensive successful experience in scholarly or creative endeavors, the ability to propose, develop, and manage major research projects, and proven contributions to the educational mission through teaching or service.	Professor, appointees shall have demonstrated a degree of proficiency sufficient to establish an excellent reputation among regional and national colleagues. Appointees should have a record of outstanding scholarly production in research, publications, professional achievements or other distinguished and creative activity, and exhibit excellence in contributing to the educational mission through teaching or service.
Contract Term	Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable. Whenever possible, faculty will be given progressively longer contracts.	Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable. Whenever possible, faculty will be given progressively longer contracts.	Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable. Whenever possible, faculty will be given progressively longer contracts.

Faculty with faculty specialist titles may be appointed at the rank of faculty specialist, senior faculty specialist, or principal faculty specialist. These ranks do not carry tenure. The minimum appointment and promotion criteria for these ranks are listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Minimum Criteria for Appointment and Promotion of Faculty Specialists

	Faculty Specialist	Senior Faculty Specialist	Principal Faculty Specialist
Academic Degree	The appointee shall hold a Bachelor's degree in a relevant area and show potential for excellence in the administration and/or management of academic or research programs.	The appointee shall hold a Master's degree or have a BA/BS and at least 3 years full-time experience as a Faculty Specialist (or similar appointment at another institution), or its equivalent.	The appointee shall hold a Ph.D. or have a BA/BA or MA and at least 5 years of full-time experience as a Senior Faculty Specialist, or its equivalent
Professional Experience	Faculty Specialists are expected to engage in activities such as developing curriculum and/or innovative means for delivering curriculum, supervising the non-research activities of graduate or post-doctoral students, serving as grant writers or authors of other publications for an academic or research program, conducting specialized research duties or other such duties that would generate intellectual property to which the faculty member shall retain the rights.	Showing superior ability to administer academic or research programs, as evidenced by successfully discharging responsibilities such as those of the Faculty Specialist, as well as demonstrating the potential for leadership.	The appointee shall have demonstrated an ability to fulfill the duties of senior faculty specialist, as well as write grant proposals, serve as lead on projects, presentations and papers, mentor students and faculty specialists, manage project budgets, coordinate multiple projects and demonstrate leadership.
Contract Term	Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable. Whenever	Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable. Whenever possible, faculty will be given	Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable. Whenever

	possible, faculty will be given progressively longer contracts.	progressively longer contracts.	possible, faculty will be given progressively longer contracts.
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These Tables do not provide an exhaustive review of available PTK faculty titles at the University of Maryland. Instead, they reflect the most common and likely titles used by PTK faculty members in the BSOS Dean's Office. For other ranks, the College will adopt the minimum qualifications and job descriptions provided by the [Office of Faculty Affairs](#).

Search Procedures:

Competitive, posted searches should be conducted for vacant or new PTK faculty positions. Searches may be waived by the Dean on a case-by-case basis when filling short-term vacancies. All searches will follow campus procedures and policies.

Agreement Letter & Contract:

A PTK faculty member appointed in the BSOS College Office of the Dean will sign both an agreement letter and an online contract. The agreement letter should follow the [template](#) provided by the Office of Faculty Affairs. The agreement letter between the College and the employee stipulates the specific duties and the % FTE dedicated to each of the domains (e.g., teaching, research, administration). In addition to the agreement letter, the employee will also sign an online PTK faculty contract based on primary duties, appointment type and rank. The letter and contract (together) will include all of the following: salary, detailed duties and expectations (by % FTE), reporting and supervision, notification date about renewal or non-renewal, professional development resources, mentorship plan, performance/evaluation criteria and timelines for performance evaluation and promotion considerations.

Upon appointment, the PTK Faculty should be provided with a copy of the campus AEP Manual, as well as the BSOS' guidelines and promotion criteria.

Support for PTK Faculty:

All PTK faculty members are critical to the College's mission and should be provided with the necessary and appropriate support for the execution of their duties. Where appropriate, professional development of PTK faculty should be encouraged and supported. This will normally be negotiated at hire or contract renewal and stipulated in the agreement letter.

PTK Faculty Role in College Governance:

PTK faculty with appointments in the BSOS College are important contributors to the College faculty and are part of the College Assembly. However, they are not faculty members in an academic department, except via a separate appointment in a department. When there are

college-wide opportunities for service and committees, PTK faculty with appointments in BSOS are eligible to participate.

Mentoring:

In line with [campus guidelines on faculty mentoring](#), and in accordance with the UM guidelines for PTK faculty, mentoring of PTK faculty by appropriate senior faculty, either TTK or PTK faculty, will be arranged at the time of appointment. This senior faculty member may be from another unit if no one suitable works within the unit. The mentor should not be the faculty's official supervisor. Mentors shall encourage, support, and assist these faculty members and be available for consultation on matters of professional development. Favorable informal assessments and positive comments by mentors are purely advisory to the faculty member and do not guarantee a favorable promotion decision. PTK faculty may request (to their Supervisor) to switch mentors and/or to be assigned more than one mentor.

