Department of Economics

RTA Promotion and Evaluation Guidelines

Approved: 2022
RTA Promotion Criteria and RTA-related Governance Sections for Department of Economics

Spring 2022

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I.A.1. Membership of PAC for evaluation of tenure-track faculty

A tenure-track economics PAC (TTPAC) will evaluate tenure-track faculty for the midpoint review, tenure applications, and applications for promotion. The TTPAC shall consist of tenured members of the department who agree in writing in advance to abide by the procedures detailed in this document. Non-tenured faculty members are excluded from all discussions and all votes regarding evaluation of tenure-track faculty.

I.A.2. Membership of PAC for evaluation of RTA faculty

An Economics RTA Personnel Advisory Committee (RTAPAC) will evaluate RTA candidates for promotion in the areas of teaching, scholarship/professional practice, and service. RTAPAC membership will differ from that used for evaluating tenure-track faculty. The RTAPAC shall consist of tenured members of the department and all RTA faculty who are senior lecturers or principal lecturers. Assistant professors who are untenured and lecturers who have not been promoted are excluded from all discussions and all votes regarding RTA candidates for promotion. All RTA faculty, including senior lecturers and principal lecturers, are excluded from formal deliberations related to tenure-track hiring.

I.B.2. PAC duties for evaluation of RTA faculty

During an RTA faculty member’s third year at JMU, the RTAPAC will provide feedback for RTA faculty development purposes. For these purposes, RTA faculty will submit to the AUPAC a dossier summarizing their activities and accomplishments in the areas of teaching, scholarship/professional practice, and service since beginning employment at JMU. This dossier should be submitted to the RTAPAC chair by February 1 and should include a curriculum vitae and supporting documentation as requested by the PAC. The PAC reserves the right to have a consultative meeting with the AUH to discuss the candidate.

The RTAPAC will conduct an evaluation of teaching, scholarship/professional practice, and service for RTA applicants for promotion. The RTAPAC will rate the applicant as being Exceptional, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory in each of these three areas. Details on criteria for ratings are described in Section III below. A letter addressed to the dean of the College of Business, explaining the rationale for the RTAPAC’s ratings will be provided to the dean with copies to the AUH and candidate, according to the procedures and timelines indicated in the Faculty Handbook.

I.C.2. Timelines

The PAC will follow all timelines indicated by the Faculty Handbook. The standard timeframe for a midpoint review is a faculty member’s third year, but if a faculty member has negotiated a different tenure review timeframe, then the midpoint review will be adjusted accordingly. Tenure-track midterm review packets are due to the PAC by March 1 of the midpoint review year, and the PAC’s tenure-track midterm review letter will be provided to the faculty member and AUH by April 15. Tenure and promotion applications are due to be submitted to the PAC by the Faculty Handbook deadline of October 1, and the PAC’s letter concerning a tenure and/or promotion application will be provided to the faculty member, AUH, and Dean by November 15. RTA third-year feedback review packets are due to the PAC by February 1, and the PAC’s letter concerning an RTA third-year review will be provided to the faculty member and AUH by April 15.
III. Evaluation criteria for RTA promotions

Promotion to the rank of senior lecturer is contingent upon substantial professional achievements, evidenced by an appropriate combination of teaching, scholarship/professional practice and service as established by the academic unit. An excellent rating in teaching and at least satisfactory ratings in the other two areas is required for promotion to senior lecturer. In addition to the requirements for senior lecturer, promotion at the rank of principal lecturer is contingent upon recognition of outstanding professional accomplishment, evidenced by an appropriate combination of teaching, scholarship/professional practice and service as established by the academic unit. Excellent ratings in teaching and one other area and at least a satisfactory rating in the third area are required for promotion to principal lecturer.

The Department of Economics values RTA activities that support the goals of the college and university. RTA candidates for promotion must qualify as Scholarly Academic (SA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), Practice Academic (PA), or Instructional Practitioner (IP) as defined by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Normally, a faculty member should have completed five years in academic rank before being reviewed for promotion. If a faculty member applies for promotion before completing five years in academic rank, they must present compelling evidence of accomplishment to be awarded early promotion. This means that to receive a rating of Exceptional in a particular area, the candidate must significantly exceed the normal expectations of Exceptional accomplishment in that area. Similarly, this means that to receive a rating of Satisfactory in a particular area, the candidate must significantly exceed the normal expectations of Satisfactory accomplishment in that area.

There is no requirement for a lecturer to apply for promotion to senior lecturer or principal lecturer. Otherwise, the deadlines for RTA promotion applications are identical to those defined for tenure-track applications described above and indicated by the faculty handbook. The AUH and PAC chair should be notified of intent to apply for RTA promotion by September 1, and the candidate’s application packet must be made available to the RTAPAC by October 1. If a candidate is applying for senior lecturer after five or more years of service at JMU, then they should provide materials from the past five years. If a candidate is applying for principal lecturer after ten or more years of service at JMU, then they should provide materials from the past ten years. If a candidate is applying for principal lecturer with less than ten years of service at JMU, then they should provide materials from the time they started working at JMU.

