

Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs  
Resolution 2007-08B  
Redefinition of Administrative and Professional Faculty Appointments  
under HR Restructuring

Approved by CAPFA: April 4, 2008  
[Also reviewed and endorsed by the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs]  
First Reading, University Council: April 21, 2008  
Approved, University Council: May 5, 2008  
Approved, President: May 5, 2008  
Approved, Board of Visitors: August 25, 2008  
Effective Date: To be phased in during 2008-09 as proposed below

WHEREAS, the higher education restructuring act provided level 3 institutions with an opportunity to redefine and realign administrative and professional faculty appointments; and,

WHEREAS, issues of equity of treatment for employees who serve in relatively comparable positions, with relatively comparable credentials and salaries, have been a long-standing concern when some are categorized as staff and others are considered A/P faculty; and

WHEREAS, recruitment of some difficult-to-fill positions in pay bands 5-7 would be significantly enhanced by faculty status and retirement benefit options; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs, with the assistance of Human Resources (HR) staff, has examined this issue and recommends proceeding with changes to the definition of A/P faculty and recategorizing most positions that are currently classified at bands 5-7;

WHEREAS, the Commission has sought the input of the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs, the Staff Senate, the Employee Advisory Committee, and the HR Restructuring Steering Committee in preparing this proposal;

THEREFORE be it resolved that:

- The current categorization of **Administrative** faculty remains similarly defined but referred to as **Senior Administrators** to more accurately reflect the nature of these appointments. Administrative faculty will be defined as follows:

**Administrative Faculty (referred to as Senior Administrators)**

Senior administrators perform work related to the management of the educational and general activities of the institution at least 50% or more of their contractual time. Senior administrators typically serve in executive-level leadership roles such as vice president, dean, and assistant or associate vice president or dean. The organizational reporting relationship is normally not lower than three levels below the president or the next most senior position(s).

Qualifications Criteria:

- Must have an advanced degree, or training and work experience at a level that equates to an advanced degree. (A master's degree would be the typical minimum entry qualification. Many of these positions, particularly academic leadership roles, may require a terminal degree.)

- Must regularly exercise discretionary actions.
- The category of **Professional** faculty be referred to as **Managers and Professionals** to reflect the variety of roles and appointments that will now be included in this category; minor changes to the definition and expected qualifications criteria are also proposed. Professional faculty will be defined as follows:

**Professional Faculty (referred to as Managers and Professionals)**

Managers (and directors) typically have responsibility for supervision and evaluation of a significant number of staff and/or professional faculty, and budgetary responsibility for their unit or a substantive program. Incumbents exercise discretion and independent judgment and they must perform managerial or director functions at least 50% of their contractual appointment. Managers and directors typically report to a senior administrator and provide leadership and oversight for their unit or a significant program.

Professionals provide direct service to students, other university constituencies, or clients external to the university as part of the university's missions of learning, discovery, or engagement. They may direct or provide support for academic, administrative, extension, outreach, athletic, or other programs. Professional faculty may also provide vital university functions such as information technology, budget or finance, human resources, public relations, development, and architectural or engineering functions. Incumbents must regularly exercise professional discretion and judgment, and are expected to take professional initiative in carrying out their primary roles and assignments. Professionals include, but are not limited to: extension agents; librarians; coaches; physicians; lawyers; engineers; architects; student or academic affairs professionals; development officers; specialists in public relations, human resources, information technology; and financial specialists.

**Qualifications Criteria:**

- Must have an advanced degree, or training and work experience at a level which equates to an advanced degree. (Although a master's degree would be the typical entry qualification, this category also includes individuals with a bachelor's degree and professional training or certifications critical to their fields. In some cases, individuals with substantial professional-level experience or expertise which equates to the minimum educational qualifications may be considered for appointment.)
- Must regularly exercise discretionary actions
- The work must be intellectual and varied in character, in contrast to positions that carry out more standardized or routine tasks and activities.
- Staff positions currently in pay bands 5-7 be converted to A/P faculty positions as appropriate in accordance with the following general plan:
  - All eligible vacant positions in pay bands 5-7 will be advertised and filled as A/P faculty positions immediately following approval by the Board.
  - **University staff** in pay bands 5-7 whose positions are deemed appropriate for A/P faculty will be converted to faculty status. This process will occur in conjunction with the introduction of other HR changes during fall 2008.
  - Employees currently in **eligible classified** positions will be invited to change voluntarily to A/P faculty appointments, or they may choose to remain as classified employees. However, when the position is vacated, it will be advertised and filled as an A/P faculty position. This process will occur in

conjunction with the introduction of other HR policy changes during fall 2008; changes are expected to be effective spring semester 2009.

