

# FACULTY HANDBOOK

*Section 2 of 4: Policies and Procedures Specific to Faculty*  
*Effective July 2023*

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**In order to promote the health and welfare of all persons in the Blackburn College community and to protect College assets, the administration is committed to a policy of promoting safe working conditions on the campus. Everyone in the College community should share this commitment; it is expected that everyone will continue to work toward providing a safe working environment and promoting safe working practices in all departments.**

## **2.1 Faculty Organization and Regulation**

### **2.1.1 Duties of the Faculty**

The duties of the faculty shall be to instruct students of the College in the arts and sciences and in other branches of liberal education, according to accepted standards and procedures; to regulate the course of studies, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees; to recommend to the Board of Trustees at the meeting of the Board preceding the December and May graduation dates those students who have completed the courses of study prescribed by the faculty and who in other respects are deemed worthy by the faculty to receive certificates or degrees from Blackburn College appropriate to the students' attainments; and, under the leadership of the President, to perform other functions which shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Recommendations for consideration by the President and the Board of Trustees on academic standards and policy for admission, advancement, and graduation of students;
- Recommendations for consideration by the President and the Board of Trustees on policies concerning faculty employment, promotion, tenure, salary increases, leaves of absences (including sabbatical leaves), and grants for faculty travel or research;
- Formulation of general regulations obligatory upon themselves, provided such regulations are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees;
- Formulation of policies and regulations for intercollegiate activities, provided such regulations are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees;
- Recommendations for consideration by the Board of Trustees of persons deemed worthy to receive honorary degrees;
- Recommendations for consideration by the President and the Board of Trustees of measures requisite or useful for the effectual discharge of the functions of the Faculty and for the advancement of the academic life and general welfare of Blackburn College, including periodic assessment of the academic program;
- Academic advising, as assigned.

When cases may arise not expressly provided for in the Bylaws, the Faculty Assembly is authorized to adopt such additional regulations, not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, as are deemed necessary for the good order of the College, and those regulations, when announced, shall be binding on themselves and on students as fully as the published regulations.

### **2.1.2 Operations of the Faculty Assembly**

#### **2.1.2.2 Membership**

The membership of the Faculty Assembly shall consist of all faculty who teach at least 6 hours per semester or 12 hours per year. All members are expected to attend regularly.

#### **2.1.2.3 Voting Rights**

All members shall vote on all matters.

#### **2.1.2.4 Procedures**

All matters shall be decided by a quorum of the faculty. A quorum shall consist of the majority of the total membership of the Faculty Assembly, not including those on sabbatical or other leaves of absence. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with established parliamentary procedures, with Robert's Rules of Order as a model.

For Faculty Assembly meetings, any member of the Assembly may request a secret ballot on a formal vote. If a member would like to make their request for a secret ballot anonymous, they must do so at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. "Secret" means that no member of the body is aware of the vote of any other specific member and no record of the vote will be recorded beyond overall vote totals. The specific methods for anonymously requesting and carrying out the secret ballot will be determined by Assembly leadership.

Courses approved by CAP shall not be considered approved by the faculty until after CAP has reported their recommendations for approval at the Faculty Assembly meeting, which is subsequent to CAP's discussion and approval.

Any motion receiving a majority vote is sent to the President as a recommendation of the Faculty Assembly, except for curricular issues, which, as required by policy, shall go to the Board of Trustees through the Office of the President with comment by the President.

*Updated 11-2022*

#### **2.1.2.5 Chair and Vice Chair of Faculty Assembly**

The Chair and the Vice Chair of the Faculty Assembly shall be members of the faculty elected annually by the Faculty Assembly at the last regular meeting of the academic year. The terms of office shall begin immediately following the meeting at which the election takes place. The Provost is excluded from election to these offices. The Chair of the Faculty Assembly shall not serve more than three successive years in office. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in their duties. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside, and in the latter's absence, the Provost. A vacancy in the position of the Chair or Vice Chair shall be filled through election by the Faculty Assembly at the first meeting following the declaration of a vacancy.

#### **2.1.2.6 Meeting Schedule**

Faculty Assembly will meet on the third Thursday of each month and on the Friday preceding the beginning of fall classes. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by 20% of the members of the Faculty Assembly. Meetings of the Faculty Assembly are open to the College community. Meetings can be closed by a vote of 25% of the Faculty Assembly members present. The vote to close the meeting will be taken upon any request of any member of the Faculty Assembly.

#### **2.1.2.7 Faculty Assembly Agenda**

The Chair, in consultation with the Vice Chair, shall set the agenda. The agenda should reflect major issues and concerns of the faculty, including any appropriate item(s) from the President, the Provost, and/or 20% of the membership of the Faculty Assembly. Agendas are distributed among the entire faculty as described below.

On the Monday of the week before the Faculty Assembly meeting, the Chair shall solicit items and announcements for the agenda from the College community. Announcements may be brought by individuals or committees and generally should be brief. Faculty committees or other groups should submit items for action no later than the Friday before the meeting with a written description of the proposal to be acted on by the Assembly and a rationale for advocating its approval. These proposals, the meeting agenda, the CAP Committee minutes, and the previous Faculty Assembly minutes will be distributed to the Faculty Assembly members no later than Monday before the meeting.

The Office of the Provost will be secretary and custodian of all official records for the Faculty Assembly, including the taking and storage of meeting minutes. A copy of the official records will also be kept in the minute records stored in the President's Office.

#### **2.1.2.8 Review and Revision of the Faculty Section of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks**

Changes to the Faculty Section of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks are the responsibility of Faculty Assembly and shall be made annually pursuant to official actions that modify existing policy and procedure. Proposals for changes to the Faculty Section may originate in any faculty committee or any body having responsibility for areas of campus life covered by the Faculty Section. The normal path these proposals should take is as follows: When a proposal is developed, committee representatives take this proposal to their respective divisions for preliminary discussion. On the basis of these discussions, the proposal is put into final form, including a date of implementation, reviewed by the Faculty Assembly for inconsistencies and then presented to the Faculty Assembly for reconciliation. Approved proposals are forwarded to the President and, if necessary, to the Board of Trustees by the Chair of the Faculty Assembly. The President will notify the Faculty Assembly as to the acceptance, denial, or referral to the Board. Such changes shall become effective at the time of the official action. The Faculty Assembly must approve proposed changes no later than the April meeting. Changes initiated by the Board of Trustees or the Administrative Officers shall be discussed with the Faculty Assembly prior to a final decision. The Chair of Faculty Assembly, the Provost, and the division chairs shall be consulted when the College is not in session.

All proposed revisions to the Faculty Section of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks are to be sent to the Office of Human Resources, which office will keep track of and make needed revisions and maintain historical handbook files.

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#### **2.1.2.9 Selection of the Student Marshal**

Each fall, the faculty elects the Student Marshal from among members of the senior class; this is the highest honor that the faculty can bestow on a graduating senior, and it recognizes the recipient as being outstanding in all areas of campus life. The requirements for being selected and maintaining the position of Student Marshal are set forth below.

##### *Prerequisites for Selection of Student Marshal*

- Senior status (at least 90 hours completed);
- Have earned a minimum grade point average of 3.3;
- In good standing in the academic, work and social programs; and has never been reported for academic cheating;
- Have provided a positive contribution to the campus through participation in at least three significant activities and support of the community life;
- Have displayed exemplary performance in the Work Program, if a resident student, or comparable experience if a commuter student.

##### *Requirements for Maintenance of Honor*

- Remain a full-time student at the Blackburn campus for the fall and spring semesters during the year of service as Student Marshal (resident or commuter). In the event the Student Marshal is not enrolled in the spring semester or is participating in an off-campus program, the runner up shall become Student Marshal and assume all rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the office. Both Marshals shall lead their class at

graduation. Because the fall Marshal is tapped in a public ceremony, the spring Marshal will perform the tapping ritual the next year;

- Maintain good standing in the academic, work, and social programs, including no report of academic cheating;
- Maintain significant campus involvement.

#### *Duties of the Student Marshal*

- Serve on the Student Status Committee and other appointments made by the President of the College;
- Address the campus community at a fall convocation (the Freshman Convocation, for instance);
- Present an address at the Honors Banquet;
- Lead the graduating class, with the Senior Class President, at Baccalaureate and Commencement;
- March in formal processions of the College.

#### **2.1.2.10 Honorary Posthumous Degree/Recognition**

Upon written recommendation of a faculty, staff, or administration member of Blackburn College sent to the Office of the Provost, the Faculty Assembly may recommend the conferral of an honorary posthumous degree for a student who meets the following requirements. Input from the student's family should be sought and honored, as appropriate and/or possible. This recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

#### *Requirements for Honorary Posthumous Degree*

- The student must have attained senior status (90 or more earned hours) at the time of death and have completed a minimum of two semesters as a Blackburn-enrolled student;
- The student must be enrolled and pursuing a bachelor's degree at Blackburn College at the time of death;
- The student must be in good academic, social, and work standing at the College at the time of death and have met the cumulative minimums for major and minor grade point averages for the degree.

If the student meets these requirements and is recommended by the Faculty and Board of Trustees of Blackburn College, the honorary degree will be awarded. The transcript will reflect that the degree was awarded posthumously, and the student's name will be listed in the Commencement program. The family will decide if the name will be read during the Commencement Ceremony and if the degree is to be conferred during the ceremony or in a private ceremony at a later date.

In the event a student has not reached these criteria, a certificate of achievement may be presented to the student's family as recommended by the same process.

#### **2.1.2.11 Honorary Degree Criteria**

These criteria apply to Honorary Degrees proposed by those other than the Board of Trustees.

##### **2.1.2.11.1 Purpose**

Honorary degrees pay tribute to worthy individuals and at the same time enhance the College by such action. The degree is not equivalent to, or a replacement for, an earned degree.

Honorary degrees serve a dual purpose. They both recognize people of high achievement and celebrate values that we profess as an institution of higher learning. They are a way of telling the larger public that certain people and accomplishments are important.

An honorary degree is the highest accolade the College can bestow on an individual who is not currently employed with the College. It is given to honor an individual who possesses outstanding qualities and talents; who has made exceptional contributions to the field of their endeavor; and who exemplifies the highest standards of personal integrity, civic responsibility, and service to humanity.

#### **2.1.2.11.2 Eligibility/Criteria**

Substantial evidence must be presented of outstanding achievement and significant contributions to cultural, educational, scientific, economic, social, humanitarian, or other worthy fields of endeavor. Careful distinction must be made between the extraordinary efforts of individuals who have performed beyond the call of duty in service to humankind, in contrast to fulfilling normal expectations in service, employment, or professional requirements, including longevity.

The recipient must be present at the convocation at which the degree is conferred.  
Honorary degrees may not be awarded to the following:

- Current faculty members, staff, or administrators of Blackburn College;
- Former faculty, staff, or administrators of Blackburn College (except in unusual cases).
- Members of the community with a current pecuniary interest in the College.

Potential recipients can include persons with nationwide and worldwide recognition as well as those who have not been widely recognized and decorated.

Recipients may well be persons who have contributed to Blackburn College in extraordinary ways and whom the College wishes to honor with this highest accolade the College can bestow. However, nominees for honorary degrees must fulfill all the criteria mentioned in this document regardless of their particular contributions to Blackburn College.

Nominees must have demonstrated qualities of mind and spirit and humane values that are consistent with the aims of higher education, and with the highest ideals of the persons' chosen fields.

#### **2.1.2.11.3 Nominations**

Nominations shall be submitted each semester to the Faculty Assembly, whose recommendation will be presented, for approval, to the Faculty Assembly, to the President of the College, and then the Board of Trustees.

Nominations shall be solicited from the faculty, staff, individual and individual members of the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Board, and the senior class. Nominations from other sources will also be accepted.

Nominations shall be made in writing in accordance with application guidelines and in strict confidentiality.

A member of Faculty Assembly who has nominated a candidate for the award of an honorary degree shall not take part in the deliberations nor in the decision of the Assembly on the candidate so nominated.

A person nominated for the award of an honorary degree shall not be consulted beforehand and any resolution will be in the form of an offer of the award.

#### 2.1.2.11.4 Nomination Application

A letter of nomination shall include reasons as to why the person should receive an honorary degree from Blackburn College. The letter may also include supporting opinions and suggestions as to persons appropriate to be consulted in relation to the proposal.

Nominations should be accompanied by the following supporting information, including all pertinent dates:

- Full name of nominee for award;
- Date of birth;
- Degrees received and granting institutions, if applicable;
- Appointments with educational institutions, if applicable;
- Relevant career history or experience relevant to the nomination;
- Significant honors, achievements, contributions;
- Societies, associations for which a nominee holds membership, if applicable;
- Career summary.

### 2.1.3 Organization of Divisions and Departments

#### 2.1.3.1 Faculty of College

The faculty of the College is organized into departments of instruction and the departments are organized into three divisions. The departmental and divisional organization is as follows:

#### Division of Humanities

Art  
English & Communications  
Modern Languages  
Music & Theatre  
Philosophy & Religion

#### Division of Natural Sciences

Biology  
Chemistry  
Mathematics & Computer  
Science  
Physical Education

#### Division of Social Sciences

Business Administration &  
Economics  
Education  
History  
Leadership, Law, and Public  
Service  
Psychology

#### 2.1.3.2 Division Chairs

Division chairs are elected by division members in accordance with the following stipulations:

- When a division chair's term is expiring, all members of that division shall be given the opportunity to nominate candidates for division chair at the last division meeting of the academic year. Elections will be held by secret ballot after all candidates who have accepted the nomination have left the meeting space. The candidate with a majority of the vote will be named division chair.
- In the event of a tie, each candidate will be given the opportunity to concede. If neither concedes, both candidates will leave the meeting space. The remaining members of the division will then deliberate about the fitness of each candidate for the position. They will then revote by secret ballot. This process will continue until one candidate concedes or receives the majority of the vote.
- In the event of only one person accepting nomination, no election will be needed, and the nominee will be named division chair by acclamation.
- Newly elected division chairs will begin their service at the first Faculty Assembly meeting of the fall semester, except in the case that an outgoing division chair is retiring or otherwise leaving the college, in which case they will begin their service on the outgoing chair's official departure date.
- Whenever possible, the person selected shall be a tenured member of the faculty; and, when circumstances render this impossible, a nontenured person who is acceptable to the members of the division shall be nominated as acting chair for a one-year term, or until such time as a tenured chair may

be selected.

