



University of Colorado

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BOARD OF REGENTS

5. FACULTY

Policy 5.D: Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion of Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty

5.D.1 Tenure Probationary Period

(A) A recommendation on tenure shall be made after a probationary period of continuous full-time service as a professor, associate professor, or assistant professor. (See exceptions in section 5.D.1(E)). The probationary period has a beginning and ending date, and shall not exceed seven years unless the faculty member is granted an automatic or approved extension of the end date of the probationary period ~~tenure clock~~.

(1) If an individual's professional accomplishments warrant, the probationary period may be waived and tenure may be recommended upon hire.

(2) Full-time service in the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor at other institutions may reduce the probationary period. Years of credit must be negotiated before the comprehensive review and preferably at the time of the appointment.

(a) An agreement to include prior full-time service in the probationary period at CU must be negotiated and captured in the letter of offer at the time of appointment, or no later than the time of comprehensive review.

(b) The agreement must document that the start date for the probationary period at CU is prior to the start date of the tenure-track appointment at CU.

~~(1)(3)~~ Any change to the probationary period because of leave will be in increments of one year.

~~(2)(a)~~ If a one-year extension of the tenure clock is provided, a one-year delay applies to the start of personnel actions related to the tenure clock, such as comprehensive review or tenure review, scheduled to occur after the leave period. All probationary period personnel actions (e.g., comprehensive review) that have not yet occurred by the start of the leave period, shall be delayed by the length of the leave period.

~~(3)(1)~~ If an individual's professional accomplishments warrant, the probationary period may be waived and tenure may be recommended upon hire.

(b) The individual's professional accomplishments evaluated for the tenure decision shall be those achieved during the tenure probationary period, no matter how many times that probationary period has been extended.

(c) The primary unit criteria for tenure evaluation remains the same regardless of whether the probationary period has been extended or the individual chooses to come up early for tenure.

~~(4) Full time service in the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor at other institutions may reduce the probationary period. Years of credit must be negotiated before the comprehensive review and preferably at the time of the appointment.~~

(B) A faculty member may apply for leave during their tenure probationary period.

(1) Parental Leave and the Tenure Probationary Period

(a) If a faculty member utilizes parental leave during the tenure probationary period, the faculty member shall be granted a one-year extension of the ~~probationary period~~tenure clock. A faculty member may irrevocably elect, no later than six months following their return to full-time service, to have the leave time count as part of the tenure probationary period. Such an election shall be made in writing and is subject to approval by the dean of the school or college and the chancellor or designee. See corresponding APS 5062 - Leave, section 11 (Parental Leave) and campus policy for additional details on parental leave benefits for faculty.

(2) Other FMLA/FAMLI Leave that is not Parental Leave and the Tenure Probationary Period

(a) If a faculty member qualifies for leave under FMLA/FAMLI during the tenure probationary period for reasons other than parental leave, and the leave period is for one semester to one year, they will automatically receive a one-year ~~tenure clock~~extension of the probationary period. If, however, the leave period is for less than a semester, and the faculty member believes that the leave period will harm their chances for a successful tenure review, the faculty member may request a ~~n tenure clock~~extension of the probationary period.

If the dean of the school or college determines the leave is such that the faculty member's performance cannot be appropriately evaluated during the existing probationary period, the faculty member shall be granted a one-year extension of the ~~probationary period~~tenure clock. The dean's decision may be appealed to the chancellor or their designee. A faculty member may irrevocably elect, no later than six months following their return to full-time service, to have the leave time count as part of the tenure probationary period. Such an election shall be made in writing and is subject to approval by the dean of the school or college and chancellor or designee.

(3) Negotiated Alternative Leave and the Tenure Probationary Period

(a) If a faculty member applies for leave for other reasons not covered in 5.D.1(B)(1) or (2), the request shall be reviewed by the chair and dean of the school or college, and the dean will issue a recommendation to the provost. The request is subject to provost approval. If the leave is approved and the leave period is for one semester to one year, they will automatically receive a one-year ~~tenure-clock~~ extension of the probationary period. If, however, the leave period is for less than a semester, and the faculty member believes that the leave period will harm their chances for a successful tenure review, the faculty member may request an ~~n tenure-clock~~ extension of the probationary period. If the dean of the school or college determines the leave is such that the faculty member's performance cannot be appropriately evaluated during the existing probationary period, the faculty member shall be granted a one-year extension of the ~~probationary period-tenure-clock~~. The dean's decision may be appealed to the chancellor or their designee. A faculty member may irrevocably elect, no later than six months following their return to full-time service, to have the leave time count as part of the tenure probationary period. Such an election shall be made in writing and is subject to approval by the dean of the school or college and chancellor or designee.

