

**Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization
Bylaws 1A**

**Guidelines and Procedures for
Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty**

Approved October 8, 2018

I. Preamble

This document supplements the University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (approved by USM Chancellor, 26 March 1993, with subsequent revisions) and the CMNS Policy on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure. It shall not supersede College or University policies in force at the time of any action described in this document.

This plan was circulated and then discussed in a meeting of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Department of Astronomy on May 15, 2017, with 12 of 14 members present. The Guidelines were discussed and modified during the meeting, with secret votes for each major proposed change. To accept the modified document in its entirety, 11 votes were received by secret ballot (one member was called away before the final vote), with 11 votes in favor of this plan, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining. This vote is a positive vote as defined by the Department's Plan of Organization. The faculty agreed to a typographical correction at a meeting on October 8, 2017.

II. Terminology and reference documents

Faculty: When not otherwise specified, faculty in this document refers to members of the Tenured/Tenure-track (TTK) faculty appointed in the Department of Astronomy.

The First Level Review Committee: is the same as the faculty review committee required by Policy II-100(A), section III.D.2.

Reference documents are:

University Policy II-100(A) at

<https://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-ii-faculty>

University Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) procedures at:

<https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/documents/APTManual.pdf>

College Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) procedures at:

<https://cmns.umd.edu/faculty-staff/chairs-handbook/cmns-protocols-faculty-searches-appointments-promotions-and-reviews>

III. Faculty ranks of Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty covered by this document

Assistant Professor: Normal criteria for an initial appointment include a Ph.D. in Astronomy or Physics or a closely related field and publication in refereed journals of several research articles that have had an impact on the research of other scientists in the field. Most importantly, the individual must show the promise of becoming an outstanding researcher and educator, as well as promise for growth to satisfy the requirements for Associate Professor. A modest amount of service in support of departmental needs and the external professional community is expected. Appointment at this rank usually also requires congruence between the individual's area of anticipated future research and the Department's programmatic goals.

Associate Professor: Normal criteria include demonstrated excellence in research, as demonstrated by a firmly established reputation within the candidate's field at the national level together with recognition at the international level. An active publication history in highly-ranked journals, high citation rate, and success in obtaining external funding all contribute to such a record. Educational criteria include excellence in teaching and mentoring as demonstrated, for instance, by high ratings in course evaluations, by successful innovations in the teaching program, and by research students approaching or past completion of their theses. Normally there should be demonstrated excellence in teaching both at the graduate and at the undergraduate level. There should also have been significant service either to the University community or to the external professional community. Appointment to this rank may require congruence between the individual's anticipated area of future research and the Department's programmatic goals. Appointment to this rank confers tenure.

Professor: Normal criteria for appointment or promotion to this rank include an established international reputation for outstanding research, a record of distinguished teaching, and substantial service beyond and within the University. A person to be appointed as or promoted to Professor should have demonstrated qualities of leadership of research in the field and a record of research funding. Promotion to this rank is normally independent of the Department's programmatic goals, but new appointments at this rank may require congruence between an individual's anticipated area of future research and the Department's programmatic goals. This rank carries tenure.

IV. Elements in evaluating candidates for appointment and promotion

Essential criteria for appointment or promotion of professorial faculty fall into three general categories: (1) performance in teaching, advising, and mentoring of students; (2) performance in research, scholarship, creative and/or professional activity; (3) performance of professional

service within the university, the profession, or the community. For convenience, the following definitions are abstracted from University Policy II-100(A) in effect in 2017, along with additional considerations that the Department finds important:

1. The fundamental criterion in evaluating research is the impact of the individual's research on the field, i.e., on the importance of the research. This is assessed by a variety of criteria such as the quality of the individual's publications, publication journal reputation, citations to refereed publications, assessment of the impact of the individual's research by external experts in the field, assessment by collaborators of the individual's contributions to collaborative efforts, receipt of invitations to present invited reviews at national and international meetings, and ability to obtain external funding for the research. University policy states that "research of a classified or proprietary nature shall not be considered in weighing an individual's case for appointment or promotion."
2. The individual's teaching is assessed by means of a teaching portfolio. The teaching portfolio contents must comply with College and University requirements, and may include references to other materials submitted in conjunction with the assessment (e.g. APT package sections) to reduce redundancy. It typically includes course syllabi for courses taught since the previous evaluation. The portfolio must include summaries of University student course evaluations and peer teaching evaluations. It may additionally include other information that the candidate or Department feels would be helpful in evaluating educational activities, including input from graduate students, particularly including students advised by the individual, information on the quantity and quality of graduate students who have completed theses under the direction of the individual, and accounts of innovations introduced into the teaching program of the Department.
3. Service is evaluated by contributions to the University and the profession by activities within the University, to its community (the state and citizens of Maryland), and to the professional community both nationally and internationally. The university requires that "Service activity shall not be expected or required of junior faculty to the point that it interferes with the development of their teaching and research."

B. Procedures for periodic evaluation of tenured faculty

Periodic evaluation of tenured faculty members (University Policy II-1.20) shall take place at intervals or times established by the University or College. The Tenured/Tenure-Track Merit committee (Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization Bylaws 1B) shall conduct an appropriate evaluation of research, education, and service in conjunction with the annual review process, and will report their findings to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will be responsible for arranging evaluations required by the University or College. A faculty member may request an evaluation at the appropriate time in any year.

V. Departmental Procedures for Search, Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure

University policy emphasizes a fundamental principle that: “Search, appointment, and promotion procedures shall be fair, unbiased, and impartial, and comply with institutional policies that are widely publicized and published in the Faculty Handbook.” The following subsections indicate specific departmental procedures within that principle.

A. Search procedures

1. When a search is carried out for any of the tenure-track positions, the Department Chair will appoint a search committee consisting of at least three members of the Tenured/Tenure-Track department professorial faculty at or above the search rank. The Department Chair will not be on this search committee.
2. The Department Chair shall appoint a search committee Chair. In addition to being a voting member of the committee, the search Chair shall also be responsible for ensuring that the search and initial evaluation process reflects the University’s commitments to equity, inclusion, and fairness. Advertisements for the position shall be placed in the AAS Job Register at a minimum, and in other venues that may increase the chances that diverse candidates will be encouraged to apply. The committee Chair or designee shall also ensure that written evaluation material is collected, written, and distributed to the evaluators in a timely manner, typically at least one week in advance of discussions. The search committee shall carefully evaluate all applicants. After conducting the search, the search committee shall present the Department Chair with a slate of three or more candidates. The search committee Chair or designee will inform applicants who are no longer under consideration, in accord with University policy.
3. Candidates who are invited to visit the Department for further evaluation shall have the opportunity to talk with all Tenured/Tenure-Track members of the Department. The committee will ensure that students from the Department interact with the candidates and provide input to the First Level Review committee (sec. V.C).
4. In rare cases the Department Chair may bring a case of an applicant suitable for an expedited (target of opportunity) hire directly to the First Level Review committee. Unless the First Level Review committee agrees otherwise, the committee shall interact with the candidate as it would with any other candidate; that is, to have opportunities to review written materials, to attend a talk presented by the candidate, for individual interviews and discussions, to obtain feedback from student interviews with the candidate, and so on.
5. All candidates identified for further consideration shall be evaluated by a departmental First Level Review Committee.

B. Appointment and promotion procedures (First Level Review)

The Department Chair shall appoint a committee of at least two faculty members at or above the level of the proposed appointment to compile promotion materials required by the University, College, and Department for the First Level Review.

The First Level Review committee Chair shall assemble the material required (generally called the APT packet) by the University and Department as specified in Bylaws 1A and 1B of the Plan of Organization for the Department of Astronomy, then distribute this written evaluation material to the First Level Review Committee at least one week in advance of the First Level Review committee's meeting to consider the promotion. Supplemental materials (e.g. late evaluator letters) may be included for consideration by the review committee in cases approved by the Department Chair. The committee Chair presents the case and chairs the discussion and votes. Normally the committee Chair or another committee member will be the primary spokesperson for the First Level Review Committee.

The First Level Review committee consists of all active faculty members at or above the level considered for appointment or promotion, with the exception of the Department Chair, who must attend First Level Review meetings and has a voice but does not vote. Committee members who cannot come to campus and attend are strongly encouraged to participate in the meeting by phone or videoconference.

