



## **THE TENURE TRACK SYSTEM FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH PERSONNEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU**

The University of Turku has a tenure track system for teaching and research personnel. The purpose of the system is to increase the predictability, competitiveness and attractiveness of the academic career as well as to advance the University's internationalisation. The goal is to find the most talented, suitable and motivated persons amidst ever-intensifying national and international competition.

In the tenure track system, a person is recruited at first for a fixed-term employment relationship as an assistant professor, during which their work is followed and evaluated by the criteria defined at recruitment. Success in the evaluation leads to a new fixed-term employment relationship and the aim is obtaining the tenure of a professor.

### **SELECTION PROCEDURE**

Tenure track positions must support the University's strategy and its focus areas. The Rector decides which of the proposed positions can be filled through the tenure track system. The title is Assistant Professor (I phase) or Associate Professor (II phase). The title is not used in any other positions than those of the tenure track system.

A person selected for the post of assistant or associate professor must possess an appropriate doctoral degree, ability to conduct independent scientific work and experience in management of scientific research. In addition, the person must have evidence of international co-operation in his or her field of study, and the ability to provide high-quality teaching based on research and to supervise theses and dissertations.

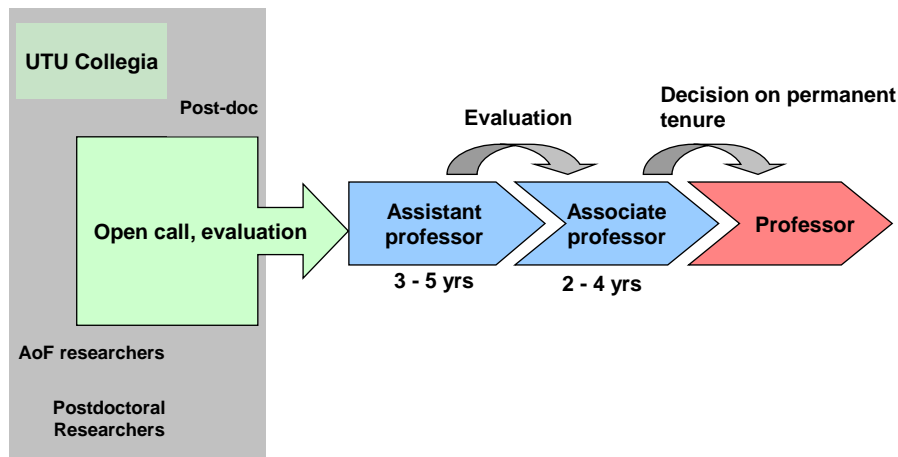
The positions are mainly meant for researchers who are past the postdoc phase. When selecting a person for the I phase, especially academic potential and motivation for an academic career are taken into consideration. When selected for II phase, the associate professor should already have significant scientific merits and clear potential for the tenure of a professor.

The positions are advertised nationally and internationally. The purpose is that the unit wishing to recruit is active and spreads the information by using its own international networks.

The tenure track is formed of two fixed-term employment relationships, first as an assistant professor, second as an associate professor, and after that the tenure of a professor. A person can also be recruited directly to the second phase, depending on the career stage of the applicant.



## Tenure track at the University of Turku



Tenure track positions are filled with an open call for applications. In the recruitment phase, the same procedure is in use as when filling the post of a professor. If an open call is not organised, it has to be separately justified and the invitation procedure for filling the post of a professor is followed in filling the tenure track position where applicable. Using the invitation procedure always requires the Rector's permission.

The dean appoints a preparatory group for the selection process, where 3–5 professors or other members of the teaching and research staff are invited. Optionally, also other members can be invited to the group. When using the invitation procedure, a preparatory group can be established when necessary.

The preparatory group first makes a *pre-selection of the applicants* based on the information presented in the application and its appendices. After this, the preparatory group obtains expert statements on the scientific merits of the top applicants chosen through the pre-selection process and takes care of the other practical arrangements related to the selection process, for example, the interviews of top applicants.

The final selection decision is made by the Rector by the proposal of the faculty council.