- Staff who convert to Administrative and Professional faculty will be subject to the policies that govern Administrative and Professional faculty included in the Faculty Handbook.
- Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook be updated to incorporate the revised definitions and criteria for Senior Administrators and Managers and Professionals
- Detailed guidelines for the transition of staff positions and employees to A/P faculty will be developed by Human Resources in consultation with the senior administrators whose employees/positions are affected by the proposed conversion. These guidelines will include provisions for handling leave balances for both regular and restricted employees.
- The attached document provides greater detail on the rationale for the change and the revised definitions of senior administrators and managers and professionals. The proposal will be submitted to the Board of Visitors for approval as one step in the overall HR restructuring initiative.

# Human Resource Restructuring Initiatives: Redefinition of the Administrative and Professional Faculty

## Background:

The human resources restructuring initiative approved by the state includes the opportunity for redefining the administrative and professional faculty (see chapter 4.10 of the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act), with consequent changes in the status of individual employees. Virginia Tech had approximately 140 administrative faculty members and 760 professional faculty members in fall 2007. Administrative faculty members are typically the senior administrative leadership of the university, the colleges, and major administrative units (vice presidents, deans, assistant and associates reporting to these, and directors of major units). Among the professional faculty are extension agents, coaches, librarians, student and academic affairs professionals of many types, development officers, and others.

NOTE: This proposal does not change the status of employees already categorized as “A/P faculty” who are subject to policies included in the Faculty Handbook and the compensation plan approved by the Board of Visitors.

The proposal, in brief, is as follows:

- The majority of positions currently classified in pay bands 5, 6, and 7 within the state system would be eligible to become part of the Administrative and Professional Faculty structure. There are approximately 560 staff members currently in bands 5 and above. Those in eligible positions who have been recently hired as University Staff would be converted to A/P faculty status.
- Classified staff employees currently occupying positions in bands 5-7 eligible for the change would be given an opportunity to move to A/P faculty status. The positions of those employees choosing to remain classified would be refilled as A/P positions whenever they became vacant.
- Some positions in bands 5-7 may not be appropriate for recategorization as A/P faculty; these will be reviewed with supervisors on a case-by-case basis for a determination of appropriate classification.
- The existing state definitions of “administrative” and “professional” faculty will be slightly modified to more accurately reflect the roles and credential requirements of the now-broader group of positions. The categories would be renamed:
  - Senior Administrators
  - Managers and Professionals(Faculty benefits and policies are identical for both groups.)

## Rationale for the Proposed Change:

There are two driving reasons for proposing the redefinition of A/P faculty and the transfer of more senior-level staff positions to A/P faculty status:

- **Equity issues:** There have been issues raised for many years about the equity and consistency of appointments for individuals with very similar

responsibilities, training, and experiences where some will be in classified/university staff positions and others will be A/P faculty. The pay scales for bands 5 and above completely overlap compensation for similarly qualified A/P faculty. Credentials for individuals in these senior-level classified/university staff positions are usually comparable. Restructuring allows the university to address these long-standing inequities by moving eligible senior-level classified appointments, all of which are exempt positions, to A/P faculty appointments.

- **Recruitment difficulties:** It has been difficult to recruit and retain senior-level classified appointments, particularly in the administrative areas (finance, budget, information technology, and others). Across-the-board raises, controls on opportunities for promotion and reward for excellent performance, and mandatory participation in VRS rather than a portable retirement program make these positions less attractive for individuals with talent and more attractive options. Positions at band 5 and above are usually recruited on at least a regional, and usually a national basis, and the compensation and benefits package, along with opportunities for career growth need to be competitive to retain administrative talent at VT.

#### **Proposed Redefinition of A/P Faculty:**

*[Current state definitions of administrative and professional faculty are available in Appendix A for comparison.]*

The current categories of **Administrative** and **Professional** faculty will be referred to as Senior Administrators and Managers and Professionals and their definitions slightly modified.

#### **Administrative Faculty (referred to as Senior Administrators)**

Senior administrators perform work related to the management of the educational and general activities of the institution at least 50% or more of their contractual time. Senior administrators typically serve in executive-level leadership roles such as vice president, dean, and assistant or associate vice president or dean. The organizational reporting relationship is normally not lower than three levels below the president or the next most senior position(s).

