

Hiring, Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Processes for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

The university's academic and intellectual leadership, headed by the Chancellor (in consultation with the Deans, Department Heads, and the tenured and tenure-track faculty) drives all hiring and Reappointment, Tenure¹ and Promotion (RTP) processes. This process is overseen by the Academic Council, which approves all hiring and all RTP packages. All hiring and RTP processes are ratified by the Comision Gestora (CG).

All hiring and RTP processes involve the constitution of a committee of tenured and/or tenure-track faculty chaired by a senior faculty member who is responsible for producing a committee report. The committee and the committee chair are selected by the Dean, the Department Head, and by the departmental faculty. The committee report recommends a specific action.

The report is presented to the departmental faculty and subsequently to the faculty of the entire School for a vote. Following these two faculty meetings, the Dean adds his or her recommendation and forwards the package to the Academic Council. The Dean presents the entire case to the Academic Council for discussion, vote, and approval (or rejection). The recommendation of the Academic Council is forwarded by the Rector and the CG for final approval.

The following sections describe in detail all of the above-mentioned steps and provide information about the differences and peculiarities which make up each of the specific processes (hiring, reappointment, promotion in rank, and granting of tenure).

I. SEARCHING FOR AND HIRING TENURED and TENURE-TRACK FACULTY

The Chancellor retains the ultimate responsibility for understanding the overall hiring needs of the university and for requesting the funds from the Rector, who is Yachay Tech's head fundraiser. The Chancellor is also responsible for consulting with the Deans to determine the needs of each School and for optimally and wisely distributing the available resources to the Schools so that they can properly respond to their future needs.

Following the distribution of resources to the Schools, the Deans consult with the Department Heads and identify specific areas for hiring, taking into account the advice of the tenured and tenure-track faculty. Once the areas for hiring are identified, the Dean presents detailed descriptions of the expected faculty searches to the Chancellor for final approval.

The goal of the search process is to find and recruit world-class faculty to become members of the Yachay Tech academic community. The authority for hiring tenure-track faculty rests with the Chancellor, the Rector, and the Academic Council, but the responsibility for recruiting and evaluating these potential faculty lies with the resident disciplinary experts — Yachay Tech's in-place tenured and tenure-track faculty.

The Deans, the Department Heads, and the departmental faculty members are responsible for finding and persuading world-class scholars to become part of the Yachay Tech community. This involves making prospective faculty members feel comfortable and welcomed at Yachay, answering their questions, informing them about the strengths and accomplishments of our university and its faculty, and educating them about the distinct regional culture and about Yachay Tech's mission, academic values, ambition, and unique place in higher education in Ecuador and the world.

¹ Yachay Tech University does not yet have a tenure policy. But, the university has been granted authority to draft such a policy and present it to the Ministry for approval. We are actively pursuing this opportunity. Once the policy is completed and approved, Yachay Tech will be the first university in Ecuador to grant tenure. In the interim, all research-focused faculty at Yachay are hired as tenure-track faculty with annually renewable contracts. This document details the procedures for recruiting and hiring such faculty.

The specific steps of the faculty hiring process are outline below. Once the Chancellor has received a budget from the Rector that includes tenured and tenure-track faculty positions and — in consultation with the Academic Council — has determined how those positions will be distributed among the Schools and Departments, the process may proceed in one of two ways: faculty may be recruited and hired through a search process or the Dean may request an "opportunity hire." As noted in the following sections, Yachay Tech faculty may be hired as tenure-track or with tenure.

HIRING via a SEARCH PROCESS

This process typically takes up to a full academic year, starting with the selection and approval of the search committee and the posting of an advertisement for the position — typically in early- or mid-Fall — and culminating with the hiring of the candidate.

1. The Dean receives approval from the Chancellor to proceed with a specific faculty search.
2. The Dean authorizes a search by providing the Department Head with a one-page (maximum) memo that includes a description of the intellectual area and expected rank. The memo also instructs the Department Head to proceed with the search.
3. *The Search Committee*
 - A. The Department Head, in consultation with the Dean, selects a chair of the search committee from among the tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty. The chair of the search committee solicits nominations to the committee from the departmental faculty. The number of nominations should be at least one more than the number of available committee slots. The Department Head selects the committee members from the list of nominations provided by the faculty.

Search committees should consist of 4 faculty members and the committee chair, all of whom must be tenured or tenure-track. One of the search committee members may be from outside the department. If the appointment is to be offered at the rank of Assistant Professor (tenure-track), all tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on the search committee and vote on the case. For more senior appointments, only faculty of rank and tenure status equal to or above the level of the proposed appointment may serve and vote.

In departments with fewer than 4 tenured and tenure-track faculty members, the search committee shall consist of all eligible tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty, including the Department Head and the Dean. If necessary to reach the minimum number of committee members, additional tenured faculty members may be added by the Chancellor.

