



NTT Faculty Development Plan (FDP) Process

CRITERIA FOR INITIATING A NON-TENURE-TRACK (NTT) FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

All faculty members at the University of Houston, including non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty members and “instructors-of-record” are required to undergo a faculty annual performance review (F-APR) as laid out in the Faculty Annual Performance Review (F-APR) policy found on the Office of the Provost website.

The faculty annual performance review (F-APR) shall be a comprehensive evaluation of a faculty member’s performance in those domains in which they have professional responsibilities (i.e. student teaching and/or instructional activities, research and scholarship activities and/or service activities).

Overall annual faculty workload and faculty performance expectations are set by the department/college under the guidelines provided for in the university level faculty workload policy ([MAPP 12.05.01](#)) and the faculty annual performance review policy (see Office of the Provost Website). Based on peer review, the faculty annual performance review (F-APR) is designed to provide a faculty member with a clear description of their achievements relative to the expectations of their unit/department as it relates to the roles and responsibilities of the faculty title/position they hold.

In the case of promotion eligible NTT faculty members that hold a renewable employment agreement (REA), the faculty annual performance review (F-APR) is intended to function as the main element of the performance review required for annual extension of the renewal employment agreement (REA). Under normal circumstances, the results of a faculty annual performance review (F-APR) will itself constitute the appropriate level of annual performance evaluation for promotion eligible NTT faculty members that hold a renewable employment agreement (REA).

In general, an apparent performance deficit is identified as when a promotion eligible NTT faculty member receives a rating/score in their faculty annual performance review (F-APR) that falls below the equivalent of a “meets expectations” as set out by their department/college. Only when an apparent performance deficit is identified by the F-APR process will the reviewing body proceed to a further evaluation to assess the faculty member’s performance on the basis of absolute performance standards established by the unit's faculty.

If a promotion eligible NTT faculty member holding a renewable employment agreement (REA) receives a rating/score in their faculty annual performance review (F-APR) that falls below the equivalent of a “meets expectations”, the faculty member becomes subject to the initiation of a mandatory NTT Faculty Development Plan (NTT-FDP). A rating that falls below the equivalent of a “meets expectations” rating or score in the faculty annual performance review (F-APR) does not establish a presumption that the faculty member has given "cause" for dismissal.

Once a NTT-FDP has been initiated the renewable employment agreement (REA) held by the faculty member is cancelled. Notice of the decision to initiate a mandatory NTT-FDP and the cancellation of the REA must be made in writing to the faculty member no later than May 31 of the current academic year. Once notice of such cancellation has been provided, the promotion eligible NTT faculty member will

revert to a three (3) year fixed term employment agreement, the term of this employment agreement beginning at the start of the academic year following the academic year in which the notice of cancellation was provided.

Unless the faculty member satisfactorily completes the conditions of their NTT Faculty Development Plan (NTT-FDP) and the department and college (or college when no departments exist) subsequently recommends reinstatement of a renewable employment agreement (REA), the faculty member is subject to termination at the end of the fixed, three year term employment agreement.

As is the case for all faculty members, promotion eligible faculty members are subject to dismissal for adequate cause, financial exigency, medical reasons, or discontinuance of academic programs as defined in the relevant sections of the UH Faculty Handbook and/or applicable university policy, regardless of whether they hold a renewable employment agreement (REA) or not.

NON-TENURE TRACK – FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NTT-FDP)

The terms of any non-tenure track-faculty development plan (NTT-FDP) should be determined as per existing department/college policies governing NTT faculty performances expectations. Any NTT-FDP must be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Provost prior to its initiation. However, the NTT-FDP process should adhere to the following general principles in order to ensure a fair and transparent review process.

NTT-FDP Process

Once the NTT faculty member holding a renewable employment agreement (REA) has been informed that they are subject to a mandatory NTT-FDP, the department or academic unit shall elect a committee of senior faculty members for the purpose of conducting the NTT-FDP review. This committee may be a previously constituted committee, such as a departmental personnel committee or faculty annual performance review (F-APR) committee, with the caveat that the committee membership must be elected by the departmental or unit faculty. This is an essential peer review step, providing protection against arbitrary and capricious administrative actions.