(C) In extraordinary circumstances, the president may empower the chancellors to approve ~~tenure-clock~~ extensions of the probationary period that are independent of leave. Any such empowerments shall be reported to the Board of Regents.

(D) Each tenure-track faculty member shall be evaluated in a comprehensive manner at least once during the tenure probationary period apart from the review for award of tenure. The comprehensive review typically occurs during the fourth year of full-time service. The comprehensive review results in one of two outcomes:

- (1) the faculty member is reappointed to a tenure-track position, or
- (2) the faculty member is not reappointed to a tenure-track position, and they will be given a one-year terminal appointment at their existing rank and salary.

The faculty member shall be informed in writing of the results of the comprehensive review.

(E) In the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy and Public Health, promotion and tenure are separate processes but may occur concurrently.

- (1) Unless waived by the faculty member and approved by the dean of the school or college and chancellor, a decision regarding promotion to associate professor shall be made after a maximum probationary period of seven years of continuous full-time service at the rank of assistant professor. Normally, the promotion review of a faculty member will commence at the beginning of the seventh year of service.

- (2) Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy and Public Health tenure-track faculty members in the rank of associate professor or professor are eligible for consideration for tenure. There will be no maximum time limit for the award of tenure; however, the faculty member who is turned down for tenure may not be reconsidered for three years.

5.D.2 Standards for Tenure

- (A) Tenure may be awarded only to faculty members with demonstrated meritorious performance in each of the three areas of: teaching (or librarianship), scholarly/creative work, and leadership and service (to the university, profession and/or public); and demonstrated excellence in either teaching, or scholarly/creative work.

Additionally:

- (1) In the School of Medicine, tenure may be awarded only to faculty members with national and international reputations for academic excellence who are among the best in their field of academic endeavor and who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship and demonstrated excellence in, and dedication to, teaching (as further defined in the rules of the School of Medicine).

Professional/administrative leadership and service and/or clinical activities should be weighed into any decision regarding tenure, but such activities in the absence of significant accomplishments in both teaching and scholarship are not an adequate basis for tenure.

- (2) In its tenure recommendations, the Colorado School of Public Health may consider public health practice/clinical activity and scholarship, as further defined in its bylaws.

- (3) In the School of Pharmacy, tenure may be awarded only to faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship and demonstrated excellence in, and dedication to, teaching (as further defined in the appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure policy of the School of Pharmacy).

- (4) Candidates at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs may also be evaluated on professional practice, in which case they shall also demonstrate meritorious performance in that area.

- (5) Recognizing the importance to the University of Colorado of the commercial and community-based innovation and entrepreneurial activities of the faculty, primary units are encouraged to include in their primary unit criteria impactful innovative and entrepreneurial activities and to award credit for these activities within the usual evaluative areas.

- (B) A recommendation of tenure based on excellence in scholarly/creative work shall include evidence of impact beyond the institution. A recommendation for tenure based on excellence in teaching shall include multiple measures of teaching evaluation and demonstrated achievement at the campus, local, national, and/or

international level which furthers the practice and/or scholarship of teaching and learning beyond one's immediate instructional setting.

- (1) For the School of Medicine and the School of Pharmacy, which require excellence in both teaching and scholarship, at least one area, as specified in the primary unit criteria, must show evidence of impact beyond the institution.

- (C) Effort or promise of performance shall not be a criterion for excellence or meritorious performance. Demonstrated performance and outcomes are required for tenure.

5.D.3 Primary Unit Criteria for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

- (A) Primary units develop criteria that define the teaching, scholarly/creative work, and leadership and service expectations for faculty, such as expectations for publications, grants for scholarly/creative work, measures of clinical excellence, etc., in terms of their scholarly field(s). These primary unit criteria are reviewed for rigor, fairness, and consistency with regent requirements and are not effective until approved by the dean and provost. In those cases where the primary unit has requested and received Board of Regents' approval of specific alternative or additional criteria (see section 5.D.2(A)), those criteria shall be applied in appointment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions.

