OP 7. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Committee and Faculty Search Committee Processes

OP 7.1 Membership of the APT Committee.

7.1.1 Composition. The APT Committee shall consist of all tenured faculty members in a Department or unit (hereafter "Department"). A Department may also include tenure-track faculty members and voting-eligible Special Faculty members, either all such faculty or a subset chosen through a process set out in the Department's foundational documents. The APT Committee shall include no fewer than four (4) tenured faculty members. If a Department has fewer, the dean, after consulting the Department's tenured faculty, shall appoint tenured faculty from related departments to bring the number to four.

7.1.2 APT Committee Chair. The APT Committee Chair shall be a tenured faculty member, elected in accordance with the Department's established procedures.

7.1.2.1 Subset of APT Committee. Members of the APT Committee may vote to use a subset of no fewer than four (4) faculty from the APT Committee to review and make recommendations regarding appointments of Special Faculty with contract periods of two years or less. The use of this subset, if authorized by APT Committee vote, shall be stated in the department's foundational documents and must also include the following (to be determined by the APT Committee Members):

1. the number of APT Committee members in this subset, half of whom are elected from APT eligible Special Faculty;
2. the procedures for and timing of the election of subset members, including whether APT Committee members shall elect the subset or if other voting-eligible (see OP 11.2) members of the department shall be allowed to vote for members of the subset;
3. the terms of the subset members or replacement of vacancies;
4. whether the recommendations of the APT Committee subset regarding subsequent appointments of Special Faculty with contracts of two years or less shall move directly to the Department Chair or shall require a vote of the full APT Committee prior to moving the recommendation forward to the Department Chair.
5. A process for members of the APT Committee discontinuing use of the subset.

7.1.3 Committee operations. All APT Committee members may vote on matters related to the operation of the committee, including the election of the APT Chair.

7.1.4 Personnel actions for tenure-track and tenured faculty. Only tenured faculty members may attend, deliberate, or vote in any meeting, subcommittee, or other proceeding concerning the reappointment, promotion, or tenure of tenure-track or tenured faculty. Votes on promotion shall be limited to tenured

faculty holding a rank equal to or higher than the rank sought.
7.1.5 Personnel actions for Special Faculty. Special Faculty members (or a subset) serving on the APT Committee shall attend, deliberate, and vote on the reappointment and promotion of Special Faculty. Tenured and tenure-track members (or a subset) may also vote on these actions. Votes on promotion shall be limited to members holding a rank or title equal to or higher than the one sought, as defined in the Department's foundational documents. Each such review shall include at least two Special Faculty members. If none are eligible, the APT Chair shall invite eligible Special Faculty from a related department.
7.1.6 Confidentiality. All members, and any observers permitted under 7.1.4, shall keep APT Committee personnel deliberations and votes confidential.

OP 7.2 APT Committee Procedures

OP 7.2.1 Calling APT Committee Meetings. The Department Chair or Unit Supervisor (hereafter "Department Chair) shall call and schedule all APT Committee meetings.

OP 7.2.2 APT Committee Meeting Notification. The Department Chair shall notify all members of an academic unit in writing about the meeting, and shall provide its agenda ten (10) calendar days prior to any meeting. The announcement shall clearly state the time and location (or means) of the meeting and that information shall become a part of the APT Committee's permanent records. The Department Chair shall also provide APT Committee members information regarding how to access all materials to be considered in that notice.

OP 7.2.3 Location and Type of APT Committee Meeting. All meetings of APT Committees shall be held at Appalachian State, via electronic access on a University approved platform, or shall combine the two options. If the meeting is conducted electronically (in whole or in part), the Department Chair (or the APT Committee Chair in cases where the Department Chair is under consideration) shall host the meeting. Any University employee participating in an APT Committee meeting electronically is responsible for securing a setting that maintains the confidentiality requirements of the APT Committee when personnel actions are being considered.

