

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Tenure
SRSU Policy ID: FH 2.06
Policy Reviewed by: Executive Vice President and Provost
Approval Authority: President of the University
Approval Date: February 26, 2019
Next Review Date: May 2, 2022

Tenure must be viewed from the standpoint of the general good of the University. It signifies not only the entitlement to continuing appointment as a member of the faculty but also presumes a corresponding commitment by the faculty member to the goals and mission of the University and acceptance of the responsibilities as set forth in the *Rules and Regulations, Texas State University System*, in the *Faculty Handbook* of the University, and the statements by the American Association of University Professors on academic freedom, tenure, and due process.

A. Evaluation Procedure for Tenure

Employment by the University for the period of time required before tenure can be considered does not imply that a faculty member has met all criteria required for tenure. The faculty member must demonstrate, at the time tenure is considered, a significant contribution to the mission of the University during the probationary period and show potential for continued significant contributions to that mission.

1. Earned terminal degree.

The earned doctorate or designated terminal degree is a prerequisite to consideration for tenure. The only exception is in those instances in which the initial letter of appointment or a subsequent reappointment letter clearly waives the requirement of a terminal degree as an ultimate condition of eligibility for tenure consideration.

2. Regular evaluation.

Beginning with appointment to a tenure-track position, each non-tenured faculty member will be observed and evaluated in the classroom by the department chairperson and the college dean. The chairperson shall maintain the departmental file of these annual evaluations with a summary of the University-sponsored student evaluations along with anything else the faculty member may wish to submit.

3. Documented conferences.

After consultations with the tenured faculty, the chairperson shall hold a conference with the tenure-track faculty member and enter into the departmental file all notes from this conference. A copy of these notes shall be given to the faculty member. This process shall be repeated each successive spring semester until the probationary faculty member has been granted tenure. After the faculty

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member has been granted tenure, this process shall continue as part of the Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty Members.

4. Probationary Period.

The probationary period is six years from the date of employment indicated on the original letter of appointment. The letter of appointment to the seventh year shall state that the appointment is terminal or that tenure has been awarded.

5. Credit for previous experience.

A maximum of three years of credit toward fulfillment of the required probationary period may be awarded, at the time of employment, for previous college or university teaching experience. The initial letter of appointment shall indicate the years of credit awarded for previous college or university teaching experience as well as the date when the individual shall be considered for tenure.

6. Tenure at the time of employment.

Tenure may be granted at the time of employment in exceptional situations under the current provisions of the *Rules and Regulations* of the Board of Regents.

7. Leave of absence.

Time spent on leave of absence will not apply toward the minimum years of experience at Sul Ross State University which are required for eligibility for tenure.

B. Eligibility of Administrators for Tenure

1. Teach part-time.

An administrator who teaches part-time may be eligible for tenure in a department offering instruction for which that administrator is academically prepared. To become eligible for tenure, the administrator must have taught on a part-time basis for a period of time at least equivalent to that required for the granting of tenure to full-time faculty of the same academic rank.

2. Tenured position only in academic department.

A tenured appointment for an administrator will apply only for the faculty (teaching) position. The privilege of returning to a full-time teaching appointment with tenure will be contingent upon the availability of a full-time position in the appropriate academic department, and the decision for such a change will be at the discretion of the President and the Board of Regents.

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C. Procedure for Tenure

1. Deadlines.

The evaluation of faculty for tenure is an annual process which begins in the fall semester and continues into the spring semester. The exact dates for each stage of this evaluation process shall be established by the Faculty Affairs Council each spring semester and included in the University's academic calendar and announced at the first meeting of the Faculty Assembly in the fall semester.

2. Criteria.

In making recommendations for tenure, the faculty and administrative officers will consider a candidate's annual performance evaluations, along with the University's institutional needs, as well as the candidate's contributions and potential for continued contributions to the institution.

The tenure-review procedure is as follows:

a. Application.

The tenure-review process shall be initiated by the faculty member in the fall semester of the final year of the probationary period as indicated in the faculty member's initial appointment letter. By the second Friday in October, the candidate must present an application to the department chair.

b. Contents of the application for tenure.

The application for tenure shall include the official application for tenure (see Appendix), a letter of application for tenure, a copy of the applicant's initial letter of appointment, a copy of the current *Curriculum Vita*, copies of the department chairperson's annual evaluations for the most recent three years, and summary sheets of the student course evaluations for the most recent three years. All recommendations from each level of the tenure review procedure shall be added to the tenure application as the application moves through the review procedure.

The application may also include other evidence of contributions to the fulfillment of the University's mission statement and the applicant's commitment to teaching and scholarship such as books, reprints or preprints of articles, scripts, scores, performance programs and other scholarly work appropriate to the discipline.

It is the individual faculty member's responsibility to provide full documentation of the application. Faculty members who fail to document

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adequately their application may not append additional information after the review process has begun and may be denied tenure based upon insufficient documentation.

c. Department.

The department chairperson shall convene the Department Tenure Committee to consider all applications for tenure in the department. This committee shall consist of all of the tenured faculty in the department. If there are fewer than three persons from the applicant's department or program qualified to serve on the departmental reviewing committee, a number of faculty members from outside the department sufficient to compose a departmental committee of three will be selected randomly by the dean of the academic college. Faculty members qualified to be chosen for membership on the departmental committee are faculty members with tenure within the college with the rank of Associate Professor or Professor. The applicant and the department chair may each veto the selection of one committee nominee selected through the random selection process. However, if there is no department chair or if the chair is the applicant, the dean of the college and the applicant may each veto one nominee.

