

Guidelines for Joint Academic Appointments at Tarleton State University

2017

Joint appointments in more than one department can promote multi/interdisciplinary research and education and support faculty interested in such efforts. Joint appointments are commonly split 50%-50%, 75%-25%, or 100%-0% between academic units. Appointments may be between departments within a college, departments from different colleges, between a department and research initiative, or for the purposes of joint appointment to an academic center or institute.

When a joint appointment is created, an MOU between the two units should be written and signed; signatories should include the heads of the units involved as well as the faculty member. This will detail how key procedures related to the faculty member's academic responsibilities are carried out (see Appendix A for a sample MOU). Obligations across the two units should not exceed those of other faculty who are full-time in a single unit.

A. General guidelines

1. Each unit should ensure faculty are part of departmental/college operations. This includes full participation in departmental faculty meetings and unit events.
2. Units should work collaboratively to ensure jointly appointed faculty members are not excessively burdened and, in total, have comparable access to resources as faculty with single appointments. These resources include mentors, space, equipment, funding, and access to graduate students.
3. Academic review should acknowledge the faculty member's multiple academic commitments and interdisciplinary work. This may entail making special effort to evaluate the work that falls outside of the normal purview of a single discipline. Reviewers for tenure and promotion should be selected carefully, with the goal of identifying scholars who are capable of looking beyond disciplinary constraints.
4. The jointly appointed faculty member plays an active role in facilitating the effective collaboration of the two units. If the faculty member becomes aware of conflicting procedures regarding his or her appointment, he or she must bring these to the unit heads' attention in a timely manner. The unit heads will then work together to resolve the conflict and make note of the resolution in the MOU via an addendum.
5. Although an appointment may be at 0%, it is not at 0% effort. It is considered an "above the line" appointment and conveys full voting rights in the department or school. Therefore, there is a campus expectation that a 0% faculty member will contribute to the unit. Such contributions (teaching, service, participation in faculty meetings) should be clarified in the MOU.

The MOU should include:

- a. Designation of an administrative home department. One unit shall be selected by mutual agreement between the faculty member and the two unit heads as the administrative home in the MOU. The home department takes responsibility for notifying the other unit of reviews, preparing/modifying MOUs, and providing opportunities for review and renegotiation of agreements and plans. However, this designation does not release the other unit from its responsibility for providing clear communication with the faculty member and being responsive to issues as they arise. The home department may be changed if there is good cause and mutual agreement; the dean or deans of the division(s) or college(s) should be asked to advise in the event of disagreements on this issue. Ideally, the heads of the two units will meet at least annually to discuss the coordination of the joint appointment.
- b. Rank and appointment percentage in each unit. Designate the faculty member's academic/administrative rank in each unit and percentage of effort assigned to each.
- c. Workload. Designate expectations with regard to faculty teaching, scholarship, and service. Ensure the overall demands on the faculty member are reasonable and appropriately balanced in terms of the appointment percentage.
- d. Salary scale. If the joint appointment involves different salary scales, the salaries in each unit should be clearly stated.
- e. Access to resources. Discuss and agree on the faculty member's access to resources in each unit (e.g. office space, administrative support, startup funding, mentoring, and graduate student support). New appointments should receive support from both units in accord with normal departmental/unit practices and such support should be proportional to the faculty member's percentage of appointment.
- f. Allocation of research revenues. If applicable, the units should agree in advance how revenue generated by the faculty member's research will be distributed. Such an agreement should be described in the MOU.
- g. Mentoring. Ideally, the units should coordinate their mentoring programs so the faculty member has one mentor who is familiar with interdisciplinary work and can provide sound advice on how to achieve tenure and thrive in two units.

B. Changes in appointment

Faculty members with joint appointments may request alterations in the appointment over the course of their academic career. Similarly, single unit faculty may wish to establish a joint appointment. Schools/colleges and/or departments/units may also wish to change the terms of the appointment. These changes may arise because of new opportunities, changes in faculty interest and focus, or concerns with the original joint appointment.

The following are recommended practices related to changes in joint appointments:

1. Making changes to a budgeted appointment. The deans' offices should agree, in advance if possible, on the procedures by which the faculty member can request to change a budgeted joint appointment or create a budgeted joint appointment. Changes in FTE allocations require academic affairs approval.

