

Texas A&M University-San Antonio

12.01.99.O0.01 Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure

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Procedure Statement

This Procedure supplements Texas A&M University System (System) Policy [12.01 Academic Freedom Responsibility and Tenure](#) on topics such as written terms of employment, tenure and promotion, financial exigency, the phasing out of programs, and annual performance review.

Reason for Procedure

This Procedure is required by System Policy [12.02 Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure](#) and applies to all faculty members of Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-San Antonio).

Official Procedure

1. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic Freedom is outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 1.

2. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY OF FACULTY MEMBERS

Academic Responsibility of faculty members is outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 2.

3. TENURE AND PROMOTION

3.1 Eligibility and Guidelines for Tenure

3.1.1 To be eligible to receive tenure a faculty member must be a full-time employee of A&M-San Antonio who holds academic rank as assistant professor, associate professor, or professor and hired in a tenure-track faculty position.

- 3.1.2 Administrative positions are not tenure-eligible positions. However, administrative personnel who also hold academic tenure rank in addition to their administrative titles retain their tenured status as faculty members. The appointment letter for a faculty with an administrative position should state the portion of the employee's salary that is associated with the administrative position. Also, in such case, the appointment letter should state that the administrative position and the salary associated with such position may be terminated without cause.
- 3.1.3 Faculty members awarded tenure at other institutions in The Texas A&M University System or any other institution have no claim to tenure at A&M-San Antonio. Persons whose initial appointment to the A&M-San Antonio faculty is at the rank of associate professor or professor and who held the rank of associate professor or professor and were tenured at another institution may be eligible for tenure upon appointment.
- 3.1.4 The probationary period for a tenure-track faculty member shall range from a minimum of three to a maximum of seven years of consecutive service at A&M-San Antonio. The initial appointment letter will clearly indicate the length of the probationary service at A&M-San Antonio.
- 3.1.5 Under some circumstances the probationary period may be extended upon petition by the faculty member, positive recommendation by the dean and approval by the provost. An extension may be approved when a faculty member encounters circumstances that may seriously impede progress toward demonstrating qualification for award of tenure and promotion. Circumstances that may justify approval of such an extension include, but are not limited to, serious illness or injury; responsibility for the primary care of an infant or small child; responsibility for the primary care of a close relative who is disabled, elderly, or seriously ill; or other serious disruptions of the probationary period for unexpected reasons beyond the faculty member's control. The probationary period will normally be extended for one year, but an extended period may be requested for compelling circumstances.

3.2 Written Terms of Faculty Employment

- 3.2.1 In general, a faculty member is any full-time or part-time employee of A&M-San Antonio with an appointment as a professor at any rank, lecturer, visiting, or Professional-Track faculty member. The term of all faculty appointments shall be for a fixed-term of nine months (September through May) unless otherwise stated and are subject to renewal or non-renewal each year or until tenure, for tenure-track positions is achieved. Employment during the summer months (June through August) is not guaranteed but is determined by the needs of the university and the availability of faculty.

3.2.2 Appointment Letters (See System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 3.1)

3.2.3 Annual Notification of Salary (See System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 3.2)

3.2.4 Notification of Resignation (See System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 3.3)

3.3 Tenure and Promotion Evaluation Criteria

3.3.1 All faculty shall be evaluated for tenure and promotion on accomplishments in each of the three major categories of performance: Teaching, Service, and Scholarship. Although some quantitative measures of evaluation may be employed, excellence in performance is of primary importance; that is, the quality, significance, and impact of accomplishments are of much greater importance than their numbers. For tenure and promotion, in addition to meritorious accomplishments, a high potential for continued excellence is required. In most cases, the judgments of colleagues in the faculty member's discipline, internal or external to the institution, provide the best and most reliable basis for making sound decisions about tenure and promotion. Further explanation and examples of evidence in the three categories of performance are:

