**Guidelines for Full-Time, Fixed-Term Academic Appointments for the College of Arts & Architecture**

# **Purpose of Guidelines**

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure consistency across academic units in the appointment of Fixed-Term I faculty and Fixed-Term Multi-Year faculty. These best practices address the academic unit's need for flexibility in academic staffing, its interest in ensuring academic quality, and the goal of providing consistency, equity, and recognition for faculty members not in tenure-track positions.

## **Fixed-Term Teaching Faculty Appointments**

Teaching faculty shall be appointed to a fixed-term I position full-time for minimum of six calendar months up to a maximum of one year from date of hire. Employees classified as academic and academic administrator appointed to fixed-term I positions are appointed for a minimum of twenty-four (24) weeks up to a maximum of forty-eight (48) weeks per fiscal year.

Fixed-term I positions are terminable in accordance with applicable University policy and applicable terms and conditions of employment. Employees may be offered subsequent contracts at the option of the University.

## **Fixed-Term Research Faculty Appointments**

Research faculty shall be appointed to fixed-term multi-year position for two (2) years from date of hire. Fixed-term multi-year positions are appointed for a minimum of thirty-six (36) weeks up to a maximum of forty-eight (48) weeks per fiscal year.

Fixed-term multi-year positions are terminable in accordance with applicable University policy and applicable terms and conditions of employment. Employees may be offered subsequent contracts at the option of the University.

# **Visa Sponsorship for Fixed-Term Full Time Academic Appointments (H-1B)**

## An H-1B visa allows an individual to enter the United States to temporarily work at an employer in a specialty occupation. The regulations define a specialty occupation as requiring theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge in a field of human endeavor including but not limited to biotechnology, chemistry, computing, architecture, engineering, statistics, physical sciences, journalism, medicine and health: doctor, dentists, nurses, physiotherapists, etc., economics, education, research, law, accounting, business specialties, technical writing, theology, and the arts. To request sponsorship, the person must have completed the terminal degree.

A person in H-1B status must continue to be employed by their employer in the job they were hired for in order to stay in H-1B status. If the person's employment ends for any reason, the person must leave the United States, unless the person applies for and is granted a change of status or finds another employer compatible with the H-1B status. Effective January 17, 2017, the [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Citizenship_and_Immigration_Services) allows grace period of up to 60 days to stay in the United States after the person's end of employment.

The College of Arts & Architecture will sponsor H-1B visas for foreign nationals hired in a fixed-term research faculty position requiring a terminal degree. If you are interested in sponsoring fixed-term teaching faculty on an H-1B, you will need to seek approval from the Dean. **Please note**: Most visa requests will need to be initiated by the school/department in iStart **at least 6 months in advance** of the anticipated employment start date - if not submitted as requested, the Office of Global Programs Faculty Advising cannot guarantee that the foreign national will be able to begin his/her position as anticipated. More information can be found at: <https://global.psu.edu/category/international-faculty>.

Penn State will sponsor fixed-term full-time academic faculty positions in H-1B classification up to a maximum of six (6) years.

## **H-1B Fees**

All H-1B fees will be the responsibility of the school/department. This includes the current $460 filing fee and the $500 anti-fraud fee. The school/department or the sponsored candidate may wish to utilize premium processing. Premium processing requires USCIS to take action on the case within 15 calendar days. The fee for premium processing is currently $1,225 and is optional as to who is required to pay, the school/department or the person being sponsored. If premium processing is utilized and the school/department decides the person being sponsored will not be responsible for this fee, it will be the responsibility of the school/department to pay the fee.

## **Permanent Residency**

Sponsorship for permanent residency at Penn State currently applies primarily to tenure track faculty positions, as these are the only positions determined to be “permanent” in nature. Any position which has an end date, even if the funding is guaranteed for several years, does not fall under Penn State’s definition of “permanent”. Fixed-term positions by their nature are not considered to be permanent. Therefore, sponsorship for permanent residency does not apply for any fixed-term faculty.

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