



UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**

Equal Opportunity Office

September 1, 2020

**Guidance: Changing Faculty Rank to “Restart The Clock”  
on Limited-Term Appointments**

*If a unit wishes to continue the employment of a limited-term faculty member currently in the third and final year of their limited-term appointment, can the unit change the faculty member’s rank and ask that EOO issue a new limited-term appointment that starts over at the first year? Similarly, may a unit take the same action to extend the employment of a limited-term faculty member currently in the first or second year of their appointment?*

\* \* \*

**Summary:** It is correct that a change in rank, whether at the end or in the middle of a limited-term appointment, restarts the clock on that appointment. Accordingly, EOO will review all requests to restart a limited-term appointment at a different faculty rank – whether during the course of or at the end of the two-plus-one-year appointment period – on a case-by-case basis. The requesting unit must demonstrate a material change in the faculty member’s responsibilities or credentials in order to obtain the new limited-term appointment. Limited-term faculty members may not serve more than six years in consecutive limited-term appointments at any rank.

**Detailed Guidance:** As EOO’s [website](#) states, “[t]he general rule is that all faculty and administrative appointments require a search.” Accordingly, all permanent faculty positions (*i.e.*, not interim/acting, admin add-on, limited-term, or part-time) must be searched competitively; this applies to all faculty ranks, including academic professionals, clinical faculty, and research scientists. Limited-term direct hires are an exception to the general rule because they are capped at three years and thus temporary in nature. If a unit wants to hire a full-time faculty member to fulfill the same responsibilities for more than three years, that strongly suggests that the need for the position is not, in fact, temporary, and that a competitive search for a permanent position should be conducted.

Accordingly, EOO will review all requests to restart a limited-term appointment at a different faculty rank – whether during the course of or at the end of the two-plus-one-year appointment period – on a case-by-case basis. Units requesting the restart of a limited-term appointment at a different faculty rank, whether during or at the end of the

two-plus-one-year period, will be required to demonstrate a material change in either (i) the faculty member's responsibilities or (ii) the faculty member's credentials that supports the change in rank. If the unit requests a change because subsequent review indicates that the faculty rank originally assigned to the limited-term faculty member was erroneous, the change in rank will be made retroactive to the original appointment and will not restart the two-plus-one-year clock.

Furthermore, as [a faculty member hired via a competitive search as a full-time instructor may serve no more than seven years at that rank,](#) \* and a faculty member hired via competitive search as a full-time lecturer [may serve for no longer than six years at that rank,](#) no faculty rank changes that would have the effect of extending the tenure of any limited-term faculty members hired without a search<sup>†</sup> beyond six years will be permitted, since their counterparts hired via search are subject to those time limits.

**This is not retroactive;** any faculty members currently serving consecutive limited-term appointments or serving a limited-term appointment that is beyond the six-year limit may complete the remainder of those appointments.

All changes in faculty rank also remain subject to the [Provost's guidelines for faculty hiring and appointments.](#) For example, a limited-term faculty member whose duties consist entirely of teaching and research may not be reassigned to the rank of Academic Professional unless their teaching and research responsibilities are reduced to less than 50% of their total obligation.

This guidance is effective immediately and subject to change upon the review of the Provost.

\* \* \*

Please direct any general questions or queries regarding unique or emergency situations to Kieran B. Morrow, J.D. at [kbmorrow@uga.edu](mailto:kbmorrow@uga.edu).

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\* Please see p. 11 of this document.

<sup>†</sup> These renewal restrictions also apply to the infrequent limited-term faculty hired via a competitive search, as the unit originally elected to hire them into a position for a maximum of three years rather than a permanent position.