

Procedures for Evaluation of Promotion to Associate Professor

Passed by the University Assembly 4/10/2015

Amended by the University Senate 4/11/2016

1. General Principles

MODUL University-Vienna is a research university whose goals and mission require that all faculty members continually develop professionally and gain recognition within their respective discipline(s).

Personnel decisions related to reappointment and promotion must be guided by evaluation of the performance of the individual faculty member. The evaluation criteria in all cases relate to the individual's contribution to the University's tri-partite mission of basic (scholarly) research, teaching, and knowledge transfer, plus internal service (self-governance and administration).

The individual faculty member and the University are best served when the criteria and process for promotion decisions are clear as to what are the activities that are valuable and contribute to the missions of the University; the individual faculty member is given regular feedback about the extent of his/her contributions; that high levels of performance are rewarded with promotion while inadequate levels of performance are not rewarded with promotion.

2. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor

Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor recognizes significant accomplishments and contributions to the University's missions in basic research/scholarship, teaching, and knowledge transfer, plus internal service. While a candidate's full record is taken into account, disproportionate weight is placed on the individual's contributions made since becoming an Assistant Professor at MODUL University.

a. Performance in Basic Research/Scholarly Activities

Research performance is assessed by the following dimensions:

- Demonstrated individual ability to do effective and valued research on topics judged to be significant;

- Demonstrated ability to publish one's research in a high quality forum that will advance the diffusion and impact of the individual's scholarly activities to the broader disciplinary community, including sole-authored publications;
- Demonstration of the individual's ability and interest to engage in collaborative research projects with other faculty and doctoral students at MODUL University;
- Demonstration of ability to gain third party funding to support one's research agenda;
- Evidence of ability and motivation to maintain and enhance a high level of research and scholarly productivity *after* promotion to associate professor.

The overall criterion for assessment in research and scholarship is the significance of the contribution to knowledge. An important indicator of this is that the candidate has already made important contributions and provides evidence of *becoming* an internationally known and highly regarded leader in one's chosen area(s) of scholarly research. Thus, while research collaboration and co-authorship are encouraged, the individual faculty member's contributions are central to the assessment of research and scholarship.

b. Performance in Teaching

Effective teaching – the transfer of relevant knowledge and know-how from faculty to students -- is a central mission of MODUL University. The assessment of teaching performance dimension requires multiple measures. The following are suggested elements to be considered in the individual's assessment as an effective teacher:

- Appropriate course content and course design, including the development of new courses;
- Development of new and innovative teaching materials and methods of delivery;
- Contributions to the development and improvement of effective teaching by other MODUL University faculty;
- Demonstrated skill and effectiveness in classroom presentations and discussion, based upon student evaluations and possibly peer evaluations;
- Contributions to the development of students outside of the classroom including supervision of theses, mentoring, and professional development;
- Evidence of motivation and ability to maintain and enhance effective teaching after promotion.

c. Performance in Knowledge Transfer

MODUL University expects all faculty to be engaged with external organizations and constituencies who may benefit from the know-how and other expertise within the university. These can include businesses, NGOs, government organizations, community and advocacy groups. Knowledge transfer can also include providing services and leadership to one's disciplinary/professional organizations, for example serving as an elected officer of an association, as an editor of a journal, or serving on editorial boards. While knowledge transfer activity is less important than high performance in basic scholarship and teaching for promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate should show some evidence of having the interest and ability to contribute to the university's knowledge transfer mission by having some record of meaningful engagement with external organizations such as businesses, NGOs, government organizations, community or advocacy groups.

The following are suggested elements to be considered in the individual's evaluation in the performance of transfer services:

- Demonstrated individual ability to generate and implement applied research projects funded by industry or government organizations;
- Demonstrated ability to be invited to give presentations to external groups (scholarly or non-scholarly);
- Demonstrated ability to provide know-how, expert opinion, or commentary to external (non-scholarly) audiences in the form of, for example, invited presentations, public talks, commentaries, written publications in newspapers, industry magazines or other public forums;
- Demonstrated ability to provide leadership and service to disciplinary associations;
- Evidence of ability and motivation to maintain and enhance service in the future.