Individuals with Emerita or Emeritus professorial titles are entitled to voice but not vote. Faculty with joint appointments in another department or joint appointments on another campus of the UMD System will be entitled to both voice and vote, provided their appointment in astronomy is greater than 0.33 FTE. Other persons with professional stature at or above the appointment or promotion may occasionally be allowed to attend First Level Committee meetings with the permission of the Department Chair and First Level Review Chair.

C. First Level Review committee voting procedures

Voting procedures in appointment and promotion cases are slightly different. The main difference is that, given the department's size, candidates for promotion cases are generally well known to all of the faculty members, so absentee votes are allowed. Proxy voting is not allowed in any case.

1. Voting in appointment cases

At least 3/4 of members qualified to vote must be able to participate in the committee discussion, either in person or electronically, to establish quorum. All voting shall be by secret ballot, with no absentee voting allowed, and only vote totals will be reported. The usual goal of voting in appointment cases is to establish a ranked list of final candidates who are well-qualified for the position under consideration. Preliminary voting in the committee may be by plurality, by elimination, or by any other method that the review committee shall choose prior to commencement of voting in each instance. There shall be a final vote on the appointment of at least the top-ranked candidate, where a positive vote shall be more than 1/2 of the votes in favor of the appointment, and fewer

than 1/3 votes are opposed. If a ranked list has been made the committee may provide the Department Chair with instructions in the event the top-ranked candidate declines to be considered further. Such instructions may include majority agreement for the Chair to contact further members of the ranked list in the order of ranking, to suspend the search until the First Level Review committee can reconvene to again consider the candidates proposed for consideration by the Search committee, or other similar options that maintain the intent and integrity of the original search process.

2. Voting in promotion cases

At least 2/3 of members qualified to vote must be able to participate in the committee discussion, either in person or electronically, to establish quorum. All voting shall be by secret ballot, and only vote totals will be reported. Absentee ballots shall be solicited from eligible members unable to participate in the meeting due to travel or other absences. Absentee votes must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM department time on the day of the meeting to a member of the administrative staff designated by the Department Chair. Absentee ballots will be tabulated separately in the report submitted to the second level, with unsubmitted ballots reported as absences. The final vote for promotion and tenure will be considered positive if more than 1/2 of the total number of yes and no votes are in favor of the promotion and fewer than 1/3 of these votes are opposed.

D. Subsequent evaluation

As required by University procedures, the Department Chair will contribute a letter to the APT packet containing her or his evaluation and any other information that may be germane. This letter is not shared with the First Level Review committee. Second-level and subsequent reviews follow College and University procedures.

E. Lack of Limitations: Nothing in these guidelines is intended to limit the sources from which relevant information may be sought. In particular, the Chair of the unit, the promotion/search committee, or the first level review committee may seek input and advice from whatever sources it deems appropriate in addition to the required sources. Additional sources must assist in making fair, unbiased, and impartial decisions. The candidate may make requests to the Department Chair that specific individuals be excluded as evaluators, providing information that the Chair may consider in making a decision on the matter.

F. Confidentiality

All materials in the review process are strictly confidential and must be returned to the Department or destroyed following the First Level Review committee meeting. Similarly, all preliminary information (including the names of applicants), discussions, committee decisions, or other search- or promotion-related information are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone outside of the committee or Department, as appropriate, unless allowed by University policy or with Department Chair's permission.

V. Modification of departmental APT Guidelines and Procedures

According to University policy, the criteria described in this document should be reviewed periodically by the Department as deemed necessary, but no less frequently than once every five years. This review should include consideration of the unit's progress toward increasing the diversity of its tenured faculty. This document must be updated as necessary to comply with changes in University and College policies. These guidelines and procedures may be modified or amended as described in the Plan of Organization for the Department of Astronomy.

**Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization
Appendix 1B**

**Merit Pay Distribution Plan for
Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty**

Approved 2018 February 5

I. Preamble

In compliance with the University of Maryland Policy on Faculty Merit Pay Distribution as revised in May 2010, this document provides a merit pay distribution plan for tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Astronomy.

This plan was circulated and then discussed in a meeting of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Department of Astronomy on 2017 May 15, with 11 of 15 members present. Following minor revisions, an amended draft was circulated a week before a meeting on 2018 February 5. Following University Senate procedure, votes were called for each amendment to the plan. 11 of 15 members were present, with all agreeing to the amendments. This vote is a positive vote as defined by the Department's Plan of Organization.

II. Merit Review Committee activities

A Merit Review Committee consisting of three faculty members will serve to advise the Department Chair on merit pay distribution. The Committee will be directly elected annually via secret ballot by the tenure-track and tenured faculty for staggered three-year terms. Insofar as possible, the Merit Review Committee's composition over a period of years will reflect the distribution of tenure-track and tenured faculty, scholarly interests, gender, and racial/ethnic distribution of the Department. To this end, as part of the election process the Department Chair will provide a list of faculty who have served on the Committee during the past seven years, identify areas in which the distribution has been poorly represented over the prior five years, and encourage a distribution that reflects the composition of the faculty. Election to consecutive terms is not allowed. The rotation in membership of the Committee helps ensure that the priorities of the Department are fully reflected over time.

Each year the Department will provide the Committee with written documentation of faculty achievements for the previous three years with emphasis on the immediately preceding year. All activities that show the faculty member's accomplishments should be included in written materials submitted to the committee. Such material shall include standard campus annual reports or a substitute specified by the Department, and submission of the faculty member's current CV. Other material may be requested by the Committee or provided by a faculty

member for consideration. These documents will be retained by the Department for at least three years, or until they are no longer to be used during faculty evaluations.

The Merit Review Committee will use this written material to evaluate faculty contributions in all of the following areas:

1. Research, scholarship, and creative activities. Measures to be used in this evaluation will include the quantity and quality of publications in refereed journals, citations to refereed publications, and success in acquisition of research funding. First- or corresponding- author papers carry more weight than others, although publications with the faculty member's student or postdoc as first author carry nearly as much weight, and should be clearly indicated in the CV. Releases of computer codes, construction of scientific instruments, and other work that advances the field also fall in this category.
2. Educational activities in teaching, advising, and mentoring. Measures to be used in this evaluation will include teaching contributions as revealed by student and peer teaching evaluations, innovations in teaching methods, course development, and evidence of active student and/or postdoctoral mentoring.
3. Service to the University, community, and the profession. Measures to be used in this evaluation will include the level and amount of service on departmental, campus, community, and external professional committees.

Each Committee member shall provide an independent ranked list, based on evaluation of research, teaching, and service, of all other faculty members to the Department Chair. A brief note shall provide information on the relative weighting between the three areas. The list shall also be accompanied by brief comments noting strengths and weaknesses that played a part in each ranking. These comments are especially important information for the Chair to consider, and must be fair and clear. The Department Chair may use this information in the salary letter and in discussions with the faculty member without attribution.

For each year when merit pay is not available, the achievements of faculty members for that year will be taken into consideration during the next year in which merit pay is available.

The Department Chair shall convene a meeting of the entire Merit Review Committee to discuss the aggregate scores only and general evaluations for all faculty members. Committee members shall leave the meeting room during discussion of their own evaluations. The result of this meeting will be an advisory ranked list, with ties allowed but not encouraged, of all faculty members' professional performance over the evaluation period.

The Merit Committee shall also separately review progress toward advancement for all faculty members it reviews, and call the Department Chair's attention to faculty who should be considered for promotion or other advancement. The Committee and Chair shall discuss faculty advancement as part of the Merit Committee meeting.

The Committee shall hold evaluations and any related material in strict confidence. Committee members will certify that they have followed the Department's Merit Pay Distribution Plan, or will provide a rationale in any situations where it has deviated from the Plan.

III. Department Chair's Responsibilities

The Department Chair has the responsibility to determine merit increases and merit dollar distribution, subject to the revision by the Dean, and will be advised in this endeavor by the information and discussion provided by the Merit Review Committee. The Department Chair will also make his or her own independent assessment of the Merit Review Committee results in order to ensure that individual accomplishments in research, education, and service that might be unknown to Committee members will be properly reflected in the new salary recommendations.

Merit pay will be assigned in dollar increments rather than as a percentage of salary. The Department Chair will evaluate the salary structure of the Department annually and consult with the Dean to address salary compression or inequities that have developed in the Department. A portion of the money from the merit pool may be reserved for the Department Chair's discretionary use to address special salary considerations. The portion reserved will be determined by the Department Chair in consultation with the Committee, and should be between 0 and 33% of the merit pool.

