Lecturer and Senior Lecturer
Guidelines for Appointment, Reappointment and Promotion

The mission of Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of Education and Human Development has, from its founding as Davidson Academy in 1785, included teaching as an essential element. In 1990, Peabody’s faculty reaffirmed this priority by adopting the following statement:

The mission of Peabody College is threefold: the creation of reliable knowledge about the process of education and human development; the translation of reliable knowledge into excellent practices to address critical problems in education and human development; and the preparation of students at all levels to seek, create, use, and adapt reliable knowledge in the course of their chosen careers.

Peabody faculty who are appointed with the titles Lecturer and Senior Lecturer are vital contributors to the third strand of Peabody’s mission: the preparation of students.

The purpose of this document is to specify procedures for the initial appointment of Lecturers and Senior Lecturers, for their reappointment, and for promotion from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer.

Distinctions between Lecturer and Senior Lecturer

According to the *Faculty Manual*¹,

The titles Lecturer and Senior Lecturer designate teaching appointments that are not within the normal promotion sequence from Instructor to Professor. Lecturers may be part time or full time and are appointed for terms of no more than one year. Senior Lecturers may hold part-time or full-time teaching positions and may be appointed for terms of no more than three years. Further differences between the two categories may be stipulated by a school with the approval of the Chancellor.

Within Peabody, the two titles are differentiated from one another as follows:

**Lecturer in _________** is a position for which a doctorate is preferred but not required. While expertise in the subject matter to be taught is essential, neither a record of scholarship nor seniority is required. In addition to teaching, a Lecturer’s responsibilities may include student advisement, program development activities, and service. Ordinarily, no administrative duties are included. Lecturers may be part time or full time and are appointed for terms of no more than one year.

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Senior Lecturer in _________ is a position for which a doctorate is required. In addition to demonstrating a capacity for highly effective teaching, individuals appointed at this level typically have senior professional standing in relevant specialty areas and/or records of scholarship. Senior Lecturers may fill administrative roles in addition to performing the duties of Lecturer mentioned above. Senior Lecturers may hold part time or full time positions and may be appointed for terms of up to three years.

Procedures for Initial Appointment

Authorization to fill positions with title of Lecturer or Senior Lecturer must be obtained from the dean.

Lecturer. Recruitment for Lecturer appointments may proceed without the involvement of a search committee. Invitations to candidates to visit the campus may be extended only upon authorization of the dean. Affirmative action goals are central to the deliberations in any recruitment effort.

The file compiled for a candidate recommended for at least half-time appointment must include (a) the candidate’s curriculum vitae, (b) at least three letters of reference from persons (who may be internal to Vanderbilt University), and (c) appropriate evidence of teaching ability. No letters are required for candidates to be employed less than half time.

As specified in Peabody’s Procedural Guidelines for Appointment, Renewal, Promotion and Tenure, the appointment of a Lecturer may be recommended to the dean without a faculty vote. The department chair forwards his or her recommendation to the dean, who decides whether to accept the recommendation as presented. University policy limits the length of a Lecturer’s appointment to a maximum of one year.

Senior Lecturer. Recruitment for half- to full-time Senior Lecturer appointments requires a search committee appointed by the dean in consultation with the relevant department chair(s). Affirmative action goals are central to the deliberations in any recruitment effort. No search committee is required for the recruitment of Senior Lecturers to be employed less than half-time.

The file compiled for a candidate recommended for an appointment of half-time or more must include (a) the candidate’s curriculum vitae, (b) the summarized recommendation of the search committee, (c) at least three letters of reference, and (d) appropriate evidence of teaching ability. Those appointed half-time or more as Senior Lecturer must be recognized for their performance by intra- and extramural reviewers. No letters are required for candidates to be employed less than half-time.

As required by Peabody’s Procedural Guidelines, the search committee forwards to the chair of the department (a) the files of those identified as the top three candidates, (b) the
files of the highest ranking female and highest ranking minority candidate, and (c) its recommendation. The chair of the department reviews the search committee report, adds her or his recommendation, and transmits both recommendations together with the files to the dean. The dean decides whether to accept the recommendations as presented. Invitations to candidates to visit the campus may be extended only upon authorization of the dean.

Initial approval of the proposed appointment by a simple majority of the department’s voting faculty is required. All full-time faculty with titles other than Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Professor, and Visiting __________ are eligible to vote at this stage.

Appointment as Senior Lecturer (rather than Lecturer) requires approval by a simple majority of the department’s faculty above the rank of instructor and with titles other than Research Associate Professor, Research Professor, and Visiting __________. Senior Lecturers also are eligible to participate in this second vote.

The department chair forwards the candidate file, the results of the department vote, and his or her own recommendation to the dean, who decides whether to accept the recommendation as presented. The maximum length of a Senior Lecturer’s appointment is three years.

