

Guidelines for Consideration of UNTF Faculty for “Designation B” Status

According to the terms of the contract between MSU and the Union of Nontenure-track Faculty (UNTF), fixed term faculty members who are members of the UNTF may apply to be considered for “Designation B” status during “the first month of the eighth or subsequent semester of teaching employment within seven years of the first of these semesters in a given employing unit.”

A Designation B appointment is predicated on exemplary instructional performance in UNTF bargaining unit assigned teaching duties. If Designation B approval is granted, subsequent UNTF appointments would have a duration of five years. Details can be found in the [UNTF contract](#) and the relevant MSU policies and procedures can be found here: [Designation B MSU Policies & Procedures](#).

This document specifies the criteria and procedures used by the College of Natural Science and its affiliated units in reviewing applications for Designation B status. Since UNTF appointments are exclusively associated with teaching, the focus of the review is on teaching excellence.

The criteria for teaching excellence used by College of Natural Science and its affiliated units are the same as those used in evaluating the classroom teaching performance of tenure-system faculty as described in the [“Guidelines for Faculty Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure in the College of Natural Science at Michigan State University”](#). Additional information can be found by reviewing the [Teaching Evaluation Guidelines](#).

Procedural Overview

1. As per [MSU policy](#) for all faculty, candidates must use unit-approved student instructional ratings forms (or online equivalent) in all classes (every course, every section, every semester), and make these forms available to the unit for collection and analysis.
2. Candidates are expected to maintain a Teaching Portfolio (as defined below) that provides evidence of teaching excellence.
3. The candidate must submit their completed Form B and associated materials to their unit administrator by the designated semester deadline (Fall: September 30; Spring: January 31).
4. Unit administrators can employ an appropriate review committee for advice in making a recommendation to the NatSci Dean. In this case, the candidate must be provided the opportunity to meet with the review committee prior to it making a recommendation. Recommendations of the review committee are forwarded to the unit administrator.
5. If no review committee is used, the candidate must be provided with an opportunity to meet with the unit administrator before a recommendation is provided to the NatSci Dean.
6. Unit administrators must provide a recommendation to the NatSci Dean by October 12th (Fall) or February 20th (Spring). The recommendation should be recorded on the cover page of Form B. The recommendation should summarize the assessment of the teaching record of the candidate including an analysis of the student evaluations and the candidate’s teaching portfolio. The statement should be included as letter added to the end of Form B as detailed below. Forward completed packets to the NatSci Dean at natsci.rpt@msu.edu.

7. The unit administrator must also send a copy of the recommendation to the candidate at this time. The candidate will have 3 business days to provide a response directly to the Dean's office (natsci.rpt@msu.edu) if they choose.
8. The NatSci Dean's Office will review the case and make the recommendation to the Office of the Provost by the appropriate semester deadline (Nov. 1st or Mar. 15th).
9. The Office of the Provost will make a final decision on Designation B status by the corresponding semester deadline (Nov. 30th or Apr. 15th).

Form B Materials

Completed packets must include the following pieces in the order listed. Each item listed should be bookmarked in the final packet. Items A-D are part of the Form B. Items E-I should be added after Form B. ***The total packet is limited to 84 pages inclusive of all items listed below.***

- A. Recommendation For Designation B Appointment Form (Form B)
- B. Undergraduate and Graduate Credit Instruction
- C. UNTF Non-Credit Instruction
- D. List of Instructional Works
- E. Evidence of Teaching Excellence (see next page)
- F. Reflective Essay (no more than 5 pages, see next page)
- G. Curriculum Vita
- H. All Annual Reviews
- I. Summary Evaluation by the Department Chairperson or School Director

Approved by the NatSci Faculty Advisory Council: 11/21/2013
UNTF updates, due dates, DEI: 01/03/2022
Clarification and updates: 08/16/2023

Evidence of Teaching Excellence

Evidence of Teaching Excellence must minimally include, (1) complete summary of student evaluations, (2) instructional materials that demonstrate excellence and (3) Peer Observation. Additional materials that provide evidence of teaching excellence are welcome as long as the entire Designation B document does not exceed the 84-page limit.

A Defined Teaching Portfolio

Past instructions have recommended including a teaching portfolio and this is certainly an acceptable approach to demonstrate teaching excellence. We also encourage you to consider including a “defined” teaching portfolio as described herein. This approach is aligned with the NatSci Reflection on Student Learning and can be used to highlight an example of teaching excellence. The syllabus for the course should be included and the candidate will select a single learning objective upon which to focus. This defined portfolio provides reviewers with a more complete understanding of the candidate’s approach to teaching and learning. It also offers a platform for reflection, which is a key component of teaching excellence. This can be done for more than one learning objective or course, space permitting. Candidates who choose to use this approach should address the following prompts.

- What is the learning objective that will be the focus of the portfolio? How does this learning objective fit within your broader course learning goals that are specified on your syllabus and the broader curriculum in your unit?
- In what ways do you engage students in learning related to achieving this learning objective? In other words, what do you do (classroom, recitation, or laboratory activities; homework; report or paper; oral or poster presentation...) to help students learn the content, scientific or mathematical practices, and/or skills related to this objective? *Include at least one specific example of materials in the portfolio.*
- How do you provide formative feedback to students about their progress on this learning objective? Formative assessment with feedback can be thought of as an opportunity for students to practice using a skill or concept and then receive guidance from peers or instructors. Students may or may not get credit for these efforts, but the goal is to ensure that they have opportunities to practice using a critical skill or concept and obtain feedback prior to experiencing it on an exam or other high-stakes summative assessment. *Include at least one specific example of materials in the portfolio.*
- How do you assess students’ progress and achievement on this learning objective? Here, assessments may be formative or summative, low- or high-stakes (e.g., clicker questions, activities during class, recitation, or laboratory, quizzes, exams, papers, homework, oral/poster presentations, etc.). In other words, how do you measure students’ performance on this objective? *Include at least one specific example of materials in the portfolio.*
- What does the evidence tell you about the extent to which students have achieved the learning objective?

As noted, written responses to the prompts should be accompanied by the supporting materials including examples of instructional materials, formative assessments, and summative assessments.

Reflective Statement

The Designation B reflective statement provides an opportunity for candidates to describe their teaching philosophy and how they enact it in the classes they teach. Candidates should reflect on their specific efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in their approach to teaching and learning, citing specific examples. The statement should also include a description of professional development and how the candidate plans to continue their growth as an educator.