Qualifications Criteria:

- Must have an advanced degree, or training and work experience at a level that equates to an advanced degree. (A master's degree would be the typical minimum entry qualification. Many of these positions, particularly academic leadership roles, may require a terminal degree.)
- Must regularly exercise discretionary actions.

#### **Professional Faculty (referred to as Managers and Professionals)**

Managers (and directors) typically have responsibility for supervision and evaluation of a significant number of staff and/or professional faculty, and budgetary responsibility for their unit or a substantive program. Incumbents exercise discretion and independent judgment and they must perform managerial or director functions at least 50% of their contractual appointment. Managers and directors typically

report to a senior administrator and provide leadership and oversight for their unit or a significant program.

Professionals provide direct service to students, other university constituencies, or clients external to the university as part of the university's missions of learning, discovery, or engagement. They may direct or provide support for academic, administrative, extension, outreach, athletic, or other programs. Professional faculty may also provide vital university functions such as information technology, budget or finance, human resources, public relations, development, and architectural or engineering functions. Incumbents must regularly exercise professional discretion and judgment, and are expected to take professional initiative in carrying out their primary roles and assignments. Professionals include, but are not limited to: extension agents; librarians; coaches; physicians; lawyers; engineers; architects; student or academic affairs professionals; development officers; specialists in public relations, human resources, information technology; and financial specialists.

Qualifications Criteria:

- Must have an advanced degree, or training and work experience at a level which equates to an advanced degree. (Although a master's degree would be the typical entry qualification, this category also includes individuals with a bachelor's degree and professional training or certifications critical to their fields. In some cases, individuals with substantial professional-level experience or expertise which equates to the minimum educational qualifications may be considered for appointment.)
- Must regularly exercise discretionary actions
- The work must be intellectual and varied in character, in contrast to positions that carry out more standardized or routine tasks and activities.

**Appendix A:**  
***Current definitions of Administrative and Professional Faculty from the Consolidated Salary Authorization for Faculty Positions in Institutions of Higher Education, Office of the Secretary of Education***

**Administrative Faculty:** Administrative faculty require the performance of work related to the management of the educational and general activities of the institution, department or subdivision thereof. Incumbents in these positions exercise discretion and independent judgment and generally direct the work of others.

Qualification Criteria:

- Must have advanced degree; or training and work experience at a level which equates to an advanced degree.
- Must perform the duties and responsibilities associated with this category 50 percent or more of the contractual time.
- Must regularly exercise discretionary actions;
- The organization reporting relationship normally must not go lower than three levels below the President for institutions that are doctoral degree granting or have a student headcount enrollment of 10,000 or more, nor two levels below the President for institutions that are non-doctoral degree granting and have a student headcount enrollment less than 10,000. In the two teaching hospitals, the reporting relationship normally must not go lower than three levels below the Chief Executive Officer of the hospital.

**Professional Faculty:** Professional faculty require advanced learning and experience acquired by prolonged formal instruction and/or specialized work experience. This category is normally limited to librarians, counselors, coaches, lawyers, physicians, dentists, veterinarians and other professional positions serving education, research, athletic, medical, student affairs, and development functions or activities.

Qualification Criteria:

- Must have advanced degree; or training and work experience at a level which equates to an advanced degree.
- Must perform the duties and responsibilities associated with this category 50 percent or more of the contractual time.
- Must regularly exercise professional discretion and judgment;
- Work produced must be intellectual and varied in character and should not be standardized.

***Authority under Higher Education Restructuring regarding faculty definitions***

§ [2.2-2901](#). Appointments, promotions and tenure based upon merit and fitness.

E. The Board of Visitors of public institutions of higher education shall establish policies for the designation of administrative and professional faculty positions at institutions of higher education. Those designations shall be reserved for positions

that require a high level of administrative independence, responsibility, and oversight within the organization or specialized expertise within a given field as defined by the Board of Visitors. The authority under this subsection to establish policies for the designation of administrative and professional faculty positions shall be granted only to those institutions that meet the conditions prescribed in subsection B of § [23-38.88](#).

CHAPTER 4.10, RESTRUCTURED HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS ACT, SUBCHAPTER 1; GENERAL PROVISIONS.

10. To be allowed to establish policies for the designation of administrative and professional faculty positions at the institution pursuant to the conditions and provisions provided in subsection E of § [2.2-2901](#);