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SECTION: Academic Affairs  
SUBJECT: Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff Positions  
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Policy for: All Campuses  
Procedure for: All Campuses  
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## I. Policy

This policy defines the academic titles authorized for faculty appointments and appointments of other academic personnel engaged in instruction, research and clinical activities at the University of South Carolina.

Faculty and unclassified academic staff may only be appointed to positions using one of the academic titles specified below. Additionally, all University faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction must meet the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) credential requirements for teaching at the appropriate level. The hiring authority will confirm that the correct title is used and that the candidates meet the required criteria for appointment.

All exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the campus chief academic officer or designee. See also Section A.2. below.

Academic personnel with responsibilities and/or credentials not included in this policy must be appointed in accordance with standard hiring guidelines of the Division of Human Resources. See also University Policy ACAF 1.24 Appointment, Transfer, and Promotion of Classified, Research Grant, Time Limited or Unclassified Staff Employees.

### A. Oversight and Approval

#### 1. Hiring Authority

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 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.

- a. On the Columbia campus, the hiring authority for faculty positions is the dean of the college or school 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.

See University Policy ACAF 1.00 Appointment and Recruitment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.

## 2. Campus Chief Academic Officer

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.

See University Policy ACAF 1.00 Appointment and Recruitment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.

## B. List of Academic Titles for USC System

The following titles will be used for all faculty and unclassified academic staff positions across the USC system. The definitions of these roles will vary by campus and are outlined in Section C. below.

### 1. Tenure-Track Titles

- Professor
- Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor
- Librarian (Columbia campus only)
- Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor of Library Science (Senior campuses only)
- Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor (Library faculty on Regional campuses only)

### 2. Non-Tenure-Track Titles

- Distinguished Lecturer
- Senior Instructor
- Senior Lecturer
- Instructor
- Lecturer
- Instructor Librarian
- Legal Writing Instructor
- Professor, Part-Time
- Associate Professor, Part-Time
- Assistant Professor, Part-Time
- Clinical Professor
- Clinical Associate Professor
- Clinical Assistant Professor
- Clinical Senior Instructor or Clinical Senior Lecturer
- Clinical Instructor or Clinical Lecturer
- Research Professor
- Research Associate Professor
- Research Assistant Professor
- Professor of Practice
- Visiting Professor
- Visiting Associate Professor
- Visiting Assistant Professor
- Adjunct Professor
- Adjunct Associate Professor
- Adjunct Assistant Professor
- Temporary Faculty
- Distinguished Professor Emeritus

- Professor Emeritus
- Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus or Distinguished Clinical Professor Emeritus
- Endowed Chair Emeritus or Named Professorship Emeritus

3. Unclassified Academic Staff Titles

- University-Supported Post-Doctoral Fellows
- Fellowship-Supported Post-Doctoral Fellows
- University Affiliates
- Academic Program Director
- Academic Program Manager
- Teaching Associate
- Senior Teaching Associate
- Research Associate
- Senior Research Associate
- Master Teacher I
- Master Teacher II

C. Definitions

The academic titles listed in Section B above are defined by campus as outlined below.

1. Senior Campuses

All positions on the Senior campuses will follow definitions outlined in their respective *Faculty Manuals*.

2. Regional Campuses

Tenure-track faculty positions on the Regional campuses will follow the definitions outlined in the Regional Campus and Extended University *Faculty Manual*.

All other faculty positions, non-tenure-track faculty positions and other unclassified academic staff positions on the Regional campuses will follow the definitions outlined below in Sections I.C.3.b - f.

3. Columbia Campus

All faculty and unclassified academic staff positions on the Columbia campus will follow the definitions outlined below.

a. Tenure-Track Appointments

Tenure-Track appointments are regular, full-time faculty appointments of individuals who have an earned doctorate or a terminal degree unless otherwise noted below.

i. Professor

- (a) To be eligible for appointment at the rank of professor, a faculty member must have a record of superior performance usually involving both teaching and research, or creativity or performance in the arts, or recognized professional contributions. The faculty member normally is expected to hold the earned doctor's degree and have at least nine years of effective, relevant experience. Professors are eligible for tenure.
- (b) Distinguished Professor: The title Distinguished Professor shall be awarded to tenured professors who do not hold named or chaired professorships in their final year of service. Upon retirement, this title shall change to Distinguished Professor Emeritus. (See Section I.D. below.)

