

# Academic Guidelines for Appointment, Extension and Promotion

Adopted by the Executive Board and approved by the University Council on October 7, 2016

## Introduction

The Guidelines particularize the provisions stipulated in the Constitution of Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU). The university has different **appointment, extension and promotion** policies for its scientific staff based on three categories: employed faculty, adjunct faculty, and other scientific staff.

## 1 Categories of Scientific Staff

The university distinguishes its scientific staff in three categories: employed faculty, adjunct faculty, and other scientific staff. The university may also employ visiting professors.

### 1.1 Employed Faculty

Employed faculty include those individuals who have gone through the constitutionally appropriate appointment procedures and whose primary tasks are in the areas of research and teaching whereby any additional administrative or mentoring tasks are considered either part of their service records (i.e. not additionally compensated) or explicitly compensated for specific managerial tasks (i.e. department head stipends). Employed faculty assignments include research, teaching, and service whereby they are all required to do independent research, collaborate in scholarly/scientific projects, do independent teaching, supervise undergraduate and graduate theses, participate in committees, serve on task forces, and cooperate in administrative responsibilities.

The university distinguishes and assesses its employed faculty in accordance with their rank, which includes Assistant, Associate and Full Professors. This system aims to foster mentorship and advancement among faculty. All three ranks require at least a doctorate degree. Depending on the discipline, the equivalent in professional experience may serve as a substitute for doctoral degrees. Assistant, Associate and Full Professors are appointed under the conditions of the Austrian labor law. Specific procedures pertaining to promotion must be based on an evaluation of performance agreements and follow international standards.

#### 1.1.1 Assistant Professor

Assistant Professors are faculty members with a doctoral degree or equivalent professional experience employed part-time or full-time on a temporary or permanent basis. The Campus Director based on a short-list submitted by the respective academic department head appoints Assistant Professors. Extensions of limited appointments of an Assistant Professor beyond five years as well as the promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor occur only after a qualification assessment, which focuses on the quality of the research and the teaching performance of the past years. The Campus Director in collaboration with the respective department head and at least one external reviewer from another university or post-secondary educational institution assesses the merits of such applications with final decision resting with the Campus Director.

### **1.1.2 Associate Professor**

Associate Professors require a Habilitation or equivalent (such as post-doctoral experience in an appropriate academic institution or years of documented experience and achievement); they are employed part-time or full-time on a temporary or permanent basis. Associate Professors are expected to help foster the development of Assistant Professors, apply for external project funds and engage Assistant Professors in on-going projects as well as use their experience to promote the research endeavors of the students. The Campus Director based on a short-list submitted by the respective academic department head appoints Associate Professors. Extensions of limited appointments of an Associate Professor beyond five years occur only after a qualification assessment, which focuses on the quality of the research and the teaching performance of the past years. Promotion from Associate to Full Professor may only occur when a Full Professor position is opened and advertised and the individual seeking promotion has successfully completed the appointment process for Full Professors.

### **1.1.3 Full Professor**

Full Professors require a Habilitation or equivalent (such as post-doctoral experience in an appropriate academic institution or years of documented experience and achievement) and a distinguished, long-standing scholarly track record to justify the position. They are employed part-time or full-time on a temporary or permanent basis. Full Professors are tasked with the responsibility to contribute substantially to the scholarly/scientific development of all members in their department, pursue larger, long-term grants and engage Assistant and Associate Professors in setting and meeting their research goals.

The university allocates Full Professor positions filled on a permanent basis (or longer than five years) by establishing chairs in accordance with the development plan. The appointment procedure entails an international search and the search committee must include at least one external member from another university or post-secondary educational institution. The Campus Director ultimately selects the individual for appointment based on a short-list submitted by the search committee after consulting with the university's Diversity Manager.