OP 7.2.4 Electronic Recording of APT Committee Meetings. Because of the confidentiality required for consideration of personnel matters, electronic recording of APT Committee meetings is not permitted.

OP 7.2.5 Conduct of APT Committee Meetings. All APT Committee meetings shall be conducted using procedures outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order,* as currently revised.

OP 7.2.6 Keeping of APT Committee Meeting Minutes. At each meeting, the APT Committee shall select from its voting membership a person to keep minutes (see also OP 7.3.18).

OP 7.2.7 Confidentiality of APT Committee Meetings. Confidentiality must be maintained for APT Committee personnel actions. Confidentiality means not sharing or discussing any of the following outside of the APT Committee: any materials submitted, reference or external reviewer comments, APT Committee discussions and deliberations, and APT Committee determinations and recommendations. Information gathered during any APT Committee personnel process may not be shared with others without written permission of the person being considered. No discussion of APT Committee members about a personnel matter shall take place outside the confines of an APT Committee meeting.

OP 7.2.8 Storage of Candidate Materials by the APT Committee. All candidate materials shall remain in a secure location in the department office (under the supervision of the Department Chair) and/or in a secure University electronic server file with access provided to all eligible APT members and all
subsequent reviewers.

OP 7.2.9 Applicant Presence at APT Committee Meeting. Any applicant being considered by the APT Committee may be present at the APT Committee meeting at which their candidacy will be considered for the sole purpose of presenting information and answering questions, but shall leave prior to any deliberation or vote.

OP 7.2.10 Recusals from the APT Committee. An APT Committee member who is an applicant, or who has a relationship with an applicant as described in the Professionalism in Personnel Decision policy (see OP 11.1), shall be recused from the deliberation and from the vote on their personnel action, but may rejoin the meeting for other personnel actions on the agenda.

OP 7.2.11 APT Committee and Joint Appointments. In the case of a joint faculty appointee, the Department Chair of the home Department shall make certain that any process necessary in any other Department regarding that faculty member's personnel action stipulated in the letter of appointment is undertaken according to the criteria for evaluation designated therein.

OP 7.2.12 Participation of the Department Chair in APT Committee Meetings. While the Department Chair shall be responsible for knowing and

sharing both information about procedural matters and relevant information requested by the committee, the Department Chair's role in the committee's deliberations and decision shall be minimal. In cases where the APT Committee is making personnel recommendations involving the Department Chair, the Department Chair shall not be present during the deliberation or voting.

OP 7.2.13 Participation of APT Committee members while on leave. The Department Chair shall contact, via Appalachian State email, any eligible committee members on leave to inquire about their intentions to participate in an upcoming APT Committee meeting/action. The Department Chair shall include the APT Committee Participation Form for the faculty member to complete to verify their decision to voluntarily participate in the APT Committee meeting/action. The completed form must be received by the Department Chair by the start of the APT Committee meeting in question in order for the faculty member to participate.

OP 7.2.14 Anonymous Voting in the APT Committee. APT Committee voting shall be carried out anonymously, either by secret ballot or by an electronic means that anonymizes respondents.

OP 7.2.15 APT Committee Quorum. To conduct business, a simple majority of members is required and that number shall include members who have provided the APT Committee Chair with valid absentee ballots. Members who are on approved leave and eligible to participate in APT Committee actions may choose to cast votes (including absentee ballots), but do not count toward the required quorum.

OP 7.2.16 APT Committee Absentee Ballots. Deliberation among APT Committee members is a crucial part of the faculty review of candidates and all reasonable efforts must be made to be present (in person or virtually) at meetings to deliberate on a candidate's case. Absentee ballots from APT Committee members not present at the meeting are permitted in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Department Chair, in consultation with the APT Committee Chair. Departments may create rules governing the casting of absentee ballots, but Departments shall not prohibit the casting of absentee ballots in a APT Committee vote. Departments shall not create rules governing absentee ballots that are less restrictive than those given below.