- Chairs serve for a three-year term and may be appointed for a second three-year term for a maximum of six years of consecutive tenure. The division chair coordinates academic affairs for the various departments in the division by:
    - Reviewing proposed semester class schedules;
    - Presiding over monthly meetings of the division faculty, guiding formulation of new academic policy and curricular changes for recommendation to the CAP committee and/or the Faculty Assembly;
    - Consulting with departmental faculty on proposed curricular changes in their respective areas and serving as one of the divisional representatives to CAP;
    - Reviewing proposed departmental budgets and serving on the Planning and Budget Committee.
- The division chair participates in the search for new full-time faculty members in the division, makes recommendations to the Provost regarding the initial appointments of division faculty, and subsequently evaluates them and makes recommendations for reappointment, including appointment to tenure. In the case of scheduling conflicts or problems, the division chairs consult together and, with contributions from the Provost, resolve the issues. The division chair also provides guidance and assistance to the faculty for improvement of their teaching, scholarship, and service to ensure that high academic standards and sound procedures prevail within their division.

### **2.1.3.3 Division Meetings**

Regular division meetings will be held on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. Agendas shall be set by the division chair but should include reports from members of standing committees and discussion of matters requiring action at the next meeting of the Faculty Assembly. Special meetings may be scheduled by the division chair.

### **2.1.3.4 Department Chairs**

The President of the College appoints department chairs. They serve annual terms but may be reappointed without limit to the number of years in this position.

The duties of the department chair include preparing the annual proposed budget and schedule of course offerings; developing proposals for curriculum changes; contacting, screening and recommending applicants for available faculty positions; evaluating other faculty members of the department as appropriate for reappointment and ensuring that high academic standards and sound procedures prevail within their departments.

## **2.2 Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures**

### **2.2.1 Appointment**

The initial appointment of all members of the faculty shall be for a period not to exceed one year.

The President in consultation with the Provost makes faculty appointments.

All full-time teaching faculty (12 load units per semester or equivalent) will receive faculty contracts. Faculty teaching 7 load units or fewer are considered part-time adjunct faculty and will receive adjunct contracts.

All prospective candidates for teaching positions must be offered teaching faculty contracts.



Salary is confidential.

### **2.2.2 Reappointment Procedure**

In the event that a candidate is a department chair, an alternate within the same division will evaluate the candidate's teaching performance in order to have two evaluations in the tenure process. In the event that a candidate's department and division chair are the same person, an alternate will serve in this evaluative capacity. This alternate will be elected by the department and/or division at the beginning of the academic year or at such time as the need arises.

By October 15 and March 1, department and division chairs will conduct teaching observations of all pre-tenure faculty in their department/division in accordance with procedures described in [handbook section 2.2.14](#), Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness.

By December 15, the Provost sends requests for a list of professional activities.

In order to ensure sufficient time for the annual review by the Provost, Division Chair, and Department Chair, non-tenured faculty will submit their Summary of Professional Activities ([see Appendix 2A for guidelines](#)) by February 1 to the aforementioned parties.

After their spring semester observation, Department and Division Chairs will then write letters of reappointment or non-support. These letters will specifically address the criteria for reappointment and continuous tenure; they should make particular note of teaching—materials, observations, and conversations with the candidate—in doing so.

- They should also include additional data from general observation (such as service on committees) and/or department members or students. They will also note, when called for, concerns that have been expressed about a pre-tenure faculty member's adherence (or lack thereof) to ethics of the teaching profession as defined in Criteria for Tenure Appointment, [handbook section 2.2.5.10.3](#).
- Department and Division Chairs will submit one copy of the letter, with completed Teaching Observation forms attached, indicating support or non-support of the reappointment to the Provost no later than March 1. A second copy of the letter indicating support or non-support or reappointment will be sent to the non-tenured faculty members for their own record.

By April 1, after receiving the signed copies of the letters written by the division and department chairs, the Office of the Provost will meet with the division chair, the department chair (or alternate), and the non-tenured faculty member for the purpose of reviewing the faculty member's performance.

By April 15, following this meeting, the Provost will provide one copy of the letter to the faculty member that provides a detailed summary of the review, making particular note of strengths and concerns, if any, regarding the pre-tenure faculty member's candidacy. Similar to the department and division chair letters, the Provost's summary will specifically address the criteria for reappointment and continuous tenure; they should make particular note of teaching while also noting additional data from general observation (such as service on committees) and/or department members or students. They will also note, when called for, concerns that have been expressed about a pre-tenure faculty member's adherence (or lack thereof) to ethics of the teaching profession as defined in Criteria for Tenure Appointment, [handbook section 2.2.5.10.3](#).

The faculty member will keep that copy of this letter for their personal record. The Provost will keep a copy for the faculty member's personnel file.

This process is repeated each year until such time as the candidate is eligible to apply for tenure. The President issues contracts no later than May 1.

In January of their third (or otherwise mid-point) year, pre-tenure faculty will also meet with the tenure committee for the purpose of providing candidates with additional feedback and support in their progress to tenure.

- Before this meeting, the committee will review all materials previously submitted in the faculty member's reappointment process, including Summaries of Professional Activity (and any attachments) and letters of reappointment written by department and/or division chairs and the Provost (including any attachments).
- During this meeting, the committee will review the application process with the candidate, including criteria, timelines and what material should be included in the tenure application. They will provide the candidate with the opportunities to ask questions, express needs, and share concerns.
- The committee may provide the candidate with written feedback regarding their progress towards tenure. If issues or needs arise, including those related to support and/or resources, the committee will communicate those to the Provost.

[See Appendix 2B](#) for a timetable describing personnel responsibility.

### **2.2.3 Academic Rank**

No distinction in rank is recognized at Blackburn College. There is no objection to the use of the title of "professor" for faculty members of Blackburn College. Another appropriate title would be "member of the faculty of Blackburn College."

### **2.2.4 Emeritus Faculty**

The conferral of emeritus status is an honor given in recognition of service to Blackburn College. The nominee for emeritus status must have attained tenure at the College. A recommendation for emeritus status may be made by any member of the faculty or the President's Office, after the nominee has submitted their intent to retire in writing to the President. If approved by Faculty Assembly, the recommendation is forwarded to the President, who will then forward it to the Board of Trustees.

#### *Criteria for Candidacy*

Successful candidates for consideration to the rank of Professor Emeritus will have:

At least ten years of full-time employment at Blackburn College prior to retirement and be a tenured Professor at retirement. A tenured Professor with fewer than ten years of employment at Blackburn may be considered for Emeritus status at the discretion of the Provost.

A consistent record of quality performance as demonstrated by one or more of the following:

1. A substantive record of outstanding teaching, educational contributions, and/or scholarship in the field;
2. Clear evidence of service to the College beyond teaching.

### *Application*

Application for Emeritus Professor should be initiated by the Department Chair of the department in which the candidate held their full time appointment. Alternatively, the retiring faculty member may submit a written request to the Department Chair requesting consideration for emeritus status. The candidate should provide supporting documentation that includes a current, comprehensive Curriculum Vitae or written summary of professional activities while at Blackburn. The Department Chair forwards their recommendation, with the necessary supporting materials, to the Provost by December 15.

Early in the Spring semester, the Provost forwards the application and supporting materials to the Tenure Committee, which deliberates and delivers its recommendations to the Provost by February 1.

After review, the Provost forwards their recommendations as well as the recommendations of the Department Chair and Tenure Committee to the Faculty Assembly and the President. Upon approval, the Provost will present the candidate to the Board of Trustees for consideration at their next meeting.

Candidates whose rank of Professor Emeritus has been approved by the Board of Trustees are notified promptly and the rank is conferred by the President during an appropriate College ceremony.

The Provost may approve the submission of a candidate's application for Emeritus status in accordance with the above procedures on a modified or accelerated schedule.

### *Privileges*

The privileges associated with having been granted the rank of Professor Emeritus are:

- Lifetime listing indicating the rank of Professor Emeritus in College catalogs and directories;
- Regular and online library privileges;
- Lifetime email address and support including listing in Blackburn directories;
- Lifetime eligibility for use of College facilities;
- Participation in College public ceremonies;
- Based on availability and the recommendations of the Department Chair and the Provost, use of office and/or lab space, equipment, and other campus facilities to support scholarly work and/or educational activities;
- With permission of the Department Chair, Provost, and/or Committee Chair authorization to serve on committees or engage in other research or educational activities within the College.

## **2.2.5 Tenure Policies**

**2.2.5.1** A faculty position that requires a teaching load of 12 load units per semester will be designated as a tenure-track position.

Faculty may be appointed to temporary non-tenure track positions at the time of hiring. Non-tenure track faculty positions are positions created solely to provide the College with the opportunity to augment or sustain its curricular offerings without offering the prospect of tenure. Such appointments should be made using one of the following descriptions: artist-in-residence, visiting professor, exchange teacher, and sabbatical, administrative duty, or leave-of-absence replacement. Faculty hired to replace late resignations that prevent full search opportunities are also included. The Conditions of Service Committee must review all such positions each year.

Such non-tenure contracts cannot be continued for more than three years, beginning with the first full year of service. At the end of three years, non-tenure track positions must either be converted to tenure track positions, or eliminated.

**2.2.5.2** At Blackburn, the maximum probationary period is six years with the tenure decision to be made in the spring of the sixth year; faculty appointed with the Ph.D. (or equivalent terminal degree) and a minimum of five years full-time prior College teaching will be considered for tenure in the fall of their third year or after four semesters. Those candidates applying for tenure in their third year will begin service work in their first semester, including committees and advising. The time for a tenure application to be made will be stipulated in the contract offered to a prospective faculty member.

A Blackburn faculty member who had previously been on a Blackburn adjunct and/or visiting contract, and who has moved into a permanent tenure-track position, will be considered for appointment to continuous tenure after the standard probationary period outlined above. Candidates who have moved from an adjunct or visiting-professor position to a tenure-track position must serve no less than two years or four full semesters in a pre-tenure probationary period as described above.

A Blackburn faculty member who had previously been on a Blackburn staff contract, and who has moved to a tenure-track position will be considered for appointment to continuous tenure after a probationary period of at least four years from the date of the move to a faculty contract. Negotiations determining the length of the probationary period must occur at the time of full-time faculty contract issuance and signing.

**2.2.5.3** A faculty position held by a full-time employee who holds or formerly held a staff contract with the appropriate terminal degree and which requires a teaching load of at least six credit hours per semester or 12 hours per year and requires additional responsibilities which are academic in nature, may be designated as a tenure-track position, when the academic responsibilities are those which involve teaching outside of the classroom. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to, coaching, training peer tutors, performing remediation, advising, and counseling.

The department chair responsible for a position in question may recommend to the division chair that the position be changed from a non-tenure track position to a tenure-track position. The division chair may recommend that change to CAP and the Faculty Conditions of Service Committee, both of which must concur in recommending that change to the President for approval.

This process may be repeated as often as the appropriate departmental chair chooses to initiate it.

**2.2.5.4** Tenured faculty will retain their tenure status when, in the interest of meeting a special need of the College, it is appropriate for them to shift into a full-time administrative position for a limited period of time. Similarly, probationary faculty who hold tenure-track positions will not lose their years earned towards tenure if they shift into a full-time administrative position. Such years of administrative service, however, will suspend the probation period for tenure until full-time faculty service is resumed. The period is limited to three years. Should a move be made from a faculty position to a full-time administrative position, tenure will not follow to the administrative position. Acceptance of a permanent, full-time administrative position requires the forfeiture of tenure.

Similarly, tenured faculty who shift into a part-time administrative position will retain their tenure status, and probationary faculty who hold tenure-track positions will not lose their years earned toward tenure if they shift into a part-time administrative position. The probationary period for tenure, however, may be altered after negotiation between the President and the tenure candidate before assuming the part-time administrative position.

**2.2.5.5** In a few cases, tenure-track positions at Blackburn may not require the terminal degree. Thus, it may be possible to attain tenure with a lesser degree. In order for a position to be considered as tenure-track without the terminal degree, it must be so designated by CAP and the Faculty Conditions of Service Committee, and approved by the President. In addition, they shall designate the degree, which must be held before any candidate will be considered for the position.

This process may be initiated by either the appropriate departmental or divisional chair who will then be responsible for justifying the change on the basis of any or all of these criteria: (a) the nature of the position or (b) prevailing practices at comparable institutions, or (c) relative unavailability of persons with a terminal degree.

The above-stated criteria will be applied to all new positions as well as existing positions which become vacant.

**2.2.5.6** The policy of awarding continuous tenure should be continued and those faculty holding continuous tenure should retain it without being subject to regular review of their continuous tenure. Faculty holding continuous tenure will be subject to the evaluation procedures established by the Faculty Assembly and approved by the President.

**2.2.5.7** In the event that, at any time during a faculty member's probationary appointment period, the College's financial prospects or programmatic needs make it unlikely that the candidate can be granted tenure under the tenure criteria in the Faculty Handbook, the faculty member shall be so informed by the President. In each instance:

- The circumstances that are likely to require program reduction or redirection will be reported to the President by CAP and the Conditions of Service Committee.
- The possible program reduction or redirection will be legitimate and necessary as documented by careful review of institutional mission, program, and finances.
- Such notification will be provided at the earliest feasible occasion, but in any event at least two (2) and preferably three (3) years before the expiration of the probationary period, following the identification of the circumstances which may preclude the award of the tenure.
- If they wish, the affected faculty member will be assisted in locating another position or considered for appointment to other positions within the College for which they are fit by education, training, and experience.
- In connection with the latter circumstances, if it is determined that the faculty member might qualify for a given assignment after additional education, the College will consider providing partial support to enable the individual to secure necessary background training. Such support is not to assume the proportions of that provided through a sabbatical leave, but is to be modest and designed to enable the faculty member to expand their competence to permit secondary participation in the new area of teaching or service while retaining the primary role in the original area or department.