Each faculty member will receive a letter from the Department Chair containing his or her new salary and the salary increase. The letter will identify in general terms the Merit Review Committee's evaluation of the faculty member and how this was used to assign the merit increase. The letter will inform the faculty member that she or he may request a meeting with the Department Chair to receive an explanation of the merit pay decision.

The Department Chair shall certify that she or he has followed the Department's Merit Pay Distribution Plan, or will provide a rationale to the Merit Review Committee in any situations where he or she has deviated from the Plan.

IV. Appeals process

Faculty members have the right to appeal the merit pay decision via a formal letter to the Department Chair. The appellant may meet with the Department Chair, who will then relay the Committee's discussions on that particular faculty member's case. The appellant may request a meeting with the Committee. If the faculty member is still not satisfied, he or she may write a letter to the Department Chair that will be included in the materials provided to the Committee the following year.

V. Modifications and Amendments

The Merit Pay Review Plan may be modified and amended as specified in the Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization.

**Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization
Bylaws 2A**

**Guidelines and Procedures for Professional Track Faculty
Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion**

25 August 2024

I. Preamble

This document supplements the University of Maryland Policy on Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty and the College of Mathematical and Natural Sciences Policy on Appointments, Evaluation, and Promotion. It shall not supersede College or University policies in force at the time of any action described in this document, although in some cases adds to the minimum requirements defined by those policies.

This plan was circulated and then discussed in a meeting of all Faculty Advisory Committee members (all PTK faculty of the second and third levels, all TTK faculty) of the Department of Astronomy on 15 April, 2019, with 21 members present. A vote was called to approve the plan with modifications discussed during the meeting. 21 votes were recorded, with 21 votes in favor of this plan, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining. This vote is a positive vote as defined by the [Department's Plan of Organization](#). Subsequent minor updates for clarification, and the addition of Appendix 2 providing guidelines for preparation of dossier section 7, were approved at the Faculty Advisory Committee meeting on 7 October 2019. The 21 members present voted as 20 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstaining. The Faculty Advisory Committee met via Zoom and approved minor changes and updates at its meeting on 9 November 2020. Of the 30 members present for discussion, 26 voted in favor, and none opposed (there was not a specific option to abstain). A subcommittee of the Faculty Advisory Committee proposed changes to add the Research Professor sequence to the titles in regular use. To satisfy timing constraints, the Department Chair approved the changes below as an interim working policy in consultation with the subcommittee and faculty. In accord with the Department's Plan of Organization, the department's second and third rank PTK and all TTK were invited to meet to discuss and vote on this document's current version on 20 September 2021. Of the 33 members present, 31 voted in favor, none were opposed, and 2 abstained in approving the changes. Administrative changes to Appendix I in January and March 2022 reflect Faculty Affairs' changes to the AEP research promotion package structure and corrections from the College. Administrative changes to Appendix 1 in August 2024 relate to guidance from the College, also some minor typographical reformatting.

II. Terminology and reference documents

Faculty

When not otherwise specified, faculty in this document refers to members of the Professional Track (PTK) faculty appointed in the Department of Astronomy. PTK faculty members directly or indirectly participate in one or more of the University's three primary missions: research, education, and service. Expectations for the amounts of independent work and support activities varies by appointment.

Reference documents

University of Maryland Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion (AEP) guidelines at:

https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/documents/UM_Guidelines_for_PTK_Appointments.pdf

College of Mathematical and Natural Sciences Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion (AEP) procedures at:

https://cmns.umd.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/research/cmns_ptk_policies_procedures_approved2.pdf

CMNS Research Faculty Criteria at:

<https://cmns.umd.edu/faculty-staff/chairs-handbook/>

under CMNS Research Faculty Criteria

University Policy and Procedures on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty II(1.00-A); includes definition of the University's educational mission:

<https://president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/II-100A.pdf>

Department policies for mentoring, appointment, evaluation, promotion, and related items:

<https://www.astro.umd.edu/resources/policies>

III. Departmental Procedures for Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion

University policy emphasizes a fundamental principle that: "Search, appointment, and promotion procedures shall be fair, unbiased, and impartial, and comply with institutional policies that are widely publicized and published in the Faculty Handbook." The following subsections indicate specific departmental procedures within that principle.

All new hires shall receive a copy of this policy, either in hardcopy or by link to this and related documents (e.g. mentoring) on the Department's Plan of Organization web page.

The following promotion and merit policy applies to Professional Track Faculty in the first through third ranks. Definitions of ranks, titles, and expectations for faculty are in Section V of this document. Details of required dossier elements are summarized in Appendix 1 of this doc-

ument. Faculty with appointments in more than one unit are subject to procedures negotiated by the units.

A. Appointment and promotion procedures

1. Appointment and promotion procedure for Research Scientists, Engineers, and Professors (all ranks) and Faculty Specialists (ranks two and three)

The procedures for these titles are identical except for the Departmental First Level Review Committees for the different ranks, as defined below.

In all cases: The Department Chair shall appoint an ad-hoc review Chair, and may appoint members, to an ad-hoc committee to manage each appointment or promotion case. Ad-hoc committee members must be at or above the rank of the proposed appointment. The ad-hoc review Chair is responsible for assembling the material required (generally called the AEP packet or dossier; see Appendix 1 for specific requirements) by the University and Department, submitting the materials to the department office by the deadlines given in Appendix 1, and shall be responsible for ensuring that the case is presented to committees for further discussion. Supplemental materials (e.g. late evaluator letters) may be included for consideration by the First Level Review committee with approval of the Department Chair. The ad-hoc review Chair presents the case to the First Level Review and chairs the discussion.

The First Level Review Committees are formed as follows:

- a) The Departmental First Level Review Subcommittee and its Chair for first rank Research Scientists, Engineers, and Professors shall be appointed annually by the Department Chair. This subcommittee shall review and anonymously vote on each case. The subcommittee forwards its vote totals and the subcommittee's brief written conclusions to the Department Chair, and shall be available for the Departmental First Level Review Committee's review and approval. The subcommittee or the Department Chair may request review of any case by the Departmental First Level Review Committee; the Departmental First Level Review Committee's assessment and vote (if held) is then separately added to the Subcommittee's.

This subcommittee shall be composed as follows. Approximately 20 Professional Track Faculty members shall be drawn in numbers proportional to the numbers holding each level of Research Professor, Scientist, or Engineer at or above the first rank, and Faculty Specialists above the first rank. At least 3 Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty shall be appointed for each meeting of the subcommittee. If there are no PTK faculty at or above the level considered for promotion, the Department Chair will request guidance from the Dean of Faculty Affairs. Other persons with professional stature at or above the appointment or promotion may occasionally be allowed to

attend First Level Review Subcommittee meetings with the permission of the Department Chair and First Level Review Chair, and have a voice but do not vote.

- b) The Departmental First Level Review Committee for appointments other than Lecturers consists of all active Professional and Tenured/Tenure Track faculty members at or above the level considered for appointment or promotion with appointments in the Department of Astronomy at 50% FTE and above. If there are no PTK faculty at or above the level considered for promotion, the Department Chair will request guidance from the College's Dean of Faculty Affairs.
- c) The Departmental First Level Review Committee for second and third rank appointments for Lecturers consists of all active Lecturers and Tenured/Tenure Track faculty members at or above the level considered for appointment or promotion. If there are no Lecturers at or above the level considered for promotion, the Department Chair will request guidance from the Dean of Faculty Affairs.

Each member of the First Level Review committee or subcommittee, including the review Chair, has a single vote. The Department Chair or a designee must attend First Level Review meetings and has a voice but does not vote. Individuals with Emerita or Emeritus titles are entitled to voice but not vote. Faculty with joint appointments in another department or joint appointments on another campus of the UMD System will be entitled to both voice and vote, provided their University appointment in the Department of Astronomy is greater than 0.5 FTE. Other persons with professional stature at or above the appointment or promotion may occasionally be invited to attend First Level Review Committee meetings with the permission of the Department Chair and First Level Review Chair, and have a voice but do not vote.

