

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Office of Academic Affairs

312 Old Main
Laramie, WY 82071-3036
307.766.4286 • fax: 307.766.2606 • allen@uwyo.edu

To: College Deans
From: Myron Allen
Subject: Conversion of employees in academic –professional positions
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Within the past year, several department- and college-level administrators have raised questions about converting employees who are in academic-professional ranks to tenured or tenure-track faculty ranks. To treat employees fairly and consistently, it is necessary to have some general policy, instead of answering the questions case by case. This memo states the policy.

For purposes of this document, academic professional ranks include all lecturers, research scientists, extension educators, and postdoctoral associates. Faculty ranks include instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

The University does not generally allow conversions of employees from academic-professional positions to faculty positions. And there is no mechanism for accomplishing such a conversion via promotion. The institution's policy is to hire people into tenured or tenure-track faculty positions through national or international searches, targeting candidates who are outstanding teachers and scholars and who hold the terminal degrees in their fields.

Academic professionals are welcome to apply for any open faculty position in which there is such a search, and hiring committees are free to consider these applications and to weigh their merits against those of other applicants.

Most requests for conversion involve cases that are exceptional in some sense. They may involve extraordinary performance, anomalies associated with positions occupied before the adoption of UniReg 408, or other unusual features. The fact that a case is exceptional is not, by itself, sufficient to circumvent policy. As a rule, the institution's imperative to maintain fair, equitable, and consistently applied hiring practices outweighs its interest in resolving anomalies and exceptions through the vehicle of further exceptions.