III.A. Evaluation of teaching for RTA promotion

RTA faculty teaching will be evaluated similarly to tenure-track faculty teaching. Determination that a RTA candidate for promotion to senior lecturer or principal lecturer is either Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, or Excellent, will be made by members of the RTAPAC on the basis of their professional judgment. Teaching is a multifaceted activity that includes, course design and delivery, curriculum development, and interaction with students. Therefore, the evaluation process should be characterized by multiple sources of information and a broad view of the activities that constitute effective teaching. Consideration of teaching performance may include but is not limited to a well-developed teaching philosophy, self-evaluation, evaluations by peers and/or AUHs, and student evaluations of the course content, assignments, learning experiences, and intellectual challenges (i.e., not on the individual style
or personality of the instructor). Student evaluations may only be utilized as a formative tool or as part of a teaching portfolio. Consideration may be given to a faculty member’s commitment to student advising, student mentoring, innovations in teaching, contributions to departmental curriculum improvement, efforts to improve teaching as evidenced by development of new course work and teaching methodology, and other contributions to student success. Consideration of teaching performance may include artifacts to demonstrate student progress and learning, such as edited papers, student projects, student accomplishments, testimony from students, and course portfolios (e.g., presentation material, assignments, rubrics). Any such policy shall apply equally to all similarly situated faculty members in the academic unit. Furthermore, student evaluation scores may not be the primary method by which teaching performance is evaluated.

*Satisfactory Teaching* is defined as effectively performing the following activities:

- Providing instruction at a rigorous and challenging level
- Stimulating learning and interest in the subject matter
- Being well-prepared for class
- Informing students of course objectives, assignments, and examination procedures
- Conducting class in a well-organized manner
- Communicating the subject matter clearly
- Maintaining scheduled office hours
- Treating students with courtesy and respect
- Providing career advising to students
- Maintaining fair and impartial grading standards
- Providing timely feedback on progress
- Staying current with the subject matter
- Participating in program activities to assess and update the curriculum

These activities are essential to good teaching and are, therefore, necessary for an evaluation of Satisfactory in the area of teaching.

*Excellent Teaching*: In general, there are multiple paths to teaching excellence. Indicators of excellent teaching include, but are not limited to:

- Fulfilling the requirements for satisfactory teaching performance in an exemplary manner
- Evidence of a strong and sustained commitment to teaching
- Publications in refereed journals relating to teaching methods, pedagogical innovations, and course content
- Development of new course or major revisions of existing courses
- Teaching awards
- Outstanding student or peer evaluations
- Supervision of independent studies and honors theses
III.B. Evaluation of Scholarship/Professional Practice for RTA promotion

1. Promotion to Senior Lecturer

Satisfactory: Scholarship/Professional Practice must satisfy the Scholarly Academic (SA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), Practice Academic (PA), or Instructional Practitioner (IP) criteria as defined by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Excellent: Scholarship/Professional Practice must exceed the Scholarly Academic (SA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), Practice Academic (PA), or Instructional Practitioner (IP) criteria as defined by the AACSB.

2. Promotion to Principal Lecturer

Satisfactory: Scholarship/Professional Practice must satisfy the Scholarly Academic (SA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), Practice Academic (PA), or Instructional Practitioner (IP) criteria as defined by the AACSB.

Excellent: Scholarship/Professional Practice must significantly exceed the Scholarly Academic (SA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP) criteria as defined by the AACSB.

III.C. Evaluation of service for RTA promotion

Determination that a RTA candidate for promotion to Senior Lecturer or Principal Lecturer is either Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, or Excellent, will be made by the members of the PAC on the basis of their professional judgment. Entering into that judgment should be evidence regarding the quantity and quality of their service activities for the Department of Economics, the College of Business, James Madison University as a whole, the economics profession as a whole, the academic community as a whole, and the non-academic community at large, both locally and more widely.

The Department of Economics recognizes three levels of service, in order of increasing merit:

a) Level 3 Service is defined as participation in department, college, and university events for which faculty visibility is important. Generally, such participation does not require additional efforts either before or after. All faculty members are expected to participate in a variety of level 3 activities.

b) Level 2 Service is defined as important activities in support of one’s program, the college, the university, or the profession that involve a moderate to significant time commitment. It is anticipated that the bulk of a faculty member’s service activities will fall into this category.

c) Level 1 Service is defined primarily as activities that involve a very significant time commitment. Secondary indicators of Level 1 service are 1) a high level of personal responsibility, 2) involvement in activities that are critical to the mission of the department, college, university, or professional organization, 3) distinguishing oneself in a leadership role, whether elected or appointed, 4) serving, with distinction, one’s profession or the external community in a role that exploits one’s professional knowledge, skills, and talents, 5) making a difference in those areas in which one has chosen to serve, and 6) being widely recognized as one who has an exemplary attitude towards service commitments and who serves as a role model for other faculty. Level 1 service should not be interpreted as requiring the presence of every indicator of exceptional performance. However, in all cases there should be evidence of a substantial contribution and an active role.