In all cases the quorum for a vote is greater than half of each committee's eligible voters. Committee members who cannot attend the meeting in person are strongly encouraged to participate in the meeting electronically, with votes communicated by individuals via email to a member of the administrative staff designated by the Department Chair. Members joining remotely must be able to participate in discussion to vote.

All voting shall be by secret ballot and only vote totals will be reported (the staff member receiving votes by email shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding voter names). Proxy voting and voting without attending the meeting are not allowed.

Establishing quorum for a vote requires that at least 1/2 of members qualified to vote must be present to participate in the committee discussion. The final vote for promotion will be considered positive if more than 1/2 of the total votes are in favor of the promotion and fewer than 1/3 of the votes are opposed.

As required by University procedures, the Department Chair will add a letter to the AEP packet containing her or his independent evaluation and any other information that may be germane. This letter is not shared with the First Level Review Committee. The case is then sent to the College Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs for further review. Second-level and subsequent reviews, as needed, follow College and University procedures.

Shortly after the First-Level Review is complete, the Department Chair shall notify each candidate by electronic mail of the vote totals, whether this constitutes a positive or negative recommendation, and what the next stages of review are. The Department Chair shall promptly notify each candidate by electronic mail of final approval or rejection by the higher-level reviews. If a case is rejected, the Department Chair shall provide written information on the case's weak areas and suggestions for subsequent submissions. When possible, a promotion carries a salary increase set by the College. A new contract reflecting the promotion should follow the general policy of progressively extending the contract term to the extent possible. A promotion, once given, may not be rescinded. Negative decisions do not preclude renewal of the existing appointment, and may be appealed by procedures specified by the Office of Faculty Affairs.

2. Appointment and promotion for Faculty Specialists (first rank), Lecturer (first rank), Faculty Assistant, and Postdoctoral Associate

A department member familiar with University, College, and Departmental equity rules proposes one or more candidates. The Department Chair makes the final determinations in extending an offer.

3. Appointment and promotion for Lecturers in the second and third ranks

A department member familiar with University, College, and Departmental equity rules proposes one or more candidates for appointment, or, in consultation with the Department Chair, a candidate for promotion.

4. Appointment to Visiting positions

A faculty sponsor proposes a candidate for Visiting positions. University policy limits the length of time of a visiting appointment, typically to three years except for J-1 visa holders, where the appointment may extend to the termination date of the visa. The Department Chair reviews the recommendation before appointment and makes final determinations in extending an offer. If the Department Chair is the sole faculty sponsor, the Chair is expected to consult with relevant faculty before making an appointment.

5. Appointment to other positions

The Department Chair shall consult University and College policies to establish the process for appointments and promotions for positions not listed above. If other titles become common, this document shall be updated to reflect this.

B. Confidentiality

All materials in the review process are strictly confidential and must be returned to the Department or destroyed following the First Level Review Committee meeting. Similarly, all preliminary information (including the names of applicants, except to approved external evaluators), discussions, committee decisions, or other search- or promotion-related information are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone outside of the committee, unless allowed by University policy or with Department Chair's permission.

C. Lack of Limitations

Nothing in these guidelines is intended to limit the sources from which relevant information may be sought, within the boundaries of maintaining confidentiality in the process. In particular, the Chair of the unit, the promotion/search committee, or the First Level Review committee may seek input and advice from appropriate sources in addition to the required sources. In conformity with University policies, additional sources shall only provide information that assists in making fair, unbiased, and impartial decisions on professional merit. The candidate may make requests to the Department Chair that specific individuals will be excluded as evaluators, providing relevant information so the Chair may make a reasoned decision.

IV. Elements in evaluating candidates for appointment and promotion

Performance evaluation at the University is concerned with the candidate's performance in three areas: research, education, and service. PTK faculty activities typically strongly emphasize a subset of these areas, either directly or by supporting the activities, although activity in other areas is recognized.

Each candidate shall provide a description of the division of responsibilities within these categories, as agreed by a supervisor or sponsor if appropriate. Evaluation will be based on progress in these areas, weighted by the division of responsibilities. Minimum expectations for individuals shall be summarized in the University's electronic contract system, and shall be updated at least as frequently as at each contract renewal or major change of responsibility. Evaluation is made against the documented responsibilities at levels appropriate to rank.

The fundamental criterion for appointment and promotion is the candidate's ability and promise to advance knowledge in the field or to communicate it, as appropriate to the position. Advances may be direct or indirect, as described below; in research, education, or service; and must increase appropriately with increasing seniority of rank. Sufficient evidence of professional development and promise for further advances sets a practical minimum time between promotions. Neither the University nor Department specifies a maximum time in rank, but the Department shall monitor progress and time in rank and urge its faculty to consult with mentors and apply for promotion when sufficient progress justifies advancement.

The following evaluation criteria are abstracted from University Policy II-100(A) in effect in 2017, along with additional considerations that the Department finds important:

- A. Research** evaluation centers on the impact of the candidate's ability to advance knowledge in the field. Research contributions fall in two broad categories:
1. Independent work typical of academic basic research. Past work and plans for the future are important indicators, and may be assessed by a variety of criteria such as the quality of the individual's publications, publication journal reputation, citations to refereed publications, assessment of the impact of the individual's research by external experts in the field, receipt of invitations to present invited reviews at national and international meetings, ability to obtain external funding for the research, and research plans. University policy states that "research of a classified or proprietary nature shall not be considered in weighing an individual's case for appointment or promotion."
 2. Directed activities emphasizing research support that advances the field. This work is generally supervised by a group or activity leader, with well-defined expectations for duties. Evaluation of directed activities is based strongly on how successfully the individual's work conforms to the specific requirements of the grant or program that has provided funding for the work. Directed activities involve specific elements of skilled work required by a grant or program. These often support research activities but do not directly involve academic research. Examples are data base creation and maintenance, computer programming or hardware maintenance tasks, data analysis or archiving, instrument calibration, and so on.
- B. Education** includes teaching and academic mentoring activities. Educational activities may include but are not limited to: directing undergraduate research, directing graduate student 2nd year projects, teaching University courses, curriculum development, advising graduate student Ph.D. dissertations, serving on dissertation committees, education research, mentoring junior faculty.

Research mentoring of students and postdocs is assessed by a description of the mentoring and corresponding mentee activities. Educational activities primarily for the benefit of students in University of Maryland College Park programs will be weighted more heavily than other activities. Educational public outreach will be considered a service contribution.

Teaching is assessed by means of a teaching portfolio. For Lecturers or Research Professors citing classroom teaching experience, the teaching portfolio contents must comply with College and University requirements and may include references to other materials submitted in conjunction with the assessment (e.g. AEP dossier sections) to reduce redundancy. Documentation in the Teaching Portfolio should parallel the TTK dossier elements, including teaching/mentoring, course syllabi, University student evaluations, peer evaluations of teaching, and a section on student advising as applicable. The emphasis should be on mentoring and courses taught since the previous evaluation.

For the Research Professor cases that do not cite classroom teaching, an education portfolio should include a 1-2 page educational narrative presenting a demonstrated history of contribution and plan for future contribution to the educational mission of the University. This should include a statement of teaching/mentoring philosophy and a description of any student research engagement. It may also summarize any professional development undertaken related to education. The narrative should identify the candidate's objectives as an educator and provide evidence how those objectives were achieved. If the candidate has involved students in research, co-advised students, or mentored students, there should be a listing of the students, dates, type of involvement and brief description of project or extent of mentoring. In cases where the candidate has co-advised Ph.D. thesis research, a 1-2 paragraph statement from a TTK co-advisor evaluating the candidate's advising ability should be included.

In all cases, portfolios may include additional information that the candidate or Department feels would be helpful in evaluating educational activities, including input from graduate students, particularly including students advised by the individual; information on the quantity and quality of graduate students who have completed theses under the direction of the individual; and evaluation of innovations introduced into the teaching program of the Department.

- C. Service** is evaluated by contributions to the University and the profession by activities within the University, to its community (the state and citizens of Maryland), and to the professional community both nationally and internationally. Peer mentoring activities within the Department carry considerable weight in evaluating service. The university requires that "Service activity shall not be expected or required of junior faculty to the point that it interferes with the development of their teaching and research."

V. Ranks, titles, and expectations for Professional Track Faculty

The specific faculty title shall correspond to the majority of the appointee's effort, as indicated in these assignments and expectations.

