

# Faculty Handbook



**Richard Bland College**  
*of WILLIAM & MARY*

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**RBC.EDU**

## FOREWORD

Welcome to Richard Bland College. As a faculty member, you are an integral part of the Richard Bland College (“College”) commitment to quality instruction and education.

The Richard Bland College *Faculty Handbook* provides many of the policies, information concerning the policies, and related administrative matters associated with the role of a faculty member. (The College *Policy Manual* provides policies that apply to all College employees, including faculty, and other campus-wide policies may be found on the College website, rbc.edu.) Any questions concerning the administrative policies of the College may be directed to the Chief Academic Officer or the President. Concerns and questions related to course content and instructional needs may be directed to the appropriate Academic Division Chair and/or the Office of the Chief Academic Officer. It shall be the responsibility of the Office of the Chief Academic Officer to maintain the *Handbook* and provide to the President any recommended changes from the appropriate administrative units or the faculty.

This *Faculty Handbook* and the *Richard Bland College Catalog* are provided for your information and preparation for serving as a member of the Richard Bland College faculty.

Richard Bland College faculty are committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning environment for all people, respecting all cultures, identities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and perspectives. We believe in the dignity and worth of all people and the limitless value of their potential. Our teaching cultivates a free and open exchange of ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect, to better prepare students for an evolving global society.

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# **RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE FACULTY HANDBOOK**

## **I. APPLICABILITY**

This document is applicable to all faculty members at Richard Bland College. These educators are known, for the purposes of this document, as “teaching faculty.”

## **II. STATEMENT OF FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Faculty are responsible for all aspects relating to the educational programs of the College, making recommendations to the Chief Academic Officer. Duties of the faculty include, but are not limited to making recommendations to College administration concerning:

- A. Reviewing and revising the mission, goals, and policies of the College;
- B. Developing and maintaining an educational program of high quality;
- C. Delivering educational content to achieve established student learning outcomes. Faculty are expected to regularly assess student-learning outcomes against established departmental goals, and to adjust curricular content and instructional methodologies to ensure focused and success-oriented results, while maintaining academic rigor;
- D. Recommending and maintaining admission standards;
- E. Recommending and maintaining curricula;
- F. Awarding grades for students in their classes;
- G. Recommending policy, including standards, requirements, and procedures for awarding degrees and certifications granted by the College;
- H. Certifying all degree candidates to the Registrar;
- I. Recommending to the administration procedures for maintaining and improving faculty competence through programs of academic and sabbatical leave, in service instruction, and attendance at professional meetings;
- J. Recommending professional standards and criteria in such areas as faculty retention, promotion, and tenure;
- K. Recommending and maintaining policies, including determining prerequisites for courses and degrees, policies governing transfer credit, academic probation, admissions, and withdrawals, and
- L. Participating in shared governance.

Cross-institutional responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- A. Budgeting;
- B. Academic advising;
- C. Promoting institutional effectiveness;
- D. Providing input, where appropriate, to building and grounds;
- E. Assisting with student recruitment;

- F. Representing the faculty to the Board of Visitors, and
- G. Reporting to agencies such as SACS and SCHEV.

### **III. AGENCIES OF FACULTY SELF-GOVERNANCE**

#### **A. Academic Departments**

Each department is an administrative unit composed of related academic disciplines structured to facilitate coordination of faculty efforts and to promote interdisciplinary activity. Academic disciplines at Richard Bland College are grouped under three departments: Natural Science and Mathematics, Language and Humanities, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Composition of the groupings is as follows:

- Natural Science & Mathematics: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Health, Physical Education, Physics, and Mathematics;
- Language and Humanities: Composition, Foreign Languages, Geography, Government, Literature, Philosophy, Religion, Speech, and Theater; and
- Social and Behavioral Sciences: Art, Business, Economics, History, Logistics, Music, Project Management, Psychology, and Sociology.

The composition of academic departments periodically will be assessed and adjusted in support of the College mission and goals.

Current job descriptions for department chairs are available on the College website. On or before April 15 of each year, all full-time faculty from the respective departments are eligible to vote for a candidate for recommendation to the Chief Academic Officer and President, who then make the appointment.

Department chairs are subject to annual review by the Chief Academic Officer and President, and serve two (2)-year terms, and no more than two (2) terms consecutively. They teach a reduced load of classes while serving the College, as determined by the Chief Academic Officer.

#### **B. The Faculty Assembly**

##### **1. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the Faculty Assembly is to advise the Chief Academic Officer and the President on matters affecting the welfare of the College, and to ensure effective faculty participation in College governance.

- a. The Faculty Assembly will achieve this purpose by facilitating communication and collaboration between faculty and administration, and by promoting the welfare of students, faculty, and members of the College community in general. This includes, but is not limited to, studying issues, and recommending policies to the administration. It involves participating in the development of educational, curricular, research, and service components of the work of the College.
- b. The Faculty Assembly shall have access to the agendas of the Board of Visitors that pertain to Richard Bland College, strategic planning for Richard Bland College, and reports of all college-wide committees.

## 2. Membership

- a. The membership shall consist of regular (voting) members.
- b. Regular members shall be all full-time Richard Bland College faculty, with the addition of one (1) elected adjunct-faculty member from each of the three (3) academic departments.

## 3. Structure

- a. The chair of the Faculty Assembly shall, as a rule, preside at Faculty Assembly meetings, although this role may on occasion be taken by the College President, or in the case of illness or incapacitation of the chair, by the vice-chair. The agendas for Faculty Assembly meetings will be prepared by the chair of the Faculty Assembly, with the aid of the vice-chair and Faculty Assembly secretary, and with input from the membership.

The chair and vice-chair will be elected by a vote of all full-time teaching faculty during the last Faculty Assembly meeting of the academic year in even-numbered years. All full-time faculty members are eligible to serve as chair or vice-chair. The chair and vice-chair will serve for terms of two (2) years, with the possibility of one (1) consecutive re-election. The administrative assistant from the Office of the Chief Academic Officer will serve as secretary for the Faculty Assembly;

- b. As a general rule, the Faculty Assembly will meet once a month. Meetings are open to the entire College community. Adjunct faculty are encouraged to participate, and are represented in decision-making upon electing a representative to vote on their behalf. Their contributions to discussion are always welcome. Meetings shall be guided by the protocol established in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. They shall be recorded by the Faculty Assembly secretary, with recordings archived and maintained by him/her.
- c. Preparation of minutes and agendas for meetings will be the responsibility of the chair of the Faculty Assembly, in conjunction with the Faculty Assembly secretary. Agendas for a meeting will be presented at least five (5) business days in advance of that meeting, whenever possible, and minutes will be disseminated no later than five (5) business days following it. Both will be distributed to the College community by email. A record of agendas and corrected minutes will be maintained by the secretary.

### C. The Academic Council

Department chairs, along with the Chief Academic Officer(s), comprise the Academic Council. The Academic Council meets regularly to ensure the business of academic departments (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) moves forward, and that lines of communication remain open and transparent. Members of the Academic Council will also serve on the President's Council.

### D. Faculty Committees and College Committees

The following are standing and ad hoc committees of Richard Bland College, including their membership, duties, and reporting line. Each committee receives reports on the status of its action items from the appropriate member of the President's Council so as to

ensure clear lines of communication and effective implementation. Committees receive charges at the beginning of each academic year from the appropriate President's Council member, and will report their activities and progress regularly to that member, to the Faculty Assembly, to the College community, and to the President. Committees may also initiate new business or take up matters brought to their attention by department chairs, faculty, staff, or administrators.

Committee chairs, unless otherwise specified, will be elected by the appropriate committee's members for a term of one (1) year (subsequent terms of service may not exceed three [3] consecutive years) at the first committee meeting of the academic year. Meetings shall be guided by the protocol established in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. Agendas for all meetings should be distributed to faculty five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Minutes of committee meetings shall be distributed to members of the faculty via email within five (5) business days following the meeting. Minutes shall be subsequently archived and maintained by the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Academic Officer.

#### 1. Standing and Ad Hoc Faculty Committees

[Members to be Chosen at the Beginning of Fall Semester]

##### a. Peer Review Committee

###### (1) Purpose and Scope

This committee is convened to evaluate faculty involved in the pre-tenure process, multi-year contract review, or who are applying for tenure or promotion.

###### (2) Membership

At least one faculty member shall be elected from each academic department, for a minimum complement of three (3) members serving at one time, with, ideally, greater representation from departments with faculty members undergoing evaluation. Committee members will be selected in March, for service in the upcoming academic year. The committee will be chaired by a department chair from a department in which no faculty members will be up for evaluation, promotion, or tenure. If all departments have candidates under review, then the Chief Academic Officer will appoint a chair. The committee reports to the Chief Academic Officer.

##### b. Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee (IPCC)

###### (1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To research degree requirements of area colleges and universities, as well as national curriculum trends
- (b) To review, propose, and consider recommendations to modify, add to, or delete components of degree requirements and curricula in support of the College's Strategic Plan;
- (c) To interface with members of academic disciplines before recommending policy changes, policies, or programs to the Faculty Assembly and the Chief Academic Officer; and



- (d) To review and recommend to the Faculty Assembly and the Chief Academic Officer modifications, deletions, and/or additions to policies, programs, and/or course descriptions.

(2) Membership

Two (2) faculty members shall be elected from each academic department for a total of six (6), ensuring a complement of six (6) members representing teaching faculty. Furthermore, one (1) member may be appointed by College administration from the Registrar's Office, Enrollment Services, or the library, and one (1) student may be appointed by the Student Assembly as a non-voting member. Members serve for a two (2)-year period, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. This body reports to the Faculty Assembly through its chair or an appointed designee, and to the Chief Academic Officer.

c. Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To study faculty concerns with regard to welfare in areas such as salary, fringe benefits, and working conditions;
- (b) To propose programs and policies for faculty development in areas such as in-service activities, continuing education, promotion, and tenure;
- (c) To review, propose, and consider recommendations made to the Faculty Assembly and the Chief Academic Officer concerning modifications of, additions to, or deletions from the Faculty Handbook to support the College's Strategic Plan, and
- (d) To advise the College concerning faculty recruitment.

(2) Membership

Two (2) faculty members shall be elected from each academic department for a total of six (6), ensuring a complement of six (6) members representing teaching faculty. Furthermore, a seventh member may be appointed by College administration from Finance, Enrollment Services, or Human Resources. Members serve for a two (2)-year period, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. This body reports to the Faculty Assembly through its chair or an appointed designee, and to the Chief Academic Officer.

d. Academic Standards and Appeals Committee (ASC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To develop recommendations consistent with the College's Strategic Plan concerning admissions standards and policies, and the Honors Program;
- (b) To develop recommendations and review academic standards and policies, including those involving dual-enrollment, online/distance, and remedial education, to ensure they align with the College Mission of providing a rigorous quality education;
- (c) To review and determine the academic status of students in cases not

clearly covered by established standards;

- (d) To designate representatives to serve on an academic appeals team each semester;
- (e) To hear and decide, subject to right of appeal, pleas concerning individual exceptions and/or appeals in areas such as admissions, academic status, adjustment of academic records, and/or waiver of degree requirements;
- (f) To review overall campus academic assessments; and
- (g) To certify degree candidates to the Registrar.

(2) Membership

Two (2) faculty member shall be elected from each academic department for a total of six (6), ensuring a complement of six (6) members representing teaching faculty. Furthermore, a seventh member may be appointed by College administration from the Registrar's Office or Athletics, and one (1) student may be appointed by the Student Assembly as a non-voting member. Members serve for a two (2)-year period, and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. This body reports to the Faculty Assembly through its chair or an appointed designee, and to the Chief Academic Officer.

e. College Faculty Appeals and Grievance Committee (CFAGC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To investigate a grievance, and
- (b) To recommend to the Chief Academic Officer (or President, as dictated by the nature of the filing) a recommended resolution.

