

September 1, 2026

Guidelines for the 2026-2027 Review of Full-Time Non-Tenured Research Faculty (First, Third, and Fifth Year Reviews)

The Arts and Sciences has in place a comprehensive system for review of its full-time, non-tenured faculty in the professorial ranks. Reviews are conducted in the first, third, fifth and seventh years of service. Through constructive, informative and timely evaluations, senior faculty advance the professional development of their junior colleagues to ensure the presence of faculty of the highest quality and distinction. Each case is evaluated on its own merits, and the review process, and recommendations that emerge from the reviews, are intended to be treated with the utmost seriousness by departments.

Statutory Terms of Non-Tenured Appointment

By University Statute, all initial appointments to a non-tenured rank are for one year only. Subsequent appointments may be for a term of one, two, or three years. The statutory limit on all full-time, non-tenured appointments is eight consecutive years of counted service.¹ Reappointment beyond this date requires the granting of tenure. Under Arts and Sciences policy, associate professors without tenure may not hold appointment at that rank for more than five years of counted service.²

The University may choose not to renew an appointment beyond its stated term because of budgetary considerations, changes in staffing needs, or less than optimal performance on the part of the officer. In such cases, the University must give written notice in advance of the expiration of the appointment as follows:

- 1) not later than **March 1** of the first academic year of fulltime service³

¹ Initial appointment as instructor (pending Ph.D.) or the taking of a full-time leave will generally be excluded from the accumulation of counted service. Parental workload relief may also extend the up-or-out date. The tabulation of counted service and the determination of the date beyond which a full-time, non-tenured appointment may be continued is the responsibility of the Provost, whose "Policies and Procedures for Determining the Statutory Limit on Full-time Service by Non-Tenured Faculty" may be found here: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/docs/nonten.html>

² Faculty whose initial appointment is at the rank of associate professor are reviewed on a different schedule. All receive a first-year Confirming Review. Those on fixed-term, non-renewable appointments may request a Developmental Review at the third year point to obtain feedback on their professional development. Those on appointments eligible for tenure consideration are reviewed for tenure in the third or fourth year of the appointment.

³ For those faculty whose appointment began in January 2026, the confirming letter must be sent by October 1, 2026, for non-renewal effective December 31, 2026.

- 2) not later than **December 15** of the second academic year of full-time service, if the appointment expires at the end of that academic year
- 3) at least *twelve months* before the end of all *subsequent periods* of service (**May 31**).

Procedures for Review

The review of full-time, non-tenured faculty⁴ should be as thorough and searching as possible. Faculty members scheduled for review should be invited to submit a current curriculum vitae and other evidence of their professional accomplishments. The department should supplement these materials with other readily available evidence related to the individual's record of teaching, scholarship, and university service. Except in unusual circumstances, the department should not solicit outside evaluations of a faculty member's work. Please consult Margaret Edsall, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs before conducting the review.

After reviewing the faculty member's work, the department must decide whether or not to recommend reappointment for an additional term of service. This decision should be based on three considerations:

- 1) effectiveness as a teacher of undergraduate and graduate students;
- 2) accomplishments and potential as a scholar, scientist, or artist;
- 3) service to the department and the University.

The department will recommend the maximum allowable term of reappointment for those whose performance is judged to be excellent, and non-renewal for those whose performance is considered unsatisfactory.

The procedures for reviews are as follows. For simplicity, the year stipulated refers to the number of years of counted service.

Types of Review

First Year Review. The first year of service at Columbia for all full-time non-tenured faculty, regardless of rank, serves as a probationary period and a decision must be made as to whether or not to extend the statutory initial appointment. Reviews of full-time, non-tenured faculty in their first year of service are essentially confirming reviews. Those who successfully complete the probationary period may be extended through the fourth year. Those who do not should be notified in writing by **March 1, 2027** that their appointment will not be renewed beyond **June 30, 2027**. The chair should notify the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences of the department's decision by copy of the letter to the candidate no later than **March 1, 2027**.

⁴ Full-time, non-tenured research faculty refers to those research faculty in the ranks of instructor, assistant professor, and associate professor.

Third Year Review. Those in their third year of counted service must be reviewed this year for a decision on renewal beyond **June 30, 2028**. The department should use this review to place a strong emphasis on the professional development of the faculty member, identifying areas of progress and noting especially those requiring attention. Developmental reviews follow established departmental procedures. These generally include evaluation of the candidate by a subcommittee of at least three tenured faculty prior to departmental deliberation. The subcommittee is tasked with carefully reading the candidate's work, cv, teaching and research statement, and student evaluations.

