Rule Statement

Tenure is a privilege and an honor. The granting of tenure is the most important decision in the development of an outstanding faculty. As such, it is a selective process, which recognizes an individual as worthy to be a continuing member of the faculty based on performance during a trial period. The importance of this decision to the University dictates that tenure is to be awarded when there is sufficient evidence and documentation that an individual will continue to make significant long-term contributions in each of the areas of evaluation and to the overall goals of the university.

Reason for Rule

This rule describes the criteria and responsibilities of tenure/tenure-track faculty and the basis upon which they may be appointed, tenured, and dismissed at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL

1.1 System Policy 12.01 Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure states, “Tenure means the entitlement of a faculty member to continue in an appointed academic position unless dismissed for good cause.” The policy also identifies the conditions or circumstances that will constitute good cause for dismissal of a faculty member. Tenure is granted only by the affirmative action of the Board of Regents upon recommendation of the President of the institution.

1.2 The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide faculty members with a written statement of terms of employment including tenure conditions when employment is initiated. Beginning with appointment, the standard probationary period for an eligible faculty member will be seven years of full-time service at Texas A&M -Corpus Christi. Review for tenure shall be no later than the sixth year of service (unless an extension of the tenure probationary period has been approved according to University Rule 12.01.99.C4).
1.3 Up to three years of appropriate full-time service at other institutions may be included as a portion of the probationary period if agreed to in writing and so stated in the appointment letter from the provost at the time of initial appointment. The appointment letter will also indicate the dates for pre-tenure review and tenure review (see 1.6).

1.4 Each untenured faculty member shall be evaluated annually by the department chair to discuss progress, accomplishments, opportunities for improvement, and expectations with regard to excellence in teaching, excellence in scholarship and/or creative accomplishments (12.01.99.C1.01 Academic Rank Descriptors for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty Members). Annual reviews are reviewed and approved by the dean.

1.4.1 Tenure-track faculty members during their first year review, during their pre-tenure review, and during their tenure-review shall also meet with the provost or designee.

1.5 Application for Early Tenure

1.5.1 Early tenure will only be granted rarely. Faculty members with exceptional teaching, scholarship, and service records may apply during the tenure review process that runs in their fifth year of service at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Faculty members granted years of credit in their appointment letter (for service at other institutions or for non-tenure-track service at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi) during the hiring process shall not be eligible for early tenure. Faculty members should consult with their department chair and dean before applying.

1.5.2 If the applicant for early tenure withdraws during the tenure review prior to submission of materials to the provost’s office for review by the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, he or she will be reviewed in the mandatory year.

1.5.3 If the early tenure applicant does not withdraw and the decision is not to award tenure, the faculty member will be offered an appointment for one additional year following the term or semester in which the notice is received but is no longer eligible to pursue tenure.

1.6 Notification of Years of Credit

1.6.1 Years of credit toward tenure will be stated in the appointment letter. Years of credit may be stated in terms that provide faculty members “up to” the stated number of years allowing the faculty member to choose whether to utilize those years of credit.

1.6.2 In such cases, the appointment letter will note the earliest and latest dates
that an application for tenure may be submitted.

2. UNIVERSITY STANDARDS FOR TENURE

2.1 To be eligible to receive tenure, a faculty member must be an employee of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, must have an earned terminal degree in his/her academic discipline or a related discipline, and should hold the academic rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. (See 12.01.99.C1.01, Academic Rank Descriptors for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty Members.) Members of the faculty whose appointments are part-time or temporary, such as lecturers, instructors, visiting professors, clinical or professional of any rank, or graduate student teaching assistants, are not eligible to receive tenure and consequently are not subject to the provisions of this rule. A faculty member with tenure, however, may request a half or three-quarter time appointment for a fixed period of time. If such a request is approved, the faculty member's tenure status will not be forfeited.

2.2. Administrative personnel, such as department heads and deans, who hold academic rank at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in addition to their administrative title, retain their tenured status as faculty members, but administrative positions per se are not subject to tenure. The initial appointment letter, or if applicable, the letter notifying the faculty member of his or her appointment to the administrative position, should state the portion of the employee’s salary that is associated with the administrative position. Also, in such case, this letter should state that the administrative position and the salary associated with such position may be terminated without cause. Except in extraordinary cases, administrators who have not held a tenured faculty position at an institution of higher learning will not be hired with tenure at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

2.3 The tenured faculty of a particular program and/or dean of a college may determine that it is in the university’s best interest to recommend the appointment of a faculty member with tenure. Such a circumstance must be accompanied by a written recommendation to the provost from the dean in consultation with the appropriate department chair and faculty. All requests for tenure upon arrival must be approved by the president prior to any offer to a candidate, and any offer of a tenured position is contingent upon the Board of Regents’ approval to award tenure to the candidate.