3.3.1.1 Teaching: Effective teaching is a minimum expectation for the granting of tenure and promotion, and no recommendation for tenure or promotion should be made when effectiveness of teaching is in doubt. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness should be as comprehensive as possible. The process must include information from a variety of sources including systematic assessment of student feedback and input from peers and the academic dean. Among the methods that may be used to demonstrate teaching quality are:

3.3.1.1.1 portfolio documenting exceptional teaching strategies, academic rigor, outstanding student work, assessment of student learning outcomes, course revision as a result of assessment

3.3.1.1.2 peer observation of classroom performance

3.3.1.1.3 student evaluation of course instruction

3.3.1.1.4 receipt of an award or honor for Teaching Excellence from an internal or external agency

3.3.1.2 Service: Service includes service to the institution, to students, colleagues, departments, divisions, and the university, as well as service to the community and the faculty member's professional society. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

3.3.1.2.1 successful recruiting and marketing of academic program

3.3.1.2.2 advisor for a student organization

3.3.1.2.3 member and/or chair of a division or university committee

3.3.1.2.4 service as an academic program coordinator

3.3.1.2.5 guest lecturer or speaker for an outside agency or professional organization

3.3.1.3 Scholarly or artistic endeavor: Scholarship is the creation and dissemination of new knowledge or creative activities. Scholarship and artistic endeavors can take many forms and should be evaluated in the context of discipline norms. In most disciplines peer reviewed, scholarly journal articles represent the standard by which scholarship is judged. Faculty are expected to show continuing growth and professional development through research (externally or internally funded), writing, or other creative activities, and through participation in professional activities within their disciplines. Examples of evidence of scholarship and artistic endeavors include, but are not limited to, the following:

3.3.1.3.1 published book; chapters within a book; editor of a professional book in faculty member's discipline

3.3.1.3.2 peer-reviewed scholarly journal article in faculty member's discipline

3.3.1.3.3 original creative writing (e.g., theatrical play, musical piece)

3.3.1.3.4 public performance of an art form

3.3.1.3.5 public display of a visual art form in a juried setting

3.3.1.3.6 patent and/or other commercialization of research

3.3.1.3.7 invited or juried oral presentation of current research and/or policy analysis.

3.3.2 As a supplement to the criteria and procedures for promotion and/or tenure outlined in System policies and regulations as well as any University rules and procedures, each Academic college shall establish requirements and guidelines for tenure and promotion that apply to faculty working within that academic college. Academic college guidelines must be in compliance with this document. All academic division guidelines shall be submitted to, and approved by, the provost.

3.3.3 Each academic college will establish one or more committees to review applications for tenure and promotion. Composition, method of selection, and appointment of the committee chair(s) shall be stipulated in academic college guidelines compliant with the following:

3.3.3.1 All members of a tenure and promotion committee must be tenured. Tenure and/or promotion committee(s) comprised of peers from the faculty member's academic college, with preference given to faculty in the member's discipline, shall be appointed or elected from within each college to review the portfolios.

3.3.3.2 The college tenure and promotion committee(s) shall review the faculty

member's level of accomplishment and potential in the criteria areas of teaching, service, and scholarly activities relative to disciplinary norms and standards. Committees shall submit written reports and recommendations as well as reports of votes on each applicant to the college department chair and dean.

3.3.3.3 The department chair will construct a letter summarizing the faculty member's contribution and will submit his/her recommendation to the dean along with the Portfolio.

3.4 Tenure and/or Promotion Calendar

3.4.1 The following time line will apply to all applications for tenure and/or promotion:

3.4.1.1 **1st Friday in May:** The provost shall send written notification to each faculty member who is entering his/her mandatory year for a tenure decision that he/she must apply for tenure during the subsequent academic year and be approved for tenure in order to continue employment at the university beyond the probationary period.

3.4.1.2 **3rd Friday in May:** Each faculty member who plans to apply for promotion and/or tenure in the subsequent year shall submit written notification of intent to the dean of the hiring academic college, who shall forward a summary list to the provost's office no later than the 1st Friday in June.