The committee shall elect its own chairperson. The committee shall vote "for" or "against" tenure and then return the application for tenure to the department chairperson.

The department chairperson shall make a recommendation and notify the applicant of the departmental recommendations if requested by the applicant. The chairperson shall forward the application to the dean of the college by the second Friday in November. If the department chairperson is applying for tenure, then the Department Tenure Committee shall forward the chairperson's application directly to the dean by the above date.

d. College.

The dean shall convene the College Tenure Promotion Committee by the second Friday in December and provide all applications for tenure. The College Tenure Committee shall include the chairpersons of the

Department Tenure Committees within the college. The committee shall elect its own chairperson. The committee shall review each application for tenure and vote "for" or "against" tenure for each applicant. When the college review is complete, then the committee shall return the applications to the college dean.

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e. Dean.

The college dean shall make a recommendation "for" or "against" tenure and then notify the applicant of the college recommendations if requested by the applicant. The dean shall forward all applications for tenure to the chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure Review Council by the second Friday in February.

f. Campus.

- i. Alpine. The Promotion and Tenure Review Council shall review all applications for tenure from the Alpine campus and vote "for" or "against" granting tenure to each applicant. The Promotion and Tenure Review Council shall rank all applicants. The recommendations shall be transmitted to the Joint Council on Academic Affairs by the Friday before Spring Break in March.
- ii. Del Rio-Eagle Pass-Uvalde. The Promotion and Tenure Review Council shall review all applications for tenure from the Del Rio-Eagle Pass-Uvalde campuses and vote "for" or "against" granting tenure to each applicant. The Promotion and Tenure Review Council shall rank all applicants. The recommendations shall be transmitted to the Joint Council on Academic Affairs by the Friday before Spring Break in March.

g. University Review.

- i. The tenure recommendations from each campus Promotion and Tenure Review Council shall be transmitted to the Joint Council on Faculty Affairs, a joint council of the SRSU Faculty Governance Organizations. The Joint Council on Faculty Affairs shall be comprised of nine tenured faculty members with the rank of Professor from the Alpine and the Del Rio-Eagle Pass-Uvalde campuses. The Joint Council on Faculty Affairs shall receive and review the recommendations. Two-thirds of the membership shall be from the Alpine campus and one-third from the Del Rio-Eagle Pass-Uvalde campuses. The membership of the Joint Council on Faculty Affairs shall be appointed by the presiding officers of the SRSU Faculty Governance Organizations.
- ii. The senior faculty member of the committee shall chair the committee.
- iii. The Joint Council on Faculty Affairs shall transmit the recommendations to the Executive Vice President and Provost by the first Friday in April.

h. Executive Vice President and Provost.

The Executive Vice President and Provost shall review all applications for tenure and recommend either "for" or "against" granting tenure to each applicant. The Executive Vice President and Provost shall forward the applications to the President by the second Friday in April. The Provost shall notify the applicant of the recommendation if requested by the applicant.

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i. President.

The President shall review all applications for tenure and determine who shall be recommended for tenure to the Board of Regents at their May meeting. The President shall notify all applicants, department chairpersons, and college deans, the chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure Review Councils, and the Executive Vice President and Provost of these recommendations. Following action by the Board of Regents, the President shall give written notice to each applicant of the action taken by the Board.

D. Special Considerations

1. Withdrawing an Application.

An applicant may withdraw an application for tenure at any time in the tenure-review procedure.

2. Hearing Conditions.

A faculty member shall not be entitled to a statement of reasons for denial of tenure or to a hearing to review or appeal such denial, unless he or she submits in writing to the president factual allegations that the denial constitutes a violation of a right guaranteed by the laws or Constitution of the State of Texas or of the United States and requests an administrative hearing to review these allegations. The allegations shall be heard under the same procedures as in the case of dismissal for cause (Chapter V, Subsection 4.444, of the *Rules and Regulations, Texas State University System*) with the exceptions applicable to non-tenured faculty who are not reappointed or who are denied tenure (Chapter V, Subsection 4.28).

3. Tenure/Promotion Committees.

It is assumed that the various departmental and college committees shall be convened to review applications for tenure and promotion concurrently.

E. Return of Tenure Applications

When the tenure-review procedure is complete, the Executive Vice President and Provost shall forward all applications to the chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure Review Councils, who shall return the applications to the applicants.

F. Deadline for Promotion/Tenure Review

The following timeline defines the deadlines for the promotion/tenure review process:

- 2nd Friday in October: Applications to department chairperson
- 2nd Friday in November: Applications from department to college dean
- 2nd Friday in December: Applications from deans to College Review Committees

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- 2nd Friday in February: Applications from college deans to University Promotion and Tenure Council
- Friday before Spring Break in March: Applications from College Promotion and Tenure Review Councils to the Joint Council on Faculty Affairs
- First Friday in April: Applications from the Joint Council on Faculty Affairs to the Executive Vice President and Provost
- Second Friday in April: Applications from the Executive Vice President and Provost to President
- May Meeting, Board of Regents: Recommendations to the Board of Regents