- The place of the affected faculty member will not be filled by a tenure-track replacement within a period of three (3) years unless the affected individual has been offered reinstatement and a prescribed time in which to accept or decline it.

**2.2.5.8** The tenure committee may not, in review of and deliberations about a candidate's application, consider unsolicited data or input outside the formal process of re-appointment. This includes but is not limited to letters from faculty or staff who did not serve as department or division chair during the candidate's reappointment proceedings. Candidates may include letters of support in their application if they wish.

**2.2.5.9** Blackburn will, upon granting tenure to the six tenure-track faculty members hired prior to August 30, 2018, increase their annual salaries by the greater of \$5000 or 10%. Any faculty hired or who entered the tenure track after September 1, 2018, will, upon being granted tenure, receive a salary increase of \$3500. The Board reserves the right to adjust, in its discretion, the amount of any future salary increases awarded upon granting tenure.

### **2.2.5.10 Criteria for Tenure Appointments**

#### **2.2.5.10.1 Academic and Scholarly Competence**

Candidates normally will hold the appropriate terminal graduate degree, give evidence of scholarly or creative accomplishment, and potential for continued growth. [See Appendix 2C.](#)

#### **2.2.5.10.2 Teaching Effectiveness**

A successful candidate for tenure:

- Performs teaching duties responsibly and effectively, including willingness to initiate, develop, and implement new pedagogies, courses and programs as needed.
- Gives evidence of careful and conscientious preparation.
- Meets classes regularly and punctually as scheduled and uses class time well.
- Covers appropriate material in a logical and organized manner.
- Demonstrates good written and oral communication skills.
- Attempts, as relevant, to provide students with the most current and important material in the field.
- Maintains a rigorous standard of student achievement as appropriate to the varying skill levels and experiences of students.
- Fosters a classroom environment in which students are actively engaged in learning.
- Uses instructional and evaluative approaches that foster higher cognitive abilities (e.g., critical thinking), written and oral communications skills, as well as content mastery.
- In cases where an application for tenure is made by a person with full-time appointment with the College whose duties are at least half-time but less than full-time teaching, the Tenure Committee shall consider non-academic duties that complement the person's teaching.

#### **2.2.5.10.3 Adherence to the Ethics of the Teaching Profession**

- Assumes ethical qualities and responsibilities that characterize the profession of College teaching.
- Exemplifies qualities of integrity, honesty, and personal regard for others that reflect on an institution of higher learning.
- The faculty of Blackburn College endorses the most recently approved [AAUP Statement of Professional Ethics](#).

#### **2.2.5.10.4 Contributions to the College Community**

- Performs student-advising duties with interest and responsibility.
- Participates actively in College governance through the appropriate bodies.
- Maintains respectful interest in students.
- Discharges faithfully committee responsibilities.
- Accepts and carries through special assignments that contribute to the total program of the College.

#### **2.2.5.11 Procedures for Tenure Appointment**

- No later than March 15 of the year prior to the review, a faculty member and the tenure committee will be notified by the Office of the Provost of their eligibility to be considered for tenure.
- No later than September 15 of the year of review, the candidate is responsible for assembling the following materials into an application and submitting it electronically to the Office of the Provost, which will make it available to the Tenure Committee:
  - (a) a written statement explaining how the criteria have been met; the statement should refer to and reflect upon qualitative and quantitative data as evidenced by items b-i below;
  - (b) copies of annual summaries of professional activities, including all attachments (*see Annual Summary of Professional Activity, Appendix 2A*);
  - (c) copies of annual recommendations from the department chair (when applicable), division chair, and the Provost for all years the candidate has taught at Blackburn;
  - (d) Additional peer-evaluations if available and deemed desirable by the candidate;
  - (e) most recent syllabi and representative assignments for all courses taught by the candidate that are not already attached to the annual summary;
  - (f) additional supporting course material deemed relevant;
  - (g) evidence of scholarship and/or creative efforts;
  - (h) information concerning service to the College (committee participation, student advising, contributions to on- and off-campus extra-curricular events, etc.);
  - (i) copies of data obtained from teaching evaluation instruments used during the candidate's years at Blackburn.
- In each application for tenure, the Tenure Committee will be given complete access to all applications for tenure and to all relevant documents and evidence on those candidates applying for tenure.
- By October 1, the Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost shall convene a meeting for the purpose of discussing and analyzing the candidate's merits for tenure vis-à-vis the stated tenure criteria; this may include discussion of any concerns they may have regarding the tenure appointment under consideration.
- By October 15, the Tenure Committee will meet with the department and division chairs to discuss the candidate's application relative to the stated tenure; department and division chairs will submit at this time their recommendations to grant or not grant tenure to the candidate. The Tenure Committee will forward these recommendations to the President at such time as the committee makes its recommendation.
- No later than November 1, the Faculty Tenure Committee will meet with the tenure candidate. The agenda of the meeting shall be discussion and analysis only of the candidate's merits for tenure vis-à-vis the stated tenure criteria.
- The vote of the Faculty Tenure Committee on each case of tenure will be arrived at by secret ballot. Tenure votes must be made available upon request. In keeping with academic tradition and past practice, the votes of the individual Tenure Committee member and any comments or evaluations they make to the Committee are confidential and will not be disclosed except when negative recommendations

(but not the votes of the individual members) are disclosed to the candidate. A copy of the Committee's report will be sent to the division and department chairs, and a copy will be sent to the candidate upon request.

- No later than November 15, the Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost will exchange with each other their independent recommendations regarding tenure. In the event of significant disagreement between the Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost a meeting should be convened prior to December 15 in an effort to resolve the differences.
- The Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost shall submit their reports and recommendations to the President by December 15. Copies of reports and recommendations of the Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost shall be provided to the Board of Trustees. Divisional and departmental chairs' reports will also be provided to the President and Board of Trustees.
- If the department chair (when applicable), division chair, Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost, or President recommend against granting continuous tenure, the tenure candidate will be informed orally within three days of the decision. If the tenure candidate so requests within three calendar days after receipt of oral notification, the candidate will be given a written statement of any and all negative recommendations and reasons for same and will be allowed five calendar days after negative recommendations and reports have been delivered in person, or if that is not possible, via USA certified mail to the home address of the candidate, to respond in writing to the negative recommendations and reports. This response will be submitted to the person or group who made the negative recommendation. The person or groups who submitted the negative recommendation will have five calendar days after receipt of the rebuttal by the tenure candidate to respond in writing (with a copy of the response going to the candidate) if they so choose. The rebuttal of the negative recommendation and the response to the rebuttal shall become part of the tenure candidate's file to be passed along to the people or groups in the decision-making process.
- On the basis of the recommendations (and responses, if relevant) made by those noted above, the President will recommend to the Board of Trustees that the candidate be granted or not granted continuous tenure. The President's final recommendation (for granting or not granting continuous tenure) shall be announced to the tenure candidate by January 15.
- All parties should make a good faith effort to adhere to all the deadlines incorporated in the tenure procedures. In cases of extenuating circumstances, failure of the College or the candidate to meet the deadlines as specified in the procedures will not give rise to any rights to, or forfeiting of, continuous tenure, reemployment and reappointment. In such cases, the time schedules of the tenure procedures may be renegotiated by agreement of all parties.
- The final decision regarding the continuous tenure status of the candidate rests with the Board of Trustees. A faculty member will be notified by the Office of the President that they have been granted or not been granted continuous tenure by the Board of Trustees no later than March 1.
- All materials related to individual tenure decisions, including personnel records, are confidential and are available only to the candidate being considered and appropriate College personnel concerned with their appointment and evaluation.

#### **2.2.5.12 Calendar of Tenure Procedures**

##### **Standard Timeline**

- **March 15** (of year prior to the review). Candidate and Tenure Committee notified by the Provost that they are eligible to apply for continuous tenure.
- **September 15** Candidate submits tenure statement and materials.
- **October 1** Meeting between Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost.



- **October 15** Meeting between division and department chairs and the Faculty Tenure Committee at which time chair recommendations are submitted to the committee
- **November 1** Faculty Tenure Committee meets with candidate
- **November 15** Provost and Faculty Tenure Committee exchange recommendations and if necessary meet to resolve differences.
- **December 15** Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost submit recommendations to the President.
- **January 15** President announces recommendation to candidate.
- **February** Board acts on President's recommendation during February board meeting. Candidate informed of the Board's decision by the President after the board meeting, but no later than March 1.

### **Alternate Timeline**

- **September 15** (of semester prior to the review). Candidate and Tenure Committee notified by the Provost that they are eligible to apply for continuous tenure.
- **January 15** Candidate submits tenure statement and materials.
- **February 1** Meeting between Faculty Tenure Committee and the Provost.
- **February 15** Meeting between division and department chairs and the Faculty Tenure Committee at which time chair recommendations are submitted to the committee.
- **March 1** Faculty Tenure Committee meets with the candidate
- **March 15** Provost and Faculty Tenure Committee exchange recommendations and if necessary meet to resolve differences.
- **April 15** Provost and Faculty Tenure Committee exchange recommendations and if necessary meet to resolve differences.
- **May 1** President announces recommendation to candidate.
- **June** Board acts on President's recommendation during February board meeting. Candidate informed of the Board's decision by the President after board meeting, but no later than July 1.

*Revised by Tenure Committee 2022, Passed by Faculty Assembly 4-2022*

### **2.2.6 Policy on Adjuncts**

Blackburn College is an institution committed to quality instruction and full-time tenure track faculty is the most effective long-term means of ensuring the best instruction and service for students. Although committed to the preferred use of full-time faculty, the College can hire adjunct faculty with the minimum of a master's degree in the interest of keeping flexibility in order to be responsive to temporary shifts in enrollment and to hire adjuncts with special knowledge and skills that can enhance the quality of instruction. In certain departments there are instructional benefits of using a person with current knowledge from the work world, *e.g.*, business law, journalism, educational pedagogy. The College also uses adjunct faculty on a continuing basis. In such cases, the College may decide to recognize ongoing loyalty and instructional experience with some limited benefits and somewhat higher compensation. Such benefits and augmented compensation, however, should not convey any implicit promise of a full-time teaching position.

The final responsibility for hiring adjunct faculty will rest with the Provost. Department chairs and the division chair will be asked to identify, contact, and assess prospective adjunct faculty and to make recommendations to the Provost. CAP serves in a consultative role with the Provost in approving new adjunct faculty positions. There is a limited fund for dealing with true emergencies.

No adjunct faculty member should teach more than seven semester hours per term. The purpose of this limit is to avoid the creation of de facto pro-rated full-time positions from adjunct loads.

Students will evaluate adjunct members each semester and copies of the evaluations will be distributed to the proper department and division chairs.

Adjunct faculty will be given library privileges, access to computers, and office space.

Adjunct faculty have the protection of due process and access to the grievance procedure.

Adjunct faculty will receive \$900 per load unit.

#### **2.2.6.1 Evaluation of Adjunct Faculty**

Both new adjunct faculty and continuing adjunct faculty will be reviewed on a regular basis by the department chair in consultation with the Provost in the following manner:

- First-time adjunct faculty will be reviewed during the semester they teach through at least one visit by and consultation with the department chair. In addition, the chair will receive student ratings on the first-time adjunct immediately after the semester is completed and review those ratings with the adjunct faculty member. Included with the classroom visit will be a review of course syllabi and other teaching materials by the chair.
- Continuing adjunct faculty, *i.e.*, those who are hired more than once to teach the same course(s), will be reviewed on an annual basis. That is, the department chair will receive and review with the faculty member student ratings for the academic year as soon after the year is completed as possible. The chair may make at least one classroom visit during the academic year and may review course syllabi and other teaching materials.

#### **2.2.6.2 Off-Campus Programs**

All faculty teaching off campus shall be given adequate compensation including, but not limited to reimbursement for miles traveled at the standard rate set by the College and standard adjunct salary as set by the College and/or compensation for off-site teaching, whichever is appropriate; adequate support including, but not limited to, office space at the off-campus site and office support and facilities; appropriate review consistent with the Faculty Section of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks.

##### *Considerations for future programs*

- Faculty and administration will propose future programs in a cooperative manner;
- Faculty will teach in such a program only with the joint consent of the Department chair, the Provost and the affected faculty member(s);
- Faculty and administration will ensure appropriate staffing.

It is noted that this policy does not cover any one specific program, but all programs in a general sense.

#### **2.2.6.3 Outstanding Adjunct Instructor Award Policy**

An Outstanding Adjunct Instructor Award will be given as a way of formally recognizing adjuncts who have maintained instructional excellence over an extended period of time in service to the mission of the college.

The specifics are:

- The award would only be presented in years when there are outstanding candidates;
- The award recipients would be selected by the Provost and Division Chairs in consultation with faculty, staff and students;
- The award would be presented at the Honors Banquet in the form of a plaque and would carry a small cash prize, for which private funding will be obtained.

*Effective 10-2011*

### **2.2.7 Termination**

Tenure is considered to be a continuous appointment to the faculty of the College. Termination of a tenured appointment may be effected by the College only for:

- Cause,
- Financial exigency, or
- Discontinuance of a program or a department of instruction for academic rather than financial reasons.

#### **2.2.7.1 Termination for Cause**

- Moral turpitude, gross insubordination, or professional incompetence in the performance of duty shall justify for cause.
- Blackburn College accepts the version of the 1940 [\*Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure\*](#) (with footnotes) most recently endorsed by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges.
- When a tenured faculty member is subject to dismissal for cause, the procedures followed shall conform to the procedures set forth in the most recently approved version of the AAUP's [\*Statement on Procedural Standards and Faculty Dismissal Proceedings\*](#).