Procedures and Timeline for Ongoing Evaluation:

Professional track faculty will be mentored and invited to submit evaluation materials on an annual basis for informal feedback from the mentor and Supervisor, separately. During these regular reviews, the Supervisor/Unit head should discuss a promotion plan with the PTK faculty member. Formal evaluation will normally occur in the academic year prior to contract renewal (which will range from 1 to every 5 years). Formal evaluations will be conducted by the Supervisor and will comment on the extent to which the PTK faculty is meeting expectations across all job duties as defined in the employment contract.

Joint Appointments:

PTK Faculty members with joint appointments hold both a primary appointment and one or more secondary appointments. An MOU outlining the agreement between/among Units is encouraged. This MOU should codify matters such as the merit process, DRIF allocation (if relevant), and research credit (if appropriate). When a joint appointment candidate is reviewed for promotion, the primary appointment Unit is responsible for making the recommendation after first obtaining advisory input from the (one or more) secondary units, as appropriate.

Guidelines for Raises Associated with Promotions:

PTK faculty promoted to the second- or third-level rank within their title series will receive a minimum \$5,000 salary increase if they are 9 month faculty. Salary increases associated with promotion will take effect in the following academic year. Note that salary increases associated with promotion are separate from merit and cost of living increases.

Guidelines for Merit Increases:

When the University decides that merit funds are available to faculty, PTK faculty will be assigned to one of three merit categories (not meeting expectations, meeting expectations, exceeding expectations) according to materials in the evaluation/promotion file at the time of the review. The timeframe of consideration for these evaluations in the file will be since the last merit increase.

Guidelines for Termination:

All campus PTK faculty contracts include standard language regarding termination prior to the end of the appointment. The reasons for the University to terminate a contract early are outlined in sections 3, 4, and 5 of the employee's contract. As noted in the University System of Maryland (USM) Policy on Appointment, Rank, and Tenure of Faculty ([II-1.00](#), Section I.C.12) and the University of Maryland Policy on Full-Time and Part-Time Professional Track Instructional Faculty ([II-1.00\(F\)](#)), PTK faculty must receive adequate notice of non-renewal of their contracts. Below are the non-renewal notice periods, effective July 1, 2025:

- 30 days for individuals with under 1 year of service, or with an FTE below 50% (no change).
- 90 days for full-time (100% FTE) individuals with 1-7 years of service (no change).
- 180 days for full-time (100% FTE) individuals with 7 or more years of service (no change).
- 60 days for individuals with 1-7 years of service and FTE between 50% and 99%.
- 90 days for individuals with 7 or more years of service and FTE between 50% and 99%.

The PTK faculty contracts also specify that contracts may not be renewed.

Eligibility for Awards:

PTK faculty can be nominated for any of the college or campus awards for which they meet the criteria of eligibility.

Title Change:

PTK faculty may request a change of title via written request to their Supervisor and Dean. The Dean may approve the request upon a determination that the PTK faculty member satisfies the qualifications for a new appointment into that title. There should be no expectation on the part of the faculty member that their request for change of title will be granted. The requested change must be a lateral move or change to a lower rank in the new series. A title change is considered a new appointment, thereby requiring the issuance of a new contract and terms (e.g., salary, assigned duties, FTE) by the Unit to the faculty member.

Promotion Guidelines and Procedures:

- a. There are two (progressive) promotions for PTK faculty, assuming an initial appointment was at the first level-rank within their title series: review for

promotion to the second rank; and, review for promotion to the third rank. Promotion is based on the PTK faculty member's qualifications and achievements as specified in the unit's AEP Policies and Procedures and the duties outlined in their employment contract. Although time in rank may be considered as part of the promotion eligibility/review, it alone does not qualify a candidate for promotion.