The committee may be composed of tenured faculty members and promotion eligible NTT faculty members holding renewable employment agreements (REA), but at a minimum the committee membership must consist of at least one senior promotion eligible NTT faculty member holding a renewable employment agreement (REA) in the appropriate professional domain (i.e. instructional, clinical or research domains). In the case where no promotion eligible NTT faculty members of senior rank exist in the department or college, a department or college may find a suitable alternate from another department or college within the University or consider waiving this requirement with the approval of the Office of the Provost.

The elected committee described above will meet to review the basis of the unsatisfactory performance

rating, identify the area(s) in which the faculty member performance requires remediation, and provide the faculty member with guidance on how to address the performance deficiencies identified. While the faculty member subject to the mandatory NTT-FDP requirement has the right to meet with the committee to discuss their findings and to provide any corrections to matters of fact, the faculty member may elect to omit this step. Regardless of whether or not the faculty member elects to meet with the committee, a written statement of the performance deficiencies will be issued to the faculty member by the committee and copied to the appropriate administrator (i.e. department chair and/or dean).

The unit administrator (i.e. department chair or dean in colleges without departments) will work with the faculty member to develop and monitor a NTT faculty development plan (NTT-FDP) designed to address the performance deficiencies identified as part of the NTT-FDP review. Such a NTT-FDP plan must be approved by the Dean and Office of the Provost, and must contain specific steps designed to address the performance deficiencies identified and a clear set of outcomes by which the faculty member's performance will be assessed during and at the end of the NTT-FDP process.

Promotion eligible NTT faculty members subject to an NTT-FDP are employed on a fixed three (3) term employment agreement. As such, while the form and the term of an NTT-FDP will depend on how best to address the performance deficiencies identified, an NTT-FDP will have a maximum duration of three (3) years. Those NTT faculty members participating in a mandatory NTT-FDP will continue to receive feedback on their performance through the normal faculty annual performance review (F-APR) process, as well as receiving specific feedback from their department chair and/or dean on their progress in addressing the performance deficiencies identified in their NTT-FDP.

At the conclusion of the NTT-FDP, the faculty committee responsible for establishing the terms of the original NTT-FDP will review the outcome of the NTT-FDP process to determine if the faculty member has successfully remediated their performance deficiencies and satisfactorily completed the terms of the NTT-FDP. If for whatever reason the faculty committee loses any of its original members by the time the NTT-FDP is concluded, replacement members will be elected to the committee prior to any review of the outcome of the FDP. Deans must report annually to the Office of the Provost the names of the faculty members who are currently participating in NTT-FDPs, the nature of the deficiencies, and the progress made and outcomes of those plans.

Unless the NTT faculty member satisfactorily completes the conditions of their NTT Faculty Development Plan (NTT-FDP) and the department and college (or college if no departments exist) subsequently recommends reinstatement of their renewal employment agreement (REA), the faculty member is subject to termination of their employment agreement at the end of the fixed, three year term.

DUE PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Promotion eligible NTT faculty members have full access to the university grievance process with respect to their faculty annual performance evaluations as laid out in departmental/college/university faculty annual performance review (F-APR) policies.

In addition, if after the conclusion of a NTT-FDP process the department and/or college does not recommend reinstatement of a renewable employment agreement (REA), the promotion eligible NTT faculty may appeal this decision to the University Grievance Committee. The appeal must be filed in writing with the committee within fifteen calendar days of receipt of the notice of non-reinstatement of a renewal employment agreement (REA) being received by the faculty member. However, any appeal must be based on errors of fact or a lack of due process afforded to the faculty member during the NTT-FDP process, but cannot challenge the professional judgement of the review committee regarding its decision not to reinstate a renewable employment agreement (REA). The university grievance committee will review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Provost. The Provost's decision on the non-reinstatement of a renewable employment agreement (REA) to a promotion eligible NTT faculty member as a consequence of a NTT-FDP process is the final institutional step in this matter and shall not be subject to further review or grievance proceedings.