As detailed in this document, search committees are charged with generating the advertisement for the search, writing the job description and qualifications, receiving and reviewing the applications, ranking the candidates, organizing candidate visits and interviews on campus (including public technical talks by each invited candidate), and making a recommendation for the position. Members should be available to participate fully and consistently in the entire process and to perform duties as assigned by the search committee chair.

Members of a search committee need to maintain a strict level of confidentiality to protect the privacy of the candidates and to preserve the integrity of the search process.

- B. The search committee chair convenes a meeting of the committee to draft a position description and the job advertisement. (A draft position description may be provided to the committee by the Dean or Department Head and templates for faculty job descriptions and advertisements are available from the Office of the Chancellor.) Search committee chairs are encouraged to take the final position description to the full departmental faculty for general input and approval.

- C. After consultation with the Department Head, the position description and the advertisement text are submitted to the Dean's office for approval.
- D. The Dean's office submits the documents in item C, above, to the Chancellor's office for approval.
- E. Following approval from the Chancellor's office, the job is posted and advertising is placed.
- F. Searches are more effective if the faculty of the department are active in encouraging their colleagues at other institutions to apply and to assist in advertising the position through professional networks. At this point in the search, it is very important to make sure that the department's website is up-to-date. It is recommended that a link to the departmental web site be included in the advertisement and that a positions-available web page be available on the department web site to eventually facilitate direct electronic submission of applications.
- G. Evaluation of Applicants
 - a. The search committee chair shares applicant information with the committee members. (Please note that all applicants remain as confidential as possible until they are advanced to the finalist — campus interview — stage.)
 - b. All search committee members review the materials of all applicants.
 - c. After the search committee has reviewed all the applicants, the committee chair convenes a committee meeting to discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the applicants and arrive at a short list of *candidates* to be interviewed via telephone (or internet).
- I. Candidate Evaluation
 - a. The search committee networks with their colleagues on campus and at other institutions to find further information on the short-listed candidates.
 - b. The search committee conducts telephone interviews. (It is important in telephone interviews that each candidate be given a chance to respond to a similar set of questions.)
 - c. After the conclusion of all telephone interviews, the search committee meets to determine which, if any, of the short-listed candidates to bring to Yachay for campus as *finalists* to be interviewed. The list of finalists to be interviewed is submitted to the Department Head.
- J. Finalist Evaluation
 - a. The search committee chair requests that the Department Head solicit letters of recommendation for the finalists. (It is important that all requests for letters of recommendation be worded the same. The requests may be sent via email; follow-ups may be made via telephone, as needed.)
 - b. The search committee chair works with the Dean's office, the Department Head, the committee, and each finalist to determine interview dates, and coordinates all travel in advance.
 - c. The search committee chair arranges the schedule for the on-campus interview. The on-campus interview must include, at minimum, a formal technical/research presentation by the finalist and the opportunity for the finalist to meet with the following groups and individuals:
 - i. the search committee,
 - ii. the department and school faculty,
 - iii. the Department Head,
 - iv. the Dean or her/his designee,
 - v. the Chancellor or her/his designee, and
 - vi. any others requested by the candidate or deemed appropriate by the Department Head or Dean.

- d. Following the completion of all interviews, the search committee reconvenes to consider the finalists and determine which, if any, of the candidates to recommend for the position.
- d. The committee prepares a comprehensive report on their final recommendation. The report should include a summary of any feedback obtained from faculty and should detail, in particular, the strengths and weaknesses of the recommended candidate. The quality and depth of this report is very important. The report, once completed, is presented to the Department Head.

4. Authority Decisions

- A. The Department Head reviews the committee report. (S/he may also wish to consult with other constituent individuals and groups involved in the interview process.)
- B. After making a preliminary decision, the Department Head meets with the search committee to discuss the decision and to explain any non-concurrence. Following this meeting, the Department Head sends the search committee report to voting-eligible tenured and tenure-track faculty in the department and schedules a meeting of the departmental faculty to discuss the case. To ensure that faculty have enough time to undertake a thorough evaluation, this faculty meeting must take place at least 10 days following the receipt and distribution of the report.
- C. If the appointment is at the Assistant Professor (tenure-track) level, all tenured and tenure-track faculty receive the report and participate in the faculty meeting. For more senior appointments, only faculty of equal (or higher) rank and tenure status to the proposed participate. (Note that these same restrictions hold for the selection of the search committee.)
- D. During the faculty meeting, the chair of the search committee presents the case to the faculty, in the Department Head's presence, and advocates for the candidate. The Department Head then presides over an open discussion by the faculty and eventually calls for a vote. The vote is public and reaching a quorum requires that half of the voting faculty have cast a vote. Votes may be cast in person or electronically. Electronic votes must be received by the Department Head before the meeting and should be accompanied by a brief explanation. The Department Head informs the faculty of the electronic votes and explanations during the meeting. The result of the faculty vote is very important in informing the about the opinion of the faculty.
- E. The faculty vote is non-binding to the Department Head. The vote is purely advisory, but the results are recorded and presented in the next step.
- F. Following the vote by the faculty, the Department Head presents the committee report, a brief memo describing the faculty discussion and vote, the candidate's reference letters, the candidate's CV with detailed list of publications, his/her own recommendation, and (if the recommendation is positive) a draft offer letter to the Dean, who ensures that the search committee and Department Head's report are distributed to the eligible voting faculty and calls for a meeting of the full voting faculty of the School. This meeting proceeds in the same manner as the department meeting, with the search committee chair presenting the case, the Dean presiding over the meeting, and the meeting culminating with a vote of the eligible faculty members.
- G. The faculty vote is non-binding to the Dean. The vote is purely advisory, but the results are recorded and presented in the next step.
- H. Following the vote, the Dean decides whether or not to present the hiring package to the Academic Council. Note that no offers — verbal or written — may be made until the finalist is approved by the Chancellor and the Academic Council and that all offer letters must be labelled "pending approval by the Rector and the Comisión Gestora of Yachay Tech University." (The Dean's office will notify the Department Head when the finalist is approved by the Academic Council.)
- I. The Dean submits the hiring package, which includes the search committee's report, the Department Head's report, the votes of the Department and School, the reference letters, the candidate's detailed CV, and a brief