#### **2.2.7.2 Termination Under Conditions of Financial Exigency**

- Financial exigency may be declared by the Board of Trustees when, in its judgment, economies achieved through program redirection and/or other means have failed to reduce operating deficits to a tolerable level. The operating deficit will be considered intolerable when it has accumulated to a level that is 20% of the average of the College's current operating expenses for the last three years, if the Board of Trustees determines that such deficit would jeopardize the continued financial viability of the College. When computing the deficit for purposes of determining financial exigency, all unrestricted funds which the College is permitted to spend for current operations shall be treated as income (thereby reducing the amount of the deficit).
- A state of financial exigency lasts no longer than twelve months, unless it is renewed in accordance with the criteria specified in paragraph a above.
- If the Board of Trustees declares financial exigency, the Planning and Budget Committees of the College may review the financial analysis leading to the declaration, and report the results of that review to the Faculty and Staff Assemblies.

- If the financial analysis is not confirmed, a report may be forwarded to the Board of Trustees outlining points of disagreement and requesting a re-evaluation. If the financial analysis is confirmed, CAP will consult with and make recommendations to the administration concerning the particulars of the exigency plans to be implemented.

- Prior to the termination of a tenured faculty member the College shall:

- Have made a demonstrable good-faith attempt to reduce the size of faculty through attrition;
- Have previously terminated or not reappointed part-time and nontenured faculty from all positions that the potential terminnee is qualified to fill;

- Have attempted to negotiate voluntary retirement with other tenured faculty whose positions the potential terminnee is qualified to fill;

- Have attempted to reach an agreement with the potential terminnee regarding employment (and possible retraining) in some other position, teaching or non-teaching, within the College, in the event that such position exists;

- Observe the seniority principle within departments; that is, the tenured faculty member to be terminated shall be that person within the department with the fewest years of service after efforts made pursuant to above, unless academic program needs, which the potential terminnee is not qualified to meet, require the retention of a faculty member in that department with fewer years of service. Seniority is based on continuous full-time service at the College as a faculty member. Time spent on military leave, authorized leave without pay, faculty improvement leave, and sabbatical leave count toward seniority, if the individual returns (or returned) from the leave, unless prior agreements with individual faculty members stipulate that specified leave time does not count toward seniority. The effective day of initial appointment to the current period of uninterrupted service shall determine an individual's seniority. Seniority shall not be altered if an academic department is merged with or transferred to another academic department.

- The tenured faculty member designated to be terminated shall be accorded the following rights:

- Twelve months' notice of their termination;

- A hearing during the notification period before the College's Professional Relations Committee regarding compliance by the College Administration with conditions in the bullet points above. The burden of proof in such a proceeding rests upon the College Administration. A complete audio recorded transcript of this hearing shall be made.

- The tenured faculty who are terminated shall be accorded the following rights:

- Receive severance pay of one month's salary for each year of service at the College. Payment may be in one lump sum or in monthly installments, depending on the option the faculty member chooses;

- Receive an offer of re-employment with tenure and seniority as of the time of termination in the event that the College creates a position that is identical with or substantially similar to the one from which the former faculty was terminated, within three years of the date of termination;

- Have the option of continued participation in the College health and hospital insurance plan, at the terminnee's expense, subject to the policy of the College, for one year following termination.

### **2.2.7.3 Discontinuance of Program or Department not Mandated by Financial Exigency**

Termination of a tenured appointment, or of a probationary or special reappointment before the end of the specified term, may occur as a result of bona fide formal discontinuance of a program or department of instruction. The following standards will apply:

- A motion to discontinue a program or department of instruction, which would result in the termination of any appointment as specified above, may originate with the President or the division in

which the appointment is made. The President will report the motion to all affected departments and divisions and to CAP and the Faculty Conditions of Service Committee. The initiator of the move to discontinue will supply documentation supporting the motion.

- The decision to discontinue formally a program or department of instruction will be determined by CAP, with the subsequent review and recommendation of the Faculty Conditions of Service Committee and final approval by the faculty.
  - The faculty approval will require a simple majority vote by a mailed secret ballot.
  - The decision to discontinue must be reached within one calendar year dating from the date of the President's initial report.
  - Notification of the intent to terminate a faculty position may occur simultaneously on the date of the initial report to CAP by the President.
- The decision will be based essentially upon educational considerations. "Educational considerations" do not include cyclical or temporary variations in enrollment. These considerations must reflect long-range judgments that the educational mission of the institution as a whole will be enhanced by the discontinuance, and must be documented as necessary and legitimate.
- Notification of intent to terminate employment of a non-tenured faculty member because of a decision to discontinue a program or a department of instruction will be provided in accordance with the standards outlined in *handbook section 2.2.5.7*; similarly affected tenured faculty will be provided a minimum of twelve months prior to the termination date.
- Before the Administration terminates the employment of a faculty member because of formal discontinuance of a program or department of instruction, the institution will make an honest and reasonable effort to place the faculty member concerned in another suitable position. If placement in another position would be facilitated by a reasonable period of training, financial and other support for such training will be offered. If no position is available within the institution, with or without training, the faculty member's employment may be terminated but with severance salary. Severance salary will be determined using whichever of the following options is most beneficial to the affected faculty member:
  - One year's salary, or
  - One-ninth of one year's salary for each year of service at the College up to and including 18 years, except the payment shall not exceed the amount of salary the individual would be entitled to receive if they remained on the faculty until age 65.
- A faculty member may appeal a proposed relocation or termination resulting from discontinuance and has a right to a full hearing before the College's Committee on Professional Relations. The hearing need not conform in all respects with a proceeding conducted pursuant to a dismissal for cause. A recorded adjudicative hearing before the Committee will be observed. The issues in such a hearing may include the institution's failure to satisfy any of the conditions specified above. In such a hearing a faculty determination that a program or department is to be discontinued will be considered presumptively valid, but the burden of proof on all other issues will rest upon the College.
- If the College decides to reinstate a discontinued program, the position of a terminated faculty member will not be filled with a tenure-track replacement within a period of three years after that faculty member's separation from the College, unless that faculty member is offered re-employment and a reasonable, prescribed time to accept or reject the offer. The terms of re-employment will include the reinstatement of the tenure status the individual has attained at the time the original position was terminated.

#### **2.2.7.4 Termination for Medical Reasons**

Termination of an appointment with tenure, or of a probationary or special appointment before the end of the period of appointment, for medical reasons beyond the 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) time, will be based upon competent medical evidence and advice that the faculty member cannot continue to fulfill the terms and conditions of the appointment for medical reasons. There will be appropriate consultation and the faculty member concerned, or someone representing the faculty member, will be informed on the basis of proposed action and afforded an opportunity to present the faculty member's position and to respond to the evidence. If the faculty member requests, the evidence will be reviewed by the College's Professional Relations Committee before a final decision is made by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the administration.

#### **2.2.7.5 Non-Reappointment**

For non-tenured faculty members, notice of non-reappointment shall be given in writing in accordance with the standards endorsed by the AAUP in their [Statement on Procedural Standards in the Renewal or Nonrenewal of Faculty Appointments](#) and Standards for Notice of Nonreappointment.

In the instance of an appointment made for a specific length of time, such as a one- or two-year appointment made as replacement for a person on leave, the letter of appointment shall state clearly the termination date and shall indicate that the position is not expected to lead to continuous tenure. No additional notice of non-appointment is required.

#### **2.2.7.6 Academic Freedom**

Blackburn College accepts the most recently approved [Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#) endorsed by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges.

#### **2.2.8 Faculty Salaries**

The President, in consultation with the department and division chairs, makes recommendations on initial salary and salary increases to the Board of Trustees where applicable. The Board of Trustees makes final decisions on all salaries. Initial salaries are based on the quality of academic preparation and scholarly achievements, College teaching and other appropriate experience, together with the requirements for the particular position available, and with due recognition of the scarcity of qualified candidates in a few fields. Individual salary information is kept confidential; College officials will provide individual salary information to appropriate authorities when required to do so by law.

Salary adjustments for continuing members of the faculty take account of changes in the cost of living and demonstrated merit in teaching, scholarship, and service as approved by the Board of Trustees.

##### **2.2.8.1 Overload Pay**

Blackburn's overload pay rate will be a base of \$900 per load unit.

*Effective beginning fiscal year 2012-2013; updated 2023.*

##### **2.2.8.2 Summer Pay**

Blackburn's summer pay will be a starting base of \$900 (consistent with the adjunct/overload pay) per load unit with a minimum enrollment of 7. [Pro-rated pay will be negotiable with the formula 50/50.]

*Effective beginning fiscal year 2012-2013; updated 2023.*

### **2.2.9 Sabbatical Leaves**

Sabbatical leaves are granted to tenured faculty members so that they may engage in creative intellectual activities such as graduate study, research, writing, painting, and composing. Sabbatical leaves will not be granted, however, to enable a candidate to complete a terminal degree in their field of specialization. The faculty member shall inform their department chair, division chair, and the Provost upon application for sabbatical leave. Because applicants must apply for a sabbatical two years in advance, any tenure-track faculty member may apply for sabbatical as soon as the fifth year of employment at Blackburn College, with the sabbatical leave contingent upon earning tenure status.

Full-time faculty are eligible for sabbatical after serving Blackburn for six full years since joining Blackburn or the last sabbatical. For full-time employees teaching part time to be eligible, they must have been employed full time at Blackburn for six years with a minimum teaching responsibility of 50% for six years. The leave may be taken for a full academic year at the remuneration of one-half (1/2) the faculty member's salary for that year. A sabbatical leave for the full academic year granted after nine (9) years of service (after the last sabbatical or since beginning full-time employment) shall carry a remuneration of three-fourths (3/4) of the faculty member's salary for which they would otherwise be entitled. In either instance, if a faculty member receives a sabbatical leave for one (1) semester, the member shall be compensated for their full salary for that academic year.

#### **Process**

CAP shall oversee the orderly review of requests for sabbatical leaves. The recommendations concerning the granting or denial of sabbatical leaves shall be based on the merits of the faculty member's proposal for the leave. See below for Faculty Assembly Guidelines for Sabbatical Applications. CAP has the responsibility to ask the candidate for clarification of the project as it deems necessary.

Applications by the faculty members for sabbatical leaves shall be filed with, and in keeping with the format stipulated by, the Faculty Assembly before October 1, two years in advance of the proposed leave. If there are variables that could potentially delay or disrupt the sabbatical project, or if the project might be completed before the sabbatical begins, CAP requires that an alternate project be included in the proposal.

Faculty members who are applicants for a sabbatical leave shall not participate in the decision regarding the granting of sabbatical leave, whether as a member of CAP or the Faculty Assembly, except to answer questions posed by other members. To this end, CAP may invite the applicant to respond to questions. All applicants have the right to appear in person before CAP to present their application, if they so choose. Faculty members of CAP may present their application to the committee, but then shall be excused from the meeting and not participate in the discussion or vote on their application.

CAP shall forward approved applications to the Faculty Assembly, which may ask applicants to respond to questions and may ask applicants to present a summary to the Assembly.

A faculty member whose application is not approved by CAP or Faculty Assembly may appeal the decision to the Professional Relations Committee. In this event, the applicant submits to Professional

Relations a rationale for review of the decisions no later than November 15 of the application year. Professional Relations will conduct a timely investigation of the process (including a statement of rationale from the Provost), requesting information as it deems necessary, and issue a recommendation to the President by December 15 of the application year. Faculty members whose applications for sabbatical leave are not approved because of merit may reapply for leave in the succeeding year, but shall not have any priority over other eligible applicants.

All applications will be reviewed. In situations where more sabbatical applications are approved by CAP, Faculty Assembly, and the Board than will be funded by the Board of Trustees, approved applicants will be prioritized within that year based on years of eligibility (more years as higher priority), recognizing that people become eligible seven years after beginning employment, or seven years after the prior sabbatical. Ties will be settled by drawing lots. All faculty approved by the Board but not funded for sabbatical that year must take sabbatical before applicants in subsequent years can take sabbatical. If an approved project is completed or no longer feasible before the applicant begins the sabbatical, the applicant will submit a new sabbatical plan to CAP for review and approval.

After Faculty Assembly approves an application for sabbatical leave, the Chair of Faculty Assembly will inform, in writing, the chair(s) of any department and division which offers a course normally taught by the faculty member applying for a sabbatical. The Chair of Faculty Assembly will also remind Department chair(s) that they, with the assistance of other members of their department and the administration, must develop a plan to ensure that all required courses will be taught during the sabbatical. The Office of the Provost will maintain a permanent file of the sabbatical application and will inform the Board of Trustees that the appropriate department and division chairs have been notified of the sabbatical leave application.

Final approval of sabbatical leave requests is made by the Board of Trustees. Faculty members engaged in a sabbatical cannot take assignments for which they receive compensation unless the assignment is directly related to the purpose of the sabbatical as approved by the College. This provision does not apply to the acceptance of fellowship awards where services are not required by the recipient.

Upon return from the sabbatical leave, faculty members shall receive the benefit of any salary increases made during their absence and shall retain all previous privileges and seniority rights to which they would otherwise be entitled. The faculty member may continue to contribute to Blackburn-sponsored retirement plans at the same or a different rate than when off sabbatical, and Blackburn will contribute at the rate that would have been in force were the faculty member not on sabbatical.

Prior to the granting of sabbatical leave, the faculty members shall execute a written agreement with the College providing that on termination of such leave, they will return to the service of the College for a period of at least one year. If anything, short of death or qualifying long-term disability (long-term disabilities are defined as extending beyond 90 days), prevents fulfillment of this agreement, the faculty member will refund to the College an amount equal to the portion of salary received by the faculty member while on leave which is in proportion to the amount of service not actually rendered as agreed. [See Appendix 2D](#) for a copy of the Sabbatical Leave Agreement.

In the semester following the termination of the sabbatical leave, CAP will ask the faculty member to give a presentation to the faculty about the sabbatical project.