ii. Associate Professor: To be eligible for appointment at the rank of associate professor, a faculty member must have a record of strong performance usually involving both teaching and research, or creativity or performance in the arts, or recognized professional contributions. The faculty member normally is expected to hold the earned doctor's degree and must possess strong potential for further development as a teacher and scholar. Associate Professors are eligible for tenure. (Also see Professor Emeritus.)

iii. Assistant Professor: To be eligible for appointment at the rank of assistant professor, a faculty member normally is expected to hold the earned doctor's degree or its equivalent and must possess strong potential for development as a teacher and scholar. Assistant Professors in the tenure track are not eligible for tenure; however, service under such an appointment is considered part of the probationary period for tenure consideration. (Also see Professor Emeritus.)

iv. Librarian: An individual appointed at the rank of Librarian will usually have a terminal degree in a specific field and a master's degree in library science, and strong potential for effective professional service. Librarians are eligible for tenure. This title

may be expanded to Assistant Librarian or Associate Librarian as appropriate to the status of the individual.

b. Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Appointments

Non-tenure-track faculty are appointed on an annual or multi-year basis. Service in a non-tenure-track appointment is not considered part of a probationary period for tenure consideration. See also University Policy ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.

- i. Instructor or Lecturer: The primary responsibility of an individual appointed as an Instructor or Lecturer is teaching; however, other duties may be assigned.
  - (a) Distinguished Lecturer: The title of Distinguished Lecturer is used only on rare occasions and must have prior approval, through academic channels, of the president.
  - (b) Senior Instructor or Senior Lecturer: An initial appointment may not be made at this rank. An individual promoted to the rank of Senior Instructor or Senior Lecturer must have held a regular, full-time appointment as an Instructor or Lecturer at the University of South Carolina for a minimum of six consecutive years, and must have received approval for the promotion by vote of the departmental faculty, the recommendation of the department chair (in departmentalized units), the recommendation of the campus, college or school dean, and the approval of the provost or the Senior campus chief academic affairs officer.
  - (c) Instructor or Lecturer: To be eligible for appointment at the rank of instructor, a faculty member normally is expected to possess a master's degree in the teaching discipline or a master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
  - (d) Legal Writing Instructor: An individual appointed to the title of Legal Writing Instructor is expected to possess at least a juris doctor degree. The individual is eligible for a long term contract only after successful completion of the initial six year period.

- ii. Part-Time Faculty: These titles are only used for tenured faculty who move off the tenure track and become part-time, in accordance with University Policy ACAF 1.18 Change in Status to and from Tenure-Track Faculty.
  - (a) Professor, Part-Time: The requirements are the same as for the title of Professor, but the individual is appointed on a part-time basis. Part-time Professors are not eligible for tenure, and tenured Professors who become part-time relinquish their tenure.
  - (b) Associate Professor, Part-Time: The requirements are the same as for the title of Associate Professor, but the individual is appointed on a part-time basis. Part-time Associate Professors are not eligible for tenure, and tenured Associate Professors who become part-time relinquish their tenure.
  - (c) Assistant Professor, Part-Time: The requirements are the same as for the title of Assistant Professor, but the individual is appointed on a part-time basis. Part-time Assistant Professors are not eligible for tenure, and tenured Assistant Professors who become part-time relinquish their tenure.
- iii. Clinical Faculty

Clinical Faculty appointments are regular, full-time or part-time appointments of individuals of substantial professional caliber to supervise and instruct students in clinical, field, classroom, or laboratory settings, and/or to engage in practice and outreach, and/or have substantial professional caliber to administer academic programs and other administrative activities. Clinical Faculty usually have an earned medical or terminal degree unless noted below. According to individual circumstances, faculty in these positions may or may not be salaried.

- (a) Clinical Professor: An individual appointed as a Clinical Professor must have a record of outstanding clinical performance, and have at least nine years of effective, relevant experience. This rank is reserved for individuals with proven stature as a clinician.
- (b) Clinical Associate Professor: An individual appointed as a Clinical Associate Professor must have a record of

effective clinical performance and have strong potential for further development as a clinician.