(2) Membership

Five (5) active and five (5) back-up members as designated in the grievance section below.

f. Ad Hoc Committees

Faculty members can be assigned or volunteer to serve on ad hoc committees as they are created. These committees report to the Faculty Assembly or to the administrator convening the committee.

2. College Committees

a. Student Experience and Success Committee (SESC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To receive regular financial budget information from the Student Assembly;
- (b) To support and monitor priorities established in the Strategic Plan, as well as progress relative to:
  - (i). Goals established in the SEM plan;
  - (ii). Goals established in the Residential and Student Life Plan;

- (iii). Goals established for the One-Stop Enrollment Center;
  - (iv). Goals established for student retention and success; and
  - (v). Goals established for student development.
- (c) To monitor College policies for alignment with a positive student experience;
  - (d) To monitor and support compliance with all pertinent SACSCOC standards, including but not limited to, sections 1.1, 2.5, 2.9, 2.10, 3.3, 3.9, 4.1, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.9;
  - (e) To review proposals for new (or modifications to existing) student enrollment and development initiatives of cross-institutional significance, and to provide recommendations to the President's Council based on needs data, pertinent input from stakeholders, cost-benefit analysis, and the College's strategic goals;
  - (f) To review analysis of persistence and attrition data with a view to proposing modifications to admissions and enrollment criteria, policies, and student-development services;
  - (g) To review annual summary data regarding judicial and student complaints, and to develop recommendations for continuous improvement;
  - (h) To review annual summary assessment data regarding student advisement participation, processes, outcomes, and student satisfaction, and to recommend amendments to practices and procedures with a view to ensuring continuous improvement; and
  - (i) To facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices related to strategic enrollment management, delivery modes, student development, and student life.

(2) Membership

The committee will be comprised of thirteen (13) members, including representatives from the Office of Residence Life; Student Success; Athletics; Financial Aid; the Registrar's Office; the Business Office; Communications; and Admissions. One (1) faculty member shall be elected from each academic department for a total of three (3), and two (2) student representatives will also serve. The committee will be co-chaired by the Associate Provost for Enrollment Management and Student Success and the Assistant Provost for Student Life. The committee reports to the President's Council through the Associate Provost for Enrollment Management and Student Success and the Assistant Provost for Student Life.

b. Operations and Finance Committee (OFC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To facilitate review of budget proposals in support of the College's Strategic Plan;
- (b) To review non-academic grant proposals;

- (c) To inform the development of a transparent College budget;
- (d) To communicate with stakeholders regarding financial issues; and
- (e) To monitor compliance with pertinent SACSCOC standards.

(2) Membership

The committee will be comprised of one (1) faculty member elected from each academic department for a total of three (3), in addition to representatives from Enrollment Services, Finance, and Facilities. The committee reports to the President’s Council through the College Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

c. Institutional Effectiveness (IE)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To link institutional assessment efforts to College-wide strategic planning;
- (b) To create a strong feedback loop between research and assessment data on the one hand, and the planning, development, and modification of existing programs and academic support services on the other. This arrangement is intended to facilitate innovation and the achievement of standards of excellence in programs and services;
- (c) To advance a collaborative, integrated approach to institutional planning and assessment that maximizes communication and transparency among College constituents;
- (d) To serve as a recommending body to the President’s Council regarding institutional planning and assessment practices;
- (e) To monitor and support compliance with all pertinent SACSCOC Standards, including but not limited to, sections 1.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.8, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.8, and 4.9;
- (f) To facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices to members of the College community;
- (g) To inform development of an institution-wide, evidence-based institutional effectiveness plan, and assess existing planning and practices at the College related to academics, student services, and administrative functions. The goal is integrated, meaningful, and sustained improvement;
- (h) To inform the President’s Council of progress toward achieving the College’s Mission and goals as defined in the Strategic Plan through systematic review and monitoring of academic departments, administrative departments, programs, and student outcomes- assessment plans and activities;
- (i) To recommend emendations to the institution’s Strategic Plan; and
- (j) To communicate results of institutional- effectiveness efforts to appropriate on-campus and external stakeholders with a view to promoting accountability and transparency.

(2) Membership

The committee will be comprised of one (1) faculty member from each academic department for a total of three (3), three (3) administrative members selected by the President, one (1) staff representative selected by the President, and one (1) non-voting student representative recommended by the Student Assembly. It will be co- chaired by the Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Information, Strategy, and Innovation Officer. The committee reports to the President’s Council.

d. Online Education Committee (OEC)

(1) Purpose and Scope

- (a) To review the practices and effectiveness of online education;
- (b) To develop recommendations concerning standards and policies for online educational programs and all modalities;
- (c) to facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices related to online education, online delivery modes, online tools, and online student experience.
- (d) To monitor compliance with pertinent SACSCOC standards.

(2) Membership

One (1) faculty member shall be elected from each academic department for a total of three (3), ensuring a complement of three (3) members representing teaching faculty. Furthermore, additional members may be appointed by College administration from the Office of Online and Continuing Education, Registrar's Office, Enrollment Services, Library, or other stakeholders in online education.

Faculty members serve for a two (2)-year period and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. This body reports to the Faculty Assembly through its chair or an appointed designee, and to the Chief Academic Officer.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Academic freedom is the freedom to discuss in the classroom matters deemed relevant to the business of a given class. It should be recalled that intellectual inquiry, which sometimes results in disagreements or controversy, is essential both to the pursuit of knowledge, and to production of valuable work.

Additionally, faculty members are entitled to their political rights, and to all the prerogatives of United States citizens.

However, faculty members should endeavor not to introduce into classroom teaching controversial material without bearing on material relating to their courses and/or disciplines, or unrelated to fostering intellectual awareness and/or critical thinking in their students. They should recall they belong to a learned profession associated with exercise of reasoned and reasonable discourse, and expression of informed opinion. Therefore, they should at all times strive to be accurate in their representations, and to show respect for the opinions of others.

Academic freedom allows faculty members to pursue research and scholarship, and/or to

engage in creative expression without obtrusive interference or fear of institutional censure, insofar as these activities do not impinge on the rights and well-being of others (e.g., slander and libel, potentially harmful experimentation with human subjects, anything else that could physically or emotionally harm a student or other person). Faculty members may speak, write, or create works of art without institutional reprisal, retaliation, or constraint, as long as they do not represent themselves as speaking for or representing their institution.

However, faculty members must perform their academic duties as a professional priority, given that Richard Bland College is primarily a teaching college. They also are required to comply with federal and state laws and regulations, and applicable federal, state, and College policies.

Academic freedom in higher education helps ensure that colleges and universities serve the public good. This process best thrives where the search for truth, furthered by the exposition and ongoing assessment of ideas, is actively encouraged.

Richard Bland College generally endorses the Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure adopted jointly in 1940 and reinterpreted in 1970 by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

## **V. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The policy outlined below applies to all teaching faculty.

“Intellectual property” here means property which is patented or copyrighted, or which may theoretically and reasonably become either of these. College employees retain all rights over intellectual property which they develop outside the scope of their employment and without substantial reliance on College facilities and resources. College faculty retain all rights relating to publication, preparation of derivative works, distribution, and classroom use of works which they have prepared on their own time and initiative, including papers published in scholarly journals or books, theses, and dissertations—provided the College does not possess rights of ownership by virtue of the exception described two paragraphs below.

Ownership of materials remains the same whether publication format is print or electronic.

The exception mentioned above is when such materials are developed by a faculty member as a special, stipulated part of a particular contractual obligation to the College, and the production of which may therefore be considered to fall under the faculty member’s “assigned duties” (e.g., preparation of a list of course transfer equivalencies at other Virginia institutions of classes taught at Richard Bland College). It does not include materials developed by a professor or professors in performance of teaching duties, unless such material has been made over to the College by contractual prearrangement between professor(s) and institution.

Faculty intellectual property disputes will be resolved according to the faculty grievance procedure (Section XV).

## **VI. POLICIES AND CONTRACTUAL MATTERS AFFECTING TEACHING FACULTY**

### **A. Appointment Categories**

The minimum requirements for any faculty appointment are almost invariably a master’s degree and a minimum of eighteen graduate hours in the area of instruction. In exceptional cases, equivalencies may be determined on the basis of unusual

circumstances at the discretion of the Chief Academic Officer with concurrence from the President. Such arrangements will be delineated in writing at the time of the faculty member's hiring, and documentation relating to the arrangement will be maintained in the faculty member's professional file on deposit with the College, as well as by the Chief Academic Officer's office. Teaching faculty, whose original employment by the College is certified by the Board of Visitors, receive annual performance reviews from their department chairs and the Chief Academic Officer. If promotion in rank is at issue, subsequent Board approval of that change in status is required.

Full-time faculty appointments at the College are held under one of the following categories:

#### 4. Tenured Faculty

Richard Bland College accepts and endorses the principles of tenure. A tenured appointment may only be terminated by the College for adequate cause. Adequate cause in faculty dismissal proceedings includes, but is not necessarily restricted to:

- a. An ongoing pattern of demonstrated incompetence;
- b. Dishonesty in teaching or research;
- c. Substantial and manifest neglect of duty;
- d. A violation of federal or state laws or regulations, or federal, state, or College policies;
- e. Moral turpitude;
- f. Bona fide financial exigency on the part of the College, or
- g. Discontinuance of a program or department of instruction.
- h. The burden of proof in establishing cause for dismissal rests upon the institution. The standard of proof is preponderance of the evidence.

#### 5. Tenure-Eligible Faculty

##### a. Timeline

Faculty who hold tenure-eligible appointments may be considered for tenure under the provisions specified below:

- (1) When a tenure-track faculty member joins the faculty of Richard Bland College, an initial, probationary appointment for a specified period begins, at the conclusion of which the appointment expires unless reappointment is offered. Reappointment is also for a specified period, and likewise expires, unless renewed.
- (2) No faculty member has any rights, real or implied, to appointment or reappointment during the probationary period.
- (3) A faculty member is evaluated for tenure in the fall of the sixth year of full-time employment. The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for notifying faculty members for whom a tenure review is required. Notification should be made during the spring semester preceding the review. At that time, candidates should also be informed of the members of the Peer Review

Committee. In case a faculty member is not informed by the Chief Academic Officer, the member should contact the Chief Academic Officer concerning his or her eligibility.

- (4) In exceptional cases, early eligibility for the tenure review process may be granted by the Chief Academic Officer with concurrence from the President. Explanation in writing of the exceptional case will be provided to the Peer Review Committee.
- (5) Full-time, tenure-eligible service only, in any rank, from instructor to professor, or any combination of ranks, will count towards tenure. However, tenure will not be accorded those below the academic rank of assistant professor.
- (6) Faculty members on leave, with or without pay, may gain credit toward tenure or consideration for multiple-year appointments, if such leave is approved by the Chief Academic Officer.
- (7) Richard Bland College is administered under a July 1 - June 30 fiscal year. Faculty who serve a twelve (12)-month appointment will be considered to have served a full year if they commenced duties by July 1, and faculty under academic- year appointment only if they serve the entire academic year. Fractional years of service may not be combined into one or more whole years in the computation of probationary years of service.
- (8) Full-time teaching/research experience at the rank of instructor or above at any other accredited institution of higher learning will be credited towards the above tenure probationary period. The individual may be required, however, to serve a probationary period of as much as four (4) years at Richard Bland College before tenure is granted, even if the total full-time service exceeds seven (7) years. The terms of such a probationary period will be stated at the time of initial appointment, both in the letter of offer and in the final written appointment letter.

b. Non-Renewal

Permissible reasons for non-renewal of a probationary appointment or non-appointment to tenure include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Unsatisfactory performance or lack of sufficient progress in meeting the institution's stated criteria for reappointment or award of tenure;
- (2) Qualification and performance which, although satisfactory, will not enable the institution to achieve or advance its educational objectives and standards;
- (3) Full staffing at tenure level in the areas of the candidate's principal competence or specialty;
- (4) Changes in the institution's academic program;
- (5) Budgetary constraints that make it impossible or imprudent to renew the appointment or to increase the tenure staff;
- (6) Failure to complete educational requirements agreed upon in writing at time of hiring; or



(7) Failure to comply with laws or state or College policies.