### JOB DESCRIPTION

A professor shall carry out and supervise scientific work, give education based on it and follow developments in science and participate in societal interaction and international cooperation in his or her field (Universities Act, Section 33).

The job description of those on the tenure track is agreed on individually in the annual performance appraisals; however, the University's policies must be followed. Mentors are appointed for the assistant and associate professors and they will conduct the performance appraisals and agree with



the assistant/associate professor about the goals on advancing in the tenure track. The supervisor can act as the mentor, but the mentor can also be another senior colleague. With the tenure track, the University offers the recruits a career path that, through regular evaluations, enables them to proceed to the post of a professor in their field. The work is followed and evaluated regularly so granting a discretionary leave of absence for a person in the position of an assistant/associate professor is possible only for a very compelling reason.

Of the total working time of an assistant/associate professor in a tenure track position, two-thirds is research work. In the University's tenure track system, all the assistant and associate professor both teach and conduct research. Education at the University of Turku is strongly based on research and the assistant and associate professors are required to participate in the planning of education as well as in the teaching in their own field. The position includes 20–30 % teaching, including supervising scientific postgraduate studies and final theses and dissertations. The third share of working time can involve other activities in the scientific community. The shares described above can be deviated from if career progress requires other kind of emphasis on the content of the work.

## **EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

Those advancing on the University's tenure track take part in evaluations that concern advancing on the tenure track (decision on hiring for another period as an assistant professor, the evaluation before the tenure of a professor). The evaluation of an assistant professor selected for a tenure track position is done well in advance, approximately a year before the first 3–5 year fixed-term employment relationship ends. If the evaluation criteria for the performance are fulfilled, the individual is selected for another 2–4 year period as an associate professor. A year before the end of the second fixed-term employment relationship, a more extensive evaluation required for the tenure of a professor is carried out, where external evaluators are used as well.

When recruiting for and evaluating the position of an assistant/associate professor, attention is paid primarily to the scientific potential and quality. The evaluation is carried out as an overall evaluation. The University's faculties can have discipline-specific criteria that specify and complement the University's guideline.

### **Evaluation criteria**

The evaluation criteria used in the tenure track system are based on the principles of predictability, transparency and international comparability. In the tenure track system, performance is evaluated in three categories:

1. research merits
2. teaching, and
3. academic leadership and societal interaction.

To be employed as a tenured professorship, top performance is required in research and teaching and the other categories under evaluation. The evaluation is carried out taking into account all three categories. In addition, the University's Strategy and values are taken into account in all tenure track evaluations. The decisions on advancing on the tenure track are made based on the performance evaluation.



The applicants for tenure track positions and the personnel advancing on the tenure track are evaluated based on performance, for example, with the following criteria:

### **Scientific research**

- research plan; current situation, vision and aims
- scientific production and the impact factor of the research
  - publications in international peer-reviewed forums
  - scientific citations
  - other research publications (books, chapters in books)
  - ongoing research
  - plenary presentations and other high impact presentations such as invited presentations, keynote presentations etc.
  - scientific articles/tools (software etc.)
- scientific cooperation and external research grants
  - the concrete results of the cooperation: joint articles, joint funding etc.
- other merits

### **Teaching**

- teaching experience
  - tasks and responsibilities related to educational development
- supervising doctoral dissertations, teaching and learning materials, teaching methods
  - use and development
- pedagogical training
  - pedagogical studies and/or teaching demonstrations
  - an account of continuous professional self-development
- recognitions and evaluations of pedagogical competence
- feedback from students and teachers
- students' learning outcomes, grants and other recognitions
- teaching networks and teaching co-operation on different levels (at the University, nationally, internationally)

### **Academic leadership and societal interaction**

- activities in the research community
  - organising conferences
  - editing publications
  - significant evaluation tasks
  - membership in academic communities
- academic leadership
  - leading a research group
  - managerial work / preparedness for managerial work
  - management training and leadership



- activities in work community
- societal interaction and cooperation with interest groups
  - societal visibility (e.g. expert tasks, book projects, visibility in media)
  - patents and other commercial rights, significant new methods etc.
  - other co-operation

Rector

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