2.3.1 The provost will consider the recommendation and appropriate documentation before making the faculty appointment.

2.3.2 Tenure appointments must be approved by the president and the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

2.4 As described by University Statement 12.01.99.C1.04 Descriptions of Teaching, Scholarship, and Service, excellence in these categories of performance for tenure are:
2.4.1 Excellence in Teaching: This category may include, among other things, classroom and laboratory instruction; development of new courses, laboratories, and teaching methods; distance education, publication of instructional materials; advising; and supervision of undergraduate students and/or graduate students.

2.4.2 Excellence in Scholarship and/or Creative Activity: Creation and dissemination of new knowledge or other creative activities and/or the preservation of knowledge. For most disciplines, this category consists of research, grants, publication, and/or creative work. This category may also include securing patents, copyrights, and commercialization as defined by college criteria.

2.4.3 Excellence in Service: This includes service to the University, to students, student organizations, colleagues, department, college, as well as service beyond the campus. Examples of the latter include service to professional societies, research organizations, governmental agencies, the local community, and the public at large, as it relates to their discipline and area of expertise as well as other activities that benefit and enhance the community and university/community relations. It is also recognized that some tenure-track faculty may have duties assigned that include semi-administrative or administrative responsibilities. Examples of these responsibilities may include duties of a director, coordinator, department chair, assistant or associate dean.

2.4.4 While department and college criteria may utilize some quantitative measures, excellence is of primary importance. Quality, impact, and significance of accomplishments are of utmost importance.

3. PRE-TENURE REVIEW

3.2. The purpose of the pre-tenure review is to give tenure-track faculty members a constructive peer evaluation prior to the tenure review. Tenure-track faculty members shall be informed of recommended alterations or improvements in performance to enhance their chances for a positive tenure recommendation by the department, school, or division.

3.3. The pre-tenure review shall be a component of a tenure-track member’s annual faculty performance evaluation that generally occurs three years prior to eligibility for tenure review. Recommendations for improvement or directed efforts will be provided to the faculty member by faculty peers, the department chair, the dean, and provost or designee. The documentation and requirements for tenure must be consistent with the candidate’s assigned workload. In instances where tenure-track faculty members have been granted time toward tenure during the hiring process, the provost shall note the year of pre-tenure review in the hiring letter. The pre-tenure review shall be administered in accordance with the following process:
3.3.1. Before the end of the spring semester of each year, the college dean shall notify each college faculty member who is subject to pre-tenure review during the next academic year.

3.3.2. By September, the faculty member who is subject to pre-tenure review shall deliver to the department chair a dossier documenting excellence in teaching, scholarship and/or creative activity, and service in accordance with college criteria.

3.3.3. All tenured faculty members in the department (or tenure review unit) shall review the dossier and shall evaluate for excellence in effective teaching, scholarly and/or creative achievement, and service.

3.3.4. Tenured faculty members shall meet together to discuss a candidate’s pre-tenure review and shall draft a developmental review identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement in each area of evaluation. Tenured faculty members shall submit their developmental review to the department chair.

3.3.5. The department chair shall develop an individual review and meet with the candidate to discuss the chair’s evaluation and the review by the tenured faculty members. The faculty member will receive a copy of the chair’s written comments and recommendations as well as the developmental review from the tenured faculty members.

3.3.6. The department chair shall submit the completed pre-tenure review to the dean, including the chair’s evaluation and the review by the tenured faculty members.

3.3.7. The dean shall review the feedback from the tenured faculty and the chair and shall prepare a written evaluation. The dean will meet with the tenure-track faculty member to discuss the pre-tenure review in accordance with college guidelines. The faculty member will receive a copy of the dean’s written comments and evaluation.

3.3.8. The dean shall forward the chair’s evaluation and the dean’s evaluation to the provost. The provost, or designee, will review the evaluations and recommendation and prepare a written evaluation. The provost, or designee, will meet with the tenure-track faculty member to discuss the pre-tenure review. The provost, or designee, may review the Pre-Tenure Evaluation Forms, if necessary. The faculty member will receive a copy of the provost’s, or designee’s, written comments and recommendations.