### **1.1.4 Visiting Professor**

When appropriate, the university employs visiting professors on the basis of renewable term, semester or academic-year contracts to provide research and/or teaching opportunities for external scholars. Visiting professors will hold a doctoral degree or equivalent professional experience at the time of their appointment. The Campus Director based on a formal plan submitted by the respective academic department head appoints all visiting professors. Service as a visiting professor does not afford any claim of extension or promotion.

## **1.2 Adjunct Faculty**

Where needed, WVPU contracts individuals to teach courses on an adjunct basis. These individuals are known as adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty shall be appointed under the respective legal conditions for a certain number of courses in a given time-frame following selection by the relevant academic department head. Such individuals are appointed on an as needed basis. They do not endure the similar appointment process for employed faculty and their service as an adjunct faculty member does not afford them any claim of extension or promotion.

Adjunct faculty members hold at least an MA or its equivalent and relevant professional experience in their field. They teach individual classes in their specific fields of expertise including full preparation for the classes as well as supervision of students' academic performance in those classes and evaluation of their work. They work part-time on the basis of an appropriate course contract and are assigned to teach individual classes in their specific fields of expertise. Upon approval of the respective academic department head an adjunct faculty may be permitted to serve as supervisor and/or reader of bachelor and/or master theses. Adjunct faculty members hold their status as an adjunct for the entire academic year in which they teach, regardless of the number of courses for which they are assigned. Individual adjunct faculty members are expected to participate in the relevant activities of their respective academic departments and the university as a whole.

### **1.3 Other Scientific Staff**

Other scientific staff work in diverse positions in teaching, research and academic support services (e.g., scientific employees in general, instructors, tutors, researchers, advisors). Similar to adjunct faculty, they do not go through a similar appointment process as that for employed faculty and, thus, are not entitled to extra-procedural promotion to employed faculty status. They are, however, entitled to an extension of their employment based on performance. They may be employed part-time or full-time with temporary or permanent employment contracts under the conditions of the Austrian labor law. In principle, such individuals must hold a master degree or equivalent in a specifically related field to be able to teach.

Their assignments include performing or supporting the specific academic activities and assuming responsibility in the specifically assigned tasks. Upon approval of department heads, other scientific staff may be permitted to serve as supervisor and/or reader of a bachelor and/or master thesis. Appointments of other scientific staff are made in accordance with university hiring policies and ultimately subject to approval of the Campus Director. Employees hired as other scientific staff are expected to participate in the relevant activities of their respective academic departments and the university as a whole.

## **2 Requirements on Teaching, Research, and Academic Service**

All scientific staff are expected to provide teaching, research and service to the university and all employed faculty are expected to produce in addition appropriate research output. Within this context, the university stipulates certain minimum requirements with regard to teaching, research, and service, the mix of which depends on status and the terms of employment.

### **2.1 Teaching Requirements**

The ability to teach at the bachelor and, where applicable, at the master level is an essential qualification for appointment, extension for all scientific staff and promotion in the case of employed faculty. Required skills include knowledge of the subject matter, skill in presentation, experience, interest in students, creativity, ability to stimulate thinking, enthusiastic devotion to teaching, integrity, versatility, and capacity for cooperation with colleagues and administration in the achievement of the WVPU's instructional goals. The following activities related to teaching are required for all scientific staff with teaching assignments:

- Maintain a state-of-the-art knowledge of their respective field;
- Deliver no less than the full classroom contact hours for each assigned course;

- Prepare course and class presentations, including designing, organizing, and refining courses, gathering materials for use in the classroom, and working to incorporate new instructional technologies into the classes;
- Evaluate student performance and provide feedback by creating appropriate testing material, grading examinations and other student work, and provide commentary to students concerning their performance on exams;
- Work with students to improve their communications skills (writing, speaking, and presenting);
- Conduct out-of-class interactions with students such as advising, counseling, and providing academic support;
- Maintain office hours to review material and respond to questions from students;
- Define and communicate course goals and learning outcomes in the course syllabi.