A. Research Scientists, Engineers, and Professors:

Appointment at or promotion to these ranks requires evidence of independent scholarly activity, which may include original research or substantial contributions to enabling research in the field. Service to the University is normally less than for the corresponding professorial ranks. Research Scientists, Engineers, and Professors at all ranks are expected to engage consistently in the broader academic life of the Department as appropriate, e.g., attending colloquia and seminars, participating in faculty meetings, and serving on relevant committees.

At all ranks, the Research Engineer track parallels the Research Scientist track, with the difference in designation indicating research emphasis alone.

The Department of Astronomy adopts functional designations of Assistant, Associate, and Principal for the first, second and third ranks.

At all ranks, the Research Professor track parallels the Research Scientist track, with the difference in designation indicating sustained commitment to the University's educational mission and engagement in activities that demonstrate this. The expectation for involvement in the educational mission is permanent with the title and becomes a component of the duties and responsibilities as evaluated in promotion and merit reviews.

Research Scientist, Engineer, and Professor titles have no specific classroom teaching requirements. For positions that do not include classroom teaching activities, the volume of research or programmatic support is expected to be larger than that for the corresponding tenured/tenure track ranks. A Research Professor may apply to change to the same rank Research Scientist or Engineer by request to the Department Chair without dossier or review. A table in the Research Scientist/Engineer/Professor dossier in Appendix 1 contains a summary of requirements for dossier elements required in transitions between title series.

Criteria for appointment and promotion beyond the general guidelines for research, education, and Service in Secs. IV-A, IV-B, and IV-C are:

1. Assistant Research Scientist, Engineer, or Professor (First rank): Demonstrated independence, creativity, and impact to the field. Candidates for this position generally have a Ph.D. or equivalent. Ability to direct the work of others such as technicians, students, or other research personnel. Anticipated contributions consistent with growth toward the Associate level shall be considered. Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable.
2. Associate Research Scientist, Engineer, or Professor (Second rank): Research accomplishments whose originality, depth and impact establish the candidate as an important contributor to knowledge in their field. Promotion to this rank shall typically first be considered 5 years after promotion to the Assistant level or equivalent. Anticipated contributions consistent with growth toward the Third rank shall be considered. Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable.
3. Research Scientist, Engineer, or Professor (Third rank): Record of research accomplishments that establish the candidate as an outstanding contributor to knowledge in their field. Promotion to this rank shall typically first be considered 5 years after promotion to the Associate level or equivalent. Appointments are typically made as five-year contracts. Appointments for additional five-year terms can be renewed as early as the third year of any given five-year contract.

B. Faculty Specialists

Faculty Specialist titles are typically appropriate for persons who are typically engaged in program work.

Criteria for appointment and promotion beyond the general guidelines for research, education, and Service in Secs. IV-A, IV-B, and IV-C are:

1. Faculty Specialist (First rank): At minimum, the appointee shall hold a Bachelor's degree in a relevant area, or have the equivalent experience in their specialty, as necessary to provide essential support for research, education, and/or the administration of programs in Astronomy. Faculty Specialists are expected to possess the skills necessary to make independent and meaningful contributions to the success of the programs they support. Appointments to this rank will typically be one to three years and will be renewable.
2. Senior Faculty Specialist (Second rank): The appointee shall show superior ability to support research, education, and/or the administration of programs in Astronomy, as evidenced by successfully discharging responsibilities such as those of the Faculty Specialist for at least three years or having the equivalent experience in an area relevant to their specialty. In addition, the appointee will have demonstrated increased independence, responsibilities, expertise, and/or innovation in their specialty (*e.g.*, through additional education, certifications, supervision, presentations, report generation, software development, and/or publications). Appointments to this rank will typically be one to five years and will be renewable.
3. Principal Faculty Specialist (Third rank): The appointee shall have a proven record of excellence in supporting research, education, and/or the administration of programs in Astronomy, as evidenced by successfully discharging responsibilities such as those of a Senior Faculty Specialist for at least five years or having equivalent experience in an area relevant to their specialty. In addition, the appointee will have demonstrated independence, responsibilities, expertise, and/or innovation in their specialty (*e.g.*, through additional education, certifications, supervision and mentoring, presentations, report generation, proposal efforts, visibility outside the group and/or publications). Appointments will typically be made as five-year contracts. Appointment for additional five-year terms may be renewed as early as the third year of any given five-year contract.

C. Lecturers

The Lecturer title is appropriate for persons primarily engaged in classroom teaching. Criteria for appointment and promotion beyond the general guidelines for research, education, and Service in Secs. IV-A, IV-B, and IV-C are:

1. Junior Lecturer: The title Junior Lecturer will be used to designate appointments of graduate students who are given a faculty appointment to teach. For administrative purpose this title is considered to be at the first rank. Appointments to this rank are typically for terms of up to one year and are renewable for up to six years.
2. Lecturer (First rank): The title Lecturer will be used to designate appointments of persons who are serving in a teaching capacity for a limited time or part-time, or who are full-time and at the entry-level of instruction in the field. The normal requirement is a Master's degree in astronomy or a related field, or equivalent professional experience such as extensive teaching or public outreach in a relevant discipline. The appointee will exhibit promise in the field of teaching, show evidence of a pedagogical, research, or creative agenda (which may include experience as a teaching or research assistant), and

have a record of scholarly achievement appropriate to the field. Reappointment at this rank requires demonstrated excellence in teaching (typically evaluated using course evaluations by students, evaluation of lectures by faculty, and innovations in the teaching program). Appointments to this rank are typically one to three years and are renewable.

3. Senior Lecturer (Second rank): In addition to having the qualifications of a Lecturer, the appointee shall have an exemplary teaching record over the course of at least five years of full-time instruction or its equivalent as a Lecturer (or similar appointment at another institution). This record may be demonstrated through some combination of classroom teaching (typically evaluated using course evaluations by students and evaluation of lectures by faculty), student advising, pedagogically related advising, curriculum development, or innovative pedagogical practices. The appointee shall also demonstrate a record of service and/or mentoring within the Department, the University, and/or the wider community. Appointments to this rank are typically one to five years and are renewable.
4. Principal Lecturer (Third rank): In addition to the qualifications required of the Senior Lecturer, appointees to this rank shall have an exemplary teaching record over the course of at least 5 years of full- time service or its equivalent as a Senior Lecturer (or similar appointment at another institution). The appointee shall also demonstrate a record of excellent service/mentoring within the Department, the University, and/or the wider community. The appointee shall have excellent pedagogical standing in the field, which may be demonstrated in many ways. These may include but are not limited to the following: making significant presentations at national conferences and conventions; placing articles in disciplinary or pedagogical journals; contributing to the production of textbooks or other innovative instructional materials; receiving invitations to serve as an expert in one's field or to make presentations at pedagogical workshops; or making significant, innovative contributions to the curriculum. Appointments to this rank are typically made as five year contracts. Appointments for additional five-year terms can be renewed as early as the third year of any given five-year contract.

D. Other titles

1. Faculty Assistant: The appointee shall be capable of assisting faculty in a relevant dimension of academic activity. At minimum, the appointee shall hold a Bachelor's degree in a relevant area, or have the equivalent experience necessary to carry out the duties. Appointments to this rank are typically for terms of one to three years. Appointments are renewable up to a total time in rank of three years. With concurrence of sponsoring faculty, Faculty Assistants are eligible for appointment to a ranked faculty position, such as Faculty Specialist, or appropriate staff position.
2. Post-Doctoral Associate: The appointee generally shall hold a doctorate in a field of specialization earned within five (5) years of initial appointment. An exception to the time from degree requirement must be approved by the Office of the Provost. The

appointee shall have training in research procedures, be capable of carrying out individual research or collaborating in group research at the advanced level, and have the experience and specialized training necessary for success in such research projects as may be undertaken. Appointments are typically for one to three years and are renewable, provided the maximum consecutive length of service in post-doctoral ranks at UMD shall not exceed six years. Exceptions may be approved by the Office of the Provost. This appointment cannot be held by any individual more than nine years post-Ph.D.

3. Use of other University titles is possible, after consultation with the department Chair, but is discouraged except in exceptional circumstances.