3.3.9. If the review of the faculty member indicates that he or she is not progressing adequately towards the requirements for tenure, the faculty member’s contract will not be renewed, as required by System Policy 12.02, Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure.
4. **TENURE REVIEW**

4.1 The evaluation of candidates for tenure will take place in the college in accordance with the following university guidelines. Before the end of the spring semester prior to the tenure review, the dean shall notify tenure candidates of their status as candidates and of the deadline for the submission of their dossiers to the dean’s office.

4.2 Before the end of the spring semester prior to the tenure review, the dean will hold a meeting open to tenure candidates to review timelines, processes, and portfolio expectations.

4.3 During tenure review, the college must assess whether the candidate has fulfilled faculty responsibilities (as described in 12.01.99.C1.03 Responsibilities of Full-Time Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty Members) and must assess his or her qualifications in the following five areas: academic preparation, experience (12.01.99.C1.01), teaching, scholarship, and service (12.01.99.C1.04). Each candidate shall provide a dossier to the dean’s office.

4.4 Each college must establish written criteria for each area of evaluation and provide examples of evidence to be used for judging the candidate's performance as delineated below and in 12.01.99.C1.05 Promotion of Tenured Faculty Members. The guidelines must be appropriate to the various disciplines within the college and consistent with the missions of the college and University. Written tenure and promotion procedures and measures shall be provided to all incoming faculty members at the time they are hired.

4.4.1 College criteria must be ratified by a simple majority of the full-time tenured or tenure-track college faculty either by a) balloting or b) through an alternative process that has been approved through balloting. In either case, the criteria and measures must be approved, in writing, by the dean and provost.

4.5 Departments may determine additional written criteria, consistent with the missions of the department, college, and university, to apply in the tenure process.

4.5.1 Departmental measures must be ratified by a simple majority of the full-time tenured or tenure-track college faculty either by a) balloting or b) through an alternative process that has been approved through balloting. In either case, the criteria and measures must be approved, in writing, by the dean and provost.

4.5.2 When revisions are made to departmental tenure criteria, the revisions should address how they apply to current untenured, tenure-track faculty. Any special provisions for current faculty should take into account the degree of change in the criteria and the time until tenure review.
4.6 If a faculty member is appointed jointly to more than one department, a memorandum of understanding will clearly communicate the criteria for tenure and the nature of the Tenure Review Unit at the time of the joint appointment.

4.7 It is the responsibility of the faculty member applying for tenure to submit a complete dossier with all appropriate documentation on or before the due date to the dean’s office. Final deadlines for submitting the dossier and for each step of the review to be completed shall be set by the provost and shared with all faculty and academic administrators before the end of the spring semester of each academic year prior to the upcoming tenure reviews.

4.7.1 Colleges may set deadlines in advance of the university deadlines.

4.8 Consistently sustained performance of faculty responsibilities (as described in 12.01.99.C1.03) is requisite for tenure.

4.9 Evaluation of faculty performance for tenure should be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the faculty member’s assigned workload during the period under evaluation.

5. DOCUMENTATION FOR TENURE REVIEW

5.1 Candidates for tenure will provide the dean’s office with sufficient documentation to support their candidacy. Except as detailed in this rule, additional documents may not be added to the candidate’s dossier once the review process has begun. All candidates for tenure must present documentation to support their tenure candidacy as specified by their college. At minimum the dossier must include, in the following order:

Section I. The department chair will provide a letter noting the nature of the appointment (percent teaching, scholarship and/or creative activity, service - including semi-administrative and administrative duties) and any changes in those duties over time.

Section II. An executive summary (2 pages maximum) that clearly illustrates how the candidate’s qualifications meet each of the requirements listed in sections 2.4.

Section III. A current curriculum vitae.

Section IV. Copies of annual or other evaluations from the department, chair, dean, and provost for the time period under review and any faculty responses.

Section V. Evidence of excellence in teaching.
1. A statement of teaching philosophy and growth (2 pages
Section VI. Evidence of excellence in scholarly and creative contributions.
1. A statement explaining contributions and success in the area of scholarly and creative activity (2 pages maximum).
2. Documentation demonstrating excellence and contributions to scholarly and/or creative activity.
3. Any external letters of evaluation, if required by department or college criteria, should follow college guidelines and be solicited from reviewers at peer or aspirational institutions who are clear leaders in their field as described in college guidelines.

Section VII. Evidence of excellence in service.
1. A statement explaining leadership and service contributions (2 pages maximum)
2. Documentation demonstrating excellence in leadership and service.

Section VIII. Other documentation that the department or college may require or allow.

