DEFINITIONS

Above Scale or Special Salary. The professorial status that is above Professor, Step IX.

Acceleration in time. Advancement in step that takes place prior to normal eligibility. Acceleration in time is only undertaken for retention purposes or in other exceptional circumstances.

Acceleration in step. Advancement that moves the candidate up the ladder more than one step in a review period of normal length. Examples: Advancement from Associate Professor, Step III, to Associate Professor, Step IV.5, or to Associate Professor, Step V. Please note that two-step merit increases are rarely awarded at any level, and that they are less common at the higher ranks and steps than at the lower.

Advancement. A broad term that includes merit-based salary increases, step increases, regularizations, and promotions.

Appointment. Refers to initial employment only.

Appraisal, mid-career (or fourth-year). A review intended to arrive at a preliminary assessment of an assistant professor’s prospects for promotion to tenure. It is carried out at the beginning of the seventh semester, and while it is often coupled with a merit review, the merit-review cycle is sometimes out of sync with the mid-career review. Occasionally a mid-career appraisal will result in preparation of a tenure case.

Appraisal, final. A review carried out in an assistant professor’s eleventh semester. A final appraisal must include a detailed examination of the candidate’s eligibility for tenure. Three outcomes are possible: a recommendation for promotion to tenure; a recommendation for denial of tenure; or (less commonly) a recommendation to delay the tenure decision for a year. Please note that a recommendation to delay the tenure decision must be based on review materials that include external letters of evaluation, and that it should include evidence supporting a prediction that the delayed decision will be positive.

Deceleration. When a faculty member advances at a pace less than one step for each normal review period, his or her advancement is decelerated.

Decoupled salary. Any salary that is higher than the salary for the rank and step. A “decoupled” increment is the difference between actual salary and the salary associated with rank and step. Note: salary associated with fractions of step (indicated by “.5” and “.9”) does not count as decoupled.
Five-year review. A mandatory review. Every faculty member’s record in research, teaching, and service must be reviewed at least every five years, even if no advancement is to be recommended. In very special circumstances, a one-year delay may be granted.

Merit increase. An advancement within rank that involves an increase in step or in above-scale increment. Examples: advancement from Associate Professor, Step IV, to Associate Professor, Step IV.5, or to Associate Professor, Step V; or a one-increment merit increase within Special Salary.

“One hundred below.” Current policy restricts this option to the steps at the top of the Assistant and Associate ranks. Assistant Professors may occupy Step VI.9; this carries with it a salary $100 below that of Associate Professor, Step III. Associate Professors may occupy Step V.9, with a salary $100 below that of Professor, Step III. (See Overlapping steps.)

Overlapping steps. Assistant Professor, Step V, overlaps with Associate Professor, Step I, and Assistant Professor, Step VI, overlaps with Associate Professor, Step II. Associate Professor, Step IV, overlaps with Professor, Step I, and Associate Professor, Step V, overlaps with Associate Professor, Step II. The overlapping salary at the higher rank is $100 higher than that at the lower rank.

A promotion to the closest overlapping step is a “lateral” promotion; most promotions involve recognition of previously uncredited accomplishments and thus should not be merely lateral. So, for example, a promotion from Assistant Professor, Step V, would normally be to Associate Professor, Step II.

Promotion. Advancement within a single title from one rank to the next, e.g., from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, or from Associate Professor to Professor. Advancement from step to step within rank is not termed a “promotion,” nor is advancement to Special Salary.

Redaction. In academic personnel cases, the redaction of an ad hoc committee report consists in the removal of the names of the committee members; and the redaction of an external letter of recommendation consists in removing the signature block, the information typically found in the letterhead, and any information supplied below the signature block. In reporting on departmental evaluation, chairs should not refer to individuals by name but should supply a sheet matching names to designations such as “Discussant #1” or “External reviewer A.”

Regularization. Advancement from an Acting title to a regular title, e.g., from Acting Assistant Professor to Assistant Professor. Occasionally a faculty member will be appointed as Acting Associate Professor or Acting Professor, which are not tenured positions. Thus regularization in these cases includes a tenure review.

Step. A level of accomplishment within a rank. In theory, all faculty members at the same rank and step have reached comparable levels of accomplishment.