6. Specified-Term, Full-Time Faculty

A specified-term appointment terminates on the date specified in the appointment letter. This arrangement may be granted for periods up to five (5) consecutive years.

a. Initial Appointment

The first year of employment for specified-term teaching faculty.

b. Reappointment

After the initial appointment, the faculty member shall be evaluated, and may be recommended for reappointment of one (1), three (3), or five (5) years.

(1) One-Year Appointment

A one-year appointment shall be for one (1) year, and may be renewed annually.

(2) Multi-Year Appointments

Multi-year appointments shall be for three (3) or five (5) years' duration. Only specified-term teaching faculty who are employed in unrestricted full-time appointments, and who have been recommended for reappointment, are eligible for three (3)- and five (5)-year appointments. Neither a three (3)-year appointment nor a five (5)-year appointment will be affected by change in faculty rank.

c. Sequencing of Appointments

No specified-term full-time faculty member shall be eligible for a three (3)-year appointment until the completion of three (3) consecutive one (1)-year appointments, including the initial appointment. No specified-term full-time faculty member shall be eligible for a five (5)-year appointment until the completion of a three (3)-year appointment.

Appointment and reappointment decisions shall be made subject to all other provisions of this policy and at the sole discretion of the President. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit the number of one (1)-year and three (3)-year appointments that may be granted, nor shall this policy prohibit the granting of a shorter appointment to a faculty member who previously held a longer-term appointment.

d. Non-Renewal of Appointment

Specified-term teaching faculty should not have expectation of employment beyond the end date of a current appointment unless reappointment is issued. Each appointment is only for the duration stipulated in its contractual terms, which ceases on the end date specified, unless reappointment is offered.

e. Notice of Non-Renewal

Unless it is determined by the President in his/her sole discretion not to be in the best interests of the College, the following notice periods will be observed. In the case of one (1)-year appointments, notice of non-renewal of the appointment

contract shall be given by March 1 of the first contract year; by December 15 of the second contract year, and twelve (12) months before the expiration of the third contract year. For three (3)-year and five (5)-year appointments, notice of non-renewal of the appointment contract shall be given at least twelve (12) months before expiration of the final contract year. In cases of inability or failure to give notice by the required date, the College may meet this requirement by providing advance notice commensurate with the period in question.

7. Specified-Term, Part-Time (Adjunct)

Qualified individuals may be appointed to part-time, short-term (generally one (1)-semester) contracts to provide instruction in specific courses. Adjunct faculty members do not qualify for benefits. Time served as an adjunct faculty member does not accrue toward tenure, and tenure cannot be awarded at this rank.

8. Retired Faculty

Upon recommendation of the President, and following completion of ten (10) or more years of full-time, continuous service and retirement under the statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, retired members of the faculty will be awarded the rank of emeritus/a. Professors in the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor who receive emeritus/a status will be awarded their respective emeriti ranks upon retirement. Additionally, academic administrators who retire with a record of exceptional service and meet these criteria will be considered for emeritus/a status. Emeritus/a standing at Richard Bland College includes the following privileges: ID card, parking decal, library privileges, email account, and inclusion in all faculty listings.

B. Creating and Filling Full-Time Faculty Positions

The Chief Academic Officer will assess the need for additional faculty yearly and report such needs to the President. All full-time faculty searches must be approved in advance by the Chief Academic Officer and President. This applies to searches for new positions, as well as searches for existing positions that become vacant.

Once an academic department has received approval from the Chief Academic Officer to search for a position, the department may begin the search process. Ordinarily, departments will receive final approval to conduct a search when the final budget is approved. Advertisement relating to the positions should be placed by mid- October, or within two (2) weeks of identifying a faculty vacancy (whichever date is later). Candidate campus visits and offers should be concluded as soon as feasible.

1. Advertisements

Advertisements will be published or mailed to organizations, publications, and institutions on the list in the Richard Bland College AA/EEO Faculty Recruitment Plan.

2. Applications

Applications postmarked through the published deadline will be processed according to criteria described in the advertisement and the AA/EEO guidelines. The AA/EEO officer will explain these guidelines to the search committee at its first meeting.

### 3. Search Committee

The search committee is recommended by the Chief Academic Officer, and appointed by the President. It will review all applications for a vacant position using the Faculty Recruitment Evaluation Sheet provided by the Chief Academic Officer. The search committee may employ telephone/video conference calls with each semi-finalist as part of the screening process. The committee will check the references given by the candidates who qualify as finalists in the search.

### 4. Finalists

The search committee will present to the Chief Academic Officer a list of not fewer than two (2) and not more than five (5) finalists, and a recommendation regarding which of these should be invited to the campus for an interview.

### 5. Interviews

The Chief Academic Officer will review the committee's recommendation with the President. The committee will be advised to invite one (1) or more candidates to campus for an interview. The campus interview should include the following:

- a. A meeting with the Chief Academic Officer;
- b. A meeting with faculty and staff;
- c. A presentation given to the College community;
- d. A meeting with the President;
- e. A meeting with the search committee members;
- f. A meeting with the Director of Human Resources to review College benefits and financial policies; and
- g. A tour of the campus and the Petersburg area.

After the search committee has reached a determination as to who are the best-qualified finalists for the vacant position, the credentials of the candidates invited to campus will be available in the Office of the Chief Academic Officer for review by faculty and staff. Reactions to this and other public aspects of the review process may be provided to the search committee.

### 6. Selection of Finalist Candidates

If the Chief Academic Officer concurs with the recommendation of the search committee as to the successful finalist to whom employment should be offered, the name is forwarded to the President for review and a culminating decision.

If the Chief Academic Officer does not concur with the recommendation of the search committee, s/he will inform the committee as to his/her reasons for dissent with the committee's determination and request consideration of other candidates. If the search committee members continue to support their initial recommendation, written rationales for their separate determinations will be forwarded by the committee and the Chief Academic Officer to the President for his/her consideration.

### 7. Hiring

The President will have final authority on all appointments. A letter of intent to make an offer will be delivered from the President to the successful candidate.

Expenses for the candidate's/s' visit(s) to campus (must not cover accompanying family members) will be paid in accordance with State guidelines and must not exceed an established figure set by the Chief Academic Officer and the President, and communicated to the search committee prior to arrangements made for candidates' campus visits.

#### C. Hiring of Adjunct Faculty

The Chief Academic Officer will involve the appropriate department chair in the hiring of adjunct faculty, time permitting.

### **VII. FACULTY WORKLOAD**

#### A. General Responsibilities

Unless otherwise indicated herein, faculty shall, unless excused by the Chief Academic Officer, meet all assigned classes, maintain office hours which are properly posted and approved by the Chief Academic Officer, attend academic processions and convocations (can be excused only by the President), attend Faculty Assembly meetings, and attend meetings of committees of which they are members. Faculty will not be required to serve on more than four (4) institutional, faculty, peer- review, and/or ad hoc committees during an academic year. All full-time faculty are encouraged to engage in the life of the College, and beyond the required workload. College service, community service, active membership in professional associations or societies, and scholarly research all contribute toward the vitality of the College and should be included in an individual's annual Faculty Development Report.

Faculty proposing the addition of a new course will fill out a Proposal for New Course form and sign it. Copies of the proposal will be distributed to all members of the academic department where the course will be taught, and a meeting will be held to discuss the proposal. After the proposal has been discussed in the academic department, the faculty member will submit it to the Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee. The Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee will set a meeting date and distribute a copy of the Proposal for New Course form to all members of the faculty as part of the agenda for the meeting.

The Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee will approve or disapprove the proposed course, and submit the recommendation to the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Academic Officer will recommend to the President either approval, with any appropriate modifications, or disapproval of the course.

One academic procession is normally held each year – on Commencement Day. Faculty members will participate and wear appropriate academic regalia. If faculty members do not own caps, gowns, and hoods, they may rent them through the College. The President may schedule additional academic processions as deemed necessary, with faculty participation required. Requests to be excused from an academic procession must be submitted in writing to the President for review and approval.

#### B. Teaching-Related Responsibilities

Faculty shall fulfill their teaching-related responsibilities throughout each semester by:

1. Routinely Fulfilling the Obligations of their Teaching Schedules

Faculty will teach twenty-four to thirty (24-30) credit hours and thirty to thirty-six (30-36) contact hours between the fall, winter, and spring sessions over their nine-month contract term. Each lecture hour shall equate to one (1) credit hour and one (1) contact hour; each laboratory hour shall equate to one-half (1/2) credit hour and one (1) contact hour. Faculty members will work with their Department Chair as part of the annual evaluation process to decide how to best distribute this load over the nine-month contract, considering both the plans of the faculty member as expressed in the FDR and the needs of the department. No faculty member can be required to carry more than 15 credits during a semester, and no faculty member can be required to teach in the winter session. The maximum assigned load that a faculty member can carry without approval from the Chief Academic Officer is 19 credits.

2. Publishing Course Overviews and Syllabi

Distribution of well-developed overviews and syllabi that provide students with essential course information is a requirement for courses offered at Richard Bland College. At the beginning of every semester, a syllabus for each course should be forwarded to a faculty member's department chair and to the Chief Academic Officer. College policies take priority over what is written in a syllabus, so all faculty members and their respective department chairs must ensure that all syllabi comply with College policies.

Specific information covered includes:

- a. Richard Bland College Mission Statement;
- b. Relevant College curriculum goals and learning outcomes;
- c. Course prerequisites;
- d. Course objectives;
- e. A listing of course textbooks, workbooks, supplementary texts, and selected readings, along with other required or recommended resources;
- f. The professor's schedule of office hours;
- g. The attendance policy for the class;
- h. Consequences of late submission of graded or assessed assignments, tests, quizzes, projects, etc.;
- i. The requirement for attendance at the final examination;
- j. The College statement requiring student adherence to the Richard Bland College Honor Code;
- k. The nature and approximate number of course activities, projects, and examinations;
- l. The course grading scale (e.g., 80-89% = B) and information regarding the weighting of course requirements in relation to the overall semester grade, including specification of a point value for class attendance and class participation

(if so desired);

- m. Evidence offered that sufficient coursework will be submitted, or tests or quizzes administered, early enough in the semester that students can reasonably evaluate their progress in a class by the semester's "drop/audit" date, and thus reach an informed decision as to the wisdom of dropping or continuing in a particular class;
- n. Dates important to the course, such as the semester's date by which to drop a course without academic penalty, dates of examination, due dates for projects and papers, and the date of the final examination; and
- o. A disclaimer statement to the effect that changes can be made in the syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances.

Whenever possible, faculty will notify both students and the Chief Academic Officer in advance of significant changes being made to the overview and syllabus.

### 3. Maintaining Class Rolls

Faculty must verify official class rolls (student name, course, section) by each semester's deadline so that Banner and Canvas information for class enrollments, and student directories, will be accurate, and also so that, if necessary, a student's whereabouts on campus at a particular time of day can be ascertained.

### 4. Ordering Appropriate Textbooks for their Classes

Faculty are responsible for the timely ordering, through the College bookstore, of textbooks and other materials to be used in their courses. They should supply as much information as possible about each textbook (i.e., author, title, edition, publisher, paper- or hard-cover edition). To ensure timely delivery of textbooks, the bookstore must receive textbook orders for the summer session by April 1, for the fall semester by May 1, and for the spring semester by November 1. Professors needing complimentary, or "desk," copies should request them directly from the publisher. Professors with duplicate copies of textbooks are urged to place extra copies on reserve in the library.

The bookstore manager will be responsible for overseeing any and all enrollment changes and for handling book orders accordingly. S/he will promptly notify faculty of any information received regarding delays in the shipment or the inability of a publisher to provide a textbook by a required date. The manager will assist in obtaining delayed books or substitute books by the most expedient means.

Each faculty member should carefully review the proposed textbook for each course s/he teaches well in advance of the semester intended for use. In evaluating such texts, faculty members are encouraged to consider comments from colleagues, students, and publishers, as well as reaching their own personal judgment regarding the usefulness of a particular text.