Section IX. Dossiers should consist of no more than one 4-inch binder or electronic equivalent but may be subject to further expectations as defined by college policy. Candidates should focus on demonstrating quality.

Understanding that the tenure review process provides for review by individuals outside of the candidate’s field of expertise, candidates should make every effort to provide context and explanations relating to their documentation and evidence of excellence.

5.2 The office of the dean is responsible for maintaining the faculty member's tenure file and providing access to that file to the faculty reviewers and to other administrative personnel with a role in the tenure review process.

6. DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROCESS

6.1 If provided for in the college policy and agreed to by departments, more than one
department may be grouped together in a Tenure Review Unit for tenure review. Such Tenure Review Units must be explicitly detailed in college policy. For purposes of this policy, Tenure Review Unit may be synonymous with a department where appropriate. Each department (or Tenure Review Unit) shall have a Department Tenure Review Committee.

6.2 The Department Tenure Review Committee shall consist of all tenured faculty members in the department and shall have at least three (3) members. A simple majority rule shall prevail.

6.2.1 In the event that the number of tenured faculty members in a department is fewer than three (3), the actual tenured faculty members in the department, plus additional tenured faculty members nominated by the department committee members and appointment by the dean, shall act as an ad hoc Department Tenure Review Committee for tenure recommendation.

6.2.2 The department members of the committee shall make nominations to the dean. The dean may make the appointment or seek alternative nominations.

6.3 After consultation with the appropriate department chair(s), the dean, or designee, shall convene a meeting of the Department Tenure Review Committee. Each Department Tenure Review Committee shall elect a chair at the meeting convened by the dean. The dean and the department chair(s) shall review college and university tenure policies.

6.4 The dean’s office shall maintain control of the dossiers throughout the process and shall designate a secure location where the dossiers are available for review by the committee members. The dean, or designee, and the department chair must not be present during subsequent meetings of the Department Tenure Review Committee.

6.5 The chair of the Department Tenure Review Committee shall convene subsequent meetings sufficient to conduct the reviews of all tenure candidates.

6.6 With at least five (5) working days of written notice, the chair of the Department Tenure Review Committee shall reconvene the committee for a final meeting to hold the tenure vote. By a simple majority of those voting, the committee shall recommend to grant or to deny tenure. The chair of the Department Tenure Review Committee shall document the results of the review to the department chair in a written statement and recommendation which shall be signed by all members of the committee.

6.7 After receiving the report and recommendation from the Department Tenure Committee, the chair shall develop a written recommendation to grant or deny tenure. The department chair may consult with the committee and the candidate regarding the recommendations.

6.8 The department chair will meet with the candidate and review the Department
Tenure Review Committee and the Chair’s recommendations.

6.9 Each Candidate will submit a response to the Department Tenure Review Committee and department chair’s recommendations. Such response shall indicate concurrence with the recommendations or non-concurrence. Responses shall be no more than two pages in length. Responses must be submitted to the department chair within two business days of the meeting with the department chair and will be included in the dossier.

6.10 The department chair’s recommendation, the Department Tenure Review Committee’s recommendation, and the candidate’s response shall be added to the dossier and forwarded to the dean.

7. COLLEGE REVIEW PROCESS

7.1 Each year, by the end of September, each department in the college shall elect one member of the department to serve a two-year term on the College Tenure Review Committee. This person (1) must be tenured, (2) shall not be the chair of the department, and (3) shall not be the assistant or associate dean. This elected faculty member cannot serve consecutive terms, unless there are fewer than three (3) tenured faculty members in the department.

7.2 After the election, the dean may appoint up to one person per department for purposes of equity, diversity, and representation to serve a two-year term on the College Tenure Review Committee. This person (1) must be tenured, (2) shall not be the chair of the department, and (3) shall not be the assistant or associate dean. This elected faculty member cannot serve consecutive terms, unless there are fewer than three (3) tenured faculty members in the department.

7.2.1 If a department has no one qualified to serve on the College Tenure Review Committee the department and dean may use one of the following:

7.2.1.1 The dean may modify the qualifications to allow a faculty member, other than the department chair, to be elected from the department. If this elected faculty member is not tenured, he or she cannot be considered for tenure during the current (or subsequent) academic year.

7.2.1.2 The department faculty may nominate a faculty member from outside the college. The dean may appoint that faculty member or seek alternative nominations from the department.

