
Chapter 7

Promotion & Tenure

USC Upstate adheres to the traditional three-fold responsibilities of faculty members: teaching, service, and scholarship or creativity. This chapter describes promotion and tenure regulations, and the evaluative terms and criteria for promotion and tenure.

Tenure Regulations

USC Upstate generally adheres to the standards of the American Association of University Professors regarding the rights, privileges, and benefits accorded faculty members; where University policies differ from those standards, the regulations stated herein, or as subsequently modified by the University, apply. No change shall be made in the University-wide promotion and tenure regulations except by vote of the full voting membership of the University faculty or by direction of the Board of Trustees.

Automatic Tenure

Under no circumstances will untenured faculty receive tenure automatically without following the established procedures for tenure decisions. Tenure must result from a positive action of the University, according to its prescribed procedures.

Award of Tenure at Time of Appointment

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Tenure at the time of appointment will only be awarded if it is in the best interest of the University. Permission to negotiate with respect to the award of tenure to the rank of associate professor or professor must be secured in advance through appropriate channels from the Chancellor's Office to the President. When permission has been granted to consider awarding tenure at the time of appointment, members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee vote on the award by secret ballot. The tally of the votes and any written comments concerning the appointment are forwarded as part of the committee's recommendation to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

New Appointments

New faculty members are notified of their tenure status in their letters of appointment. They are informed of the tenure regulations applicable on the effective date of their appointments. Any credit for prior teaching, service, and, scholarship is awarded by the Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and is clearly stated in the appointment letter. Evidence documenting the quality of that experience must be provided for promotion and tenure decisions.

Probationary Period

Maximum Probationary Period. The maximum probationary period for all full-time faculty members appointed at the rank of professor/librarian or associate professor/librarian is continuous service at the rank for six years at USC Upstate. The maximum probationary period for all full-time faculty members with the rank of assistant professor is continuous service in the rank for

seven years at USC Upstate. The maximum probationary period at any combination of ranks is the probationary period of the faculty member's first tenure track appointment at USC Upstate.

Rank	Maximum Probationary Period	Decision Date
Professor/librarian	6 years	During 5 th year
Associate professor/librarian	6 years	During 5 th year
Assistant professor/librarian	7 years	During 6 th year

Extension of Probationary Period. For documented reasons of a serious health condition (of a faculty member and/or the faculty member's spouse, child, or parent), and for requirements of childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child, faculty members holding a probationary term of appointment may request in writing that the maximum probationary period be extended, with no resulting change in employment obligations, in order to provide them additional time to demonstrate fully their professional qualifications for tenure. Documentation may include, for example, a letter from a physician or other healthcare professional indicating the time period of illness.

An extension of the probationary period may also be requested with paid or unpaid leave for reasons other than health conditions, childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child, such as active military duty.

Requests from faculty members to extend their probation-

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ary period for tenure are submitted to the faculty member's rating administrator. Requests must be made as soon as possible, but no later than the first day of classes of the decision year. Faculty members are reminded that requests for extension may be denied, in which case promotion and tenure files are required to meet all announced deadlines.

Requests to extend the probationary period require the recommendation of the rating administrator (if applicable), the dean, and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Each administrator has 5 working days in which to make a recommendation. If the five-day limit is not met, the faculty member may send the request to extend the probationary period to the next level with no penalty. The decision of the Senior Vice Chancellor is final. If an extension is granted within the first four years of tenure track status, the mandatory second or fourth year peer review may also be delayed. The request can be initiated simultaneously with a request for leave or military service; however, it is not necessary to take leave to be eligible for an extension of the probationary period for reasons of serious health condition, childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child.

An extension request for reasons of childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child must be completed within twelve months of the birth or placement of the child. The maximum probationary period may not be extended more than three times. Additionally, a faculty member's probationary term of appointment may not exceed ten years.

In cases where they have been in probationary status for more than the typical years for their rank due to an extension, faculty members shall be evaluated as if they had been in probation-

ary status for the normal probationary period, not longer. Faculty members within the probationary period who have been given a terminal contract are not eligible to extend the probationary period under this policy.

Early Submission of Files. In exceptional cases, candidates may submit an application for promotion or tenure or both prior to the year indicated in their contract. These candidates must earn an evaluation of “excellent” in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship to receive early promotion or tenure or both. Failure to receive promotion or tenure early does not prohibit candidates from subsequently applying.

Withdrawal of Files. Faculty not in their penultimate year may withdraw without prejudice their promotion and/or tenure application at any time before the application is forwarded to the President of the University. Applications for promotion to professor may also be withdrawn without prejudice before files are forwarded to the President of the University.

Final Action in Tenure Decisions

Final action in any award of tenure requires approval of the Board of Trustees.

Non-renewal of Probationary Appointments

If, during the first year of a probationary appointment, it is deemed in the best interest of the University not to renew the appointment, notice of such non-renewal is given in writing by March 1 (July 1 for a second semester appointment). If, during the second year of a probationary appointment, it is deemed in the best interest of the University not to renew the appointment, no-

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tice of such non-renewal is given in writing by December 15 (April 15 for a second semester appointment).

Thereafter, notice in writing of the non-renewal of any appointment to which the provisions of this section apply is given at least twelve months prior to the date of non-renewal.

Notification of All Faculty Members

By April 15, the Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee informs all faculty members of the dates for submitting files. Those considering a request for promotion and/or tenure are asked to notify the Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee by April 30 of the academic year preceding review.

Candidates in Penultimate Year

At the end of the spring term of each year, the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs notifies, in writing, faculty members entering their penultimate year. Candidates in their penultimate year must submit a promotion and tenure file. Faculty members hired into the tenure track after July 1, 2011 are responsible within their probationary period for meeting the unit tenure and promotion criteria and University standards in effect at the time of their hiring.