### 5. Maintaining Scheduled Office Hours

At the beginning of the semester, each faculty member will provide the Chief Academic Officer a schedule of teaching and office hours.

- a. Full-time Faculty: Full-time faculty members are expected to schedule and be

present in their offices a minimum of five (5) office hours a week for student consultation. Faculty may perform two (2) hours of this obligation offering student tutoring or advising outside their offices (to be scheduled in coordination with the Assistant Chief Academic Officer of Student Success) in the Student Success Center.

- b. Adjunct Faculty: Adjunct faculty members are expected to schedule and be present in their offices one hour per week per course taught, up to three hours per week.

#### 6. Keeping Class Attendance Records

Faculty are required to keep complete and accurate records of student attendance for all classes taught.

#### 7. Administering Final Examinations

Final examinations will be given for all scheduled academic classes. These examinations will be conducted at the established examination time. An exception is made for Lab classes (which may hold their exams during the last week of the semester) and online courses (which will conduct their exams according to the policies laid out in their syllabi).

Special exceptions to these rules, such as take-home final exams, must be discussed with and approved by the Chief Academic Officer at the beginning of the semester in which the exam is scheduled to be given.

Faculty will retain a copy of each student's final examination for at least one (1) year, to be produced, if necessary, in the event of grade appeal or litigation. The Chief Academic Officer shall keep a copy of any examinations that result in a grade appeal for three (3) years.

#### 8. Determining and Posting Final Grades

Final grades should be turned in to the Registrar's office via the College's Banner system within forty-eight (48) hours of the conclusion of a course's final examination. Final grades for Friday and Saturday classes must be received in the Registrar's office by 10:00 a.m. the following Monday.

Official grades will be made available to students by the Registrar's office. Faculty electing to post their own grades may do so, but students may not be identified by name, social security number, student identification number, or in any other manner that would conflict with the student's right to privacy.

#### 9. Accommodating Drop/Withdrawal Policies, and

- 10. Communicating with their students and department chair in the event they are unable to meet with their classes.

### C. Faculty Absence from Class

A faculty member unable to meet a class or classes (e.g., illness or car trouble) will notify the appropriate department chair, make an effort to notify his/her students, and submit a Faculty/Staff Absence Request/Report. This report shall offer an indication of what students from the missed class(es) will do to compensate educationally for the lesson

which is cancelled, if such cancellation occurs.

#### D. Laboratory Supervision

In all laboratory situations, the faculty member is responsible for direct supervision and instruction in the laboratory. Even though student assistants are used at times, no student will be expected to take charge of or direct the laboratory.

### VIII. EVALUATION OF FACULTY

#### A. Annual Merit and Performance Evaluation

Evaluation of tenured, tenure-track, and continuing track full-time faculty members' performance will be conducted on a yearly basis, and will include annual faculty evaluation of all faculty members registered on the Faculty Development Report (FDR). Criteria used for consideration include (1) teaching effectiveness, (2) College service, and (3) professional development and community service.

##### 1. Responsibility for Annual Evaluation

Primary responsibility for evaluation of faculty members' performance rests with respective department chairs and the Chief Academic Officer. Department chairs, using the Faculty Development Report as a basis, will write an annual evaluation of each faculty member. (In the case of department chairs, the Chief Academic Officer will write the evaluation, the department chair has the opportunity to respond, and the completed FDR is maintained in the Office of the Chief Academic Officer.)

Evaluations should be narrative interpretations of submitted information that will be helpful to faculty members and other evaluators. Department chairs will rate the performance of each faculty member with respect to certain stipulated criteria as follows:

- Excellent
- Above Average
- Average
- Needs Improvement
- Needs Considerable Improvement

##### 2. Annual Faculty Development Report (FDR)

All full-time tenured, tenure-track and continuing track faculty members must complete an annual Faculty Development Report. This report will detail evidence in support of the faculty member's (1) teaching effectiveness, (2) College service, (3) professional development and/or public service. Contents for the reports should be determined and organized as follows:

###### a. "Teaching Effectiveness" section will include:

- (1) A description of the nature and quality of the faculty member's teaching, to include but not be limited to information relating to course load, course presentations, innovative techniques used in the classroom, use of technology, record of help offered students outside of class time, grading of papers, testing procedures, choice of textbooks, and any additional demonstrations of



- professional growth deemed relevant by the faculty member;
- (2) Self-evaluative passage of reflection on student achievement of course learning outcomes listed on the syllabus for each course; and
- (3) Student course evaluation data from all courses.
- b. “College service” section will include information relating to
  - (1) Student advising or mentoring;
  - (2) Fulfillment of discipline and department responsibilities;
  - (3) Committee participation:
 

Faculty members who have maintained a record of active involvement with committees of which they are not official members may also request a statement about their contributions to the relevant committee from committee chairs, and
  - (4) College-wide activities.
- c. Professional development section will include information relating to:
  - (1) Membership in professional organizations;
  - (2) Attendance at, and if relevant, participation in professional meetings and conferences;
  - (3) Research and/or publications; and
  - (4) Graduate credits earned during the relevant period of time.
- d. Evidence of public service may be included in the section with professional development, and may include evidence of participation in civic and social-services activities, memberships in relevant organizations, and/or talks given which are of public benefit, but not professional in nature.

Ratings of “inadequate” will be accompanied by comments aimed at suggesting particular strategies for improvement, as well as the request for a meeting to discuss relevant sections.

Final decisions regarding salary increases for the next contracted period of employment will include a joint review of faculty members’ Faculty Development Reports by the Chief Academic Officer and the President.

If this process of annual faculty evaluations identifies a pattern of deficient performance over time, the Chief Academic Officer will conduct a thorough assessment and consult with the faculty member, the appropriate department chair, and the President.

Otherwise, if a need for significant improvement does not initiate the sequence of events just described, the faculty member will see his/her department chair’s evaluation and have the opportunity to provide a written response, to be appended to the FDR and maintained with it. The document will next travel to the Chief Academic Officer for review, and s/he will add his/her response. The faculty member in question will then have the opportunity to see the Chief Academic Officer’s written

comments, appended to the FDR, and have a chance to respond to these in writing. This FDR, now bearing the signatures of the faculty member submitting the document, the individual's department chair, and the Chief Academic Officer, along with up to two responses to evaluators' comments provided by the faculty member, is to be maintained by the Chief Academic Officer's office.

An in-depth evaluation of tenure-eligible and continuing track faculty will be conducted during their sixth semester at Richard Bland College. and tenured faculty at least every five (5) years following immediately upon award of tenure, will be conducted.

## B. Evaluation by Appointment Category

### 1. Tenured Faculty

#### a. Promotion Review

In addition to the annual Faculty Development Report, a portfolio review will be conducted for tenured faculty eligible for promotion. (See information on "portfolios" promotion.)

#### b. Post-Tenure Review

Every five (5) years a post-tenure portfolio review will be conducted for tenured faculty. The portfolio will cover the previous five (5) years. It will include Faculty Development Reports and department chair evaluations from those years, as well as student evaluations from the previous two (2) years. The portfolio will be evaluated by the Peer Review Committee.

### 2. Tenure-Eligible Faculty

#### a. Promotion Review

In addition to the annual Faculty Development Report, a portfolio review will be conducted for tenured faculty eligible for promotion. (See information on "portfolios" promotion.)

#### b. Pre-Tenure Review

##### Submission of Pre-Tenure Portfolio

Non-tenured, tenure-eligible faculty will have the opportunity to submit to the Peer Review Committee for evaluation a pre-tenure portfolio at the beginning of their sixth semester of teaching at Richard Bland College. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide evidence for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, College service, and professional development and community service in a consolidated format. The portfolio will cover the first four (4) semesters and will be organized to make a case on behalf of the faculty member indicating progress is being made toward tenure and promotion. The pre-tenure portfolio will include:

- (1) A copy of the faculty member's curriculum vitae, and a reflective essay elaborating on his/her teaching philosophy and proposal for professional development;
- (2) The first two (2) Faculty Development Reports,

- (3) A sampling of instructor-provided materials used in at least two (2) courses taught during the relevant interval. Materials should be representative of course overviews and syllabi, assignment lists, research paper assignments, reading lists, study guides, handouts, problem sets, laboratory exercises, tests, final examinations, or other course material deemed of interest to evaluators;
- (4) Student course evaluations for four semesters;
- (5) Other evidence the candidate believes may be relevant and helpful to his/her evaluation for promotion.

c. Submission of Tenure Portfolio

Non-tenured, tenure-eligible faculty will submit for evaluation a tenure portfolio to the Peer Review Committee at the beginning of their sixth year of teaching at Richard Bland College. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide, in a consolidated format, evidence for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, College service, and professional development, and community service. The portfolio will cover the first five (5) years, and will be the basis for consideration of a granting of tenure to the faculty member. The portfolio will include:

- (1) A copy of the faculty member's curriculum vitae, and a reflective essay elaborating on his/her teaching philosophy;
- (2) The first five (5) Faculty Development Reports;
- (3) A sampling of instructor-provided materials used in each course taught during the relevant interval. Materials should be representative of course overviews and syllabi, assignment lists, research paper assignments, reading lists, study guides, handouts, problem sets, laboratory exercises, tests, final examinations, or other course material deemed of interest to evaluators;
- (4) Student course evaluations for the relevant interval;
- (5) Update and progress report of professional development plan and
- (6) Other evidence the candidate believes may be relevant and helpful to his/her evaluation for promotion.

3. Continuing Track Full-Time Faculty

a. Promotion Review

Continuing Faculty applying for promotion will submit a portfolio to the Peer Review Committee for evaluation. (See information on "portfolios" promotion.)

b. Preliminary Peer Review

Continuing track faculty will submit a portfolio to the Peer Review Committee for evaluation at the beginning of their sixth semester of teaching at Richard Bland College. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide evidence for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, College service, and professional development and community service in a consolidated format. The portfolio will cover the first four (4) semesters and will be organized to make a case on behalf of the faculty member indicating progress is being made toward professional development and promotion. The preliminary review portfolio will include:

- (1) A copy of the faculty member's curriculum vitae, and a reflective essay elaborating on his/her teaching philosophy;
  - (2) The first two (2) Faculty Development Reports
  - (3) A sampling of instructor-provided materials used in two (2) courses taught during the relevant interval. Materials should be representative of course overviews and syllabi, assignment lists, research paper assignments, reading lists, study guides, handouts, problem sets, laboratory exercises, tests, final examinations, or other course material deemed of interest to evaluators;
  - (4) Student course evaluations for four semesters;
  - (5) Outline of a proposed professional development strategy;
  - (6) Other evidence the candidate believes may be relevant and helpful to his/her evaluation for promotion.
- c. Continuing Track Faculty Contract Review
- In addition to the preliminary Non-tenured faculty with continuing appointments will be evaluated by their department Chair and the Chief Academic Officer prior to each contract renewal.
- d. Five-Year Review
- Every fifth year after obtaining the rank of associate or full professor, continuing track faculty will submit a five year review portfolio to the Peer Review Committee. If the faculty member is up for promotion the same year the portfolio will follow the guidelines for promotion. If the faculty member is not under consideration for promotion, the portfolio will contain.
- (1) Five years of faculty development reports
  - (2) Four semesters of student evaluations
  - (3) An update and progress report of their faculty development plan.
4. Specified-Term, Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty (Adjunct)
- Specified term faculty members, including those teaching dual- enrollment and online/distance classes for College credit, will have a classroom observation conducted their first semester and subsequently every other year by their respective department chairs, or the designees of those chairs. The written evaluation that results from this observation and the results of their student evaluation will be discussed with each adjunct faculty member, and will form the basis for consideration in awarding future teaching contracts to the relevant faculty members. Specified term faculty are not eligible for promotion or tenure.
5. Process Subsequent to Portfolio Submission
- The Peer Review Committee will be responsible for all pre-tenure review, preliminary continuing track faculty review, post-tenure review, five year review, and promotion review. The committee will write its evaluation based on the submitted materials, consisting of an assessment of those materials, with the additions of data gathered during their classroom observations and suggestions for continued professional

growth. In all cases other than pre-tenure and preliminary continuing contract faculty review, the evaluation will be forwarded to the appropriate department chair, and the department chair will write an evaluation and forward all materials to the Chief Academic Officer. In the cases of pre-tenure and preliminary continuing contract faculty review, the committee will submit its evaluation with suggestions for continued professional development directly to the individual faculty member, report that this task has been completed to the appropriate department chair, and forward the evaluation to the next chair of the peer committee for consideration at the faculty member's next review.