### Guidelines for Sabbatical Leave Application

The Faculty Assembly requires that sabbatical leave applications be organized under the following headings and provide sufficient detail to enable members to understand the projected study plan and its scope:

1. What are the projected beginning and ending dates of the proposed leave?
2. Where will you be located during the leave?
3. What is the "study, research, writing, painting . . . composing" you will undertake if this leave is granted? Include a discussion of the particular topics, issues, problems, or hypothesis on which you will be working.
4. Will the study build on past work or will you be exploring new directions in your scholarship?
5. Can the projected study realistically be completed during the period of the sabbatical leave? If not, what plans do you have to complete the work subsequently?
6. What plan(s) have you made for undertaking this study? Please describe such factors as exploratory correspondence with institutions where you plan to study, particular scholars with whom you wish to work, the availability of archival materials, scientific equipment, or other needed facilities.
7. In what ways and in what areas will the proposed sabbatical leave improve your teaching at Blackburn, either directly or indirectly? How will your proposed study relate to your courses or to your research? Do you expect publishable work to result from the sabbatical leave?

### **2.2.10 Funding for Faculty Research and Development and Instructional Improvement**

Faculty may request funds for a variety of purposes. Funding requests should not exceed 10% of the total funds available per academic year. Proposals will be due the first Friday in October and the first Friday in February. Half of the funds will be dispersed in October and half will be available in February. If there are funds remaining after the October cycle, they will roll over to the February cycle.

#### **2.2.10.1 Faculty Research and Development**

Faculty may seek funding support for a variety of projects, including but not limited to:

- Conference attendance, moderation, or presentation
- Research or development opportunities to enrich teaching or advising at the college
- Scientific or social scientific research that may include travel, field experience, or professional development
- Artistic production that may include time or travel to write, perform, or produce various forms of art related to one's field of study

All faculty who desire funds for a project must submit a proposal to CAP ([see Appendix 2J](#)) that includes the following information:

- The participants, dates, and location of the event or proposed activity
- An itemized list of all costs, such as transportation, lodging, meals, materials, fees, etc.
- A short description of the event or proposed activity and an explanation of how this will benefit the college (in any capacity)

CAP will use the following criteria (in no particular order) to rank and approve faculty research and development proposals:

- Benefit to the college is clear (benefit may be to students in the classroom, their experience through participation, recognition for the college, etc.)
- Conference attendance versus conference participation through moderation or presentation
- Proposal directly involves and impacts students
- A tangible result from the event or activity, such as a publication, certification, award or recognition, etc.
- Clearly articulated potential for professional growth, such as the development of a new skill, competency, or increased knowledge of best practice, etc.
- How recently the applicant received funding

### 2.2.10.2 Instructional Improvement

Faculty may seek funding support for course development or improvement, including but not limited to:

- Purchasing materials necessary to facilitate course development (e.g. reference materials, supplies, subscriptions, licenses, etc.) Textbook purchases (aside from course reference materials) will not be reimbursed.
- Travel funds to obtain materials or information directly applicable to course development (e.g. meeting with professionals/experts in areas of course instruction, liaising to gain access to resources, etc.)
- Professional training that will translate directly into course development
- Faculty stipend (not to exceed \$750) to offset time and effort for course development/improvement that demonstrably exceeds regular preparatory activities;
- Stipends can only be awarded once every three years; funds can be requested at any time for materials, equipment, books, etc.

All faculty who desire funds for instructional improvement funding must submit a proposal to CAP ([see Appendix 2K](#)) that includes the following information:

- Clear and specific description of the course and proposed areas of development or improvement, including course title, number, frequency of offering, whether or not the course is a Gen. Ed. course, impact on students across majors/minors, and timeline for application of course improvements
- Clear explanation of how the proposed course development/improvement will potentially impact student learning or expected student outcomes
- An itemized list of all costs, such as transportation, lodging, meals, supplies, reference materials, fees, etc.

CAP will use the following criteria (in no particular order) to rank and approve instructional improvement proposals:

- Benefit to the college is clear
  - Benefit may be to students in the classroom, their experience through participation, etc.
- Clearly articulated results from the event or activity, such as student networking, the development of a new skill, how the activity impacts course curriculum, competency, or increased knowledge.
- A tangible result from the event or activity, such as a publication, license, certification, etc.

[See Appendix 2E](#) for further details regarding Faculty Development funds.

*Revised by Faculty Assembly 9-22*

### **2.2.11 Teaching Load**

The normal teaching load averages twelve (12) semester hours per semester for lecture courses. However, there may be exceptions from this general rule, as for example in art, music, theater, physical education activity courses, and laboratory courses where some semester hours require more contact hours of work than is true in lecture courses. Independent Studies or Field Experience is a part of a teaching load and it should be recognized that often they may require large amounts of time, despite low enrollment.

In all cases, the load should reflect as much as possible equity of work among the faculty. Where loads are unusually light, special assignments may be made. No teaching overload will be assigned without the professor's consent. Where overloads occur, adjustments will be made. The total load of a faculty member includes not only the number of hours taught, but total duties and special assignments.

The Conditions of Service Committee shall consider any unresolved disagreements over teaching load that may occur between individual faculty members and the administration of the College. The Conditions of Service Committee shall make its recommendation to the Provost.

### **2.2.12 Faculty Attendance**

Members of the faculty are expected to attend the Baccalaureate Service, Commencement exercise, and Faculty Assembly meetings. The Office of the President should be notified in advance of any necessary absence. A member of the faculty who wishes to be excused from Baccalaureate Service for reasons of conscience shall make a written request to the College Marshal at least two weeks prior to the event.

Academic regalia shall be worn at Baccalaureate and Commencement. Faculty members who do not own their own gowns and hoods and caps may rent them through the Campus Store.

### **2.2.13 Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness**

Blackburn College has a responsibility to encourage a positive institutional attitude or ambiance at every point of the evaluation and professional development processes. It can do this by encouraging interdisciplinary relationships, egalitarianism, collegiality, professionalism, and professional autonomy amongst the Blackburn faculty; it can also do this by providing faculty with timely, fair, and frank feedback on their teaching effectiveness.

All students in each class will be provided with an opportunity to write an in-depth evaluation of the course at the end of the semester. To this end, a course evaluation form will be used in all classes by all faculty. This is mandatory.

It is recommended that, in addition to these formal procedures, departments and/or instructors develop their own survey form at mid-term to provide instructors with student perceptions of the course. This data would aid instructional improvement by providing instructors with student perceptions in time to make any desired adjustments during the remainder of that semester.

As part of their duty to maintain "high academic standards," department and division chairs shall have access to, and may review, course syllabi and quantitative student evaluations for their respective departments and divisions. When problems relating to an instructor's teaching effectiveness arise, chairs shall seek solutions. Department and division chairs also have responsibilities to supply a remedy in cases

where patterns of professional incompetency might become a problem ([see handbook section 2.2.7.1](#) for reference to incompetency).

Department and division chairs will conduct at least one teaching observation per semester of all pre-tenure faculty in their department/division.

- Before the observation, they will request and review syllabi and relevant assignments.
- During the observation, they will use the college's Teaching Observation form ([see Appendix 2F](#)) to make notes.
- After the observation, they will meet with the faculty member to discuss the observation, including teaching materials provided and observation notes made. The purpose of this conversation is to provide the candidate with feedback to improve their teaching effectiveness.

Department chairs will conduct at least one teaching observation per semester of all adjunct faculty in their first year of teaching at Blackburn; frequency of observation thereafter will be at the discretion of the department.

- Before the observation, they will request and review syllabi and relevant assignments.
- During the observation, they will use the college's Teaching Observation form ([see Appendix 2F](#)) to make notes.
- After the observation, they will meet with the faculty member to discuss the observation, including teaching materials provided and observation notes made. The purpose of this conversation is to provide the candidate with feedback to improve their teaching effectiveness.

The Provost receives summary reports of the Blackburn College Course Evaluation Forms, copies of course syllabi, representative assignments/exams, and the Annual Summary of Professional Activities and can comment on and discuss their implications on a regular basis with non-tenured and tenured faculty members for the purposes of improving teaching effectiveness and professional development.

The Provost also has a responsibility to help supply a remedy in cases where "serious professional incompetency" ([see handbook section 2.2.7.1](#) for reference to incompetency) could become a problem. In these or related cases (*e.g.*, complaints about the performance of a faculty member brought by other faculty or students) the Provost can investigate such complaints and, if warranted, provide mentoring. In serious circumstances, the Provost can involve appropriate officers and official bodies of the College in a suitable and fair manner.

*Revised by Faculty Assembly 4-2022*

## **2.2.14 Post Tenure Review (PTR)**

### **2.2.14.1 Purpose**

The Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Program is designed for the central purpose of improvement or growth as teachers or advisers, scholars, researchers, writers, performers or artists, or as participants in shared governance or community service. Blackburn's post-tenure review process has two-fold purpose:

- Supporting the work of tenured faculty members as they engage with their teaching, discipline, and broader scholarly interests;
- Ensuring regular pay increases based upon professional performance determined by faculty-generated criteria.

Given these purposes, the PTR Program will adhere to the following principles:

- Should not impinge on or violate academic freedom;
- Should not be used as a disciplinary mechanism, or substitute for normal dismissal for cause proceedings. Blackburn's PTR program will be consistent with the AAUP's recommendation that "post-tenure review should not be undertaken for the purpose of dismissal. Other formal disciplinary procedures exist for that purpose";
- Should not be used as a substitute for regular cost of living allowance increases.

#### **2.2.14.2 Criteria**

The PTR criteria are based on existing criteria for the Annual Summary of Professional Activity, which are:

- Teaching effectiveness;
- Scholarly/creative growth/competence;
- College/community service.

For descriptions of how fulfillment of these criteria might be established, please see [Appendix 2G](#).

#### **2.2.14.3 Process**

The Blackburn College PTR Program is obligatory to be considered for salary increases beyond COLA. Tenured faculty members participate in the program every five years. Those faculty within five years of retirement may choose not to participate in this program. For others, the following procedures will apply.

##### **Year of Entry/Initiation**

By September 1 of each year, the Provost will notify those tenured and newly tenured faculty who are eligible (hereafter referred to as Reviewees) to enter the post-tenure review process.

By October 15 of the first year of eligibility, the Reviewee will meet with the PTR Committee (hereafter known as the Review Committee; see section below regarding constitution of the Review Committee) to begin determining how they will engage with their profession (consistent with PTR criteria) during the review period. These conversations will lead to a set of Reviewee-authored goals and a corresponding plan for completion of said goals, which will need approval by a majority of the Review Committee.

By December 1 of the first year of eligibility, the Review Committee Chair will submit the Review Committee-approved set of goals and corresponding plan to the Provost and Reviewee. If the Provost has concerns about the PTR plan and/or its successful execution, the Reviewee, Review Committee, and Provost will meet as necessary to develop a plan acceptable to the Reviewee, a majority of the Review Committee, and the Provost.

By February 15 of the first year of eligibility, the Reviewee and Provost will meet to discuss the plan and any necessary resources and/or support (such as load configuration, additional responsibilities, committee service, etc.). However, any requests for Professional Development, Instructional Improvement, and/or Faculty Research funds must be approved through the normal review process without prejudice for or against PTR projects. A summary of the meeting will be shared with the Review Committee. The plan, summary, and any response by the Reviewee will be placed in the Reviewee's personnel file.

If circumstances, resources, or professional priorities change, between approval of the initial plan and the fifth year review, Reviewees retain the right to amend their initial plan and re-submit it to the current Review Committee and Provost for re-approval. If necessary, the Reviewee, Review Committee, and Provost will meet as needed to develop a plan acceptable to the Reviewee, a majority of the Review Committee, and the Provost. The revised plan, a summary of the meeting, and any response by the Reviewee will be shared with the Review Committee and placed in the Reviewee's personnel file.

### **Year of Review**

By September 15 of the review year, the Reviewee will provide the Review Committee with a record of their past performance in a file organized by the Reviewee which may include but is not limited to material such as: the plan, letters of support from Blackburn College peers or other outside colleagues; letters from the department or division chair; course material including syllabi and assignments; instructional improvement, course development, and research proposals and reports; Annual Summaries of Professional Activity; publications; presentations; reports of attendance at scholarly events; reports documenting performance or artistic productions; reports documenting research or engagement with professional literature and any other relevant materials. The Provost's Office will provide the original plan, any approved revisions, and all reports and summaries regarding the plan. For a complete list of materials that might be included *see [Appendix 2G](#)*.

By October 15 of the review year, the Reviewee and Review Committee will convene to discuss the Reviewee's work with regard to the plan. The members of the Review Committee will have reviewed the record of past performance and should use this meeting as a time to ask questions.

By February 1 of the review year, the Review Committee submits a report and recommendation to the Provost and the Reviewee. The report consists of copies of the documents included in the review file as well as testimonies from the Review Committee members describing and documenting their recommendation and participation in this process. Should the Provost and Review Committee disagree in their recommendations, the Review Committee and Provost will meet prior to February 15 in an attempt to resolve the differences; the Reviewee may or may not be involved in some or all of the conversations.

The Provost reviews this material and by February 15 of the review year makes a recommendation to the President regarding the successful (or unsuccessful) completion of the Reviewee's plan. The President will notify the faculty of their decision no later than March 1 or the first workday thereafter.

Upon successful completion of the Plan, the Reviewee's salary will be increased 7.14%.

If the faculty member has been unsuccessful, they can file an appeal no later than April 1 of the review year.

### **2.2.14.4 Appeal**

The Reviewee has the right of appeal. The Provost's recommendation and the President's decision are appealable to the Professional Relations committee. In this event, the Reviewee submits to Professional Relations a rationale for review of the decisions. Professional Relations will conduct a timely investigation of the process (including statements of rationale from the President and Provost), requesting

information as it deems necessary, and issue a recommendation to the President by May 1 of the review year.

#### **2.2.14.5 Review Committee Structure and Purpose**

The Post-Tenure Review Committee will be comprised as follows:

Three tenured faculty-elected members (one from each division, each serving three-year terms with staggered beginnings), and two Reviewee-selected (one external if desired; the external reviewer need not be a faculty-person, tenured if a faculty-person, or directly involved in the Reviewee's discipline; however, there should be a strong connection to the Reviewee's plan). The Reviewee may change the Reviewee-appointed members of the Review Committee as they deem necessary for the integrity of the process; however, Reviewee-appointed members cannot be changed while working with the Reviewee to formulate or revise the plan, or while reviewing project outcomes, except in extraordinary circumstances.

