Overview

The Prior Approval Request (PAR) process ensures that academic units secure all funds and appropriate approvals before extending an offer of employment to a prospective faculty member. The PAR process includes new hires of all ranks, as well as current faculty being offered a new or modified appointment. A PAR must be completed for every offer of new or modified employment except those approved via the promotions process.

After posting and advertising the position and identifying and interviewing candidates, the academic unit creates the PAR packet for the selected finalist, following the steps outlined on this page. The academic unit may begin informal negotiations before the PAR process is complete, but it may not make a formal offer until the PAR reaches "Offer Pending Status". (See additional information about NTT hires on the "Non-Tenure Track (NTT) PAR" tab on this page.)

NTT hires final-approve with the Dean's Office, and once the NTT PAR has been signed by the Dean and the FPN document has been approved in DEFINE by the Dean's Office, the department may extend the offer letter to the candidate and proceed with remaining hire processes.

Tenure-track hires final-approve with the Dean's Office, and once the tenure-track PAR has been signed by the Dean and the PAR document has been approved in DEFINE by the Dean's Office, the department may extend the offer letter to the candidate and proceed with remaining hire processes.

Tenured hires require three simultaneous processes: tenure review, negotiations and offer letter drafting, and the PAR. See COE: Hiring With Tenure for details.

Fall start offers made after May 1: PARs for prospective tenured/tenure-track faculty currently employed in a tenured/tenure-track position at another AAU institution of higher education must receive final approval from the Provost's Office and the offer must be extended to the candidate by May 1 for employment beginning in the following fall semester. After this date, offers may not be extended until the Provost requests permission from the responsible administrative officer at the other institution. See COE: AAU Waivers.

For questions about PARs, please email COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu.

Position types

Primary, Joint, or Courtesy?

Primary

- A faculty member's main position within a single academic department
- All faculty must have a primary position even if only 0%
- Organizational home of faculty member
- Owning unit must be an academic department
- Owning unit generally takes lead in administering if there are joint positions

Joint

- A position held in another academic department in addition to the faculty member's primary position
- Owning unit must be an academic department
- Formal relationship, full-fledged faculty member
- Both units should use the same title and annual rate
- Both units must submit a PAR. See additional instructions in the "Joint hires" tab on this page.
Courtesy

- *No longer processed via PAR. Instead, use the Add Academic Appointment business process in Workday.*
- A professional relationship a faculty member may have in addition to their primary or joint position
- Without funding
- Owning Unit may be an academic department, program, or research center
- Associated/affiliated faculty member
- Funding and % time are N/A; may have supplement
- Any funding contributed to % time is entered on the primary or joint position
- See COE: Affiliation and Courtesy, tab "Courtesy Faculty" for more information.

When is a PAR needed?

A PAR is needed in the following situations:

- New faculty member who has never taught at UT Austin.
- Rehire of former faculty member whose position was terminated.
- Faculty member whose position has been inactive for longer than three years.
- Inactive faculty member whose position is in another unit.

*Note: If creating a new PAR for a faculty member with a previous PAR on file:*

- Reference letters are viable for 18 months from the date on the letter.
- Once the Primary Language Forms on file, another is not needed. Indicate "On File" in PAR section 7, "Supporting Documentation".

A PAR is not required in these situations:

- NTT faculty member who holds an inactive faculty position that has been inactive for fewer than three years, and is in the correct unit. Position can be reactivated in Workday.
- Courtesy (0%) positions. Instead, use the Add Academic Appointment business process in Workday.
- Retired faculty member returning to teach. Instead, use the Modified Service process.

Joint hires

*Note that a separate job requisition must be created for each supervisory organization into which the faculty member will be hired.*

A joint hire is a formal relationship with both the primary owning unit and any additional units. Each unit should submit a separate PAR, and use the same title and annual rate for each. The total FTE of the primary and all joint positions should not exceed 100%.

See additional information in the relevant Non-Tenure Track (NTT) PAR or Tenured/Tenure-Track (T/TT) PAR tab on this page.

*Joint hires with tenure: See additional instructions in "Tenure dossiers for joint hires" at the bottom of this tab.*

Important routing note

The primary PAR must "push" to Workday before the joint PAR. If the joint PAR pushes first, Workday will generate an error, and the PAR will not push. Both the primary and joint PARs should be created at the same time, but the primary PAR should be routed first.

Offer letter

See COE: Offer Letters - New Faculty, section "Joint hire offer letters".

Process
PRIMARY UNIT PAR

1) PAR section 1:
   - Position type is "Primary"
   - Percent time is the FTE of that unit only
     - Example: For a 75/25 split, the primary department percent time will be 75%.
   - Percent distribution funding details describes that unit's contributions from their accounts only.
     - Example: If annual salary of the primary unit's portion of the appointment is funded solely by the department's instructional account, percent distribution will be 100% of that account, regardless of FTE.