VI. Review and modification of departmental AEP Guidelines and Procedures

According to University policy, the criteria described in this document shall be reviewed periodically by the Department as deemed necessary, but no less frequently than once every five years. This review should include consideration of the unit's progress toward increasing the diversity of its faculty. This document must be updated as necessary to comply with changes in University and College policies. These guidelines and procedures may be modified or amended as described in the Plan of Organization for the Department of Astronomy, and shall include voting participation by members of the Professional Track Faculty. Discussion around the review, or at interim times as appropriate, shall include exchanges between department members on the First Level Review Committees and the Department Chair to ensure a common understanding of evaluation and promotion criteria.

Appendix 1: Timelines and elements for dossier submission

Submission deadlines of completed dossier elements listed below to the Department office are on the following dates by 5:00 PM:

- Promotions to third rank
 - October 1
- Promotions to second rank
 - October 1
 - April 10
- Promotion to first rank, other than Faculty Specialists
 - October 1
 - April 10

When a deadline falls on a date on which the University is closed, then the deadline shifts to the next day it is open. Submissions that are incomplete by the deadline shall be rescheduled for the deadline after their completion; any exceptions (e.g., missing letters, small delays in preparation of a dossier element) must be approved by the Department Chair.

These deadlines, along with the lead times specified below, will allow dossier preparation and circulation to the First Level Review committees in accordance with the Department's Plan of Organization.

IMPORTANT:

The Chair of the ad hoc AEP Committee shall review a [current Transmittal Form](#) (dossier cover page) from the Faculty Affairs website to ensure that necessary dossier elements are provided with appropriate section numbers, signatures, and signature dates. Guidance for contents is on the following pages.

Required materials for each title are (items with an *asterisk* must be signed and dated by candidate to verify the candidate's review) are on the following pages. The signatures may be collected in [this form](#). The Department office will add the [transmittal form](#), Chair's evaluation, and other items as needed, and will forward the completed package to the College.

Summary table of documentation elements for transitions among PTK titles (to be confirmed by College policy before dossier preparation)			
Current\Requested title	Lecturer	Research Scientist or Engineer	Research Professor
Lecturer		Research Portfolio	Research Portfolio
Research Scientist or Engineer	Educational Portfolio		Educational Portfolio
Research Professor	Educational Portfolio	Consult with Department Chair	

Research Scientist, Engineer, or Professor

- CV or resume*
 - Provided by the candidate to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline and shall be sent to the evaluators. An addendum may be provided as an update to the review committee Chair one week before the Departmental dossier submission deadline.
- Personal statement*
 - Provided by the candidate: 2-3 pages for appointment or promotion to first or second rank, 3-5 pages for appointment or promotion to third rank. The evaluation is based on all aspects of the candidate's professional work, weighted by the division of responsibilities. The personal statement should describe activities and results in approximately the same balance as the work assigned. This statement shall be communicated to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline and shall be sent to the evaluators.
- Unit promotion criteria*
 - From this document, by the review committee Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline. This document shall be included in material sent to the evaluators.
- Documentation of duties and responsibilities*
 - Provided by the candidate's supervisor in consultation with the review Chair, at least two weeks before the Departmental dossier submission deadline. In addition to listing current duties and responsibilities, the document should be forward-looking as well, preferably including duties and responsibilities that point to growth (and, if applicable, would lead to the next promotion step).
- Letter from the unit head assessing the research of the candidate
 - Provided by the Department Chair before the College submission deadline.
- Brief summary of the candidate's qualifications*
 - This shall be a dispassionate descriptive. It may refer to suitable material in other package sections provided by the candidate.
 - It should include metrics relevant to appointment or promotion: e.g. publications, grants, project leadership, programmatic duties, software or hardware produced, etc. The metrics shall be matched to the specific responsibilities of the position and to the appointment or promotion level.
 - This subsection should typically be one page for first and second ranks, and one to two pages for third rank.
- Report by the AEP Committee summarizing the candidate's credentials and providing rationale for the appointment.
 - Provided by the review Chair: in draft form at the Departmental dossier submission deadline, in final form by the College submission deadline. The candidate shall not see this material. See Appendix 3 for its structure.
- Letters assessing the research of the candidate, to be included in the Departmental dossier submission. Evaluators shall have professional standing at or above the promotion level. The Department Chair's office must approve the evaluator choice for

candidates at the second and third ranks; for candidates at the third rank, the Department shall consult with the Dean's office. All potential conflicts of interest shall be disclosed to the Chair at that time. Letters from collaborators are usual at the First rank. At the Second and Third ranks, some evaluation by collaborators that detail the individual's contributions to collaborative or programmatic efforts is encouraged after consultation with the Chair's office. Conflicts should be described in the qualifications of evaluators.

- Three letters, with writers chosen by the candidate, with at least one external to campus and to the candidate's local workgroup, for first-rank candidates.
- At least four letters, with at least one external to campus and to the candidate's local workgroup for second-rank candidates.
- Six to eight letters, with at least three external to campus and to the candidate's local workgroup, for third ranks. The candidate should suggest at least three evaluators, of which the review committee chair chooses three. The review committee chair selects the other evaluators. The evaluators names are not disclosed to the candidate.
- For the Research Professor, letters should assess both the research and educational contribution of the candidate where possible.

Letters declining to evaluate should not be included here, but should just be noted in the letter log.

- Letter log, qualifications of evaluators, sample request letter, reputations of publication outlets, and other supporting material specified in Faculty Affair's Transmittal Form. Provided by the review Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline.
- Educational or teaching portfolio, as applicable, provided by the candidate as a separate document; see Sec. IV.B.* In Research Professor cases the Educational portfolio shall be sent to external evaluators for comment. A separate TTK assessment of the candidate's academic advising ability is required when appropriate.

Additional departmental considerations for Research Professor titles:

There are three transition cases to consider for this title series:

1. For appointment with title change at the same rank of Research Scientist or Engineer title, the dossier is simplified to solely those components needed to evaluate the educational contribution. The dossier shall include the CV or resume, Unit promotion criteria, Documentation of Duties and Responsibilities, letter from unit head, and Educational Portfolio (described in Section IV). The research statement and assessment letters are not required and the letter from the unit head shall address the educational contribution. If the candidate's duties include educational components (e.g., teaching a class), they must be described in the Documentation of Duties and Responsibilities.
2. For appointment within rank from a teaching title, the educational contribution is assumed to have been met, and the dossier shall include all the elements for Research Scientist/Engineer (see above).
3. For new appointment or promotion to the title, the dossier shall include all the elements for Research Scientist/Engineer (see above) plus the Educational Portfolio.

Faculty Specialists (First rank):

- Supporting letter from the unit head providing rationale for appointment to this rank
 - Provided by Department Chair before submission to the College
- CV or resume (need not be in UMD format)*
 - Provided by candidate before consideration by Department Chair
- Brief description of duties and responsibilities*
 - Provided by supervisor before consideration by Department Chair
- Unit promotion criteria or link to information on the web*
 - From this document, provided by requestor before consideration by Department Chair

Senior Faculty Specialists, Principal Faculty Specialists (Second and Third ranks):

- CV or resume (need not be in UMD format)*
 - Provided by the candidate to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline, and shall be sent to the evaluators. An addendum may be provided as an update to the review committee Chair one week before the Departmental dossier submission deadline.
- Personal statement*
 - Provided by candidate: 1-2 pages. The personal statement should describe activities and results in approximately the same balance as the work assigned. This statement shall be communicated to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline and shall be sent to the evaluators.
- Unit promotion criteria*
 - From this document, provided by the review committee Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline.
- Brief description of duties and responsibilities*
 - Provided by supervisor in consultation with review Chair, at least two weeks before the Departmental dossier submission deadline. In addition to listing current duties and responsibilities, the document should be forward-looking as well, preferably including duties and responsibilities that point to growth (and, if applicable, would lead to the next promotion step).
- Supporting letter from the unit head
 - Provided by the Department Chair before the College submission deadline.
- Brief summary of the candidate's qualifications*
 - This shall be a dispassionate descriptive. It may refer to suitable material in other package sections provided by the candidate.
 - It should include metrics relevant to appointment or promotion: e.g. publications, grants, project leadership, programmatic duties, software or hardware produced, etc. The metrics shall be matched to the specific responsibilities of the position and to the appointment or promotion level.
 - This subsection should typically be one page for first and second ranks, and one to two pages for third rank.