**Procedures for Reappointment**

The performance of persons with Lecturer and Senior Lecturer titles will be evaluated by criteria consistent with the summary of duties provided at the time of hire or during the most recent term of appointment or review. These factors may include, but are not limited to, (a) teaching, (b) student advisement, (c) program development, (d) service, and (e) administration.

Specific weighting of factors will be indicated at the time of appointment, reviewed annually in consultation with appointees, and confirmed in a letter (the summary of duties) from the department chair to the Lecturer or Senior Lecturer not later than May 31st of each year.

Lecturers will be notified of renewal or non-renewal as early as possible, and in any case, prior to June 1. Absent such notification, the appointment is terminated. Senior Lecturers will be notified of renewal or non-renewal prior to June 1 of the penultimate year of their current appointment.

Lecturers and Senior Lecturers who are reappointed must be provided (typically, by the department chair) a detailed letter providing formative feedback that facilitates the faculty member’s professional development. This counseling letter should identify areas of strength to sustain, areas for improvement, and, if applicable, an evaluation of whether or not the faculty member is on track for promotion and what the faculty member would
need to accomplish in order to be a strong candidate for promotion. A copy of each formative feedback letter must be included in the practice or clinical faculty member’s file.

**Lecturers.** The contract renewal for a Lecturer is based upon an expedited review conducted by the chair of the department. The review should include consideration of teaching ratings as well as comments of advisees and faculty colleagues. Each Lecturer’s performance evaluation must take into account the weighting of criteria specified in the summary of duties mentioned above. Because the maximum length of a Lecturer’s appointment is one year, expedited reviews of performance occur annually.

The results of the performance evaluation and the department chair’s recommendation are summarized in a letter to the dean, who decides whether to accept the recommendation as presented.

**Senior Lecturers.** A full review of the performance of a Senior Lecturer must be conducted in the penultimate year of his or her first appointment. This review is conducted by a faculty committee appointed by the department chair in consultation with the dean. Each Senior Lecturer’s performance evaluation must take into account the weighting of criteria specified in the summary of duties mentioned above and, at a minimum, must include consideration of teaching ratings, feedback from advisees, and comments of faculty colleagues. If a Senior Lecturer’s duties include administrative responsibilities, the performance evaluation also must take into account feedback from persons who are knowledgeable about performance in this role. The review committee presents its report to the faculty of the department who are eligible to vote on the reappointment.

Beginning with the first reappointment, expedited performance reviews (conducted by the department chair) alternate with full reviews. Thus, the performance of a Senior Lecturer will be reviewed by a faculty committee in the penultimate year of his or her first three-year appointment, by the department chair in the penultimate year of his or her second three-year appointment, by a faculty committee in the penultimate year of his or her third three-year appointment, by the department chair in the penultimate year of his or her fourth three-year appointment, and so on.

Reappointment requires approval by a simple majority of the department’s faculty above the rank of instructor and with titles other than Research Associate Professor, Research Professor, and Visiting ________ . Senior Lecturers also are eligible to vote.

The department chair forwards the review report (if a committee was involved), the results of the faculty vote, and his or her own recommendation to the dean, who decides whether to accept the recommendation as presented.
Procedures for Promotion

A candidate for promotion to Senior Lecturer should have accumulated a record of excellent teaching, success in advising students, substantial contributions to academic program development, satisfactory service, and (if applicable) effective administration. While positive professional impact beyond Vanderbilt University is not a prerequisite for promotion to Senior Lecturer, indications of such impact are regarded as further evidence of eligibility for promotion.

The promotion review is conducted by a faculty committee appointed by the department chair in consultation with the dean. The review must take into account the weighting of criteria specified in the summary of duties mentioned above.

Data that should be considered in the promotion review include, but are not limited to, a statement (of no more than five single-spaced typewritten pages) from the candidate, the candidate’s current CV, student evaluations of teaching; peer observations of teaching by a minimum of two peers; feedback from advisees; letters from internal reviewers regarding performance in administrative roles (if applicable), program development, and special assignments; scholarly products directly related to duties as Lecturer; and (if applicable) letters from external reviewers. The names of prospective reviewers—both internal and, if applicable, external—must be submitted to the dean before letters from them are requested, and a standard template (supplied by the Dean’s Office) must be used for the cover letter that accompanies materials (candidate’s statement and CV; scholarly products, if applicable) distributed to reviewers.

The review committee presents its report to the departmental faculty who are eligible to vote on the promotion. Those eligible to vote include faculty above the rank of instructor and with titles other than Research Associate Professor, Research Professor, and Visiting ________. Senior Lecturers also are eligible to vote.

The department chair forwards the review committee report, the results of the faculty vote, and his or her own recommendation to the dean, who decides whether to accept the recommendation as presented.

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2 For example, letters from external reviewers could confirm the faculty member’s effectiveness in working with personnel in outside organizations or other professional impact outside Vanderbilt.