- (c) Clinical Assistant Professor: An individual appointed as a Clinical Assistant Professor must have strong potential for development as a clinician.
- (d) Clinical Senior Instructor or Clinical Senior Lecturer: An initial appointment may not be made at this rank. An individual promoted to the rank of Clinical Senior Instructor or Clinical Senior Lecturer must have held the rank of Clinical Instructor or Clinical Lecturer at the University of South Carolina for a minimum of six consecutive years and must have received approval for the promotion by vote of the departmental faculty, the recommendation of the department chair (in departmentalized units), the recommendation of the campus, college or school dean, and the approval of the provost or the Senior campus chief academic affairs officer.
- (e) Clinical Instructor or Clinical Lecturer: An individual appointed as a Clinical Instructor or Clinical Lecturer is expected to possess at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline or at least a master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.

iv. Research Faculty

Research faculty appointments are regular, full-time or part-time appointments of individuals who have research expertise and experience and evidence of scholarly accomplishment. Research faculty will be engaged primarily in independent research such as serving as principal investigator or co-principal investigator on externally funded research and having significant refereed publications. Research Faculty should have the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate.

- (a) Research Professor: An individual appointed as a Research Professor must be recognized internationally/nationally in his/her field and have at least nine years of effective, relevant experience. This rank is reserved for individuals with proven stature in research.



- (b) Research Associate Professor: An individual appointed as a Research Associate Professor must have an established reputation in his/her field.
- (c) Research Assistant Professor: An individual appointed as a Research Assistant Professor must have research expertise in his/her field. This position may not be used as a substitute for post-doctoral fellow positions. (See also Section I.C.3.d. Post-Doctoral Fellows.)

v. Professor of Practice

A Professor of Practice appointment is a full-time or part-time appointment of an individual engaged in instruction, creative work, and leadership in professional practice. The individual must have a proven reputation in professional achievement and expertise, experience, and international/national recognition in his/her professional field. Professors of Practice usually have a master's degree in the teaching discipline or a master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline. The title of Professor of Practice is used only on rare occasions and must have prior approval, through academic channels, of the president.

vi. Visiting and Adjunct Faculty

- (a) Visiting Professor: A Visiting Professor appointment is a full-time appointment, usually for no more than two years, of an individual who has academic rank or high professional status at a different institution or organization, and is on leave of absence from his/her home organization. This title may be expanded to Visiting Assistant Professor or Visiting Associate Professor as appropriate to the status of the individual.
- (b) Adjunct Professor: An individual appointed as an Adjunct Professor serves as an honorary member of the faculty of a department, school, or college. The adjunct faculty may be a University of South Carolina faculty member or from another institution. According to individual circumstances, faculty in these positions may or may not be salaried. This title may be expanded to Adjunct Assistant Professor or Adjunct Associate Professor as appropriate to the status of the individual.

- (c) Adjunct Faculty: This title is also used to refer to temporary faculty and affiliates.

- vii. Temporary Faculty

An individual may be appointed into any of the Non-Tenure-Track titles on a temporary basis in accordance with University Policies HR 1.24 Appointment, Transfer and Promotion of Classified, Research Grant, Time Limited or Unclassified Staff Employees and ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty. Temporary faculty may be appointed for no more than one semester or four and a half months. All temporary faculty must meet the minimum credential requirements of the title or position.

- c. Emeriti Faculty

The titles below may be awarded only when formally requested and approved by the provost or Senior campus chief academic officer and chancellor, the president and the Board of Trustees. The Office of the Provost coordinates the review and approval of requests for the titles below for all system campuses.

- i. Distinguished Professor Emeritus: The title Distinguished Professor shall be awarded to tenured professors who do not hold named or chaired professorships in their final year of service. Upon retirement, this title shall change to Distinguished Professor Emeritus.
- ii. Professor Emeritus: The title Professor Emeritus normally shall be conferred on any tenured assistant or associate professor at the time of retirement.
- iii. Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus or Distinguished Clinical Professor Emeritus: The title Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus or Distinguished Clinical Professor Emeritus may be awarded to clinical or research professors who do not hold named or chaired professorships in their final year of service. Upon retirement, this title shall change to Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus or Distinguished Clinical Professor Emeritus.
- iv. Research Professor Emeritus or Clinical Professor Emeritus: The title Research Professor Emeritus or Clinical Professor Emeritus normally may be conferred on any research or clinical assistant or associate professor at the time of retirement.

- v. Endowed Chairs and Named Professorships: Individuals who retire from the University while they are chairholders may have the title emeritus conferred. See also University Policy ACAF 1.21 Appointment and Review of Endowed Chairs and Named Professorships.

- f. Unclassified Academic Staff Titles

The unclassified academic staff positions defined below may be appointed on a permanent or temporary basis (annual or multi-year). Service under such appointments is not considered part of a probationary period for tenure consideration.

- i. Post-Doctoral Fellows

A Post-Doctoral Fellow is an individual who has received the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, in his or her discipline and is engaged in a temporary and defined period of mentored advanced training to enhance the professional skills and research independence needed to pursue his or her chosen career path. Appointment is on an annual or multi-year basis and service under such an appointment is not considered part of a probationary period for tenure consideration.