- Report by the AEP Committee summarizing the candidate's credentials and providing rationale for the appointment.
 - Provided by the review committee Chair: in draft form at the Departmental dossier submission deadline, in final form by the College submission deadline. The candidate shall not see this material. See Appendix 3 for its structure.
- Evaluator letters, to be included in the Departmental dossier submission:
 - Two letters assessing the qualifications of the candidate, preferably at least one from an external evaluator. Candidates should propose evaluators, but the final choice is made by the review committee Chair and will be confidential. Evaluators shall have professional standing at or above the promotion level.
- Letter log, qualifications of evaluators, sample request letter, reputations of publication outlets, and other supporting material specified in the routing form
 - Provided by the review Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline.

Senior Lecturers, Principal Lecturers:

- CV*
 - Provided by the candidate to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline, and shall be sent to the evaluators. An addendum may be provided as an update to the review committee Chair one week before the Departmental dossier submission.
- Personal statement*
 - Provided by candidate: 1-2 pages. This statement shall be communicated to the review committee Chair two months before the Departmental dossier submission deadline and shall be sent to the evaluators.
- Unit promotion criteria*
 - From this document, by the review committee Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline.
- Description of duties and responsibilities*
 - Provided by Department or review Chair, at least two weeks before the Departmental dossier submission deadline. In addition to listing current duties and responsibilities, the document should be forward-looking as well, preferably including duties and responsibilities that point to growth (and, if applicable, would lead to the next promotion step).
- Letter from the unit head
 - Provided by the Department Chair before the College submission deadline.
- Brief summary of the candidate's qualifications*
 - This shall be a dispassionate descriptive. It may refer to suitable material in other package sections provided by the candidate.
 - It should include metrics relevant to appointment or promotion: e.g. publications, grants, project leadership, programmatic duties, software or hardware produced, etc. The metrics shall be matched to the specific responsibilities of the position and to the appointment or promotion level.
 - This subsection should typically be one page for first and second ranks, and one to two pages for third rank.

- Report by an AEP Committee summarizing the candidate's credentials and providing rationale for the appointment.
 - Provided by the review Chair: in draft form at the Departmental dossier submission deadline, in final form by the College submission deadline. The candidate shall not see this material. See Appendix 3 for its structure.
- Evaluation
 - At least two letters from teaching faculty at or above the level of promotion assessing the instructional abilities of the candidate. Evaluators shall have professional standing at or above the promotion level; at least one letter must be from TTK in the Department. The review committee Chair solicits letters from the teaching faculty evaluators.
- Summary of student teaching evaluations*
 - Provided by Department and review Chair, to be included in the Departmental dossier submission.
- Peer teaching evaluations*
 - Provided by Department and review Chair, to be included in the Departmental dossier submission.
- Teaching portfolio, which is uploaded as a separate PDF document
 - Provided by candidate, at least two weeks before Departmental dossier submission
- Letter log, qualifications of evaluators, sample request letter, reputations of publication outlets, and other supporting material specified in the routing form
 - Provided by the review Chair by the Departmental dossier submission deadline.

Appendix 2: Preparation guidelines for dossier Section 14 (Department Committee Report)

Purpose of Section 14: To provide a summary of the departmental AEP committee's findings that motivate the committee's recommendation for or against appointment or promotion. Especially at the first and second ranks, this is not an exercise in producing bulk; the focus should be on an economical description of why the appointment or promotion is warranted. References to material elsewhere in the package are encouraged, but repeating material elsewhere in the package should be avoided.

Structure of Section 14:

Preamble: Summary paragraph including:

- Names of the ad hoc committee members who prepared the section.
- Date of meeting.
- Committee vote (yes, no, abstain) and quorum requirement.
- Whether the vote is positive or negative in favor of the appointment.

Sec 14a: The ad hoc subcommittee's evaluation of the candidate's case. This includes:

- Motivation for the appointment or promotion.
- Reference to departmental AEP requirements for appointment or promotion to that level, as it matches the candidate's activities.
- Assessment of candidate's progress against departmental requirements and suitable metrics for the position.
- Synthesis of top-level conclusions – but not quotes – from the evaluation letters. Evaluations of evaluator context, letters, letter writers.
- This subsection should typically be one to two pages, emphasizing information for non-specialists, for first and second ranks, and two to three pages for third rank.

Sec. 14b: Brief summaries of important discussion points from the AEP committee discussion, including:

- Relevant additional information from the Committee, including the sense of affirmations or objections from committee members.
- Resolution of any debates over progress assessment.
- Other information that will help higher-level reviews accurately assess the case.

Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization
Appendix 2B

**Merit Pay Distribution Plan for
Professional-Track Faculty**

27 February 2023

I. Preamble

In compliance with the University of Maryland Policy on Faculty Merit Pay Distribution¹, as amended in September 2017, this document provides a merit pay distribution plan for professional-track (PTK) faculty in the Department of Astronomy (the Department).

This plan was circulated and then discussed in a meeting of the faculty of the Department of Astronomy on 28 February 2022, with 43 members present. A number of changes were discussed with a revised draft circulated before a meeting on 14 March 2022 with 31 faculty present. Following University Senate procedure, the faculty voted on the plan, which was approved unanimously. This vote is a positive vote as defined by the Department's Plan of Organization. An amendment to add PI review to the process was circulated two weeks before a faculty meeting on 27 February 2023. The change was discussed at the meeting, followed by a vote with 42 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining. By this vote the amendment was accepted.

II. Merit Review Committee activities

1. Purpose of committee

The Merit Review Committee (the Committee) is tasked with meeting every year, reviewing their peers' activities and accomplishments for previous years (as defined in Section II.7) with an emphasis on the most recent year. The Committee will produce a categorized list and, for each faculty member, a summary statement noting any strength(s) and weakness(es) that played a part in the evaluation. The Committee is advisory and reports to the Department Chair.

2. PTK faculty to be reviewed

PTK faculty subject to this plan are faculty with titles such as Faculty Specialists and Research Scientists/Engineers/Professors at all ranks and who spend at least 50% of their time in the Department of Astronomy.

In years with merit pay, the university may place additional guidelines on who is or is not eligible for merit pay. However, the committee should evaluate all members to provide summary statements for evaluation letters from the Chair.

Those not covered by this plan are:

- Lecturers, who will be reviewed with the TTK following the *Appendix 1B: Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty*.
- Postdoctoral Associates (Postdocs), Faculty Assistants (FAs), and faculty with "Visiting"

¹ UMD Policy VII-4.00(A), which is referred to as "University policy" in the current document.

modifying their title, who will be evaluated by their supervisors.

3. Composition and selection of committee

Committee members will be elected by and from the PTK faculty being reviewed (as defined in Section II.2), and should be ≥ 0.5 FTE in the Department of Astronomy at the time of election. Elections are called by the Department and should be held near the beginning of the spring term. A quorum of more than 50% of these faculty is needed to elect the Committee members. The Committee shall consist of five members, each of whom serves for three years (followed by a minimum seven years off). The Committee shall select a chair from within the voting members to lead the discussions.

4. Committee member succession

To propagate experience from one year to the next, committee members will serve staggered terms, with either one or two members rotating off each year, to be replaced by new members elected as described in Section II.3. The initial Committee will be elected and then there will be a random drawing amongst the committee to determine the initial service length of each member. In subsequent years, one or two members will rotate off with one or two new members to be elected for a 3 year term. If a member is unable to continue serving their term (e.g., leaving the Department) they are replaced during the next election, with the replacement starting a new three-year term. If the absence occurs between the election and the meeting, then the Committee may need to meet with a quorum of four elected members. If circumstances arise in which a quorum of at least four elected members cannot be assembled or term overlap is disrupted to the point where year-to-year carryover is problematic, the Committee, in discussion with the Department Chair, will determine how to resolve the issue.

5. Meeting

At least one meeting shall occur during the Spring semester of each academic year for the purpose of evaluating and characterizing the merit (as outlined in Section II.7) for each PTK faculty member, regardless of whether merit pay is anticipated that year. The meeting(s) will be held in a timely fashion after the deadline for submission of the professional activities report. The meeting(s) shall consist of a quorum of at least four elected members of the Committee. The Department Chair and the Department's senior administrator for faculty affairs shall meet with the Committee members to discuss the evaluations.

6. Supporting documents

Documents may be submitted using electronic forms. The following materials, gathered by the Department from appropriate sources and provided to the Committee, will be required for evaluation for merit pay:

- a. The professional activities report, which may include the optional personal statement(s), submitted through the University's official self-reporting system (e.g. *Faculty Success*);
- b. Statement of work (SOW).