a. At a minimum, absentee ballots must be delivered to the APT Committee Chair or cast by the specified electronic means no later than 5:00 p.m. on the business day before the APT Committee meeting is to take place.
b. The absentee ballot must be delivered in a form (email, signed letter, hand-delivered ballot, early vote on a secured site) that provides

assurance that the ballot is genuine and is from a faculty member eligible to vote.

c. The APT Committee chair must be in possession of all absentee ballots at the beginning of the APT Committee meeting, and the APT Committee chair will announce the number of verified, relevant absentee ballots to be cast at the beginning of the deliberation on the personnel action

OP 7.2.17 Vote Justification Forms for APT Committee Business. In cases regarding consideration of reappointment, tenure, or promotion, each member of the APT Committee shall complete the Vote Justification Form (VJF) citing specific evidence of why the candidate does or does not meet criteria for another contract, tenure, or promotion in the areas of teaching, research, service, and participation in University affairs as per the department, college/school/library or University guidelines. The VJFs may be anonymous and shall be submitted within five calendar days of the APT Committee meeting at which the vote is taken. VJFs from APT Committee members who submitted absentee ballots shall be submitted by the same deadline.

OP 7.2.18 Notification of APT Committee Votes. Notification of the results of the APT Committee vote shall not take place until the meeting is over. The Department Chair (or the APT Committee Chair in cases where the Department Chair is the candidate under consideration) makes all notifications. The candidate shall be notified in writing of the results of the APT Committee vote within seven (7) calendar days following the date of the vote, except under extenuating circumstances. This notification, in the form of a memo, shall state on which date the vote took place, the recommended action, which was voted upon, and the vote count. Faculty members have the right to request copies of all VJFs from the Dean.

OP 7.2.19 APT Committee Minutes. The minutes of the APT Committee shall record:

1. all persons (including faculty for whom a personnel action is under consideration) in attendance at the APT Committee meeting and all members of the APT Committee absent from the particular meeting;
2. each personnel action considered. All motions shall be phrased in the affirmative. The record shall state that the committee formally considered personnel action of the particular faculty member and shall state the permissible criteria that were considered. This record shall not include individual comments. In instances of personnel actions involving promotion or tenure of a faculty member, the minutes shall confirm specifically that the criteria for promotion and/or tenure as set forth in the Faculty Handbook were considered along with any additional department criteria as published in the Department's foundational documents; and
3. the vote (the number of affirmative votes and the numbers of negative

votes) on each action, but not the votes of individual members of the committee.

OP 7.2.20 Official Record of APT Committee Business. All minutes of the APT Committee action shall be approved and, if necessary, modified by a majority of the assembled committee where a quorum is present. Such action shall normally take place at the next meeting of APT Committee, but may be gathered by electronic approval if the committee is not scheduled to meet again in a given academic year. All ballots and minutes shall be scanned and uploaded into a secure electronic file. Nothing in these guidelines shall violate the confidentiality of the APT Committee minutes, except that any individual faculty member shall have access to those portions of the minutes of meetings in which personnel actions involving that faculty member were considered.

OP 7.2.21 Materials Forwarded from the APT Committee. The APT Committee Chair shall make available the following materials to the Department Chair no later than five (5) calendar days from the vote:

1. A memo from the APT Committee Chair that includes the results of the APT Committee vote (including the number of affirmative votes, the number of negative votes);
2. the materials required of the candidate for that personnel action; and
3. the VJFs for the personnel decision.

In the event that the personnel action concerns the Department Chair, the APT Committee Chair shall forward all materials directly to the Dean and the Dean shall forward them to the Office of Academic Affairs. Only materials outlined in the *Academic Affairs Standard Operating Procedures [OP 3.1]* for a given personnel action shall be included.

OP 7.2.22 Training. All faculty in the APT Committee must receive training every three years at a minimum. The APT Chair must receive training every year. APT Committee members or APT Chair are required to be current in that training prior to the start of any committee meeting.