The Review Committee will assist the tenured member in formulating a PTR Plan of professional goals appropriate to the post-tenure review criteria. Initially the committee will assist the Reviewee in a process of self-reflection that will include review of teaching, service, and scholarship. The committee may then ask, "What would the Reviewee like to accomplish over the next five years? In what areas would they like to improve?"

The Review Committee provides reports and recommendations as described above.

#### **2.2.14.6 PTR Program Review**

Every five years beginning from the start of year one of the Blackburn College Post Tenure Review Program, the Faculty Conditions of Service Committee (hereafter referred to as FCoS) will conduct a full program review. The review commences on February 1 of each review year and is completed by April 1 of the same year. The review is based on assessment of the effectiveness of the program in relation to its purposes and principles as outlined above. The FCoS Committee will submit a report of its findings to the faculty Assembly by April 15.

Upon assessment of the FCoS program review, the Faculty Assembly reserves the right to recommend modifications to this plan or trigger the wind-down outlined below if the program departs significantly from its stated purposes and principles (see above).

#### **2.2.14.7 Benchmark**

The faculty and administration will work collaboratively to establish a mutually satisfactory salary benchmark by the end of the 2017-2018 academic year. An annual report will be generated to track our progress towards or beyond it. If the benchmark is not met, the faculty may vote to postpone evaluations.

Benchmark institutions will be determined based on criteria including, but not limited to, the following: number of full-time faculty members; number of new first-time, full-time students; baccalaureate/liberal arts mission; private non-profit status; reasonably similar endowment resources; faculty workload policies; location/community size; and faculty credentials. [See Appendix 2L](#) for current benchmark group.

#### **2.2.14.8 COLA-Prioritization Wind Down Mechanism**

A. In May 2020, the College will determine the percentage increase in CPI from May 2017 through April 2020. If that increase equals or exceeds the total COLA increases granted by the College for the

2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 academic years, the Post Tenure Review program would be suspended for the following (2020-2021) academic year, except that candidates in the final two years of their Post Tenure review program as of May 2020 will be permitted to complete their programs.

B. The College will perform a similar evaluation for the comparable three-year periods of each subsequent academic year that the program remains in effect.

C. If the program is suspended for the 2020-2021 academic year, in May 2021, the College will determine the percentage increase from May 2018 through April 2021. If that amount equals or exceeds that total COLA increases granted by the College for the academic years, the College will re-implement the program for the 2021-2022 academic year as provided in the program document. The College will perform a similar analysis any year the program is in suspension to determine whether the program will be reinstated for the following year, so long as the program document remain in effect.

*Approved by the Board 10-2019*

### **2.2.15 Criteria for Faculty Positions**

The need to embark on a search for tenure-track faculty positions can arise from three different kinds of situations: the filling of lines that have been vacated through retirement and faculty leaving the college, new lines to meet demonstrated need in an existing department or program, and tenure-track faculty needed to support a new initiative designed to generate new revenue for the college. Below are the criteria for each of these categories that need to be addressed in a proposal to CAP. If the proposals are approved by CAP, they will be recommended to the President for final approval. Each category will be considered independent of the others. As demonstrated below, proposals for new lines require more justification and evidence than those for existing lines.

#### Filling an Existing Faculty Line

When a faculty member retires or exits the college leaving a vacant faculty line, the department must submit a proposal to CAP explaining the necessity of filling the position. Proposals should be submitted as soon as the department chair becomes aware of the upcoming vacancy, and will be evaluated on a rolling basis. The proposal must include:

1. An explanation of how filling the position is necessary to support General Education, the department's majors/minors or any other majors/minors outside of the department, and/or professional programs.
2. Data supporting the need to fill the position. These data should include:
  - current numbers of majors/minors in the department;
  - the projected course load for the position;
  - course enrollments for the past 2 years and projected course enrollments for the upcoming 2 years of the program;
  - impact on department use of adjuncts.
3. Additional responsibilities outside of teaching that explain the necessity of filling the position, such as advising load, administrative duties, coverage of content areas fundamental to the discipline, etc.
4. Any additional information that supports the necessity of filling the position, such as the potential for enhancing the program by filling the position.



If CAP determines that the line does not need to be filled, or that the proposal does not meet the criteria, then the line will be open for other departments to submit a proposal to secure it under the category of a new line, using the Criteria for a New Faculty Line as outlined below.

#### Creating a New Faculty Line

When a program or Department demonstrates a need, academic or otherwise, for a new faculty line, the program or department must submit a proposal to CAP explaining the necessity of developing a new faculty line.

New faculty line proposals must be submitted to CAP by April 1 to be considered for initiating a search in the upcoming academic year. If the proposals are approved by CAP, they will be recommended to the President for final approval. The proposal must include:

1. Statement of need that justifies the creation of a new faculty line, including anticipated impact on the department (e.g. courses the new faculty member would teach, advising responsibilities, new coverage areas being added to the department, etc.).
2. Data supporting the need for a new faculty line. These data should include:
  - current numbers of majors/minors in the department;
  - the projected course load for the position;
  - course enrollments for the past 2 years and projected course enrollments for the upcoming 2 years of the program
  - impact on department use of adjuncts.
3. An explanation of potential financial impact on the College (e.g. revenue bearing, helping to reduce the number of adjunct faculty hired, etc.).
4. Any additional data or reasoning for the creation of an additional faculty line.

Proposals should be submitted in a manner that allows for careful consideration and discussion; however, if grant funds are required to support or the timeline for funding is limited, expediency is important.

#### New line to generate revenue

When an opportunity is presented for creating a new faculty line to generate revenue, the department (or academic program) must submit a proposal to CAP explaining the necessity of filling the position and the relevance of the revenue stream to the college. Proposals should be submitted to CAP and will be evaluated on a rolling basis. If the proposals are approved by CAP, they will be recommended to the President for final approval. Proposals must include:

1. A job description outlining specific teaching responsibilities, service to the college, and fundraising/grant writing responsibilities or administrative responsibilities.
2. A clear explanation of revenue streams (e.g. available state or federal funding, viable market to generate revenue, etc.), including a pro forma or financial model that illustrates potential revenue gain.
3. Provide national or local data to support the projected revenue.

4. An explanation of how the new position may impact existing faculty loads.
5. A rationale of consistency with institutional mission.
6. A plan for marketing and enrollment strategy (i.e. have you thought through where the students are going to come from).

*Approved by Faculty Assembly 2-2022*

## **2.3 Academic Policy and Procedure**

### **2.3.1 Class Attendance and Excused Absences**

Instructors are expected to meet their classes as scheduled. When an absence occurs, the Office of the Provost must be informed and that office will post notices outside the appropriate classrooms, and the Work Office must be notified. In the event of an instructor's tardiness, a class must wait ten minutes before departure without penalty.

Students are expected to meet the requirements of attendance set by an instructor. There is no uniform College policy concerning the number of permissible absences. Each instructor should make explicit to each class the number of absences without penalty which are permitted (if any) and the system (if any) by which a maximum number of unexcused absences become one of the factors in assignment of a failing grade. Any special policies about tardiness should also be announced.

When students are absent for officially approved reasons they are responsible for the work missed and the professor shall enable the student to make up the work missed, including the taking of make-up examinations. [\*See handbook section 1.10.3\*](#) for an explanation of officially approved absences.

### **2.3.2 Assignment of Classrooms**

The Records Office makes the assignment of classrooms. Special considerations concerning particular rooms for certain kinds of classes should be communicated to the Records Office well in advance of the scheduling of classes for the next semester. Classes should regularly meet in the room assigned. Any changes are to be cleared with the Records Office.

When, in the judgment of the instructor, the teaching or learning situation may be enhanced, other appropriate sites (such as faculty homes) may be chosen and announced for occasional meetings. Such changes are to be reported to the Records Office so that the faculty and students involved can be located as needed. Proposed changes that would be full time must be approved by the Records Office. While it is the consensus of the faculty that class meetings should meet outdoors only under special circumstances, the faculty leave the decision to the individual instructor.

### **2.3.3 Assignment of Faculty Offices and Faculty Office Hours**

The Provost makes assignments of offices for teaching members of the faculty. A schedule of faculty class assignments and office hours is filed in the Office of the President. A similar schedule should be posted on the door of each faculty office. Faculty members are asked to schedule five hours of office time

(consistent throughout the semester) per week for student consultation. In addition, students should be able to make appointments at special times in case the available office hours are not convenient.

### **2.3.4 Registration Procedures**

The Registrar shall announce the time, place, and arrangements for course registration and shall inform the faculty of procedures and relevant policies. Faculty advising for freshmen is done at scheduled hours and faculty members are asked to be in their offices during these periods. During the registration period for returning students, faculty members are asked to post a schedule on their office door when they will be available for approving program registration for the coming semester.

### **2.3.5 Cancellation of Small Classes**

The faculty has adopted the following policy with regard to cancellation of small classes: Classes with fewer than five students shall be dropped unless they are required for a major or minor. If the small enrollment continues for more than two years, the course should be dropped from the curriculum and another offered in its place. In special cases, CAP may grant approval for continuing courses with fewer than five students enrolled.

### **2.3.6 Double Instruction Period**

The Double Instruction Period is a period scheduled at the end of each semester. No examinations are to be administered to classes during the last regular week of scheduled classes in lieu of the final examination. Even if a final exam is not administered during the assigned final meeting time, classes are still expected to meet during the assigned time, as this time is included in the total class meeting time required.

The Provost must approve exceptions to this policy in advance.

Blue books for final examinations may be obtained from the Campus Store. A few copies are kept in the Records Office for emergencies.

### **2.3.7 Posting of Grades**

Faculty are permitted to post grades at any time during the semester in a manner consistent with federal law.

### **2.3.8 Grade Appeals**

Students who wish to appeal a course grade must do so no later than 5 p.m. on Reading Day the semester following that in which the grade was received. Students may appeal a grade on the basis of a belief that the instructor either made an error in the grading process, or was demonstrably unfair or discriminatory in assigning a grade. Students may not use the grade appeal process to appeal a determination of academic dishonesty. To appeal a grade, the student should first make an appointment with the instructor of the course in question and discuss the matter with her or him. If this is not possible or if the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this discussion, the student may appeal to the Division chair, who will meet with the student and the instructor in the role of mediator. If after such a meeting the student continues to believe that the grade in question is inappropriate the appeal may proceed to the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS). The outcome of CAS' review will result in one of three decisions. That the

- student's appeal has no merit and the grade should stand;

- grade should stand but that the faculty member in question should be advised to improve grading policies and practices; or
- grade in question is inaccurate or unfair, and the instructor should submit a revised grade.

CAS will report its findings to the Provost, who will then review the report and recommendations, ensuring that all parties receive formal notice of the disposition of the case. A student may appeal the decision of CAS only on the grounds that fair procedures were not followed or that new information has become available that would materially affect the decision. Such an appeal must be made in writing to the Provost within one week of the submission of the CAS report. On appeal the Provost will review the report and recommendations from CAS and decide either that the committee's decision should stand or be reconsidered on the basis of either procedure inadequacies or the availability of substantial new information bearing on the case. If the Provost concludes that the case should be reconsidered, CAS will reconvene and act on the recommendations for reconsideration from the Provost.

If after all reviews it is found that an instructor should change a grade and they refuses or are unable to acknowledge it and change it appropriately, the Provost, representing the authority of the faculty on academic matters, may, on the basis of the record assembled by the Committee on Academic Standing and any subsequent evidence and in consultation with CAS, submit a change of grade in lieu of the instructor of record.

All instructors should keep grade books and any other records of evaluation supporting student grades available for at least one full semester beyond the term in which the grades were posted. These records must be accessible to the Provost, division chairs and all other personnel responsible for reviewing grade appeal cases.

### **2.3.9 Textbook Orders and Procedures**

The Campus Store upon request to the Campus Store Manager stocks textbooks and supplementary books for classes. Instructors may request the Campus Store to stock titles or paperback books that are relevant to their subject area. Forms are distributed by the Campus Store for ordering books each semester and are to be returned on the date specified. Requests for an instructor's copy of a text should be sent directly to the publisher. Faculty may not charge textbooks to their department budget at the Campus Store.

### **2.3.10 Student Assistants**

Faculty members often supervise students participating in the Blackburn College Work Program. In this role, faculty members serve as teaching supervisors of their student workers and assistants and in that capacity:

- Provide adequate instruction, training and appropriate working conditions for the performance of the student(s)' duties.
- Put themselves forward as positive models.
- Provide opportunities to students so they can work in an environment that complements the College's mission and values.
- Assure that the duties assigned to student workers are appropriate and necessary, and supportive of student learning and development.
- Establish professional relations and communicate effectively with the student managers in the fulfillment of their work responsibilities.

- Adhere to the work program guidelines including the verification of student work hours, evaluation of student work performance each semester, and use of the work warning system to document unacceptable student work behavior.

### **2.3.11 Faculty Advisory System**

CAP is responsible for the advising program, including both the special freshman advising program and the advising of students by their major professor after the freshman year. Therefore, the records will be kept by the Provost with the assistance of the Records Office. Students who are undecided about their major will be divided among the faculty advisors.

Changes in major will be processed in the Records Office. All of the mechanics of maintaining procedures, etc., will continue to be under the supervision of Provost with the Records Office.

The student is primarily responsible for planning their course work to meet the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree. Faculty members are encouraged to check periodically on the fulfillment of graduation requirements, and to make it a matter of record when a student neglects to follow the advisor's recommendation on taking courses that are required for the degree.

Faculty advisors should adhere to the guidelines presented in the current Blackburn College Academic Advising Handbook. All students who register for fall classes are asked to complete the advising questionnaire, a campus-wide survey of academic advising. Faculty members will receive the results of the survey from the Office of the Provost through the Office of Institutional Research.

### **2.3.12 Limitation on Class Size**

If a department feels that the enrollment should be limited in a class, the department chair requests CAP to establish the limit. In this request, the limit should be specified, the reasons why the limit should be set, and the order of priority in permitting students to enroll in class. CAP shall consult the Registrar when considering class size limitations.