- (1) If new or revised primary unit criteria have been adopted during a faculty member's tenure probationary period, the faculty member may choose to be evaluated for tenure based on the new criteria or the criteria in place at the time of appointment. When a faculty member is evaluated for promotion to full professor, the current primary unit criteria shall apply. See corresponding APS 1022 – Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review.

- (a) Faculty members on the Anschutz Medical Campus who are evaluated for promotion to associate professor without a coincident evaluation of tenure may choose to be evaluated for promotion based on the primary unit criteria at the time of appointment or the current primary unit criteria (if revisions have been adopted since the date of appointment).

- (B) At the time of comprehensive review, institutional factors may be considered in the reappointment decision.

- (C) At the point of the tenure decision, the only consideration is the merit of the candidate. Merit is judged according to primary unit criteria.

- (D) To be promoted to the rank of Professor (also referred to as "Full Professor"), an individual should have the terminal degree appropriate to their field or its equivalent, and:

- (1) A complete record of accomplishments as a scholar or artist that, taken as a whole, may be judged to be excellent; and
 - (2) A record of significant contribution to graduate and undergraduate education, unless individual or departmental circumstances can be shown to require a stronger emphasis, or singular focus, on one or the other; and

- (3) A record since receiving tenure or promotion to Associate Professor that indicates substantial, significant, and continued growth, development and accomplishment in teaching or librarianship, scholarly/creative work, and leadership and service.

5.D.4 Mentoring

- (A) While the candidate is responsible for developing a professional record that warrants tenure, the department/unit and administration have certain obligations to mentor tenure-track faculty and to help them navigate the processes of review (reappointment, tenure, and promotion). Mentoring opportunities will be provided by primary units and/or colleges/schools.

5.D.5 Review Process

- (A) The case for reappointment, tenure, and promotion of a tenure-track faculty member and promotion of a tenured faculty member is evaluated at multiple levels. The expertise of the primary unit is balanced by the broader perspective introduced at other levels of review. At each stage of the review process, the candidate should be informed of the outcome as expeditiously as possible. Detailed review procedures are provided in APS 1022.
- (1) The primary unit criteria shall be used at every level of the review process and the criteria shall be included in the candidate's dossier.
- (2) A decision on reappointment or promotion shall be issued by the chancellor. The chancellor's decision is final, unless a denial of promotion coincides with a denial of tenure, in which case both decisions can be appealed in accordance with section 5.D.6.
- (3) A decision to recommend or deny tenure shall be issued by the chancellor. The chancellor's decision on tenure is final if the decision is negative. (See section 5.D.6 for information on the appeals process.) The chancellor shall forward positive tenure decisions to the president for review.
- (a) If the president concurs with a recommendation to award tenure, a positive recommendation is issued to the Board of Regents.
- (b) If the president does not concur, the president's decision not to award tenure is final. (See section 5.D.7 for grievance rights.)

5.D.6 Appeal of Decisions Regarding Tenure

- (A) Within 10 business days of receipt of notification, a candidate denied tenure by the chancellor may request a review by the president. The only grounds for a presidential review are: (1) procedural errors of sufficient magnitude that they may have affected the outcome; (2) factual errors of sufficient magnitude that they may have affected the outcome; or (3) the material violation of the laws of the regents or regent policy; or some combination of these grounds.
- (1) The president may determine there are no grounds for appeal and uphold the

decision to deny tenure. In this circumstance, the case is closed.

(2) If the president determines there are grounds for an appeal:

- (a) The president may remand the case to the campus to rectify errors and require the chancellor to then revise or reaffirm the original recommendation.
- (b) The president may overrule the campus decision and recommend tenure to the Board of Regents.
- (c) The president may convene a faculty advisory committee to review the case and issue a recommendation. Ultimately, the president will either make the final decision to deny tenure or will recommend tenure to the Board of Regents.

5.D.7 Grievance Rights

- (A) If a candidate is denied reappointment, promotion, or tenure and believes that there have been serious procedural or factual errors in the case, or the denial occurred through the material violation of the laws of the regents or regent policy, the candidate may submit a grievance to the Faculty Senate Grievance Committee in accordance with regent policy 5.G. A grievance may not be filed until all available administrative appeals have been exhausted.

History:

- Adopted: September 14, 2018 (Moved from the old article 5.B, 5.C and policy 5.M); Became effective July 1, 2020.
- Revised: April 10, 2025.
- Last Reviewed: April 10, 2025.