2. Discontinuing an appointment. The deans' offices should clarify the terms under which a faculty member is allowed to discontinue a joint appointment. For example, if a review shows a faculty member's duties or connections to one of his or her departments have weakened, or the faculty member has no sustained interest in the domain of one of the units, the joint appointment arrangement should be considered for discontinuance. The same consultations mentioned in (a) above, should be followed.
3. Faculty right of retreat. If a faculty member holds a tenured appointment in two or more units, it should be clear at the time of appointment if the faculty member has the option of retreating to a 100% appointment in any one unit. When it is not possible for any of the schools or colleges to offer this option, the faculty member should be fully informed about what options are available.
4. Conflict resolution. The deans' offices should identify the steps the faculty member should follow if he or she experiences concerns about the terms of the appointment and/or the actions of the departments involved. In general, conflicts should be resolved at the departmental level. If the departments' efforts to resolve the issue prove unsatisfactory, then the deans' offices should become involved. If a dean's office is directly involved in the conflict, the AVPCAFA will assist in resolving the issues. If there are concerns about a faculty member's performance or conduct, the administrator most knowledgeable about the concern should handle the issue. Each dean's office has a responsibility to notify the faculty member's other school or college of disciplinary action toward the jointly appointed faculty member.

C. Review Processes

The following are recommended practices for handling joint appointment faculty reviews:

1. Departmental recommendation. The home department will take the lead on review cases and coordinate with the other units, so a single, joint recommendation goes forward to the campus administration.
2. For cases involving a unit *ad hoc* committee, a bilateral departmental review committee will be constituted with balanced representation from each department/unit. This committee will undertake the reviews in the normal fashion, but allow any differences in emphasis between the two departments, valuations of accomplishments in different disciplines, etc., to be resolved early in the process. For example, at the time of the final appraisal and tenure review, the joint committee or department chairs (depending on unit practice) will be able to balance opinions from both disciplines by agreeing upon a group of outside reviewers to represent the different fields. In this manner, a single review file will be constructed that both departments can assess, and a single *ad hoc* committee recommendation will emerge in which both departments can have confidence.
3. Faculty members conducting the review should adopt an open-minded stance. They may need to calibrate the metrics for impact and academic success within another discipline, even a closely related one. In addition to the need to evaluate the types of research products – books, journal papers, conference papers, artifacts, and so on – it is also critical to understand the quality of each product. Which conferences are important? Which awards carry the greatest prestige? Which

people are the luminaries whose letters of recommendation should be taken most seriously, and which are known to be hypercritical? In tenure cases, there is a great deal of implicit knowledge within a discipline that is taken into account that may be missing in interdisciplinary cases.

4. In requesting letters of recommendation, use wording that specifically asks the letter-writer to evaluate the candidate on the basis of his or her own area of expertise, while recognizing that the candidate has conducted interdisciplinary research (see Appendix B for a sample letter).
5. Timeline for case preparation. Anticipate that the promotions will take longer to prepare and evaluate than purely disciplinary cases, and plan accordingly. It will take more time to select the *ad hoc* committee, more time to select the outside reviewers, and more time to evaluate the dossier.
6. Departmental votes. If a departmental vote is required (e.g. for promotion or advancement to Above Scale), faculty from both departments need to vote. Both votes will then be reported in the joint departmental letter. If the votes are not in agreement, a detailed explanation of both departmental/unit discussions and votes must be included.

APPENDIX A: Sample MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE JOINT APPOINTMENT OF **FIRSTNAME LASTNAME** IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF **DEPARTMENT 1 (50%)** AND **DEPARTMENT 2 (50%)** (Effective **Date**)

1. Home Department: **Department 1** is designated the administrative home department. All laboratory and office space will be provided by **Department 1**. **Department 1** will also supply administrative support including contracts and grants administration. Professor **LASTNAME** will participate in selection of graduate students in both departments.
2. Salary:
3. Teaching: Teaching load for the joint appointment is **###**. Classes will be scheduled by the respective departments. **DEPARTMENT 1** will remain the administering department for **[name of cross-listed course]**, and will collect course evaluations.

Any future teaching assignments will be discussed between Prof. **LASTNAME** and the cognizant chairs.

4. Any faculty leave (such as faculty development leave) will be approved by both departments prior to the start date of the leave.
5. Review of future academic personnel actions: **Department 1** will take the lead on processing academic review cases. If a merit or promotion case requires an *ad hoc* committee, there should be balanced representation from both departments. Department 1 will get Department 2's concurrence on every review case and will then forward the case to the applicable Deans.

Except in unusual circumstances, merit increases will be considered at the normal time intervals. Every effort will be made to ensure that the departments agree on whether a merit increase is justified and on the size of the increase. However, in the event that they cannot agree then each department will submit a recommendation to the cognizant Dean and he or she will resolve the issue.

6. Service: Prof. **LASTNAME's** departmental committee assignments will be coordinated annually between the two departments. Service in both departments will be expected to be roughly half that expected for a full FTE. Prof. **LASTNAME** should be prepared to participate in both departments' faculty meetings and serve on confidential *ad hoc* committees as appropriate. The department chair(s) will take all outside service obligations into account when making assignments.

We agree to the joint appointment of Professor **LASTNAME** as proposed above.

Faculty Signature

Department Head Signature

Department Head Signature

Approved: Academic Year 2016-2017
Next Scheduled Review: Academic Year 2022-2023