For supervised faculty, a brief evaluation from the supervisor(s), also obtained by the Department, is recommended.

Professional activity reports are expected to be submitted by faculty members and should include all professional activities, accomplishments, any teaching or mentoring, as well as an optional personal statement. The personal statement is an opportunity to describe a

member's work activities as compared to the expectations expressed in the SOW that may not be captured in the activity report. These statements should be concise, typically 1-2 pages and no more than 3 pages. It is the responsibility of faculty members to update, maintain, and submit their activities in a timely manner. After the annual deadline, a collection of the activity report submissions for the time period to be considered by the Committee is then provided by the Department to the Committee. In very rare instances when a PTK member is not able to submit an official report (e.g., hospitalization), an alternative brief statement may be provided through the Department, at the discretion of the Department Chair.

The statement of work (SOW), submitted by the supervisor(s) through the Department, for each member describes the responsibilities, activities, and scope of work of that faculty member, relevant for the evaluation period. The SOW should be reviewed regularly by the member and their supervisor(s). Faculty who are self-funded and have no clear supervisor should submit their SOW through the Department.

A brief evaluation, submitted by the supervisor(s) through the Department, is recommended to provide the Committee with their perspective as well as to help ensure that the Committee has a complete view of accomplishments that may not have been captured by the University's official self-reporting system. A statement of no more than 1-2 paragraphs is sufficient. For the purpose of this policy, a supervisor is a University employee who administers at least partial financial support for the PTK faculty member. In the case of PTK faculty members supported by Cooperative Agreements, the Principal Investigator (PI) of the Cooperative Agreement will determine the supervisor(s). PTK faculty members often raise a significant portion of their own support as grant PIs (or Institutional PIs) and/or have multiple supervisors. Evaluations from those supervisors providing at least 30% of the PTK faculty member's support are encouraged. For faculty who are self-funded and have no clear supervisor, accomplishments should be well-captured in the personal statement portion of the activity report and supervisor evaluations are not necessary. Lack of a supervisor evaluation shall not negatively impact the Committee's characterization of a PTK faculty member's performance.

7. Evaluation criteria

The Department of Astronomy Plan of Organization Bylaws 2A establishes general criteria for performance at the different levels for PTK faculty, and further expectations based on the rank and title. The performance criteria are centered on three general categories: research, education, and service. Because the responsibilities of PTK faculty are diverse, these categories are not necessarily equally represented in a faculty member's activities. Therefore, the SOW, which provides a more specific description of duties beyond the general guidelines, is an important reference for evaluating performance.

The Committee shall evaluate the professional activities and achievements of each PTK faculty member relative to the - evaluation criteria and expectations based on the rank and title; and the responsibilities as summarized in the SOW. However, given the number of faculty under review, the Committee may divide the workload by having each committee member read and evaluate overlapping subsets of PTK faculty members. Evaluations should be based solely on the materials listed in Section II.6. A helpful characterization of performance may be the following categories: 'outstanding', 'exceeds expectations', 'meets expectations', 'below expectations', and 'weak'. After such characterization, further differentiation among the relative performance of PTK faculty members may become clear. The Committee shall then collate and refine the categorizations. In the end, the Committee shall categorize the

performance of each PTK faculty member relative to that of other members and write a brief (e.g., 1-2 sentences) summary statement for each faculty member that may be used in the evaluation letter from the Department Chair.

Committee members shall not be involved in the evaluation of their own activities. They shall leave the meeting room during discussion of their own evaluations.

The evaluation period will be the previous three years with an emphasis on the most recent year. The Committee may need to consider additional years beyond the three years, based on University policy (e.g., VII-4.00(A) Sections D.1.b. and E.2.b.) and on guidance from the University concerning the current merit pay distribution.

8. Reports Generated and Retention of Records

The Committee will produce an electronic report with:

- A list of members sorted into categories; and
- A short summary statement for each member to be used by the Department for feedback to members.

The report will be kept by the Department for reference.

9. Confidentiality

The Committee shall hold evaluations, discussions, and any related material(s) in strict confidence and shall not share outside of the Committee. Committee members shall delete or destroy all material when it is no longer necessary for evaluations.

10. Certification

The Committee shall certify to the Department Chair that they have followed the procedures outlined in the Department's Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Professional-Track Faculty, or will provide a rationale in any situations where they have deviated from the Plan.

11. Promotion Consideration

The merit committee should also identify faculty members who should be considered for promotion and bring them to the attention of their supervisor(s) and the Department Chair.

12. Summary

Who is being reviewed?	Who can serve on the committee?	Input documents	Output documents
● Faculty Specialists ● Research Scientists/Engineers/Professors	● Faculty Specialists ● Research Scientists/Engineers/Professors ● ≥0.5 FTE at start of service	● Professional Activity report ● SOW ● Supervisor's evaluation (recommended) ● Committee report(s) from prior year(s)	● Sorted list ● Brief summary statements

Lecturers, faculty with "Visiting" in their title, Postdocs, FAs are not reviewed under this plan.

The following is an outline of events relevant for the merit review process:

- Elections in early Spring semester
- Professional Activity Reports typically due mid-March
- Department provides documents to Committee
- Committee meets and deliberates
- Committee submits report to Department Chair
- In merit years, Department Chair finalizes merit distribution
- Evaluation Letters sent to PTK faculty

III. Department Chair's Responsibilities

The Department Chair has the responsibility to determine merit pay increases and merit dollar distribution, subject to revision by the Dean, and will be advised in this endeavor by the information and discussion provided by the Merit Review Committee. The Department Chair and Department's senior administrator for faculty affairs are strongly encouraged to attend the Merit Review Committee meetings. The Department Chair will also make their own independent assessment of the Merit Review Committee results in order to ensure that individual accomplishments in research, education, and service that might be unknown to Committee members will be properly reflected in the new salary recommendations. The Department Chair should have a record of justifications for deviating from the Committee's recommendations, in case there are appeals.

The Department Chair shall provide the Department with information on available sources of funds for merit increases during the merit review process each year. Merit pay will be assigned in dollar increments rather than as a percentage of salary. Annually, the Department Chair will evaluate the salary structure to identify retention, salary compression, or inequities that have developed in the Department. In consultation with the Dean and other relevant persons (Grant and Cooperative Agreement PIs), the Department Chair will address these issues by reserving a fraction of the salary pool. That fraction of the PTK salary pool reserved will typically be, and shall not exceed, the fraction of the TTK pool reserved by the Dean and Provost for similar purposes. On request to the Department Chair or designated representative, Principal Investigators (PIs) of grants, cooperative agreements, and other funding sources shall have the opportunity to review the proposed salaries for department members funded by more than 50% of their funded effort from all sources where the PIs have responsibility. The Department Chair shall consider recommendations from the PIs and the Merit Committee in their final recommendations to the Dean. In accordance with University policy, the Department Chair shall report their final salary recommendations back to the Merit Pay Committee.

Each faculty member will receive a letter from the Department Chair containing their new salary and salary increase; a brief evaluation of the faculty member by the Department Chair and Merit Review Committee; and information about the appeals process. The "brief evaluation" may be the summary statement produced by the Committee for their report.

Each year the Department shall call for elections to fill vacancies in the Merit Review Committee (as outlined in Sections II.3 and II.4). Additionally, each year the Department Chair shall review the makeup of the Merit Review Committee over the previous five years to assure that a reasonable representation, based on the gender and racial distribution and the various scholarly interests of the Department, has been achieved and if it has not, the Chair shall encourage faculty members to more carefully consider diversity in their committee choices.

The Department Chair shall certify to the Dean that they have followed the procedures outlined in the

Department's Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Professional-Track Faculty, or will provide a rationale to the Dean in any situations where they have deviated from the Plan.

IV. Appeals process

Faculty members have the right to appeal the merit pay decision via a formal letter to the Department Chair. The appellant may meet with the Department Chair or the Department's senior administrator for faculty affairs, who will then relay the Committee's discussions on that particular faculty member's case. If the faculty member is still not satisfied, they may write a letter to the Department Chair that will be included in the materials provided to the Committee the following year. In addition, the faculty member may consult with the University Ombudsman.

V. Modifications and Amendments

The Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Professional Track Faculty may be modified and amended as specified in the Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization or as required by University policy.