Following departmental review, the chair should submit a letter by **April 15, 2027**, transmitting the department's recommendation to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences. In instances where the department is requesting renewal of the appointment, the letter should address the individual's effectiveness as a teacher, accomplishments and potential as a scholar, and service to the department. In aid of this, the Office of Academic Affairs will provide the department with all teaching evaluations relevant to this review.

A copy of the candidate's curriculum vitae, a full statement of teaching and current research plans and reports of any departmental committees must be included in the materials submitted. The candidate's works (articles, chapters) need not be submitted. The Executive Vice President will inform the department chair as to whether this request has been approved and the department must then notify the faculty member in writing about the outcome of the review with a copy to the Executive Vice President.

Following the review, it is the responsibility of the department chair and other senior faculty members to provide substantive feedback to the candidate. Feedback should be offered in detail during the academic year when the review is conducted.

Fifth Year Review. Those in their fifth year of counted service must be reviewed for possible reappointment beyond **June 30, 2028**. Any assistant professor who will have completed at least four years and no more than six years of counted service by the end of 2023-2024 is eligible for a critical review, which includes consideration for promotion to non-tenured associate professor.

The fifth-year review for reappointment and promotion to associate professor is considered a critical review. Promotion and renewal will be offered only to those who exhibit the exceptional qualities appropriate to a prospective candidate for tenure and the demonstrable likelihood of scholarly achievement necessary for tenure at Columbia or an institution of comparable stature. This promotion and renewal is intended as recognition of exceptional gifts and prospective tenurability but is not in itself a guarantee of tenure. It is also not intended as a consolation prize, and departmental recommendations for promotion must be developed with the utmost conscientiousness.

Departments have three options after carrying out a Fifth Year Review:

- 1) Recommendation for renewal through the up or out date and promotion to non-tenured Associate Professor when presented with candidates for whom there is a

demonstrable likelihood of tenure at Columbia or an institution of comparable stature.

- 2) Recommendation for termination after the sixth year when presented with candidates who have not met the criteria of demonstrable likelihood of scholarly achievement necessary for tenure at Columbia or an institution of comparable stature.
- 3) Recommendation for renewal through the end of the seventh year, with the candidate remaining at the status of Assistant Professor. A candidate renewed for two years under this could still be entered later for the tenure process if the department judges that there has been such an improvement in the candidate's work that it now meets the criteria of demonstrable likelihood of scholarly achievement necessary for tenure at Columbia or an institution of comparable stature.

The following materials must be included in the department's case for renewal and promotion to non-tenured associate professor and forwarded to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences by **February 15, 2027**:

- 1) **A statement from the candidate:** The department chair should ask the candidate to submit a complete, up-to-date curriculum vitae, as well as a full statement of teaching and current research plans. The curriculum vitae should indicate whether publications listed as "forthcoming" have been accepted and when they are expected to be published. Entries for full-length books listed as "contracted" should also reveal whether readers' reports exist, what portion of the work has actually been submitted to the press contracting it, and what the timetable is for completion.

A review committee report: Where department size permits, the evaluation of candidates for promotion to non-tenured associate professor, should be conducted by a committee of at least three tenured faculty. The subcommittee is tasked with carefully reading the candidate's work, cv, teaching and research statement, and student evaluations. The committee should submit a written report to the department, and the chair must include this report among the materials forwarded to the Executive Vice President with the departmental recommendation. The report should address the candidate's teaching and service as well as her or his standing as a scholar, scientist or artist. There should be a detailed analysis of teaching performance, including a discussion of courses taught, involvement in the undergraduate curricula and departmental central teaching requirements, enrollments, student and peer evaluations, advising, and thesis supervision. In aid of this, the Office of Academic Affairs will provide the department with all teaching evaluations relevant to this review.

A departmental recommendation for renewal and promotion to the rank of non-tenured associate professor should not be made unless the department believes, and can demonstrate, that the candidate's teaching and scholarship are likely to merit promotion to tenure at Columbia or an institution of comparable stature by the time

a recommendation for tenure would be made here. Recommendation for renewal and promotion to non-tenured associate professor allows more scope for the recognition of promise and potential than an actual recommendation to tenure. **It is a statement of tenurability, not a promise of tenure, and this circumstance should be made clear to the candidate as well as to the department.**

A departmental vote not to recommend promotion and reappointment is a decision, which is conveyed to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences by the department chair.

- 2) **A letter of transmittal from the chair:** The department chair must submit a letter stating the case for promotion in full terms, incorporating the substance of the discussion of the tenured faculty, the result of the departmental vote detailing voting eligibility, faculty who voted, and explanations for any opposition or abstentions. **NO REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE REVIEW MAY BE GIVEN TO A CANDIDATE PRIOR TO THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S DECISION AND RESPONSE.**

The promotion case must comment at length upon the candidate's prospective tenurability, at Columbia University or an institution of comparable stature, based on a full and complete evaluation of his or her work as a scholar and teacher. It must also address where the candidate fits within the overall context of the department.