report describing the basis for the Dean's recommendation (see detailed requirements in Section C) to the Academic Council at least one week prior to the council meeting in which the case is scheduled to be discussed.

- J. At the Academic Council meeting, the proposing Dean discusses the case and recommends an action. The other Deans ask questions, make comments and eventually vote on the case. The Chancellor and Rector, although present, do not participate in this vote. The vote is advisory (non-binding) to the Chancellor and the Rector. Following the vote, the Chancellor makes a decision to either proceed with the appointment or not and communicates that decision to the Dean and the Rector. The Chancellor's decision is advisory to the Rector who makes the final decision on the cases. Following a positive recommendation, the Rector is responsible for forwarding the recommendation to the CG for final ratification.

OPPORTUNITY HIRES

Opportunity hiring allows departments to hire internationally renowned scholars and to attract outstanding senior scientists and academic leaders with speed and flexibility. Opportunity hiring agreements between a Dean and the Chancellor vary on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, faculty employed as opportunity hires must be qualified for the position — they should meet the same qualifications as if the position were advertised during a regular faculty recruitment (search) process. Department Heads who wish to pursue an opportunity hire should work through the Deans, using the following process.

1. Either Deans or Department Head may identify targets of opportunity. If the Department Head identifies the opportunity, the approval of the Dean to pursue the candidate is necessary.
2. The Dean requests approval from the Chancellor and, upon receiving approval, instructs the Department Head to pursue the opportunity.
3. Once the Chancellor, the Dean, and the Department Head agree to pursue the target of opportunity, the procedure proceeds in the same manner as for regular searches. A search committee is formed, that committee evaluates the single target of opportunity candidate, and the committee's recommendation is reviewed by the authorities as outlined in section 4, above.

MAKING THE OFFER

For both hiring via a search process and opportunity hiring, the offers are made through the following steps:

1. If the position is approved by the Academic Council, the Dean consults with the Chancellor regarding the resources that are available to attract the candidate. Once an agreement is reached between the Dean and the Chancellor, the Dean negotiates with and makes a verbal offer to the candidate. At the end of the negotiations, the Dean emails to the candidate the draft offer letter for preliminary acceptance. The Department Head is continuously informed during this process and may be asked to help in the negotiations. (No signatures or further approvals are required at this step.)
2. Once the candidate verbally accepts the draft offer, the Dean signs the final offer letter and the letter is sent to the candidate (along with information about benefits, the tenure policy, etc.). The offer letter should include the following:
 - Title (rank)
 - Department and School
 - Salary
 - Appointment term
 - Start date
 - Date of first paycheck

- Contingent upon degree verification, background checks, etc.
- Tenure calendar (including year of third-year reappointment review, year of consideration of academic tenure, year tenure will be effective if awarded)
- Information about new faculty orientation
- Yachay Tech email address
- Information about start-up package
- Response date
- Signature of the Dean
- Blank signature acceptance line
- Enclosure and or links:
 - Benefits
 - Moving expense policy
 - Tax forms and other pre-employment paperwork
 - List of documents required to obtain work VISA
 - Faculty and staff resource guide

3. When the signed offer letter is returned by the candidate, the original remains in the candidate’s personnel file in the Dean’s office, and copies are provided for the Department Head’s office, Chancellor’s office, and the candidate.
4. Once the signed offer letter is received, the search committee chair sends a short letter of announcement and thanks for their interest to all other applicants.

HIRING WITH TENURE²

1. If a faculty member is to be hired with tenure (as a permanent, tenured employee), s/he must go through the tenure process (see Section B, below³).
2. Faculty who will be hired with tenure should be informed that the process for granting tenure is separate from the hiring process, given a timeline for that process, and allowed to make a decision about their start date based on that timeline.

II. REAPPOINTMENT, TENURE, AND PROMOTION (RTP) OF FACULTY

This section is in development.

²To be implemented only after a Yachay Tech tenure policy is approved by the Ministry.

³ In development.