

**Unit AEP Guidelines**  
**College of Behavioral and Social Sciences**  
**Updated July 2025**

The Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) updates the [AEP Manual and Guidelines](#) on an as-needed basis. The most recent version went into effect on July 1, 2025. BSOS procedures follow and are consistent with this Manual.

For the purposes of these guidelines, PTK Faculty are 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 with non-tenure eligible appointments at an FTE below 50% should review the USM and UMD policies for Adjunct Faculty.

1. In each title series (for example, Research Scientist, Research Scholar, Lecturer, Faculty Specialist, and Clinical Professor), PTK faculty can be appointed or promoted to one of three ranks, according to the candidates’ professional credentials and the Units’ criteria for each rank. Departments/Centers shall establish specific criteria for appointment/promotion within each of the title series which are relevant to their Unit and clearly specify expectations regarding minimum or typical time in rank. These criteria must be consistent with campus and college guidelines and should be reviewed on a regular basis. This information should be made easily accessible to all PTK faculty.
2. Initial Appointments occur at all times of the year. Unit recommendations for appointment at one of the first two ranks will be reviewed and approved by the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs. A Unit recommendation for initial appointment at the highest rank within a track will be reviewed by the college-level AEP committee. This committee consists of at least three faculty members (one tenured Full Professor, and a minimum of two PTK faculty at the highest rank in a relevant title series). After review, they will issue a recommendation to the Dean. All review committee members shall be full voting members and serve a two-year term (although this term limitation may be waived until there are enough faculty at the highest PTK ranks to rotate membership on this committee). The dossier (with the Dean’s recommendation) will be forwarded to a review committee constituted by the Office of the Provost. A third-level rank PTK appointment is not valid without approval by the Provost.
3. 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.
4. When the PTK faculty member begins employment with UMD, their Unit head should provide a copy of the campus AEP Manual, as well as the Unit’s AEP guidelines and promotion criteria. Further, at least one senior faculty member should be appointed as a mentor and the Unit should provide a copy of its mentoring plan. This senior faculty member can be PTK or TTK and may be from another unit if no

one suitable works within the unit. The mentor should not be the faculty's official supervisor.

5. Unit-level AEP plans should address how merit pay and recognition/awards for excellence will be incorporated into their PTK policies and procedures. The BSOS level award descriptions for PTK faculty can be found [here](#).
6. At the initial appointment and during regular reviews, the Unit head should discuss a promotion plan with the PTK faculty member.
7. Whenever possible, PTK faculty should receive progressively longer contracts. For instructional faculty, the expectation is that after a possible (probationary) 1-year contract, PTK at the first and second level ranks typically should have 3-year contracts, and those at the third level rank typically should have 5-year contracts.
8. Initial appointments and subsequent promotions will be managed through the University's online system to ensure that all contracts contain necessary elements, including a clear description of assignments and expectations associated with the appointment, as well as information on how to access Unit-level PTK policies and professional resources. The specific faculty title and rank shall correspond to the majority of the appointee's efforts, as indicated by assignments and expectations in the contract. Review committees shall be charged to take these assignments and expectations into consideration (along with other Unit-specific criteria) during the promotion process for PTK faculty.
9. PTK faculty may request a change of title via written request to their Unit Head. The Unit Head 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. Upon approval by the Unit Head, the request will be forwarded to the Dean for their approval. 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.
10. Promotion
  - a. There are two (progressive) promotions for PTK faculty, assuming they were appointed 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. No Unit should prohibit an eligible PTK faculty member from applying for promotion due to budgetary issues, nor can a Unit compel the candidate to

apply for promotion. If the Unit head determines the PTK faculty member is not eligible for promotion, 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 an initial review at the Unit level by an AEP committee. Eligible members of this committee include PTK and TTK faculty with voting rights at or above the rank being sought by the candidates. Units should make every effort to ensure PTK representation on this committee. If there are no eligible PTK faculty within the unit, they may appoint a PTK member within the same title series and of the appropriate rank from another unit. This committee has several responsibilities, as outlined in the [University's AEP Manual](#). Committee members should be provided with a copy of the University's Manual by the Unit Head.
- f. Promotion to Second-Level Rank
  - a. The review for promotion to the second level rank has two parts. First-level reviews (conducted by the PTK's faculty member's Unit) shall be conducted by the Unit-level AEP committee. All votes at the Unit level are determined by simple majority. If either the AEP review committee or Unit head supports the case (or both), it goes forward. The case then goes to the Dean, who makes the final determination. The candidate will be informed of the decision in writing.
  - b. 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.
- g. Promotion to Third-Level Rank
  - a. The review for promotion to the third level rank has three parts. First-level reviews (conducted by the PTK faculty member's Unit) shall be conducted by the Unit-level AEP Committee. All votes at the Unit level are determined by simple majority. If either the AEP review committee or Unit head supports the case (or both), it goes forward. The case then goes to the College AEP review committee, which makes a recommendation to the Dean. The College AEP committee is comprised of at least three faculty members (one tenured Full

Professor and a minimum of two PTK faculty members at the highest rank within their title series) After the Dean's review, the case will move to 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.

- b. 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.
- c. The College expects that the dossier for promotion to the third-level rank will include letters from internal and/or external evaluators. "Internal" is defined as former or current faculty or staff members within the candidate's Unit. The Unit's AEP plan should expressly set forth the number of evaluation letters required for promotion to the third level. BSOS joins the University in suggesting the solicitation of 3 evaluation letters. Units have discretion in determining the qualifications needed for an external evaluator to be considered at or above the rank sought by the candidate. The required qualifications should be expressly set forth in the Unit's AEP plan. The evaluators nominated by the candidate should be familiar with the candidate's work, but not be current collaborators. The request to evaluators should be sent by the Unit AEP committee, not the candidate. The [University's AEP Manual](#) provides guidelines on how to solicit, document and manage these letters.

#### h. Denials

- a. When a candidate receives a negative recommendation by both the first level Unit Head and the first level AEP Review Committee, the review will not proceed further, and the Unit Head shall provide written notice to the faculty member within two weeks of their decision. The letter should 1) state the AEP Committee's decision and the Unit Head's decision and 2) summarize briefly the reason for the denial. This letter should include the vote of the Unit AEP Review Committee. The Unit then forwards the case to the Dean, who will review the case to ensure that the candidate has received substantive and procedural due process. If the Dean determines that there has been a violation of due process, they will remand the case to the Unit for reconsideration. If no error has occurred, the Dean will notify the Unit, certifying that no violation of substantive or procedural due process was found. The Dean or Unit then notifies the candidate that the decision is final.

- b. A faculty member denied promotion 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.
  - c. If a faculty member seeking promotion to the third level rank 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.
  - d. 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.
- i. Salary increases associated with promotion will take effect in the following academic year. According to University policy, minimum salary increases shall be set annually by the College. A Unit may go beyond the minimum, but it must be consistent for all candidates at a given rank within a title series in any year. The current BSOS minimum is \$5000.