For all subsequent promotions the faculty member is responsible for meeting either (1) the current voting unit criteria and university standards or (2) unit criteria and university standards in effect at the time of his or her previous promotion or those in effect five years before the current application, whichever of these latter two is more recent. It is incumbent upon faculty members to identify the preferred criteria and standards in their application

for promotion and/or tenure.

Definitions of Evaluative Terms

Excellent. Faculty members considered excellent are those that significantly exceed the normal requirements of their position. Their level of performance indicates extra thought, time, effort, and imagination. They make important contributions to the University and its mission. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Highly Effective. The category of highly effective is reserved for faculty members whose performance exceeds the normal requirements of their position. The quality of their performance makes significant contributions to the University and its mission. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Effective. The category of effective is reserved for faculty members whose performance meets the requirements of their position. Their accomplishments support the mission of the University. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Less than Effective. Less than effective is applied to those faculty members whose performance fails to meet the requirements of their position. Continued performance at this level would clearly impede the mission of the University. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Tenure Eligibility

To promote its welfare, the University in general extends

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the opportunity for full-time tenure track faculty members to become tenured. Only full-time faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor/librarian, associate professor/librarian, and professor/librarian are eligible for tenure. Appointments to all other faculty ranks are on an annual basis and service in such appointments is not considered part of a probationary period for tenure consideration.

Regulations for Administrators

No administrator acquires a permanent appointment in an administrative office. Relinquishing administrative office does not affect faculty rank or tenure. The tenure status of a member of the faculty appointed to an administrative position is not affected adversely by such an appointment. Only years during which the administrator teaches half time or more count toward the probationary period for tenure or toward years in rank for promotion.

Classroom Faculty

To be eligible for tenure, faculty members must possess a record of *highly effective* performance in teaching and made *effective* contributions to scholarship and creativity as well as service. Faculty members are expected to hold the earned terminal degree or other appropriate degree (as in law and certain of the performing or creative arts) and have successfully completed their probationary years at USC Upstate. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of assistant professor, faculty members must possess strong potential for academic development. Faculty members are expected to hold an earned terminal degree

or other appropriate degree (as in law and certain of the performing or creative arts). Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of associate professor, faculty members must at a minimum possess a record of highly effective performance in teaching and have made effective contributions to scholarship and creativity as well as service. Faculty members are normally expected to hold the earned terminal degree or other appropriate degree (as in law and certain of the performing or creative arts) and have at least five years of relevant experience. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of professor, faculty members must at a minimum have a record of excellence in teaching and must also have made highly effective contributions to service or scholarship and creativity and effective contributions to the other category. Faculty members are expected to hold the earned terminal degree or other appropriate degree (as in law and certain of the performing or creative arts) and have at least nine years of relevant experience. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

The normal educational requirements for each rank may be waived in cases where individuals (a) have made extraordinary contributions in teaching, service, or scholarship and creativity or (b) are in disciplines where the earned terminal degree is not commonly required for undergraduate teaching. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Library Faculty

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To be eligible for tenure, library faculty members must possess a record of *highly effective* performance in librarianship and have made *effective* contributions to scholarship and creativity as well as service. Library faculty members are expected to hold a master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association and to have successfully negotiated their probationary years at USC Upstate. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of assistant librarian, faculty members must have a minimum of two years of relevant library experience and must possess strong potential for development. Library faculty members are expected to have an earned master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of associate librarian, faculty members must at a minimum possess a record of *highly effective* performance in librarianship and made *effective* contributions to scholarship and creativity as well as service. Library faculty members are expected to hold an earned master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association and have a minimum of five years of relevant library experience. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

To be eligible for the rank of librarian, faculty members must at a minimum possess a record of *excellence* in librarianship, made *highly effective* contributions to scholarship and creativity, and made effective contributions in service. Library faculty members are expected to hold a master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association and to have a minimum of

nine years of relevant library experience. Individual unit criteria provide examples of specific performance indicators.

Library faculty members not meeting these criteria are eligible for the rank of instructor. Additional advanced degrees will be looked on favorably for promotion consideration. The normal educational requirements for each rank may be waived in cases where a person has made an extraordinary contribution as a librarian.

Statement of Ethical Responsibility

Candidates may consult colleagues not involved in the review process for advice on promotion and tenure. All Peer Review and Promotion and Tenure Committee members adhere to the following ethical guidelines:

- 1. The proceedings of the Committees are confidential with respect to all materials, all discussions, and all votes.*
- 2. There shall be no discussion of files among individual Committee members except during formal Committee meetings.*
- 3. The Committees shall discuss only material contained in the files of the candidates under consideration.*
- 4. Committee members shall not enter into communication with other faculty, including candidates, concerning candidates for promotion and tenure.*
- 5. No information about candidates, candidate files, committee deliberations, or Committee actions will be conveyed using email or the Internet.*
- 6. Committee members shall abstain from participation in cases in which*

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their personal prejudices or personal self-interest may unduly affect their judgment. No Committee member may participate in the deliberations or vote on the candidacy of a spouse or other relative.

- 7. The members of the Peer Review and Promotion and Tenure Committees must meet formally to deliberate candidate files, to ballot, and to write summary recommendations. Committee members' votes shall reflect their best judgment of a candidate's qualifications in meeting the stated criteria as presented in candidates' files.*

Complaints about possible violations of this code should be made to the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee. The chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee is responsible for reporting alleged violations to the Chair or Chair-elect of the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee will consult with the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs concerning appropriate action for violations of the ethics code.

File Preparation

Candidates bear ultimate responsibility for preparation of the file on which the decision is based. Copies of the current USC Upstate format for promotion and tenure files and the current promotion and tenure calendar are available in the office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and on the USC Upstate Website.