The Chief Academic Officer will write an in-depth review of the faculty member seeking tenure and/or promotion. This review will focus on teaching performance, productivity, and potential to excel. The review is intended to give the faculty member an indication of perceptions of his/her effectiveness, and to make suggestions for continued professional growth.

- a. The Chief Academic Officer will meet with the faculty member and set goals needing to be met for potential granting of tenure, or promotion. Other criteria for evaluation of the faculty member by the committee will include, in addition to those factors already mentioned:
  - (1) The faculty member's teaching load;
  - (2) The perceived quality of the instructional materials used by the faculty member in each course;
  - (3) Development of each course, including use of assessment to allow for continuous improvement;
  - (4) Appropriateness of the intellectual tasks set his/her classes by the faculty member;
  - (5) The quality of the testing conducted in each course, with student learning outcomes as a consideration;
  - (6) The distribution of grades, if requested by the committee;
  - (7) Quality of committee service, if capable of determination;
  - (8) Quality of discipline, division, and College-wide service, if capable of determination. This would include advising;
  - (9) Demonstrated commitment to professional growth; and
  - (10) Representation of Richard Bland College in the community.
- b. If the Peer Review Committee identifies a pattern of deficient performance, the Chief Academic Officer will conduct a thorough assessment, to include:
  - (1) The faculty member's expected long-term contribution to Richard Bland College;
  - (2) Areas where improvement is needed;
  - (3) A plan for ways to deal with problem areas; and
  - (4) A timetable addressing a strategy for measuring progress toward improvement

over the next three (3) semesters.

- c. Annual evaluations in succeeding years will specifically address progress toward improvement as established in the timetable.
- d. A faculty member who does not meet the requirements for satisfactory performance (as specified in the plan and measured by the agreed-upon timetable) may be subject to disciplinary actions consistent with College policy on such matters.

## **IX. PROMOTION IN RANK**

Recommendations for promotion Richard Bland College shall be made to the Chief Academic Officer by the Peer Review Committee. In all cases, the Chief Academic Officer, upon receipt of the committee's report, shall make recommendations regarding promotions and multiple-year contracts to the President, whose decision is final, subject to the approval of the Board of Visitors. Though there will be consideration for promotion in rank at the times stipulated in this document, such promotion is not automatic upon completion of time served at a particular level of rank.

### **A. Minimum Requirements for Service and Promotion:**

#### **1. Instructor**

The faculty member must hold/have a master's degree and/or a minimum of eighteen graduate hours in the area of instruction, or in rare cases, be awarded consideration of an equivalency by the Chief Academic Officer.

#### **2. Promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor**

To be considered for promotion to assistant professor, a faculty member must:

- a. Have completed two (2) years' service as an instructor at the College, or in rare cases, be awarded consideration of an equivalency by the Chief Academic Officer;
- b. Hold a master's degree in the field of appointment, or in rare cases, be awarded consideration of an equivalency by the Chief Academic Officer;
- c. Demonstrate performance that reflects promise of the candidate's being a strong addition to the College in his/her professional field, and
- d. Submit a satisfactory portfolio for review prior to promotion, as described above.

#### **3. Promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor**

To be considered for promotion to associate professor, a faculty member must complete four (4) years' service as an Assistant Professor at the College, or in rare cases, be awarded consideration of an equivalency by the Chief Academic Officer. The faculty member must also have at least six (6) years in total of college-level teaching.

#### **4. Promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor**

To be considered for promotion to full professor, a faculty member must complete at least six (6) years as associate professor, or in rare cases, be awarded consideration of an equivalency by the Chief Academic Officer. S/he must have a minimum of twelve

(12) years of college teaching experience (or equivalency), and a terminal degree in his/her field. The M.F.A. can be considered as a terminal degree for a faculty member whose field is theater or studio art. The promotion, if awarded, will take effect in the fall semester following the candidate's completion of the requirements stipulated herein, given approval of the Peer Review Committee, the Chief Academic Officer, the President, and the Board of Visitors.

## B. Timetables

### 1. Timetable for Review: Preliminary and Pre-tenure Review

#### a. First Monday in April

Candidates for review are announced by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). Upon notification, candidates may make recommendations for the areas of expertise represented on the Peer Review Committee to the CAO.

#### b. First Monday in May

Peer Review Committee members are announced by the Chief Academic Officer. Members will include representatives from each academic department and as much as possible at least one member will possess expertise in areas specified by each candidate.

The CAO will appoint as Chair of the Committee a senior faculty member who is not a department chair of any candidate up for review.

#### c. Third Monday in January (of the following year)

Candidates for pre-tenure review or preliminary continuing faculty review submit their portfolios to the Peer Review Committee Chair.

#### d. Third Monday in February

The Peer Review Committee completes its classroom observations of the candidates (at least two members of the committee will visit an entire class meeting for each faculty member under its review). After completing their observations and portfolio reviews, the committee will meet with each candidate to discuss their continued professional development.

#### e. Third Monday in March

The Peer Review Committee submits a report with recommendations for continued professional growth to each candidate, based on its portfolio reviews, classroom observations, and meetings with the candidates.

#### f. Third Monday in April

The candidate returns a signed copy of the committee's report, along with any comments they may have to the Chair of the Peer Review Committee. The Committee Chair will then notify the candidate's department chair and the CAO that the candidate has completed the review process and retain a copy of the candidate's report for forwarding to future review committees.

### 2. Timetable for Review: Promotion and Tenure Review

#### a. First Monday in April

Candidates for review are announced by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). Upon notification, candidates may make recommendations for the areas of expertise represented on the Peer Review Committee to the CAO.

b. First Monday in May

Peer Review Committee members are announced by the Chief Academic Officer. Members will include representatives from each academic department and as much as possible at least one member will possess expertise in areas specified by each candidate.

The CAO will appoint as Chair of the Committee a senior faculty member who is not a department chair of any candidate up for review. The chair of the previous Peer Review Committee forwards pre-tenure/ preliminary review reports for candidates up for promotion or tenure to the new committee chair.

c. Third Monday in September

Candidates for promotion or tenure faculty review submit their portfolios to the Peer Review Committee Chair.

d. Third Monday in October

The Peer Review Committee completes its classroom observations of the candidates (at least two members of the committee will visit an entire class meeting for each faculty member under its review). After completing their observations and portfolio reviews, the committee will meet with each candidate to discuss their experience at the College to date and their vision of their professional future.

e. Second Monday in January

The Peer Review Committee submits its report with recommendation for or against promotion or tenure to each candidate it is reviewing and their respective department chair. Upon receipt of the Committee's report, candidates not receiving a recommendation for tenure or promotion from the Committee may submit a written response to their department chair and/ or request a meeting with the department chair.

f. Third Monday in February

The candidate's department chair submits their own recommendation for or against promotion or tenure, along with the recommendation of the Peer Review Committee and candidate's response, to the CAO.

g. First Monday in March

The CAO reports the recommendations (for or against tenure/ promotion) of the Peer Review Committee and Department Chairs, along with their own recommendation, to the President.

3. Timetable for Review: Post-tenure Review and Five-year Review of Continuing Faculty

a. First Monday in April



Candidates for review are announced by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). Upon notification, candidates may make recommendations for the areas of expertise represented on the Peer Review Committee to the CAO.

b. First Monday in May

Peer Review Committee members are announced by the Chief Academic Officer. Members will include representatives from each academic department and as much as possible at least one member will possess expertise in areas specified by each candidate.

The CAO will appoint as Chair of the Committee a senior faculty member who is not a department chair of any candidate up for review.

c. Third Monday in September

Candidates for review submit their portfolios to the Peer Review Committee Chair.

d. Third Monday in October

The Peer Review Committee completes its classroom observations of the candidates (at least two members of the committee will visit an entire class meeting for each faculty member under its review). After completing their observations and portfolio reviews, the committee will meet with each candidate to discuss their experience at the College to date and their vision of their professional future.

e. Second Monday in January

The Peer Review Committee submits its report on the candidate's professional performance of each candidate during this time period, to the candidate, their department chair, and the CAO. Upon receipt of the Committee's report, candidates not receiving a positive assessment from the Committee may submit a written response to their department chair and request a meeting with the department chair.

f. Third Monday in February

For any candidate not receiving a positive assessment from the Committee, the candidate's department chair submits their own written assessment of the candidate's professional performance, along with the candidate's written response, to the CAO. The CAO will then schedule a meeting with any candidate not receiving a positive assessment by the Committee to identify steps for improving their performance.

g. First Monday in March

The CAO will submit a plan with a specific timetable of measurable steps for professional development to any candidate who did not receive a positive assessment by either the committee or their department chair. If the plan is acceptable to the candidate, they will sign and return it to the CAO who will then monitor the success of the candidate at following the plan. A candidate may elect to have the plan reviewed by the Faculty Affairs Committee, who may suggest revisions to the plan to the CAO.

## **X. SALARY INCREASES**

### **A. General Guidelines**

To fund faculty salary adjustments, Richard Bland College uses money appropriated by the General Assembly. Depending on availability of funds, all faculty members are considered for annual salary increases. These increases will be geared toward reducing inequities, recognizing promotion, and merit.

## **XI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Richard Bland College is committed to supporting professional faculty development. The College provides resources and opportunities for professional development for full- and part-time faculty. Department chairs are responsible for coordinating faculty development activities. Areas supported by the College include, but are not limited to, funding of applied research designed to improve student learning outcomes, presentations at professional meetings, on-campus workshops and seminars, study leave, educational leave, and release time for special projects.

### **A. Faculty Attendance at, and Participation in, Professional Meetings**

Funding for faculty travel can come from departmental budgets, the Faculty Development Program budget, the Richard Bland College Foundation, funds from grants, or a combination of these and other sources.

Faculty members are encouraged, within budgetary constraints, to attend professional meetings. If classes are in session during the time of the meeting, arrangements to cover classes must be made in advance with the department chair, who will in turn notify the Chief Academic Officer as to the disposition of classes during the period of absence using the Faculty Absence Report Form ([www.rbc.edu/faculty/forms](http://www.rbc.edu/faculty/forms)).

Faculty members are required to complete travel forms prior to departure to a professional meeting. Travel regulations are discussed below. Complete information regarding travel regulations may be found in the Office of Finance. Faculty should review policies before making work-related travel plans or arrangements.

### **B. Other Categories of Faculty Development**

Many additional opportunities exist for supporting the professional development of faculty members. Some of these are discussed in the upcoming section on academic leave and leave taken as a sabbatical. Others may take different forms not involving leave or travel, e.g., purchase of hardware, software, or other educational supplies that discipline budgets cannot fund.

For funding requests not involving travel, faculty should submit a written request for funding that explains why the request is being made and gives a projection of costs. The initial request need not exceed a single page, although faculty may submit whatever documentation they wish. Should the Chief Academic Officer require additional information, s/he may request this be provided before funds will be approved.

Within sixty (60) days of completion of a purchase, or an activity not involving travel, the faculty member should submit to his/her department chair and the Chief Academic Officer a report that describes early experiences with, or results of, the supported activity.

## **XII. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

There are two sorts of leave discussed here: academic leave and leave taken as a sabbatical.