Documentation of activity in transfer services should include a short description of each service, including the name of the organization served, the time period including an estimate of the amount of effort (person-days), and (if feasible) any estimates of impact the service has had.

d. Performance in Internal Service and Administration

Universities are organizations that depend upon a high level of self-governance, and hence having faculty who are 'active citizens' in contributing to the common good of the university. Failure of any faculty to serve the 'common good' places an unfair burden on one's colleagues for performing the time-consuming but important duties of self-governance and administration. Elements of service in internal administration include:

- Mentoring students;

- Volunteering to serve on university-wide committees;
- Contributing to the sustainability goals of the university;
- Evidence of motivation in the future to enhance internal service to MODUL University and to serve in leadership roles.

Assistant professors should not be expected to spend a *substantial* amount of their work time in administration in order to focus on building a high level of performance in scholarship and to becoming effective and valued contributors to the teaching mission of MU. However, candidates for promotion to Associate Professors should demonstrate they have contributed effectively to mentoring students, and serving as active and contributing members of one or more university committees.

3. Overall Evaluation Process

A promotion review is triggered when an Assistant Professor informs the President in writing that he/she wishes to be evaluated for promotion to Associate Professor.

The President will then nominate a Promotion Committee, which will consist of three full professors, one associate professor, and one additional faculty member. The President will also nominate one of the associate or full professors to serve as the convening chair of the Promotion Committee. The University Senate will vote to approve the President's nominees. One student may be elected to become a member of the Committee. He/she will participate in all discussions of the Committee, but will be able to vote *only* on the assessment of the candidate's teaching performance. At the first meeting, the members of the committee will vote on the committee's permanent chair, who must be an associate or full professor.

The committee will have the responsibility to carefully evaluate the evidence assembled about the candidate on each of the areas of basic research and scholarship, teaching, knowledge transfer, and administration. Particularly to help the Committee assess the area of basic research/scholarship, at least four written, detailed, external assessments from recognized leading scholars will be solicited.

External assessors will be selected (voted upon) by the Promotion Committee. The candidate will be invited to submit a list of five potential external assessors, but the Committee is *not* obligated to select from among the names on the list. The external assessors cannot include the candidate's Ph.D. supervisor, previous or current co-authors or research collaborators. Each of the external assessors should be recognized as established senior scholars/researchers in one or more of the respective research specializations of the candidate. The external assessors' written reports will be viewed only by members of the committee and the President to help

ensure that the reports will be honest and candid assessments of the quality of the candidate's scholarly research record. The committee may decide, however, to take excerpts from external assessors' reports and show them to the candidate if there are any criticisms of the candidate's research quality that are open to question. Such excerpts would be redacted by the committee so that the external assessor cannot be identified. In such cases the candidate would be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the criticism and that response would be included in the candidate's file to be evaluated by the committee.

The Committee also has the option of inviting Deans and/or department heads to provide oral or written *informal* assessments of the candidate's teaching, transfer service, and administration. After considering all of the relevant material in the candidate's file and after internal discussion, each member of the Promotion Committee will assess the candidate across *each* of the four areas of (i) basic research/scholarship, (ii) teaching, (iii) knowledge transfer, and (iv) internal service and administration, using the following grades: (1) Distinguished, (2) Excellent, (3) Effective, (4) Inadequate. The comparison groups to be used for assigning these ratings are understood to be other junior faculty at comparable research institutions and with similar levels of academic experience. In particular, external assessors will be asked to compare the candidate's scholarship/research record against other junior faculty at a similar stage in their academic careers. *As a general guideline, a rating of 'Inadequate' on any performance dimension would be expected to result in an unfavorable overall recommendation for promotion. The candidate should have a rating of at least 'excellent' on basic research/scholarship. If teaching performance is evaluated as "Effective", then the candidate should have a "Distinguished" evaluation for scholarly research.*

Based upon these grades in the four areas of activities, each member of the committee, except the student member, will vote "Yes" or "No" on an overall assessment of whether the candidate meets the criteria for promotion or not. The student member of the committee can only vote on the teaching performance. The individual committee members' overall assessments as well their assessments on each of the four areas will be communicated to the committee chair anonymously with a closed vote.