- b. BSOS will not prohibit an eligible PTK faculty member from applying for promotion due to budgetary issues, nor will it compel the candidate to apply for promotion. If the Dean determines the PTK faculty member is not eligible for promotion (i.e., does not meet the minimum qualifications for that title/rank), the candidate does have the option to grieve the decision under UMD policy.
- c. Promotion reviews should occur on a standard schedule, roughly tracking the regular APT schedule in the academic year. Deadlines will be set each year by the College.
- d. Promotion decisions cannot be determined in relation to a College or department-wide quota, but should be based solely on the merits of each candidate's performance.
- e. All promotions will involve a review by a Dean's appointed AEP committee. This committee has several responsibilities, as outlined in the [University's AEP Manual](#).
- f. PTK Faculty members seeking promotion must inform the Dean by April 1 so that there can be a determination of whether the faculty member is eligible and, if so, so that preparation of the dossier/process may begin.
- g. Evaluation of whether the candidate warrants promotion to the next rank will be based on an assessment how well they have performed in their specific job duties and responsibilities and whether they meet the minimum criteria for the title to which they seek promotion.
 - i. Faculty with teaching duties are expected to have a record of high-quality and impactful instruction (as shown by evaluations, awards, syllabi, innovative course or pedagogical techniques, or other measures), as appropriate based on their duties.
 - ii. Faculty with research duties are expected to conduct high quality research, successfully manage research programs, disseminate and/or partner with stakeholders, as appropriate based on their duties.
 - iii. Faculty with administrative duties are expected to contribute to the mission of the unit, complete tasks effectively and efficiently, and/or support programs, as appropriate based on their duties
- h. Promotion to Second-Level Rank
 - i. The Dean will form a Unit AEP Review Committee that will make a recommendation to the Dean regarding promotion. Upon providing an independent review and evaluation of the case, the Dean will transmit the dossier to the Office of Faculty Affairs for review and certification. The candidate will receive notification of the final decision in writing.

- ii. The candidate seeking review/promotion will prepare and verify materials for the dossier. This includes, but is not limited to, a signed and dated CV in the required university format, and a signed personal statement (for details, see [the University's guidance](#)). Candidates must also include supplemental materials when appropriate, such as: a teaching portfolio, representative scholarship, evidence of leadership and other responsibilities, evidence of community engagement, etc. See the University's AEP guidance for a more complete list of supplemental material examples.
- i. Promotion to Third-Level Rank
 - i. The review for promotion to the third level rank has two parts. First, The Dean will form a Unit AEP Review Committee that will make a recommendation to the Dean regarding promotion. Upon providing an independent review and evaluation of the case, the Dean will transmit the dossier to the Office of Faculty Affairs. At this point, it will be reviewed by the Campus AEP Review committee, which makes a recommendation to the Provost. The Provost makes the final decision, which will be conveyed to the candidate in writing.
 - ii. The candidate seeking review/promotion will prepare and verify materials for the dossier. This includes, but is not limited to, a signed and dated CV in the required university format, and a signed personal statement (for details, see [the University's guidance](#)). Candidates must also include supplemental materials when appropriate, such as: a teaching portfolio, representative scholarship, evidence of leadership and other responsibilities, evidence of community engagement, etc. See the University's AEP guidance for a more complete list of supplemental material examples.
 - iii. The dossier for promotion to the third-level rank should include letters from internal and/or external evaluators. "Internal" is defined as former or current faculty or staff members within the candidate's Unit. BSOS requires the solicitation of 3 evaluation letters. The evaluator should have (had) qualifications that are deemed to be at or above the rank sought by the candidate. This assessment should be based more on the job duties of the evaluator than the job title. The candidate should provide a list of potential evaluators to the AEP committee and Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, including a brief professional description of each person. The evaluators nominated by the candidate should be familiar with the candidate's work, but not be current collaborators. Any potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed by the candidate. The request to evaluators should be sent by the Unit AEP committee or a member of the Dean's office, not the candidate. The [University's AEP Manual](#) provides guidelines on how to solicit, document and manage these letters.

Denial of Promotion:

- a. A faculty member denied promotion to the second level rank by the College may appeal the decision based on procedural and/or substantive grounds to the Dean. The Dean will establish an ad-hoc Appeals Committee to review the case. This committee should have PTK faculty representation. A request for an appeal must be made in writing to the Dean within 60 calendar days of receipt of the final decision. The request must detail the basis for the appeal and evidence to support the claims. If the appeal request is granted, the appellant has an additional 60 days in which to submit materials related to the case to the Dean. The Appeals Committee will meet with the appellant, and other parties, and investigate the case, as it deems appropriate. The Committee may not substitute its academic judgment for the judgment of those in the review. The Committee makes a recommendation to the Dean who makes the final decision.
- b. A faculty member seeking promotion to the third level rank who receives a negative decision from the Dean can follow the relevant appeal process outlined above. If the candidate receives a negative decision from the Provost, the faculty member may appeal a negative decision based on procedural or substantive grounds to the Provost. A request for an appeal must be made in writing to the Provost within 60 calendar days of the candidate's receipt of the Provost's letter. The request must detail the basis for the appeal and evidence to support the claims. If an appeal request is granted, the appellant has 60 additional days in which to submit materials relevant to the case to the Office of Faculty Affairs. A campus-level AEP Appeals Committee is formed by the Office of Faculty Affairs. The Committee will meet with the Appellant and may interview other parties and investigate the case as it deems appropriate. The Committee may not substitute its academic judgment for the judgment of those in the review. The Committee makes a recommendation to the Provost who makes the final decision.
- c. Negative decisions for promotion do not preclude renewal of the existing PTK appointment; (i.e., PTK faculty appointments are not "up or out"). Positive promotion decisions cannot be rescinded.