## A. Academic Leave

### 1. Definition

Academic leave is defined here as leave taken by contractual arrangement between the College and the individual requesting/receiving leave. For leave to be considered “academic,” its primary purpose must be to enhance the scholarly and/or teaching skills of a faculty member. Such leave is undertaken for the purpose(s) of pursuing a project or projects and/or coursework which both the faculty member and the College understand as being of benefit to the latter. The benefit may accrue by means of (1) enhancing a professor’s knowledge base relating to his/her discipline, (2) enhancing performance relating to the teaching of his/her subject matter in accord with his/her professional duties, and/or (3) enabling the professor to earn credentials relating to his/her discipline, or a related discipline deemed important to the work of the College.

### 2. Scope

Academic leave may include, but is not limited to, grants of absence extended for the following purposes:

- a. Pursuit and completion of coursework that helps the College meet a curricular need, such as that which leads to either a doctorate or fulfillment of eighteen graduate hours in an area of instruction, or a second Master’s degree, should the College need competence in that area;
- b. Writing, editing, or publishing a book, article(s), monograph(s), etc.;
- c. Conducting fieldwork or laboratory research;
- d. Compiling, analyzing and/or publishing data relating to a field in which the faculty members works;
- e. Teaching at another institution; and/or
- f. Employment in a government or comparable agency in an area related to the faculty member’s area of professional expertise;

### 3. Rationale

The College is committed to academic leave because such leave offers opportunities for faculty to develop professionally and to acquire new ideas or talents to share with the College community.

## B. Sabbatical

### 1. Definition

Sabbatical is defined here as leave taken by contractual arrangement between the College and the individual requesting/receiving leave for purpose(s) of engaging in a project not directly related to a professor’s academic work in the classroom at the time the leave is requested/granted. Nonetheless, the project(s) to be undertaken may be understood to be of potential benefit to the work of the College.

### 2. Scope

A Sabbatical may include, but is not limited to, leave extended for the following purposes:

- a. The writing of an article or articles, book, monograph, etc. on a topic not directly related to a professor's classroom responsibilities or discipline area, and/or
- b. Charitable or humanitarian efforts.

### 3. Rationale

The sabbatical might widen a faculty member's range of professional contacts, and/or raise the profile of Richard Bland College through the faculty member's association with the institution. In the case of a faculty member's involvement with charitable or humanitarian causes, a sabbatical permits the faculty member to benefit the society in/for which the College operates.

## C. Requesting Leave

Written application for leave, together with a letter of acknowledgement and a recommendation from the faculty member's department chair, must be submitted to the Chief Academic Officer, who will add his/her own recommendation, and forward all related documents to the President.

### 1. Timetable

For academic leave or a sabbatical to be undertaken in the fall semester, or if the leave taken is to extend through an entire academic year, a faculty member must apply in written form to his/her department chair by the end of September the year prior to the beginning date for the planned leave.

For either form of leave to be undertaken in the spring semester, written application must be submitted by the end of February the year prior to the beginning date for the planned leave. Requests made after these deadlines will be considered at the discretion of the Chief Academic Officer.

Paid leave can only be applied for after a period of six (6) years have passed since a faculty member's start-date with the College, or following his/her return from the last leave granted by the College, unless by permission of the Chief Academic Officer and College President.

### 2. Written Request for Leave

Written request for leave submitted by a faculty member to his/her department chair should be detailed in explaining the request, and in its projections, possibly including material such as the following:

- a. A detailed proposal describing the project(s), or the course of study to be undertaken during the leave period (academic leave);
- b. An explanation of how the project(s) or coursework meets the College's curricular needs (academic leave);
- c. A copy of the letter of acceptance from a graduate school signed by the proper authority representing the graduate school, or a program within it (academic leave);

- d. An estimate of the costs of up to full salary and possible tuition assistance involved (books are disallowed) (academic leave), and/or
- e. A projected timeline (academic leave or sabbatical).

D. Provisos Concerning the Granting of Leave

1. No more than three (3) faculty members will be absent from the College on leave during the same period of time;
2. No more than two (2) faculty members will be recommended by a department chair from his/her academic area during any given selection period;
3. While it is the hope and intention that all eligible applicants with appropriate proposals will receive leave after providing an appropriate request, financial and staffing constraints may limit the actual number of leave proposals granted;
4. In determining among competing requests for leave, department chairs and the Chief Academic Officer will be guided by the College's curricular needs, and will consider/prioritize:
  - a. Tenured faculty over non-tenured faculty regardless of rank (academic leave, or sabbatical);
  - b. Time of service to the College (academic leave, or sabbatical); and
  - c. Which applicant(s) are closest to completion of a degree (academic leave).

E. Responses to Requests for Leave

A faculty member may expect any of the following as possible responses to requests for leave:

1. Offer of leave with full or half pay;
2. Offer of release time from total number of credit hours taught;
3. Offer of a re-organized teaching schedule;
4. Offer of leave without pay (if the faculty member has less than six years of full-time service to the College), and
5. Offer to substitute other duties in lieu of teaching and/or College service responsibilities.

Individuals applying in a timely and complete way for leave may expect that their requests will be accepted or denied by College administration within a six (6)- week period from the date of the initial submission of their paperwork to their department chair. The individual whose completed request for leave is denied has the right to expect that the reason for denial of his/her request will be addressed in writing by the Chief Academic Officer.

F. Responsibilities of the faculty member who has taken a leave upon his/her return to the service of the College

No later than sixty (60) days following the completion of a leave, the faculty member taking the leave will file a written report with the Chief Academic Officer, sending copies to the President and his/her department chair. In the case of academic leave taken to

complete coursework, this report will include documentation from the relevant graduate school attesting to the successful completion of that work. For all other types of academic leave, and for sabbaticals, the report will include a description of how the leave will contribute to the faculty member's teaching effectiveness, the Mission of the College, and/or the work of the College and/or the community it serves, as appropriate.

### **XIII. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Faculty members are expected to avoid outside employment if it interferes with their teaching effectiveness and performance of their faculty responsibilities. The primary obligation of full-time faculty members and other employees is to the College. No other form of gainful employment should interfere with this commitment.

Persons with full-time teaching appointments who are asked to teach part-time for other institutions, or who wish to engage in consulting or other kinds of paid work, must gain prior written permission from the President or designee on the occasion of first undertaking such work.

Faculty members should be aware that provisions of the "State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act" (VA. Code 2.2-3100 et seq.) may apply to their outside employment or consulting contracts.

### **XIV. CONSENSUAL AMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS**

The appearance of a compromising conflict of interest or of coercion, favoritism or bias in educational or academic evaluation is prejudicial to the interests and integrity of Richard Bland College, its members, and the public it serves. Thus amorous relationships between faculty members and students are strictly prohibited. For purposes of this policy, "faculty" shall include all full-time or part-time College personnel who teach, and also administrators with faculty status.

Members of the College community who believe themselves to be affected adversely by this policy may initiate a complaint with the appropriate department chair. A complaint alleging that a department chair or an administrator has violated this policy may be filed

with the Chief Academic Officer or other appropriate College officer. Complaints should be filed within ten (10) calendar days of the time at which the complainant becomes aware of an alleged violation, but not more than one year after that violation.

### **XV. ACADEMIC FACULTY MISCONDUCT**

Integrity in teaching and research requires that the faculty body pay careful attention to and resolve in an equitable manner allegations of misconduct concerning its members.

The procedures set forth below permit flexibility and are designed to provide a framework for enabling equitable resolution of allegations of misconduct in a wide variety of circumstances. When applying these to a specific case, persons acting on behalf of the faculty body and others involved in the proceedings should keep in mind the following concerns, including:

- the importance that the faculty act to maintain standards consistent with recognized ethical best practices of the professoriate, and with the lawful obligations of the faculty;
- the responsibility of the faculty to the public, and to the private and public institutions and agencies with which the faculty is affiliated and/or has contractual or other arrangements;

- the necessity for the faculty to protect the rights and reputations of individuals, including person(s) alleged to have engaged in misconduct and the person(s) who make the allegation(s) of misconduct, and
- the necessity the faculty resolve allegations with care and objectivity, offering ample opportunity for interested parties to be heard, with a resolution brought about as promptly as circumstances permit.

#### A. Definition of Misconduct

“Misconduct” means actions inconsistent with the College’s Code of Ethics, College policy, applicable federal and state law or policy, or research or other academic standards. The determination as to whether misconduct has occurred must be proven by a preponderance of the evidence.

#### B. Procedures

1. The Chief Academic Officer shall have principal responsibility for receiving and assessing a proper response to allegations of misconduct concerning faculty members. An allegation will ordinarily be made by a written statement describing the misconduct in sufficient detail to form the basis of an inquiry. To enable the Chief Academic Officer to meet his/her responsibility, all allegations of misconduct, whether initially received by a department chair or other person, shall be promptly brought to the attention of the Chief Academic Officer (and, where appropriate, the President) unless it appears that the allegation, if proven, would not rise to the level of misconduct.
2. Upon receipt of an allegation of misconduct, the Chief Academic Officer shall determine, after consultation with other offices as seems appropriate (e.g., Human Resources), whether the conduct described in the allegation is governed by another College policy, procedure relating to which provides for investigation (if appropriate), and resolution, of such allegations. If another College policy or procedure is applicable, the matter will be referred to the appropriate office or individual. The Chief Academic Officer will inform the reporting party where the matter has been referred.
3. When primary responsibility for resolving the allegation rests with an office other than his/her own, that office should notify the Chief Academic Officer of the outcome of its procedural process.
4. If the conduct described in the allegation, if verified, rises to the level of misconduct, and no applicable College policy directs that the allegation be handled under a different procedure, the Chief Academic Officer shall determine whether, taking into account the nature of the allegation, it is appropriate to attempt to resolve the matter through informal processes and discussions. If this is the case, the Chief Academic Officer shall direct the appropriate department chair to undertake such efforts. Final resolution through informal means shall require the written approval of the Chief Academic Officer, submitted to the department chair responsible for the informal attempt at resolution.
5. If the matter is not resolved informally, or if the matter is not conducive to informal resolution, and further proceedings are required, the Chief Academic Officer shall

direct the appropriate department chair to prepare a written statement of the allegations, identifying the applicable policy or policies violation of which constitutes complaint of misconduct. The Chief Academic Officer shall provide a complete copy of the written statement to the faculty member accused of misconduct, who will have 10 calendar days from receipt to respond in writing to the Chief Academic Officer.

6. If the accused faculty member does not dispute the facts alleged, the matter will be submitted to the Faculty Affairs Committee. The Committee shall consider the statement of allegations and the accused faculty member's response. The committee may also seek input from the person whose report gave rise to the allegation. Then, the committee shall prepare a written report to submit to the Chief Academic Officer. In some instances, the committee may recommend that, despite the lack of a dispute over the allegations, investigation should nonetheless occur (e.g., the committee might believe there is a lack of candor in the faculty member's response, which of itself warrants further investigation).
7. If there is a dispute over facts, or for other good cause, the Chief Academic Officer, after consultation with the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, may establish one or more panels of inquiry to investigate the allegations, with a view to submitting the result of its inquiry to the committee. In deciding upon the composition of the panel(s), the Chief Academic Officer, to help ensure competence and objectivity, shall take into account such factors as:
  - a. The subject matter of the inquiry, including the desirability of the panel's possessing competence in a specialized area, or specialized investigative skills;
  - b. The desirability of including on the panel persons associated with individuals who are not members of the faculty and/or who are not associated with the College, and
  - c. The importance of selecting people who have had no prior involvement with the matters comprising the subject matter of the inquiry.
8. The investigation panel shall communicate with the person whose report gave rise to the allegations; the faculty member who has been accused of misconduct, and such other individuals who, in the judgment of the investigative panel, may have information bearing on the allegations. The investigative panel will develop, at the conclusion of its efforts, a written report detailing the system and scope of the investigation, and the panel's assessment of facts relevant to the allegations. The panel should attempt to reach consensus, but the report should identify points where consensus is not reached. It shall forward its report to the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee.
9. The chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee will distribute the report to members of the committee, and give a copy to the faculty member accused of misconduct. The accused faculty member shall be given ten (10) calendar days to provide a written response to the investigation panel report. Upon receipt of the response, the committee shall consider whether further investigation, deliberation, and proceedings are warranted. Upon completion of additional proceedings, should they be found warranted, the committee shall submit its written report the Chief Academic Officer, along with the accused faculty member's written response. The Committee will, in its



panel report, offer conclusions and comments on its assessment of the gravity of offense; recommendations as to possible sanctions, and recommended steps that should be undertaken to prevent future instances of similar misconduct. The Committee shall endeavor to reach consensus on these matters, but will note in its report where consensus has not been reached.

