

Letters of Appointment

Letters of appointment at the rank of assistant professor, non-professorial titles, and for term appointments of associate professors and professors, may be transmitted to the appointee with prior approval from the dean's office. Appointments conferring tenure require the approval of the Board of Trustees, and the official notification letter comes from the president.

In the interests of both the appointee and the university, the information conveyed (as prescribed in the policy on academic titles and appointments) in offering an academic appointment regardless of level should include:

- The formal appointment title (see Trustee-approved list in the next section), plus appropriate working title or field designator.
- The starting date and the termination date of appointment.
- The period of responsibility each year, for example whether nine months or twelve.
- The salary. If the salary for less than a full year is paid over a full year, the letter should mention the practice of prepayment and postpayment.
- Whether the appointment is terminal or renewable, and whether it is on the tenure track. [If an appointment is renewable, a decision on reappointment will be made toward the end of the stated term, and there is a commitment to give notice.]
- A general statement of the responsibilities of the position. [For initial appointments on the tenure track this is most important, since it is on fulfillment of these responsibilities that a candidate will be judged when a review is conducted for reappointment or promotion to tenure. Professorial duties normally include teaching, advising, research and other scholarly work, public service, and contributing to the department, the college, and the university. Not all faculty members are assigned all of these responsibilities. The emphasis given to each responsibility varies among the colleges and departments of the university, and even among the various positions within the department. The responsibilities may be readjusted after the initial appointment, in response to changing department needs or interests of the faculty member; these changes are customarily made by joint agreement between the faculty member and the department chairperson or representative of the dean. In any case, the general expectations should be on record, and should include the normal teaching load and any expectations regarding the initial course assignments.]
- Any special arrangements or agreements regarding such concerns as the length of the probationary tenure period, timing of sabbatical leave (for tenured professors), or provision of moving allowances.