## **2.2 Research Requirements and Evaluation of Employed Faculty**

The university requires every member of its scientific staff to meet a minimum standard of scholarly research output or creative work, which are defined in performance agreements according to the goals spelled out in the Strategic Plan. Performance agreements not only allow for better planning and quality assurance, but also for specification in line with the level, focus, and nature of individual research activities. Research faculty members must provide complete documentation of their research activities over each performance review period for evaluation and reporting purposes. The annual performance agreement as provided by the respective department will be the standard to assess the delivered work.

The respective academic department heads are responsible to conduct individual performance evaluations every semester, whereby they review and provide feedback on past achievements (performance review) and establish new agreements on future goals including timeframes (as stipulated in the departmental performance agreements). While the level of scientific output varies significantly for other scientific staff, employed faculty must meet certain requirements commensurate to their rank. Four evaluation criteria are used to assess individual scholarly or artistic output and vary respectively in regards to the respective field of work:

- Employed faculty that conduct scholarly research are expected to produce a mix of at least three publications, notable achievements, or formal acceptances for publication (single authored or co-authored) per annum. These may be any mix of articles in peer-reviewed scholarly journals, scholarly books (monograph) peer-reviewed and/or published by an academic publisher, publication as editor of a scholarly book, a paper presented at a scholarly conference and subsequently published in peer-reviewed conference proceedings or a peer-reviewed journal. In addition the university strongly encourages the acquisition of externally funded research projects or media coverage of faculty research in field-relevant practitioner publications and/or mass media and will recognize such achievements accordingly.
- Employed faculty involved in creative work are expected to achieve a mix of three publications/achievements (single authored or co-authored) per annum. These may be any mix of participation in an international or national juried exhibition, competition, invitational show or film festival, presentation of work in a solo exhibition, participation in professional

conferences or symposia, completion of commissions from international, national, or regional firms or clients, acquisitions of work by important public or private collections, media coverage of research output in field-relevant practitioner publications and/or mass media, or publication in a representative catalogue or art journal.

- All employed faculty are expected to deepen their integration in the respective scientific communities of their research areas. Specifically, this means they should review the academic work of others in the academic community (e.g., writing reviews of articles submitted to peer-reviewed academic journals or serving on the scientific board of academic conferences, PhD commissions, or Habilitation committees). Also relevant is academic editorial work (e.g., serving as editor or guest editor of academic journals), participation in the organization of academic events such as professional conferences, colloquia, or seminars, or participation in committee or jury work.
- All employed faculty are expected to supervise theses and are evaluated according to the quantity and quality of those supervised and the relevance of the thesis topic to their defined research foci.

### **2.3 Academic Service Requirements**

Other scientific staff and employed faculty in particular are required to provide academic services as part of their contractual obligations. Adjunct faculty may voluntarily engage in academic service tasks, but they are not required to do so. Scientific staff may not receive additional compensation for the provision of academic services. Examples of academic service include but are not limited to:

- Mentoring services for students including scholarly advice, guidance, and thesis supervision or committee participation;
- Active participation in committee work at the department, campus, or university level;
- Participation in task forces on development and/or evaluation of programs and facilities;
- Performing basic administrative duties associated with the primary duties of teaching and research;
- Designing new courses or working on updating course and program curricula;
- Promoting the university or the scholarly, creative, or social activities of its scientific staff and students;
- Conducting make-up classes, providing regular or extra office hours to accommodate students in their respective courses and programs;
- Participation as a proctor or co-proctor for examinations of WVPU courses.

### **3 Sabbatical Leave**

The university supports the professional development of its employed faculty by sabbatical leave. All employed faculty are eligible to request a one-year sabbatical at half salary or a half-year sabbatical at full salary after five consecutive and uninterrupted years of service or seven years since their last sabbatical. Eligible employed faculty must request sabbatical leave at least six months prior to the planned leave. However, there is no legal entitlement for a sabbatical. Sabbatical grants are contingent upon budgetary considerations, the value of the research proposal for the sabbatical leave, and an evaluation of past performance agreements.