10. The office of the Chief Academic Officer will provide a copy of the committee's report to the accused faculty member, who shall be given ten (10) days in which to provide the Chief Academic Officer with a written response. The Chief Academic Officer shall, in consultation with the President, decide the final outcome of the matter, and will take such actions as may be appropriate. Sanctions may range, from a letter of censure, to probation and monitoring, to termination of appointment in cases which do not involve tenure, unless there is cause.

In determining the appropriate sanction, the Chief Academic Officer shall consider:

- a. the nature of the violation(s);
- b. the degree to which the faculty member's conduct transgresses the standard set by the relevant policy;
- c. the impact of the violation(s), and any aggravating or mitigating factors.

If the decision of the Chief Academic Officer varies significantly from the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Chief Academic Officer shall provide in writing the reasons for such his/her determinations(s) to the accused faculty member, and to the Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee.

11. The decision of the Chief Academic Officer, if consistent with the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, shall be final. If the decision of the Chief Academic Officer departs significantly from the recommendation of the committee, the accused faculty member has ten (10) calendar days to appeal in writing to the President of the College.
12. If at this point in the process the President determines that the decision of the Chief Academic Officer does not depart significantly from the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, the President shall affirm the decision, which shall be final.
13. If the President determines that the decision of the Chief Academic Officer departs significantly from the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, and that the reasons given for his/her determination by the Chief Academic Officer are sound, the President of the College shall affirm the Chief Academic Officer's decision, which shall be final.
14. If the President determines that the decision of the Chief Academic Officer departs significantly from the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, and the reasons (if any) given by the Chief Academic Officer do not support his/her determination, the President shall remand the decision for reconsideration by the Chief Academic Officer, and provide the Chief Academic Officer with appropriate guidance. Any such remanded decision shall, after reconsideration by the Chief Academic Officer, be returned to the President for review. Upon the President's approval of the Chief Academic Officer's reconsideration, the decision shall be final.

15. The Chief Academic Officer, in carrying out his or her responsibilities under these procedures, shall bear in mind the concerns of the faculty, in particular:
  - a. The importance of deliberateness, fairness and objectivity, and of the appearance of these attributes;
  - b. The necessity of informing in a timely way other faculty and College officers, including the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, the department chair(s) involved, the General Counsel to the College, and possibly others of the existence of allegations, and also the potential necessity of consulting with these and other individuals as investigation of the allegation(s) progresses;
  - c. The importance of protecting the reputations of individuals, and to that end the need for maintaining confidentiality to the extent practicable during the course of and at the conclusion of the investigation;
  - d. The need to protect the rights of the person alleged to have engaged in misconduct, including the right to be informed at the appropriate time of the specific allegation(s) made about him/her; the evidence in support of the allegation(s), and the need to discuss with that person the investigative procedures to be followed;
  - e. The need to protect the rights of individuals who, in good faith, make allegations, and
  - f. The need to make certain the President of the College, and potentially others, is/are informed when allegations point to the existence of grave misconduct.
16. The office of the Chief Academic Officer and the Faculty Affairs Committee shall maintain records of any proceedings in which they are involved in accordance with the applicable State Records Retention schedule.

## **XVI. GRIEVANCES**

Grievance policies as discussed are relevant to all full- and part-time members of the College holding the status of teaching faculty.

### **A. Definitions**

1. A “grievance” is a complaint brought forward by a member of the faculty concerning a decision, action, or lack of action by a person or group of persons acting in an official capacity with the College, which directly and adversely affects the professional or personal well-being of the grievant, and which can be addressed and corrected or amended by the College.
2. A “grievant” is a member of the faculty who has made a complaint that constitutes a grievance.
3. A “respondent” is a member of the faculty who made the decision or took the action on behalf of the College that precipitated the grievance.

College Faculty Appeals and Grievance Committee (CFAGC) is a standing committee of the faculty, the charge of which is to investigate a grievance and recommend to the Chief Academic Officer (or President, as dictated by the nature of the filing) a recommended resolution.

4. A “unit representative” is an individual, not belonging to the teaching faculty, who is designated to speak for a department or organizational unit of the College charged with causing or being instrumental to furtherance of a situation/set of circumstances being grieved.

#### B. Coverage

The policy affects any full- or part-time member of the College teaching faculty.

#### C. Non-Grievable Actions

These include:

1. Termination of tenured, tenure-track, or probationary appointments in cases of proven financial exigency affecting the College as a whole (see Handbook on termination of faculty positions for reasons of financial exigency);
2. Termination of tenured, tenure-track, or probationary appointments in cases relating to discontinuation of a discipline/department within the College;
3. Compensation;
4. Evaluation of performance;
5. Non-reappointment or non-extension of appointment.

#### D. Procedure for Reporting a Grievance

##### 1. Filing the Grievance

- a. A faculty member with a grievance against another faculty member within his/her department shall present the grievance to the department chair.
- b. A faculty member with a grievance against another faculty member not in his/her department, with a grievance against his/her department chair, or with a policy or a practice of the department shall present the grievance to the Chief Academic Officer.
- c. A faculty member with a grievance against the Chief Academic Officer, or a College policy or procedure or the application thereof shall present the grievance to the President of the College.

##### 2. Attempt at Informal Resolution

Conflicts frequently can be resolved if the parties involved communicate their concerns, listen to each other, and show a willingness to compromise and/or change. The Informal Grievance Resolution Process is designed to empower the parties to a Grievance to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement.

To begin the Informal Grievance Resolution Process, the Grievant must file a written statement of his or her concerns as dictated by the nature of the filing. This must be done within 15 Days from the date in which he or she first knew, or could reasonably be expected to know, of the alleged violation or within (30) business days from the most recent incident in a series of related incidents. The letter must include:

- a. A description of the alleged impropriety, including the date it occurred and/or the date the Initiator became aware of the occurrence;

- b. The College policy, procedure, standard, or established practice allegedly misinterpreted or violated if the concern is procedural in nature;
- c. The name(s) of the person(s), if known, responsible for the alleged impropriety; and
- d. The remedy sought.

The CFAGC will appoint one of its members to assist the parties in resolving the Grievance. The Informal Grievance Resolution Process will be concluded by one of the following:

- a. A decision by the Grievant to stop further action on the Grievance.
- b. A resolution of the Grievance by agreement of the parties.
- c. Expiration of the time period allowed for the Informal Grievance Resolution Process.

The Informal Grievance Resolution Process must be concluded within (5) business days from the appointment of the CFAGC member unless the parties mutually agree to extend the time for conclusion of the Informal Grievance Resolution Process, provided however, that it is not extended more than 10 additional business days.

### 3. Formal Request to CFAGC

Before a Formal Request to the CFAGC for a hearing can be made, a Grievant must try to resolve the Grievance through the Informal Grievance Resolution Process. A faculty member requesting a hearing by CFAGC shall present a written statement of charges to the Chief Academic Officer. If the grievance is against the Chief Academic Officer, or a College policy, decision, or action, then the statement of charges shall be presented to the President of the College.

### 4. Statement of Charges, Preparation and Distribution

The written statement of charges submitted by the grievant shall contain the following information and material in a form from which multiple legible copies may be easily reproduced and cannot contain any new concerns or complaints:

- a. A clear statement of the facts upon which the grievance is based, including an explanation of how the grievant alleges s/he has been adversely affected and the specific form of relief requested;
- b. Copies of all documents concerning the grievance sent or received during the informal grievance resolution process;
- c. Copies of all documents concerning the Grievance that the Grievant sent or received during the Informal Grievance Resolution Process.
- d. Identification of the person(s) or the College policy or procedure considered responsible for the alleged adverse condition, action, or inaction upon which the grievance is based, and an explanation of why the person(s) charged is/are considered responsible or the College policy or procedure is considered improper;
- e. A copy of any pertinent Board of Visitors or College policies or regulations, Commonwealth statutes, contractual agreements, or other documents of custom

and practice upon which the grievant relies; and

- f. A written statement prepared by each witness that the grievant would expect to call for a hearing in support of the grievance. This/these should summarize the information or evidence that the witness would testify to at a hearing. The grievant shall also identify any witnesses believed to have relevant information who have refused to prepare a written statement or to testify at a hearing and the nature of the relevant information at issue.

#### 5. Composition of the CFAGC

The formal hearing shall be conducted by the CFAGC. The members on the Committee shall be members of the teaching faculty; no officer of the administration will serve on the committee. Prior to the Chief Academic Officer turning the formal statement of charges over to the CFAGC, both the accused faculty member/unit representative and the grievant will have one opportunity, without stated cause, to challenge the membership of the CFAGC that will hear the grievance. This is the only time at which committee membership may be challenged. At this time (prior to disseminating the statement of charges), the recusal of any member(s) of the committee should also be determined. Any member of the CFAGC should remove him/herself from the case if s/he has or could reasonably be perceived to have a bias or conflict of interest. To prevent perception of bias or conflict of interest, any member will step down at the request of a majority of members of CFAGC who have not been removed by a challenge, and who perceive and justify for the record in written form a potential cause for charges of bias or conflict of interest regarding the committee member in question. The committee must have at least five (5) members to conduct the formal investigation. Replacement of the Committee members will be determined by the remaining members from a pool of elected and so-designated "back-up members." When the Faculty Assembly conducts (annual staggered-term) elections for CFAGC membership, it will ensure the election of both five (5) active members, and five (5) "back-up members," ranked by number in order of possible call to service. Should the existing chair of the committee (whose position shall be determined by vote from among the combined numbers of the committee members and back-up members) be removed through challenge or recusal, the five (5) committee members (the four original members, together with the first-ranked back-up member) shall elect a new chair to serve for the specific purpose of the formal hearing in question. No teaching faculty members in their first year of employment with the College shall serve as either committee members or back-up committee members. Ideally, no more than one-quarter of the members of the committee should be individuals holding single-year, renewable contracts of employment.

#### 6. Conduct of formal committee deliberations

The Chair of CFAGC shall prepare and distribute a complete copy of the statement of charges to each member of the committee and to the President of the College.

#### 7. Confidentiality

It is expected confidentiality will be maintained in the conduct of formal committee deliberations. Mere suspicion of wrongdoing, even if unjustified, is potentially damaging to the process. Information concerning any grievance proceedings should

be available only to those with a right or need to know, and early in the proceeding, a written document filed with CFAGC to document the access to information of those with a right or need to know. (This may be revised as the process proceeds, with agreement of the CFAGC members, or for legal cause.) The record of such transactions will be maintained as part of the documentary filings related to the hearing.

8. Preliminary review and decision

The CFAGC shall, within fifteen (15) business days after receipt of the statement of charges, review the charges and determine a response. If the committee decides by a majority vote that the charges (a) do not constitute a grievance, (b) are frivolous or without merit, (c) do not involve actions taken by a person in an official capacity, or (d) cannot be addressed by an official College policy or procedural remedy, then the chair of the committee shall advise the grievant in writing of this finding with a copy provided to the President of the College. The action of the committee at this stage is final.

9. Request for a reply to the Statement of Charges

If the CFAGC determines to request a reply to the statement of charges, the chair shall advise the grievant and shall provide a complete copy of the statement of charges to each person against whom the complaint is made. If the grievance is against a departmental policy, decision, or action, rather than against the action of an individual, the department chair shall represent the department against which the grievance is made. If the grievance is against a College policy, decision, or action, rather than against the action of an individual, the appropriate Chief Academic Officer or a representative appointed by the President of the College shall represent the relevant institutional unit against which the grievance is made.