The chair of the committee will write and submit a report to the President summarizing the process followed, copies of the external assessors' evaluations, the results of the grades given for each of the four performance areas by each committee member (anonymous), and the voting result of the committee members on the overall assessment. All deliberations of the Promotion Committee, including the committee members' summary ratings and the final vote of the Committee, will be kept strictly confidential except in its communication with the President.

The recommendation and a description of the procedures followed by the committee will be communicated in writing to the President by the chair of the committee immediately after the committee completes its evaluation and voting. The President will make a final decision and will notify the candidate of the outcome. In the (unlikely) event the President decides against the recommendation of the committee, he/she will write a letter to the committee and candidate providing the reasons for the decision. The candidate may initiate a written appeal to the President and the chair of the committee, within two weeks of receiving the recommendation and description of the committee's procedures from the President, if he/she believes there were any violations in the procedure as stipulated in the Constitution. If there is an appeal the chair of the committee will respond to the alleged violations of procedure with appropriate documentation and provide that to the candidate and the President. The President will make a final decision on the appeal and communicate that to the candidate and the committee chair.

Following the final decision, the President will hold a meeting with the faculty candidate and attended by the chair of the Promotion Committee to provide more detailed feedback to the candidate on the evaluation.

4. The Faculty Candidate's Portfolios

An integral part of the material to be used in the assessment is a set of portfolios covering each of the four different activities, to be put together by the faculty candidate and submitted to the President and the chair of the Promotion Committee.

The basic research/scholarship portfolio will consist of an up-to-date CV, a series of publications that the candidate considers to be the most important in terms of his/her contributions to scholarship, and an essay that reflects how the individual and ensemble of publications contribute to significant advancements within their area(s) of scholarship. This essay is optional, but is highly recommended since it is often viewed as valuable by both the external assessors as well as the committee members. There is no specific minimum number of publications, but the collection selected should emphasize publications while serving as an Assistant Professor at MODUL University. The portfolio of selected articles along with the CV and reflective essay (if included by the candidate) will be sent to the each of the external assessors.

The teaching portfolio will consist of student evaluations, peer evaluations, course syllabi, other relevant material such as teaching awards, and an essay that reflects on the candidate's approach and philosophy towards teaching.

The knowledge transfer portfolio will consist of an annotated list of service activities undertaken, with most emphasis on service during the time the candidate has been an Associate Professor at MODUL University. The candidate should write a statement that

describes and discusses the significance and value of the service contributions, as well intentions for future contributions.

The administration portfolio should consist of a list of internal service activities undertaken at MODUL University, and include a short statement of the potential value and importance of the activities as well the intentions for future service.

5. Schedule

The chair of the committee has the responsibility of organizing the evaluation process such that a recommendation can be reached in a timely and efficient manner, but also ensuring that all relevant information is gathered and carefully considered by the committee in order to be able to make a fair recommendation (and subsequent decision by the President). The committee should make every attempt to complete its work no longer than six months from the date of receiving all required documents from the candidate. In reality, however, there may be delays beyond the control of the committee chair, for example, in getting agreements by suitable external evaluators to participate, and then to write and submit their reports to the committee chair. The President should aim to make the final decision within two weeks from the end of the candidate's appeal opportunity, and within the same time period, to communicate the decision to the candidate.

6. Reapplication

If the result of the assessment is a negative decision to promote to associate professor, the candidate may be re-assessed for promotion. He/she, however, will have to wait a minimum of two years from the date of the negative decision to when a new assessment process can begin. In such a case the candidate will receive detailed written feedback from the chair of the Promotion Committee, including excerpts from the reports of the external evaluators (properly redacted), about what areas of performance need to be strengthened in order to increase the chances for a positive second re-assessment.