The chair should provide guidance in the letter of transmittal regarding the normal scholarly standards for tenurability within the particular disciplines or fields. For example, are journal articles alone sufficient in providing the basis for tenurability? Or is the normal assumption for tenure consideration the completion and acceptance of one or more book length projects? Or are there other kinds of scholarly work that constitute the basis for tenurability within the candidate's discipline?

In those cases where the department chooses to reappoint the candidate without granting promotion, the chair's letter of transmittal should similarly provide guidance regarding the normal scholarly standards for tenurability within the discipline or fields, clearly stating the department's reasons, in detail and in the light of the prevailing standards in the discipline, for making this recommendation.

Following the review, it is the responsibility of the department chair and other senior faculty members to provide substantive feedback to the candidate. Feedback should be offered in detail during the academic year when the review is conducted.

Departmental recommendations for the fifth year review are reviewed by the Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC). In considering fifth year reviews, the Promotion and Tenure Committee does not replicate or preempt a tenure review panel's functions in any case brought before it and will not read a candidate's publications, interview witnesses and solicit evaluations from outside the University. The responsibility will rest with the department to present a convincing case to the Promotion and Tenure Committee on the

content and merit of the candidate's work, on the effectiveness of the candidate's teaching, and on the value of the candidate's departmental and university service.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee acts as an advisory committee to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences, and after reviewing the department's case, makes its recommendation to the Executive Vice President.

The Office of the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences will notify the departments of the outcome of the review process. Departments are required to inform those assistant professors in writing immediately of the outcome of their review and to forward a copy of this correspondence to the Office of the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences. In addition, the department chair or his/her designee will meet with the candidate to summarize progress to date, offer guidance regarding areas requiring attention over the next few years, and provide a preliminary assessment of the likelihood of a recommendation for tenure by the department.

Appendix A1

Sample Review and Reappointment Schedule without leaves for Full-time, Non-Tenured Research Faculty

(Hired July 1, 2026 as assistant professor)

Year of Appointment	Counted Year of Service	Type of Review	Year through Which Appointment May Be Extended and Possible Outcome
2026-2027	1	First	Extension through 4 th year <u>OR</u> Notification of non-renewal at end of 1 st year
2027-2028	2	---	
2028-2029	3	Third	Extension through 6 th year <u>OR</u> Decision not to renew and to discontinue at the end of the 4 th year.
2029-2030	4	---	
2030-2031	5	Fifth	Promotion to Associate Professor (non-tenured) and extension through up-or-out date <u>OR</u> Decision not to promote and to discontinue at the end of the 6 th year <u>OR</u> Remain Assistant Professor; extension through 7 th year
2031-2032	6	---	
2032-2033	7	Tenure review	Award of tenure <u>OR</u> Decision not to nominate for tenure at any point in process and letter of non-renewal sent to faculty member ; extension through 8 th year
2033-2034			
Up-or-Out: June 30, 2034	8	---	First year in a tenured appointment <u>OR</u> Final year at Columbia

Appendix A2

Sample Review and Reappointment Schedule with leaves for Full-time, Non-Tenured Research Faculty

(Hired July 1, 2026 as assistant professor)

Year of Appointment	Counted Year in Service	Type of Review	Year through Which Appointment May Be Extended and Possible Outcome
2026-2027	1	First	Extension through 4 th year <u>OR</u> Notification of non-renewal at end of 1 st year
2027-2028	2	---	
2028-2029	3	Third	Extension through 6 th counted year <u>OR</u> Decision not to renew and to discontinue at the end of the following year.
2029-2030	3	---	Up-or-out date is extended one-year maximum (from 6/30/31 to 6/30/32) due to a JFDL and/or Chamberlain Leave *
2030-2031	4	---	
2031-2032	5	Fifth	Promotion to Associate Professor (non-tenured) and extension through up-or-out date <u>OR</u> Decision not to promote and to discontinue at the end of the 6 th counted year <u>OR</u> Remain Assistant Professor; extension through 7 th counted year
2032-2033	6	---	
2033-2034	7	Tenure review	Award of tenure <u>OR</u> Decision not to nominate for tenure at any point in process and letter of non-renewal sent to faculty member ; extension through 8 th counted year
2034-2035			First year in a tenured appointment
Up-or-Out: June 30, 2035	8	---	<u>OR</u> Final year at Columbia

* Further changes to up-or-out-date occur only for Parental Workload Relief Leaves or medical leaves of two months or more.