OP 7.3 Faculty Searches

OP 7.3.1 Training. All faculty who participate in faculty or Department Chair searches (e.g. committee member, attending presentations or meals, etc.) must receive training every three years at a minimum. Faculty Search Committee or Department Chair Search Committee members, including the chairs of these committees, are required to be current in that training prior to the start of any search.

OP 7.3.2 Membership of Faculty Search Committees. The composition of faculty search committees shall conform to the guidelines in the *Faculty Handbook* when possible. Any exceptions required to the composition of a faculty search committee should be approved by the Dean of the

College/School/Libraries.

OP 7.4 Faculty Search Committees Procedures

OP 7.4.1 Calling Faculty Search Committee Meetings. The Faculty Search Committee Chair shall call and schedule all Faculty Search Committee meetings. Department Chairs (or Unit Supervisors, hereinafter "Department Chair") shall not attend these meetings.

OP 7.4.2 Location and Type of Faculty Search Committee Meeting. All Faculty Search Committee meetings shall be held at Appalachian State University, via electronic access on a University approved platform, or shall combine these two options. If the meeting is conducted electronically (in whole or in part), the Faculty Search Committee Chair shall host the meeting. Any Appalachian State University employee participating in a Faculty Search Committee meeting electronically is responsible for securing a setting that maintains the confidentiality requirements (see below).

OP 7.4.3 Electronic Recording of Faculty Search Committee Meetings. Because of the confidentiality required for consideration of personnel matters, electronic recording of Faculty Search Committee meetings is not permitted.

OP 7.4.4 Conduct of Faculty Search Committee Meetings. All Faculty Search Committee meetings shall be conducted using procedures outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, as currently revised.

OP 7.4.5 Recusals from Faculty Search Committee Meetings. A Faculty Search Committee member who has a relationship with an applicant as described in the Professionalism in Personnel Decision policy (see OP 11.1), shall indicate such at the earliest possible stage of consideration. The Faculty Search Committee Chair, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, shall determine if recusal is required. Departments should consider including in their procedures for creating faculty search committees whether to include alternate(s) and make clear when and how those alternates will participate as members.

OP 7.4.6 Keeping of Faculty Search Committee Meeting Minutes. At each meeting, the Faculty Search Committee shall select someone from its membership to keep minutes (see also OP 7.5.12).

OP 7.4.7 Confidentiality of Faculty Search Committee Meetings. Confidentiality must be maintained for faculty searches. Confidentiality means not sharing or discussing any of the following outside of the Faculty Search

Committee: any materials submitted, reference or external reviewer comments, Faculty Search Committee deliberations, and Faculty Search Committee recommendations. The names and materials of applicants for the purposes of reference checks and Appalachian State presentations shall not be shared with individuals outside of the Faculty Search Committee without written permission of the applicant. No discussion of Faculty Search Committee members about a personnel matter shall take place outside the confines of a Faculty Search Committee meeting.

OP 7.4.8 Storage of Faculty Search Candidate Materials. All candidate materials shall remain in a secure location in the department office (under the supervision of the Department Chair) or in a secure University electronic server file with access provided by the Faculty Search Committee Chair. All Faculty Search Committee members shall have access to review these materials. With written permission of the candidate, some finalist materials (e.g. a candidate's curriculum vitae, letter of application, teaching and/or research philosophy, published articles) may be made available to other members of the department or allied faculty, via the search site maintained by the Office of Human Resources.

OP 7.4.9 Solicitation of Feedback on Faculty Search Candidates. If Faculty Search Committees plan to solicit feedback on candidates (e.g. presentations, interviews, sample classes, etc.), a policy in the department's foundational documents must indicate how feedback will be collected from faculty, staff, and students outside of the Faculty Search Committee. Any Department policies on feedback shall ensure that the department's mechanism is applied consistently for every candidate and that all feedback mechanisms shall be designed to provide a fair and equitable assessment of each applicant's skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform the functions of the job. Any policy shall specify that:

a. feedback shall be through paper and/or electronic forms;
b. all paper and/or electronic forms shall include an option for anonymous feedback;
c. all forms will be collected, collated, and provided by the Faculty Search Committee Chair to committee members prior to meetings where deliberations regarding the candidates will take place.