7.2.1.3 A previously tenured emeritus faculty member may be asked to serve on this committee. The committee members, through the chair of the committee, shall make the nomination to the dean. The dean may appoint the emeritus faculty member or seek alternative nominations from the department.
7.2.1.4 As one of the dean’s appointments, if the department has no one qualified to serve on the College Tenure Review Committee, the dean may appoint a faculty member from outside the department or a previously tenured emeritus faculty member.

7.3 After the Department Tenure Review Committee and the department chair have made their recommendations, the dean shall call a meeting of the College Tenure Review Committee. At this meeting, the College Tenure Review Committee shall elect a chair, and the dean shall review college and university tenure policies. The dean’s office shall make available to all committee members the dossiers submitted by the candidates. The dean, assistant dean, or associate dean shall not be present during subsequent meetings of the College Tenure Review Committee. All faculty members eligible for tenure shall be reviewed.

7.4 With at least five (5) working days of written notice, the chair of the College Tenure Review Committee shall reconvene the review committee for a final meeting to hold the tenure vote. For each tenure candidate, the College Tenure Review Committee, by a simple majority of those voting, shall make a recommendation to grant or to deny tenure. A tie vote is insufficient to recommend tenure. The recommendations shall be based on the written measures of the college (and the department, if applicable) and on discussion among the committee members. The committee chair shall forward the recommendations to the dean.

7.5 After receiving the recommendations from the department chair and from the department and college committees, the dean shall write an individual recommendation for each candidate, to grant or to deny tenure. The dean may consult with the committees, the department chair, and the candidate regarding the recommendations.

7.5.1 The dean will meet with the faculty member to inform the candidate of the dean’s recommendation and the results of the other levels of review and to give the candidate the opportunity to read the dean’s letter.

7.5.2 Upon request by the tenure candidate, the dean shall inform the candidate of the numerical results of the department, division, and college votes.

7.5.3 The committee’s letter and the dean’s recommendation shall be added to the dossier and forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs.

8. UNIVERSITY REVIEW PROCESS

8.1 The provost shall receive the dean’s recommendation on tenure and shall forward all recommendations to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee for review.

8.1.1 The members of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee are
appointed by the respective college faculties and must meet the membership criteria described in the University Committees and Councils document.

8.1.2 The committee’s tenure recommendations shall be based on the written measures of the college (and the department, if applicable) and on discussion among the committee members. After review of each candidate’s material, the committee shall prepare a written recommendation for each candidate and send them to the provost.

8.2 After reviewing all recommendations, the provost shall write a personal recommendation for each candidate, to grant or deny tenure. The provost may consult with the committees, department chair, dean, and candidate regarding the recommendations.

8.3 The provost will meet with the president to discuss all tenure recommendations. After that meeting, the president will develop and approve a final tenure list to submit to the Board of Regents. The president may consult with the candidate, committees, department chair, dean, and provost regarding the recommendations.

8.3.1 The provost will meet with the faculty member to inform the candidate of the provost’s recommendation, the recommendation of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee and the recommendation of the president.

8.4 The president shall submit his or her recommendation to the Board of Regents.

8.5 Following action by the Board of Regents, the President or Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will send a letter to the candidate relating the Board of Regents’ decision regarding the recommendation for tenure, with copies to the dean and department chair.

8.6 The University shall retain all materials for a period of seven years beyond the faculty member’s association with the University, except for the dossier, which shall be returned to the candidate 20 days after notification of tenure by the Regents, or after the appeals deadline has elapsed.

9. CANDIDATE WITHDRAWAL FROM TENURE CONSIDERATION

9.2 A candidate for tenure may withdraw from tenure consideration at any time prior to the forwarding of the recommendations to the provost for review by the University Promotion and Tenure Committee.

9.2.1 A withdrawal request must be made in writing, signed, and dated to the dean. Once the letter is submitted to the dean it may not be rescinded.

9.2.2 In the event a candidate requests withdrawal from the tenure review process, the faculty member will be offered a contract for one additional year following the term or semester in which the notice is received and will not
10. RECOMMENDATIONS AGAINST TENURE AND APPEALS

10.1 A tenure candidate may appeal a decision denying tenure for reasons detailed in System Policy 12.01 Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure, section 7. Those appealing should refer to University Rule 12.01.99.C3, Faculty Dismissals, Administrative Leave, Non-Reappointments and Terminal Appointments.

10.2 If the decision is not to award tenure, the faculty member will be offered a contract for one additional year following the term or semester in which the notice is received and will not be subsequently renewed.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements


Contact Office

Contact the Office of Academic Affairs at (361) 825-2722