10. Reply to the Statement of Charges

Upon receipt of the statement of charges, the person(s) against whom or representing the unit against which the grievance is made shall, if s/he wishes to reply, have fifteen (15) business days to present a response to the charges to the chair of the CFAGC. The response shall be in writing and shall include:

- a. A full statement of the position taken by the person(s)/institutional units against whom the grievance has been made with respect to the charge;
- b. Any commentary the cited party/ies may wish to offer concerning any of the documents contained in the statement of charges submitted by the grievant and any pertinent documents or materials upon which the respondent(s) relied; and
- c. A written statement prepared by each witness that the respondent would expect to call for the hearing in response to the grievance that summarizes the information or evidence that the witness would testify to at a hearing. The respondent may also identify any witnesses believed to have relevant information who have refused to prepare a written statement or to testify at a hearing and the nature of the relevant information at issue. Within five (5) business days after receipt of the response to the statement of charges from the party/ies against whom the grievance has been made, the chair of the committee shall have prepared and

distributed to the grievant and to each member of CFAGC a complete copy of the response.

#### 11. Review of Reply to the Statement of Charges, and Decision

Should all members of the CFAGC, after reading the statement of charges and the response thereto, determine that there are sufficient grounds to recommend a remedy or a correction without conducting a full hearing, then the committee shall by formal resolution offer its recommendation for the remedy or correction to be taken to address the grievance. (The committee may also recommend that no corrective action should be taken.) The committee's recommendation shall be promptly transmitted, in writing, to the parties concerned, and to the President of the College, and if approved by the President, the action shall be final. If the committee determines that a hearing should be held, the chair of the CFAGC shall schedule a hearing by the committee to begin no later than fifteen (15) business days after the distribution date of the response to the statement of charges.

#### 12. Pre-Hearing Conference

At least ten (10) business days before the hearing, the CFAGC will hold, with all parties present, a pre-hearing conference to define the issues involved and to resolve procedural matters for the hearing.. For instance, the committee will inform both parties of their option to request the right to call witnesses for the hearing. Such witnesses will be expected to submit written statements to the Committee as part of the request. The committee may also choose to call witnesses based on its deliberations of the facts to this point.

#### 13. Procedure for the Hearing

The hearing shall be conducted according to the following procedures:

##### a. Attendees

The hearing shall be private, with only the parties involved, witnesses, counsel, advisers, designated observers, and members of the committee present, except that, with mutual agreement by the grievant and the party/ies against whom the grievance is made, the hearing may be made public;

##### b. Record of Hearing

The full and complete hearing shall be recorded by and for the committee; and

##### c. Conduct of Hearing

The hearing shall be convened and conducted by the CFAGC chair. Counsels, advisers, or other observers may not speak or participate; they are to silently observe the proceedings. The purpose of the hearing is to allow the committee to complete its work of determining a recommendation, given the charge(s) made, which may require further fact-finding through questioning of the parties or other witnesses. In principle, the facts will already have been presented in writing from both sides. The hearing provides the committee the opportunity to clarify issues by asking questions of either or both parties and to hear from witnesses it believes in possession of knowledge or material pertinent to the case. The committee will afford both the grievant and the accused opportunity to provide a five-minute

statement at the outset of the Hearing, should either party choose to do so, and it reserves the opportunity of asking questions of them at that time. Either party may make a written request no less than five (5) business days in advance of the hearing to call and interrogate witnesses, if either believes that such witnesses will bring new and important information to the committee's attention. The reasons for the need for such witnesses must be provided in the written request, along with a statement from each witness. The committee will rule on requests to call witnesses at least two (2) business days before the hearing begins. The committee will afford both the grievant and the accused the opportunity to provide a five-minute statement at the conclusion of the hearing, should either choose to do so, and it reserves the option of asking questions of them at the time.

#### 14. Order of Hearing Activities

The general outline of a hearing (with all possible steps included) would follow this procedure:

- a. Convening of the hearing by the CFAGC committee chair;
- b. Opening statement by grievant;
- c. Opening statement by respondent to the grievance;
- d. Questions by the committee to clarify issues raised in the written materials, including witness statements, and points raised by the two opening statements;
- e. Witnesses called by the grievant (questions by the committee and the respondent would follow the witness's initial responses to questions asked by the grievant);
- f. Witnesses called by the respondent (questions by the committee and the grievant would follow the witness's initial responses to questions asked by the respondent);
- g. Witnesses called by the committee (questions by the grievant and the respondent would follow each witness's initial responses to questions asked by the committee);
- h. Closing statement by the grievant;
- i. Closing statement by the respondent to the grievance, and
- j. Committee adjourns to deliberate and reach a decision.

#### 15. Decision

After all testimony has been presented, the chair of CFAGC shall recess the hearing, and the committee shall go into closed session to determine its findings and prepare its report and recommendations. If the grievance is against an individual faculty member and s/he is found by the committee to be responsible, the CFAGC may make recommendations for handling the problem to the President of the College.

#### 16. Distribution of the Decision

Within ten (10) business days of the recess of the hearing, the CFAGC shall present its written report and recommendations, showing the vote of the committee on the recommendations, to the Chief Academic Officer and to all parties to the hearing. The report shall provide a summary of the facts presented in the hearing and the reasons



for the committee recommendations.

The Grievant and the Respondent(s) each have the right to appeal the decision made by CFAGC to the Chief Academic Officer. Such appeal must be in writing and filed within (10) business days of receipt of the CFAGC written report. Decisions not appealed within such time are deemed final and the CFAGC report shall be forwarded to the President of The College.

If the Chief Academic Officer participated in the hearing or was a party to the Grievance, the President must appoint another College Faculty member or Administrator (designee) not associated with the Grievance to accept and decide the appeal.

The Chief Academic Officer (or designee as assigned by the President) must make a determination on the appeal within 10 Days. Such determination will be communicated in writing to the Grievant, the Respondent(s), members of CFAGC, and the President of the College. Within fifteen (15) business days after receipt of the committee's report and recommendations or the written appeal determination, the President of the College shall communicate, in writing, to the parties involved and to each member of the committee, his/her acceptance or rejection, in whole or in part, of the recommendations/determination.

## **XVII. TERMINATION OF AN APPOINTMENT FOR REASONS OF FINANCIAL EXIGENCY, AND/OR DISCONTINUANCE OF A DISCIPLINE OR DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION**

### **A. Financial Exigency**

Financial exigency in this context is defined as an imminent financial crisis threatening the College as a whole that is unable to be alleviated other than by termination of faculty appointments.

Termination of an appointment with continuous tenure, or of a probationary or special appointment before the end of a contractually specified term may occur under extraordinary circumstances because of a demonstrably bona fide instance of financial exigency, i.e., a severe financial crisis that compromises the fundamental academic integrity of the institution as a whole, and that cannot be alleviated by less radical means.

Ultimate authority over the decision to terminate appointments in cases of financial exigency rests with the College President and the Board of Visitors. However, there is the expectation that an inclusive and informed process will take place in the case of termination of appointments.

Therefore, the criteria for selecting which appointments are to be terminated should be determined by the College President and Board only after the President has consulted with the Chief Financial Officer and his/her staff, the Chief Academic Officer, and the Faculty Assembly, or a representative body of faculty elected by the Assembly in response to news of the crisis for the purpose of advising the President on faculty concerns, and acting as a liaison between administrative attempts to abate it on the one hand, and the broad-based faculty interests representing the Assembly on the other.

Once the President, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the College, and the latter's staff have determined a case of financial exigency exists, but before any faculty appointment is terminated, the members of the Faculty Affairs Committee, the

Instructional Programs Committee, and the College faculty more broadly, will be informed.

Next, the Chief Academic Officer with concurrence from the President, in consultation with the Faculty Assembly, or the elected body representing Assembly members, shall determine the criteria for identifying faculty whose appointments are to be terminated. The Chief Academic Officer and the Faculty Assembly or its elected representatives will consult programs or departments affected as part of their deliberations.

Below are a number of considerations that should inform the process as it unfolds:

As a first step, the Assembly or the elected faculty governance body should be included—though there is no requirement to do so—in the process of deciding that a condition of financial exigency exists or is imminent, and that all feasible alternatives to termination of appointments have been pursued, including expenditure of one-time money or reserves as bridge funding, furloughs, pay cuts, deferred-compensation plans, early-retirement packages, phased-retirement packages, and cuts to non-educational programs and services, including expenses for administration.

Judgments determining where within the overall academic program termination of appointments may occur involve considerations of educational policy, including affirmative action, as well as faculty status, and should therefore include the faculty or an appropriate faculty body.

The case of a faculty member given notice of proposed termination of appointment for reasons of financial exigency may be governed by the following provisions.

1. Before proposals for program discontinuance on grounds of financial exigency are made, the faculty or an appropriate faculty body will have opportunity to make recommendations regarding the institution's financial condition.
2. Academic disciplines cannot be defined ad hoc; programs should be recognized academic units that existed prior to the declaration of financial exigency. The term "discipline" should designate a related cluster of credit-bearing courses that constitute a coherent body of study comparable to similar coherent bodies as recognized by other VA institutions of higher education. When feasible, the term should designate a department or similar administrative unit.
3. Faculty members in a discipline being considered for discontinuance because of financial exigency will promptly be informed of this activity in writing, and provided at least thirty (30) days in which to respond.

If the institution, because of financial exigency, terminates appointments, it will not at the same time make new appointments, except in extraordinary circumstances where a serious distortion in the academic discipline would otherwise result. The appointment of a faculty member with tenure will not be terminated in favor of retaining a faculty member without tenure, except in extraordinary circumstances where a serious distortion of the academic discipline would otherwise result.

Before terminating an appointment because of financial exigency, the institution, with faculty participation, will make every effort to place the faculty member concerned in another suitable position within the institution if feasible.

## B. Discontinuance of a Discipline for Educational Reasons

Termination of an appointment with continuous tenure, or of a probationary or special appointment before the end of the specified term, may occur as a result of bona fide formal discontinuance of an instructional discipline. The following standards and procedures will apply.

Faculty members in a discipline being considered for discontinuance for educational considerations will promptly be informed of this activity in writing, and provided at least thirty (30) days in which to respond to it.

Academic disciplines cannot be defined ad hoc; disciplines must be recognized academic units that existed prior to the decision to discontinue them. The term “discipline” should designate a related cluster of credit-bearing courses that constitute a coherent body of study.

Before the administration issues notice to a faculty member of its intention to terminate an appointment because of formal discontinuance of a discipline of instruction, the institution will make every effort to place the faculty member concerned in another suitable position when feasible. If placement in another position would be facilitated by a reasonable period of training, financial and other support for such training will be proffered when feasible. If no position is available within the institution, with or without re-training, the faculty member’s appointment then may be terminated, but only with provision for severance salary when feasible equitably adjusted to the faculty member’s length of past and potential service, an amount which may well exceed but not be less than the amount prescribed in what follows.

If the appointment is terminated, the faculty member will receive salary or notice when feasible in accordance with the following schedule: at least three months, if the final decision is reached by March 1 (or three [3] months prior to the expiration) of the first year of probationary service; at least six [6] months, if the decision is reached by December 15 of the second year (or after nine [9] months, but prior to eighteen [18] months) of probationary service; at least one (1) year, if the decision is reached after eighteen (18) months of probationary service, or if the faculty member has tenure.

## **XVIII. LIMITATIONS UPON THE PROVISIONS OF THIS FACULTY HANDBOOK**

### A. Board of Visitors’ Purview

Nothing in this Faculty Handbook is intended to limit the power of the Board of Visitors as the final institutional authority for Richard Bland College.

### B. Effective Date

This Handbook shall become effective at the time of its approval by the Board of Visitors.

### C. Revision and Repeal

This Richard Bland College Faculty Handbook, upon acceptance by the faculty, the President of the College, and the Board of Visitors, repeals and supersedes the previously issued Faculty Handbook, and on matters of policy governing the teaching faculty at Richard Bland College, functions authoritatively on the subjects it treats.