2) PAR section 2:
   - The primary PAR includes all funding commitments. The joint PAR includes only their proportional FTE of annual academic salary.
   - If a situation arises that might call for an exception to this, such as a significant financial contribution by the secondary department, please contact COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu to discuss.

3) PAR section 8: Enter any special comments that will communicate special circumstances involved with the PAR and help facilitate processing of the electronic document. Include the doc ID of all joint PARs, for example: "Joint hire with Department Y. Primary PAR doc ID is X0FPXXXXXX." 

4) Follow all other usual NTT or T/TT PAR procedures.

5) Primary PAR must "push" to Workday before joint PAR. For T/TT hires, pushing to Workday happens after EVPP has both received the signed offer letter and final-approved the PAR. (See T/TT instructions for details).

SECONDARY/ADDITIONAL UNIT PAR(S)

1) PAR section 1:
   - Position type is "Joint"
   - Percent time is the FTE of that unit only
     - Example: For a 25/75 split, the secondary department percent time will be 25%
   - Percent distribution in funding details describes that unit's contributions from their accounts only
     - Example: If annual salary of the additional unit's portion of the appointment is funded solely by the department's instructional account, percent distribution will be 100% of that account, regardless of FTE.

2) PAR section 2: The primary PAR includes all funding commitments.

   - If a situation arises that might call for an exception to this, such as a significant financial contribution by the secondary department, please contact COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu to discuss.

3) PAR section 8: Enter any special comments that will communicate special circumstances involved with the PAR and help facilitate processing of the electronic document. Include the doc ID of all joint PARs, for example: "Joint hire with Department X. Primary PAR doc ID is X0FPXXXXXX." 

4) Email COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu a PDF of the completed and signed (but not yet routed) joint PAR. This will be attached to the primary PAR submitted to EVPP.

   - Since the primary PAR must "push" to Workday before the joint PAR does, do not approve the joint PAR forward until the primary PAR has been approved by the college.

5) Physical documentation should include a copy of the offer letter. All other Supporting Documentation listed in PAR section 7 can be designated "On File".

6) Follow all other usual NTT or T/TT PAR procedures.

Tenure dossiers for joint hires

Only one packet is needed for joint hires. The tenure statements from the dean and department chair of the joint college/department, and copy of the joint PAR coversheet with signatures, should be included with the primary departments packet.
Joint hire dossiers should include more than three letters (five or six is recommended) since more than
one department is being represented in the hire. A minimum of three arms-length assessment letters.
Letters from reviewers who are not sufficiently arms-length will not count toward the minimum
requirement. The guiding principles for selecting reviewers for promotion and tenure purposes are
applicable to the hiring process.

See more information at COE: Hiring With Tenure.

Professional track PAR

Notes:

- For joint hires, first review additional information in "Joint Hires" tab on this page.
- PAR section 8: Enter any special comments that will communicate special circumstances
  involved with the PAR and help facilitate processing of the electronic document.
- Superseding documents require specific explanations in PAR section 8 detailing the reasons
  for the supersede.

Professional track PAR routing

Click on image below to enlarge.

Note about start dates

Professional Track positions should generally have a start date of either September 1 or January 16
during the long session; and June 1, or July 1 for summer assignments. In some circumstances,
however, an earlier start date may be requested, and this should be entered in the regular start date field
on the PAR. (Professional track PARs do not include an additional "early start date" field.) The reason for
the early start date should be explained in Section 8 of the PAR.

If a summer start date prior to 9/1 is requested, then the PAR should be dated for the fiscal year prior to
the fall. For example, if a fall instructional assignment will begin September 1, 2020, and an early start
date of August 2020 is requested, then the PAR should be created for fiscal year 19-20.

Offer letter

Offer letters for professional track hires are written by the department and approved by the Dean. See COE:
Offer Letters - New Faculty, section "Professional Track hires" for more information.
**Professional track PAR process**

1) Department Executive Assistant (EA) approves FPN document in DEFINE and forwards completed PAR packet to COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu, where it is reviewed for content, to ensure all required documentation is included and in good order.

2) If any financial commitments beyond academic salary are offered, PAR packet is forwarded to the Assistant Dean for Financial Affairs for review.

3) PAR packet is forwarded to the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs for review and signature.

4) Notes are added by the Dean's Office HR Team to the FPN document that the PAR packet has been approved by the Associate Dean, with date of approval, and approves the FPN electronic document.