Upon approval by CAP, the limit will be regularly listed in the schedule of classes.

After registration is completed, the Registrar will employ the priority established by the department chair in determining which students will be permitted to take classes where an excess enrollment is present. These students will be notified that the class exceeds the prescribed enrollment and they will be advised to make alternate registration arrangements.

### **2.3.13 Low Enrollment Course Policy**

If a course has an enrollment of fewer than five students for a given semester, the Provost, in consultation with the Division Chair, Department Chair and Registrar shall determine before the start of classes whether the course will be offered or dropped from the schedule for that semester. Such decisions shall be made with the students' interests in mind and without causing undue hardship for the students enrolled.

If the low enrollment continues for at least three consecutive offerings, CAP will consult with the appropriate Department Chair to develop recommendations about possible changes in the course, the curriculum, or academic policy. A course identified as low enrollment at the end of one three consecutive offering cycle review will begin a new three consecutive offering cycle.

### **2.3.14 Midterm Grade Reporting**

All advisors need to pay close attention to midterm grades and follow-up immediately with advisees who have any poor grades. All students should receive a midterm grade for every class. Midterm grades should reflect what the instructor would assign the student if this were, in fact, the final grade for the course (meaning that mid-term grades should be taken at face value and not deflated in hopes of motivating students to improve their efforts and performance). Advisors need to pay close attention to grades from the previous semester to be sure advisees are passing or have passed all prerequisites for courses in the planned schedule (*e.g.*, if a student fails WR 112 they must take it again the next semester, and should not be allowed to go on without doing so; if a student fails CH 101 they should not be allowed to register for CH 102). Advisors should formally note when students insist on taking courses against the advisor's recommendations. A clear explanation and statement to this effect should be included in the advisor's file and a copy forwarded to the Registrar to be included as part of the official record.

### **2.3.15 Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete grades may be given at the discretion of the faculty member when in the judgment of the faculty member an incomplete serves some sound educational purpose. The faculty member must state the educational purpose being served when awarding the incomplete. The work must be completed by the time specified by the faculty member at the time the incomplete is given. Faculty must submit all such grades to the Records Office no later than the week preceding final exams of the semester following the semester in which the incomplete was given. Sound educational purposes include but are not limited to the following examples: (1) The course teaches a skill that must be mastered before the next level of the discipline can be taken and the student has made progress but needs more time to reach the desired skill level and (2) the course involves research or the mastery of complex analysis which by its nature extends beyond a single semester.

### **2.3.16 Procedures for Consideration and Adoption of Curricular Proposals**

The following procedures are to be followed with respect to the consideration and adoption of curricular proposals.

- If the proposed change has the unanimous support of the department, it shall be submitted to CAP.
- If the proposed change does not have the unanimous support of the department, it must be submitted to the division for consideration. If it receives a majority support from the division, it is submitted to CAP.
- If the proposal does not receive a majority support of the division, it is to be returned to the department for reconsideration. Upon reconsideration, the department may:
  - Decide to drop the proposal, or revise it and submit it to the division.
  - If a revised proposal has unanimous support of the department, it can be submitted directly to CAP.
  - If a proposal does not have a majority support of CAP, it is to be returned to the department or division which submitted it with suggestions for its revision.

If a proposal from the department does not have majority support of CAP, the department may submit the proposal to the division for consideration. If two-thirds of the division votes in favor of the proposal, it will be brought to the floor of the faculty for consideration. No curricular change shall go to the faculty

unless it has majority support from CAP or has received support from two-thirds of the members of the division.

Any proposal from a faculty member or department, separate from CAP or the administration, to establish or eliminate a major must be submitted to the division and shall move on to CAP only with two-thirds support from the division. [See Appendix 2I](#) for form to submit curricular proposals/changes to course catalog copy.

### **2.3.17 Non-Standard Course Proposals**

**Philosophy.** Blackburn College is a residential undergraduate institution dedicated to student learning and development as part of a community of learners and doers. Professional research and Blackburn's historical values both strongly support the importance of regular, personal interaction between faculty members and students. Faculty members who wish to develop online, web-enhanced, or other non-traditional methods of course delivery are encouraged to do so within the clear context of the priority for direct interpersonal interaction between students and professors.

**Emergency.** It is understood that in the event of emergency non-standard course delivery arrangements may be undertaken as a way of sustaining the ongoing academic work of the college. Such instances are understood to be temporary and not indicative of variation from the principles articulated above.

**Timing.** Current course offerings that rely on non-standard formats will not be subject to new reviews, though all should be considered subject to the principles articulated in point 1, above.

**Approvals.** When existing courses are anticipated to use a non-standard course format the Department Chair, Division Chair, and Provost should all review and agree that the proposed format is the most appropriate way to support the achievement of student learning objectives ([see Appendix 2H for proposal form](#)).

### **2.3.18 Course Syllabi and Final Examinations**

Faculty members are required to submit a syllabus and final examination for each course they teach. Copies of all syllabi are to be provided to the Provost at the beginning of the course.

All syllabi are to contain:

- date of the syllabus;
- College name;
- office location, phone number of the instructor;
- course prefix number, title;
- number of credit hours and contact hours; also studio and lab hours, if appropriate;
- course or catalog description;
- course objectives;
- topic outline, where appropriate;
- methods for evaluating student performance;
- texts to be required;
- required reading lists; optional or supplemental readings; and
- attendance policy.

### 2.3.19 Academic Probation and Suspension

*Academic Probation:* Students will be placed on probation when their cumulative grade point average is less than the minimum stated below at the end of the semester. A student in the first three semesters of college attendance shall not, however, be placed on probation as long as the current semester grade point average (GPA) is 2.0 or above.

Starting with the fourth semester of college attendance, the student must achieve the minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to remain in good standing. The student will remain on probation until the student's average is above the minimum indicated and/or until the student's grade point average for a full-time semester of study is 2.0 or more.

Students on academic probation may not enroll in more than 15 semester hours without the consent of the Provost. Although the College may release a student from probation, rules of financial aid are sometimes more stringent. A student may be in good academic standing with the College yet be ineligible for financial aid.

In the event a student receives one or more Incomplete grades, academic standing will be determined by the grade point average in courses completed.

	First Semester Minimum Cumulative GPA	Second Semester Minimum Cumulative GPA
First Year	1.6	1.8
Second Year	1.9	2.0
Third Year	2.0	2.0
Fourth Year	2.0	2.0

Students on academic probation may not participate on any intercollegiate athletic team. Transfer students are expected to meet the standards for both suspension and probation according to the total number of full-time college semesters attempted at all post-secondary institutions, regardless of class standing.

*Academic Suspension:* If a student earns less than a 2.0 average in a given semester and has a cumulative grade point average less than the minimum stated below, the student shall be suspended from the College for at least one semester unless granted readmission by the faculty Committee on Academic Standing, which acts on student petitions specifying extenuating circumstances and plans for academic improvement.

In the event a student receives one or more Incomplete grades, academic standing will be determined by the grade point average in courses completed.

	First Semester Minimum Cumulative GPA	Second Semester Minimum Cumulative GPA
First Year	1.0	1.4
Second Year	1.6	1.8
Third Year	2.0	2.0
Fourth Year	2.0	2.0



A student who receives less than a 1.0 average during a given semester will be suspended at the end of that semester—whether or not on probation during that semester. Students wishing to be readmitted after being on academic suspension must submit an application for readmission (available from the Admissions Office or Records Office). The grade point average earned in Blackburn College coursework will be one of the factors considered by the Committee on Academic Standing when reviewing readmission petitions. Readmission is not guaranteed simply by achieving the minimum cumulative grade point average for good standing based on the number of college semesters completed.

*Passed by Faculty Assembly 4-2022*

### **2.3.20 Administrative Withdrawal Policy**

The Provost, in consultation with the Dean of Students, Dean of Work, and Athletic Director, may administratively withdraw a student who is exhibiting significant problems in one or more areas across campus. Examples include, but are not limited to, lack of serious academic effort, and/or disruptive, abusive, or offensive behavior or actions. Failure to demonstrate a serious academic effort is defined as when in the judgment of the instructor the student's ability to derive a meaningful educational experience with regard to the content and learning objectives of the course is impaired. This may include, but not be limited to, excessive absences, failure to submit homework, complete quizzes, exams, or other classroom based measurements of progress as required by the specific course. Disruptive, abusive, or offensive behavior or actions are defined as those which result in written actions of reports within Student Life, Athletics, or the Work Program.

When such failure is reported to the Provost, the Provost shall communicate with each of the student's instructors to determine whether the student has demonstrated or failed to demonstrate a serious academic effort, as defined above. The Provost will solicit information from the Student Life, Athletics, and Work Program Offices to determine if the student has exhibited disciplinary issues. If a student fails to demonstrate serious academic effort, as defined above, they may be administratively withdrawn from the college by action of the Provost.

Prior to any decision, the Provost will schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the findings and consult with the student about the circumstances and the possible consequences. In the event of an administrative withdrawal, students may lose eligibility for financial aid. Resident students will be required to vacate college housing, and other services, activities, and benefits of enrollment at the college will be terminated. Grades will be assigned in accordance with current withdrawal policies.

In the event of a decision to withdraw a student, the student may, within 24 hours, appeal to the Committee on Academic Standing solely on the basis of procedural error. The Committee may either uphold or reverse the decision of the Provost.

Students administratively withdrawn retain the right to petition the Committee on Academic Standing for readmission in a future semester

### **2.3.21 Faculty Access to Student Academic Records**

*The Legal Guide for Admissions and Records Officers*, published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers specifies the following:

Only those faculty and employees of the educational institution who have "legitimate educational interest" in the student's records should be permitted access.

The interpretation of "legitimate educational interest" is left to the institution and to the person given responsibility for keeping the records to define.

The Guide also states that an "educational institution is liable for the actions of its agents when those agents are acting within the scope of their authority. An employee not acting within the scope of his or her authority can be sued and found personally liable on several accounts."

In order to protect the rights of the students and to enable the Registrar to discharge responsibilities in an ethical manner, the following guidelines will be followed:

- A faculty member who wishes to obtain academic information concerning an individual student should consult the faculty advisor of that student. The advisor is given all pertinent academic information for the student, and should be able to judge the merits of their colleague's request. If the advisor should not have the academic information requested, the faculty member should then prepare a written request, including the specific items of information needed, for the Records Office.
- A faculty member who wishes to obtain academic information for a number of students should prepare a written request for information for the Records Office. This request should be specific in the items of information needed and the students to be researched.
- Written requests for information should be submitted enough in advance to make it possible for the Records Office personnel to collect the information.
- Students' folders will not be made available to faculty members on a routine basis. These folders can contain non-academic information of a confidential nature and should be kept confidential. [See handbook section 1.7.15.](#)

### **2.3.22 Entertaining Students**

As one means of helping faculty members provide opportunities for informal contact with their students, faculty will be reimbursed for expenses they incur in entertaining students. The fund is limited to \$60 per faculty member for the academic year; its use is for entertaining students. The only other restriction is that no alcoholic beverages may be purchased with the College's funds. Faculty will receive reimbursement by completing the usual check request form and forwarding it to their Division Chair. If approved, the Division Chair will forward the signed form to the Office of the Provost for final approval. [Do not turn in requests directly to the Business Office.] *Original receipts must be provided for all purchases.* Students appreciate these expressions of faculty interest. Consider both the student majors you advise and, also, students in your classes.

### **2.3.23 Intellectual Property**

The College supports the development, production, and dissemination of intellectual property by its faculty members. Intellectual property created, made, or originated by a faculty member shall be the sole and exclusive property of the faculty, author, or inventor, except as they may voluntarily choose to transfer such property, in full, or in part. The College shall own a patent or copyright only if

- The College expressly directs a faculty member to create a specified work, or the work is created as a specific requirement of employment or as an assigned institutional duty that may, for example, be included in a written job description or an employment agreement.

- The faculty creator has voluntarily transferred the copyright or patent, in whole or in part to the institution. Such transfer shall be in the form of a written document signed by the faculty creator.
- The College has contributed to a “joint work” under applicable state or federal law. The institution can exercise joint ownership in this way when it has contributed specialized services and facilities to the production of the work that go beyond what is traditionally provided to faculty members generally in the preparation of their course materials. Such an arrangement is to be agreed to in writing prior to the creation of the work in question.

Funds or valuable considerations received by the faculty member from the sale of intellectual property owned by the faculty author or inventor shall be allocated and expended as determined solely by the faculty author or inventor. Funds or valuable considerations received by the College or University from the sale of intellectual property owned by the College shall be allocated and expended as determined solely by the College. Funds or valuable considerations received by the faculty member and the College from the sale of intellectual property owned jointly by the faculty member and the College shall be allocated and expended in accordance with the specific agreement made prior to the creation of the work in question. In the event of multiple creators, the creators will determine the allocation of their individual shares when the work is first undertaken.

### 2.3.24 Definition of a Credit Hour

The following table defines how the student credit hours are determined for the various forms of classes at Blackburn, as required by HLC. The chart specifies the ratio between the clock hours the course meets and the credit hours awarded. For example, a regularly scheduled course meeting three hours per week earns three credit hours: three clock hours x one credit hour per clock hour. An art studio course meeting six clock hours per week will earn three credit hours: 6 hours x 0.5 credit hours per clock hour.

The clock hours are based on the common definition of 50 clock minutes = one clock hour. For every hour of class time typical students will work two hours outside of class for one hour inside of class.