OP 7.4.10 Deliberation of Faculty Search Committees. Deliberation among Faculty Search Committee members is a crucial part of the faculty review of candidates being considered for hire. All members of the Faculty Search Committee are required to be present (in-person or virtually) for any deliberations on candidates (e.g. initial review of candidates, making an interview list, determining finalists, making recommendations for hire). The Faculty Search Committee Chair, in consultation with the Office of

Human Resources, shall determine if an absence of a search committee member due to extenuating circumstances requires a re-scheduling of the meeting. Departments should consider including in their procedures for creating faculty search committees whether to include alternate(s) and make clear when and how those alternates will participate as members.

OP 7.4.11 Voting and Ballots in Faculty Search Committee Meetings. Departments shall develop procedures in their foundational documents regarding how Faculty Search Committee ballots shall be cast, including whether those ballots shall be anonymous. If paper ballots are used, they shall be secured, scanned, and uploaded into a secure electronic file for the record.

OP 7.4.12 Minutes of Faculty Search Committee Meetings. The minutes of the Faculty Search Committee shall record:

a. all persons in attendance at the meeting and excused and unexcused members of the committee absent from the particular meeting;

b. any business under discussion;

c. any action considered. All motions shall be stated in the affirmative. The record shall state that the Faculty Search Committee formally considered a candidate and shall state the permissible criteria that were considered, but the record shall not include individual comments;

d. all votes (the number of affirmative votes and negative votes) on each action, but not the votes of individual members of the committee.

OP 7.4.13 Official Record of All Faculty Search Committee Business. All minutes of the Faculty Search Committee shall be approved and, if necessary, modified by a majority of the assembled committee. Such action will normally take place at the next meeting of the committee except that, following the last meeting of the committee in a given academic year, the recorder shall be responsible for gaining the approval of the minutes in writing from the members of the committee. A file of all minutes of the Faculty Search Committee shall be maintained with the Faculty Search Committee file (see *Appalachian State University Policy Manual* 601.8, Section 4.10). Nothing in these guidelines shall violate the confidentiality of the Faculty Search Committee minutes.

OP 7.4.14 Materials Forwarded by the Faculty Search Committee. The Faculty Search Committee Chair shall forward all recommendations within five (5) calendar days of the vote to the Department Chair. The recommendations shall be accompanied by all supporting materials and documents submitted to the Faculty Search Committee. The Department Chair shall make an independent recommendation and shall forward those

materials to the Dean. In all cases, no reviewing group or persons shall substitute their judgment for that of a Faculty Search Committee on matters relating to the professional qualifications of the individual involved, i.e., the individual's ability to fulfill adequately the professional requirements of the position (except as it relates to rank and tenure status, see OP 7.5.16).

OP 7.4.15 Materials from the Faculty Search Committee to the Office of Human Resources. The Faculty Search Committee Chair shall request all materials (i.e. copies of letters, interview notes, etc.) from members of the Faculty Search Committee and shall forward those materials to the Office of Human Resources as soon as the work of the Faculty Search Committee has concluded.

OP 7.4.16 Faculty Search Committees Requiring APT Committee Consideration. In cases where Faculty Search Committees make a recommendation to hire a candidate for a tenure-track open ranked position, the Department's APT Committee shall make the formal recommendation for the candidate's rank and/or tenure status (if this is a joint appointment, the home department of the faculty member must be determined in order for the home department's APT Committee to make that recommendation for the faculty member's rank and/or tenure). The Department Chair shall ensure the APT Committee Meeting is called in a timely manner and the Chair of the APT Committee shall follow all APT Committee procedures in considering the candidates' materials and forwarding its recommendation.