5) Final approval of the professional track PAR is at the college level. Once the PAR is final-approved by the Dean, the Dean's Office HR Team will email a copy of the PAR cover sheet signed by the Dean to the department EA, indicating that the PAR has been approved. Once this email indicating approval has been received, the department can send an offer letter to the candidate. However, all PAR information is thoroughly reviewed in the Provost's Office to ensure compliance, and if errors are found, corrections will still need to be made even if the contract has been signed by the faculty candidate.

6) EA sends, as two separate files in a single email, a) a copy of the signed offer letter and b) a copy of the PAR packet, including cover sheet signed by the chair and Dean and a cover page indicating final-approved status, to EVPP-APS@utexas.edu, with a cc to COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu, and the hire is pushed to Workday.

7) The department is responsible for maintaining professional track faculty personnel files, including PARs and offer letters.

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**Tenured/Tenure-Track PAR**

- For joint hires, first review additional information on "Joint Hires" tab of this page.
- For tenured hires, first review additional information at COE: Hiring With Tenure.
- For early start dates (prior to August 1 for fall, or prior to January 16 for spring), first review additional information in COE: PAR - Early Start Dates.
- PAR section 8: Enter any special comments that will communicate special circumstances involved with the PAR and help facilitate processing of the electronic document.
  - Superseding documents require specific explanations detailing the reasons for the supersede.

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**T/TT PAR routing**

*Click on image below to enlarge.*

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**Offer letter**

Offer letters for T/TT hires are written by the Dean's Office HR Team and approved by the Dean. See COE: Offer Letters - New Faculty for more information.

**T/TT PAR Process**

1) If the hire will be made with tenure, first complete the tenure review process (see above).
2) As soon as is possible, Department Executive Assistant (EA) submits a COE Faculty Hire Form so that the Dean’s Office Faculty Affairs team can begin drafting the offer letter in collaboration with the department EA and chair. It is not necessary to wait for the PAR to be completed before sending this form.

3) Once both the electronic DEFINE PAR document and the PAR packet are complete, email either a single PDF of the PAR packet, or a link to the packet in Box to COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu. Documentation should be in the order listed for the appropriate PAR type at COE: PAR - Documentation Checklists. APProve the FPT in DEFINE. Please do not approve the electronic document until the PAR packet has been sent.

4) Dean’s Office HR Team reviews PAR packet and DEFINE document for content, to ensure all required documentation is included and in good order.

5) Dean’s Office HR Team forwards PAR packet to the Assistant Dean for Financial Affairs for review of funding commitments.

6) Once Assistant Dean for Financial Affairs has approved funding commitments, PAR is forwarded to the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs for review, but the Associate Dean does not sign it. The Associate Dean forwards it to the Dean. The T/TT PAR packet is reviewed and signed by the Dean.

7) Dean’s Office Faculty Affairs team adds notes to the electronic PAR that the PAR packet has been approved by the Dean, with date of approval, and forwards to EVPP for final approval.

8) Once the draft offer letter written by the Dean’s Office has been approved by the Dean, the department may, if they wish, share the draft with the candidate. It must be clearly indicated via watermark that the copy is a draft, and any associated correspondence must explicitly state that the draft is pending final modifications and approval of the Dean and Provost. The draft offer letter should not be signed by anyone, as it does not represent a contract.

9) Tenure-track PARs are final-approved at the Dean’s Office level and route to EVPP for informational purposes. For tenured PARs, the Deans Office Faculty Affairs team reviews the electronic PAR and adds approval, but PAR is not final-approved at this point. Final approval of a tenured PAR comes from EVPP. Following Dean’s Office electronic approval, the PAR status in DEFINE will update as follows:

   ** Offer Pending **

10) Once the PAR is approved at the Deans Office level, the actual offer letter can be sent to the candidate. EA sends a copy of the signed offer letter to EVPP-APS@austin.utexas.edu, with a cc to COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu.

11) EVPP final-approves the PAR upon receipt of the signed offer letter, and pushes the hire to Workday.

12) Dean’s Office HR Team shares the PAR packet with the Executive Vice President and Provost (EVPP) on Box. Following EVPP electronic approval, the PAR status in DEFINE will update as follows and onboarding processes can begin:

   ** Offer Accepted - Position in Workday**

Research Faculty PARs

Note that the expectation is that Research Faculty positions are 100%, and exceptions are at the discretion of EVPP/VPR.

Resources

- EVPP: Hiring Research Faculty: PAR
- COE: PAR Documentation Checklists, section “Research Faculty PARs”.
- COE: Research Faculty for general information about these titles

Please send suggested additions to this page and notifications about broken links to COE-FacultyAffairs@austin.utexas.edu.