- a. University-supported Post-Doctoral Fellows: Post-Doctoral Fellows employed as University employees, i.e., as unclassified academic staff, supported by University funds and extramural contracts, and/or grants.
    - b. Fellowship-supported Post-Doctoral Fellows: Post-Doctoral Fellows directly supported by fellowships from an external agency are not considered to be University employees.

- ii. Academic Affiliates

Individuals appointed as affiliates are engaged by the University to participate in activities or functions, or are recognized for their contribution to the University, and receive no remuneration from the University.

See also University Policy UNIV 2.50 Affiliate Appointments.

- iii. Academic Program Director: Individuals appointed to this position serve as manager/director of larger academic, administrative or institutional programs under academic oversight. Responsibilities include program operations, management and technological services.
- iv. Academic Program Manager: Individuals appointed to this position serve as manager/director of smaller academic, administrative or institutional programs under academic oversight. Responsibilities include program operations, management and technological services.
- v. Teaching Associate: An individual appointed as a Teaching Associate must have no less than a bachelor's degree. The title of Teaching Associate is to be used only for individuals whose primary duty is teaching non-credit courses.
- vi. Senior Teaching Associate: Initial appointments may not be made into this title. An individual promoted to the title of Senior Teaching Associate must have a master's degree and have held the title of Teaching Associate at the University of South Carolina for a minimum of six consecutive years. Promotion from the title of Teaching Associate must be approved through appropriate channels.
- vii. Research Associate: An individual appointed as a Research Associate must have no less than a master's degree. Research Associates plan and conduct research, training projects, and/or community-based service projects.
- viii. Senior Research Associate: An individual appointed as a Senior Research Associate must have all of the qualifications of the Research Associate with a minimum of five years of experience in the research field.
- ix. Master Teacher I: An individual appointed as a Master Teacher I must have a minimum of a Child Development Associate Credential or an equivalent child development credential. Master Teacher I's assist lead teachers in the Children's Center at the University of South Carolina.
- x. Master Teacher II: An individual appointed as a Master Teacher II must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. A master's degree in Early Childhood Education is desired, but not required. Master Teacher II's are

lead teachers who plan, develop, and manage classroom activities in the Children's Center at the University of South Carolina.

## II. Procedures

### A. Procedures for Senior Campuses

Senior campuses will implement this policy using campus-specific policies and procedures as outlined in their respective *Faculty Manuals*.

### B. Procedures for Columbia and Regional Campuses

#### 1. Responsible Units

Units hiring faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction, research and clinical activities must use the academic titles defined in this policy on all Human Resources documentation.

- a. Units within campuses, colleges and schools including departments, all human resources officers throughout the system, the office of the campus chief academic officer, and the Office of System Affairs should confirm that the correct title has been used and the candidates meet the required criteria for each hire.
- b. The Division of Human Resources will process only personnel forms using academic titles found on this list. All exceptions must be approved in writing by the campus chief academic officer or designee. The written approval should accompany the related personnel forms submitted to Human Resources for processing.

#### 2. Faculty Roster

University faculty and other academic personnel involved in instruction must be included on the campus, college or school's Faculty Roster and must meet the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) credential requirements for teaching at the appropriate level. Official record of faculty credentials and the Faculty Roster must be maintained by the office of the hiring authority. See also University Policy ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.

#### 3. Written Criteria in Academic Units

- a. Tenuring units will have written and approved tenure and promotion criteria for tenure-track faculty in accordance with the Faculty Manual.

- b. On the Columbia campus, colleges and schools must have written criteria and internal procedures for promotion of clinical and research faculty in accordance with ACAF 1.16 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty. Additionally, colleges and schools must have written review criteria and internal procedures for all other non-tenure-track positions.

### III. 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 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty  
University Policy ACAF 1.01 Recruitment and Appointment of Academic Administrators  
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 1.24 Appointment, Transfer and Promotion of Classified, Research Grant, Time Limited or Unclassified Staff Employees  
University Policy HR 1.90 Job Reference and Background Checks  
University Policy RCAM 1.03 Regional Campuses--Academic Employment  
University Policy UNIV 2.50 Affiliate Appointments

### IV. Reason for Latest Revision

Revised to clarify role of post-doctoral fellows and to update the definition of the academic affiliates. The list of Non-Tenure-Track and Unclassified Academic Staff titles was also updated.