Activity	Clock hours/ week	Credit hours	Notes
Regularly scheduled course	1	1	
Art Studios, AR/WR 468 publication	1	0.5	
Art Review	1	1	Sophomores meet 7 weeks and get one credit (round down)
Computer Science Workshops	1	1	
Class voice or guitar	1	1	Classroom experience
PE activity courses	1	0.5	Exceptions: Bowling 3:1 due to travel time; Basic Fitness 3:2 (round-up)

PEPR, credit for varsity sport participation	Full season	1	
Science labs (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	1	0.4	Round down. Field Bio, Ecology have travel time.
Music lessons, one-on-one private lesson	0.5	1	Very focused
Choir: College or Voices	1	0.4	
Band	1	0.4	
TH 290, 291	45/semester	1	Similar to internship
ED 110 intro. field experience	1	0.5	
Student Teaching	45/semester	1	Similar to internship
Internships	45/semester	1	Immersive experience
Seminars/Capstones			
Project based	45/semester	1	45 hours of work/credit hour
Course based	1	1	As a standard class

### 2.3.25 Program Review

As part of their duty to maintain “high academic standards,” departments will conduct program review as described below.

#### 2.3.25.1 Program Review Purpose

Blackburn College charges all of its departments with program review. Program review is a periodic examination of the current activities, performance, needs, and opportunities for the program in order to develop a strategic plan for the future. The review is carried out in the spirit of collegiality, commitment to supporting the College’s academic programs, and attaining academic excellence, defined as providing the optimal learning experience for our students. The review utilizes a multi-perspective approach to continuous improvement of the student experience: self-analysis by members of the program, external peer review, internal peer review by the Assessment Committee (AC), and response and commitment by the administration.

#### 2.3.25.2 Program Review Process

Academic program reviews will take place on a seven-year cycle in accordance with the schedule shown at the end of this document. Should a department decide to conduct a major revision in the program, the Chair may request that the Program Review be moved forward to coincide with the revision; this will reset the department’s seven-year review timeline. The Department Chair is responsible for the review process. The Chair, working with the department faculty, should conduct a self-study and prepare for the external

reviewers' visit. In addition to attending the orientation meeting, the Department Chair/Program Director should invite other members of the department to attend a program review orientation meeting held early in the fall semester. At the outset of the process and periodically throughout the process, the Department Chair should hold departmental meetings to discuss aspects of the self-study findings and to develop the departmental strategic plan. In addition, the Department Chair and interested faculty should meet monthly with the Provost who will work as a program advocate and provide guidance in the development of the report and strategic plan.

### **2.3.25.3 Program Review Year Timeline**

**August:** Department Chair and department members who will be integrally involved with the review attend the program review orientation meeting. Work begins on the self-study report.

**September:** By September 1, Institutional Research provides the department chair with the Standard Data Package for the department.

**Sept.–Nov.:** The Provost meets periodically with the Department Chair to discuss information provided in the self-study and address any questions or concerns. By October 1, the Provost and Department Chair select external reviewers and issue formal invitations.

**Dec.–Jan.:** By January 15, the Department Chair provides the completed self-study report to the Provost and provides a tentative site visitation schedule to the Chair of the Assessment Committee. Once the self-study is accepted by the Provost, the Chair receives authorization to finalize the site visit dates, including ticket purchase if necessary.

**Feb.–Mar.** Once the self-study is approved and no later than one week prior to the arrival of the external Reviewers, the Chair of the Assessment Committee mails the self-study document, visitation schedule, and campus map to the external reviewers and sends them an electronic copy of the self-study document. External reviewers' site visits are conducted. External reviewers' written report is due two weeks after conclusion of the campus visit.

**April–May:** Department Chair may submit written response to the external review report and/or to the Assessment Committee report.

**April, May, or August:** The President, Provost, Department Chair, and department faculty may meet to discuss program review findings and agree upon the strategic plan moving forward.

In the second and following years after the program review, by August 31 the department chair will submit to the Provost a summary of progress on the departmental strategic plan. This document will be the basis for a conversation with the President and Provost that will be held by the end of September. The purpose of the conversation will be to ensure that both the administration and department uphold their commitments toward the implementation of the strategic plan, and to make mutually agreed-upon modifications when necessary.

### **2.3.25.4 Program Review External Review Process**

Nomination and Selection of External Reviewers: The review team will consist of two external reviewers. At least one must be faculty in a same or similar program at another institution of higher education; the other may be professionally employed in the discipline. In the case of multiple programs being reviewed within a department, a two-person review team will be selected for each program undergoing review. In closely-related programs, a single, three-person external review team may be approved by the Provost. By October 1 of the review year, the Department Chair and Provost will determine the external reviewers and the Provost will issue formal invitations.

As these reviewers provide insight on programs from the perspective of outsiders who have expertise in program content, the Department Chair and Provost should keep the following in mind:

- An external reviewer should hold a terminal degree in the requisite discipline. For programs such as the Work Program, study abroad, and library, the reviewers should have an academic appointment in a comparable position.
- Peer reviewers should be experienced academics who understand College operations and undergraduate education; who are able to realistically evaluate the program's operations, plans for growth and development, and professional activities of faculty members; and who can assess the program's strengths and weaknesses relative to similar programs at other comparable institutions of higher education. However, as in some instances it can be helpful to gain the insight of a reviewer who works in the discipline but outside of academics; thus, one of the external review team members may be a "non-academic."
- Please avoid former mentors or close personal friends of faculty members, as well as former Blackburn employees.
- Normally, reviewers should be selected from institutions within a couple hundred miles of Blackburn.

**Scheduling/Coordination of the Visit:** The Department Chair/Program Director arranges a detailed schedule for the visit. Depending on the size of the department, the reviewers' campus visit generally lasts for 1 to 2 days; both reviewers should be scheduled to visit the campus at the same time. The site visit should include the following:

- Meeting with Provost (early in the first day);
- Immediately prior to or after the meeting with the Provost, completion of IRS W-9 form with Human Resources;
- Meeting with all full-time faculty;
- Meeting with adjuncts and other non-tenure- track faculty;
- Meeting with students in the program;
- Optionally visiting at least one class taught by a member of the program;
- Touring all relevant physical facilities to view facilities, equipment, technology resources and support, and other external resources;
- Visiting with any relevant programs or staff that support the program under review, including library, career services, academic support, international studies (as appropriate); and
- Exit briefing with the Provost and the Department Chair

When beginning to craft the visitation schedule, the Department Chair should consult with the administrative assistant for the Provost to determine appointment times for the reviewers to meet with the Provost. Once the appointments with the Provost have been scheduled, the department chair should complete the visitation schedule. When preparing the schedule, the Department Chair should consult with

the Blackburn colleagues being visited and ensure that each colleague is aware of the time and place of the scheduled meeting or activity. The Department Chair also should ensure that the reviewers are accompanied to, and picked up from, each appointment.

*Travel Arrangements should not be finalized until the program review report has been approved by the Provost.* The Assistant to the Provost, in collaboration with the Department Chair, is responsible for securing lodging for the external evaluators. Reviewers who drive to campus will be reimbursed for mileage at the current standard rate. Should other transportation arrangements be required, the Assistant to the Provost, in collaboration with the Department Chair, is responsible for coordinating/making those arrangements. Travel, lodging, meals, and honorarium expenses will be covered by Academic Affairs.

**Preparing the External Reviewers' Report:** External reviewers should read and analyze the program's self-study *before* the site visit. Informed by this document, they can evaluate the program firsthand while visiting the campus. Following the external reviewers' visit, they should prepare a three- to five-page report for the College. The reviewers will decide whether to submit a single joint report or individual reports; it is understood that submission of individual reports does not necessarily indicate a difference of opinion but may be a matter of convenience. Either way, the report(s) should include:

- **Part I: General Observations and Comments:** Based on an analysis of the self-study and site-visit findings, these observations and comments should address curriculum, assessment and achievement of student learning outcomes, faculty, students, facilities, and allocation of resources.
- **Part II: Strengths of the Program:** Brief summary of what are seen as the program's major strengths
- **Part III: Weaknesses or Internal Challenges Facing the Program:** Brief summary of what are seen as the major weaknesses and/or internal challenges facing the program
- **Part IV: External Threats or Challenges Facing the Program:** Brief summary of what are seen as the major external threats and/or challenges facing the program.
- **Part V: Opportunities for Program Enhancement and/or Growth:** Brief summary of what are seen as the major internal and external opportunities for program improvement.
- **Part VI: Recommendations:** Comments that provide further direction, suggestions to improve any aspect of the program, and recommendations that may or may not require new resources. The report may note recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere.
- **Part VII: Other Relevant Commentary:** Optional—to be included at the discretion of the reviewers.

The external reviewers should submit their written report electronically to the Provost and the Department Chair no later than two weeks after the conclusion of the site visit. The honorarium will be paid upon receipt of the completed report.

The department may submit to the Provost a written response to the External Review.

#### **2.3.25.5 Program Review Self-Study Questions and Format:**

**Externally Accredited Programs:** If the program has undergone a comprehensive self-study for accreditation by an external agency or board within the past five years, then the program should:

1. submit the most recent external accreditation self-study,

2. address only those prompts in this self-study document that are not addressed in the self-study prepared for the department's external accreditors, and
3. respond to the following questions ---
  - What were the outcomes of the last accreditation review?
  - What is the implementation status of any requests made by the external accreditors?
  - When is the next accreditation review?

**Programs That Are Not Externally Accredited:** The program should respond to the following questions. Self-study reports should be *no more than 20* single spaced pages in length exclusive of appendices, font size should not be less than 10, and pages should be numbered.

1. **How do you know you have (a) quality program(s)?** Possible indicators include:
  - Assessment results (including in-house and/or nationally-normed test data such as from an ETS Field Test as applicable),
  - Reports from graduates and/or employers and/or graduate schools, etc.
  - Comparisons of your program(s) with those at peer or aspirant schools (please provide the rationale for selecting the institutions in your comparison group.)
2. **What are the program's current strengths and weaknesses?**
3. **What are the program's challenges and opportunities, especially focused on the next seven years?**
4. **What should the program look like in seven years?**
  - Describe the program faculty's vision for the program.
  - Explain how the goals associated with this vision fit into the College's strategic plan.
  - Outline the strategies the program faculty has for achieving this vision; please affix a time frame for accomplishing each of the strategies.
  - Identify resources needed to implement each strategy and, when possible, suggestions how these resources may be acquired.

**As the program faculty address the strategic vision in the above four questions, consider the following prompts. Please include in your report only those responses which provide important context and/or insight. *Not all the prompts below need to be addressed.***

1. Program Demand & Enrollments
  - What evidence is there to demonstrate current or future demand for the program?
  - What are current and anticipated enrollments?
  - Is the program offered at the level necessary to demand? Could a minor fulfill the needs and mission of the college and its constituents?
  - What are the enrollments in the program's courses that are required for other programs? I.e. – do other major, minor, or general education requirements add enrollments to your program's courses?
  - How is academic advising used to support student success?
2. Program Characteristics & Requirements
  - What is the percentage of instruction covered by adjuncts or part-time faculty?
  - What is the overall level of preparation of the students who enter the program?



- What percentage of students who enter the program successfully complete it? How many of your new majors graduate within 4 and 6 years?
- How is the curriculum regularly reviewed for scope, sequence, and integration of student learning from start to finish?
- To what degree has the program taken advantage of advances in technology to support and enhance learning?
- How current are any equipment and materials necessary to support the program?
- What is the degree of modernization of laboratories or facilities needed to ensure that students in the program are well prepared?
- How adequate are library and related resources available to support the program?
- Is the critical mass of faculty and staff available to ensure that the program can provide the learning opportunities they are promised?
- What specific resources would be required to bring the program to the next level of quality (competitive with aspirant programs)?

### 3. Program Size & Outcomes

- How many students does the program serve?
- How many faculty members directly contribute to the program?
- How many staff and student workers directly contribute to the program?
- How many majors, minors, or certificates have students earned in the program in the past 5 years?
- How successful are program graduates in obtaining employment in their field of study?
- How successful are program graduates in seeking admission to graduate and professional school?
- How well do program faculty perform on measures of teaching effectiveness?
- In what scholarly, creative, or service activities do program faculty engage that bring recognition to the program and the college?
- How clear and strong is the evidence that majors are gaining the knowledge and skills defined as essential for the major? (Include assessment data from all components of the program, including samples of senior seminar projects.)

### 4. Program & College Mission

- How central is this program to the mission of the college?
- How is this program related to the success of other programs?
- Does the program provide unique opportunities or services to the larger community served by the college?
- Does the program help distinguish the college from peer or competitor institutions?

### 5. Program Opportunities

- What opportunities for improvement and strengthening not yet achieved or considered by the college are possible for this program?
- Could restructuring improve or strengthen the program (e.g. combining or collaborating in new ways with other programs, including programs at other institutions)?
- What is the best and most realistic scenario for the future of the program to maximize its potential to serve students and distinguish the college under current circumstances?
- How have assessment results been used to strengthen student learning or adapt to student needs? Examples might include curriculum revisions; changes in pedagogy; changes in course sequencing; modification and/or additions to student learning outcomes; or increased emphasis on specific knowledge, skill, and/or attitude development.

**Appendices:** Appendices must include the following:

- Degree Planning Sheets
- The full Institutional Research data package showing course enrollments, academic advising loads, numbers of majors/minors, and number of graduates with a major or minor in the program for the last five years. For programs offering multiple specializations, please show the number of graduates with a major or minor in each specialization offered.
- Course substitutions for the last five years (or for the number of years that can be provided, not to exceed five years).
- Your program’s most recent assessment plan and annual assessment report.
- Current curriculum vitae of full-time faculty.
- If applicable, collaborative or articulation agreements for your program with other colleges or universities
- If applicable, a list of Advisory Council members, noting their profession/occupation and employer.

The self-study may include additional materials in the appendices, but please clearly indicate their relevance to the program review.

### ***Tentative Program Review Schedule***

Department	Cycle 1						Cycle 2						
	Prior PR	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	2020 -21	2021 -22
Art			X								X		
Biology			X									X	
Business & Economics	2007							X					
Chemistry & Physics				X									
Communications						X							X
Computer Science					X							X	
Leadership Education	2010 ?								X				
English						X							X
General Education				X								x	
History	2010							X					
Math				X								X	
Performing Arts	2008								X				
Philosophy & Religion	2008							X					
Physical Education	2010								X				

Justice Administrati on & Political Science	2010									X PS	X JA		
Psychology	2009									X			
Spanish	2010									X			

*Approved by Faculty Assembly 10-20*