3.4.1.3 **1st Friday in September:** Each applicant for promotion or tenure must submit a portfolio of accomplishments and curriculum vitae to the appropriate dean. Guidelines for the development of the portfolio are delineated in each academic college's guidelines for tenure and promotion. The dean shall forward the documents to the appropriate college tenure and promotion committee(s).

3.4.1.4 **1st Friday in October:** The academic college committee's written recommendations for faculty promotion and/or tenure are due to the respective dean.

3.4.1.5 **1st Friday in November:** The dean's recommendations for promotion and/or tenure are due to the provost.

3.4.1.6 **1st Friday in December:** The provost's recommendations for tenure and/or promotion are due to the president.

3.4.1.7 **3rd Friday in January:** The president renders a decision regarding all recommendations for tenure and promotion and authorizes submission to

the Chancellor and/or TAMUS Board of Regents (BOR) for approval during the March BOR meeting. The president will send a letter to the candidate relating the Board of Regents' action on the recommendation for tenure. Written notice of denials of tenure will be provided in accordance with System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 4.1.

3.4.2 At each stage of internal review, the faculty member shall receive notification when it is forwarded to the next stage. The parties responsible for these communications are the committee chair, dean, provost, and president, respectively. At any stage of review, a faculty member may withdraw the application for tenure and/or promotion.

3.5 Tenure and/or Promotion Review Process

3.5.1 Through the annual performance review process as outlined in section 4, deans shall review the performance of all faculty members who are accruing credit toward tenure except that an annual review will not be conducted for a faculty member who has received a notice of non-renewal or non-reappointment. Each faculty member shall be advised in writing of the results of this review. The purpose of regular reviews is to provide a candid evaluation of the individual's achievements so that both the individual and A&M-San Antonio may benefit by improved performance or by encouragement to continue exemplary performance.

3.5.2 A comprehensive review to determine the progress toward meeting all tenure requirements is required for tenure-track faculty during the third year of probation in lieu of the annual performance review. The comprehensive review process will include a review of the faculty member's progress by a committee comprised of peers with membership as outlined in section 3.3.3. The committee will submit a written report to the dean which includes an assessment as to the faculty member's progress. The faculty member's dean will provide a written summary of achievements and whether the faculty member is making adequate progress toward achieving tenure. If the faculty member is making adequate progress toward tenure, the dean must identify what still must be accomplished to receive a positive tenure recommendation. If the faculty member is not making adequate progress toward tenure, the university may recommend not to renew the faculty member's appointment. The timeline to be followed will be consistent with the academic division's procedures for pre-tenure review.

3.5.3 Written notice of non-reappointment will be sent by the president or designee to the faculty member in accordance with System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 4.2.

3.6 Faculty Rank Expectations for Initial Appointment and/or Promotion

3.6.1 Minimum University expectations and guidelines for initial appointment and/or

promotion in faculty rank are as follows:

3.6.1.1 Assistant Professor - This rank is the typical entry rank for new employees in tenure-track faculty positions who have limited or no previous full-time experience in higher education.

3.6.1.2 Associate Professor

3.6.1.2.1 a high level of accomplishment as compared to the contributions of contemporaries in the field with regard to university mission, resources, and responsibilities;

3.6.1.2.2 evidence indicating a commitment to maintaining the level of competence in teaching, service and scholarly or creative activity expected of a tenured faculty member;

3.6.1.2.3 evidence of scholarship in the years prior to promotion including peer-reviewed publications and/or creative activity in the faculty member's discipline

3.6.1.3 Professor

3.6.1.3.1 an exemplary level of accomplishment as compared to the contributions of contemporaries in the field with regard to university mission, resources, and responsibilities;

3.6.1.3.2 a record of excellence in teaching;

3.6.1.3.3 consistent evidence of scholarship or creative accomplishments in the faculty member's discipline during the years prior to promotion, including peer-reviewed publications or creative activities in the faculty member's discipline;

3.6.1.3.4 a notable record of contributions to one's profession, community, university and mentorship, as defined by individual colleges

3.6.1.3.5 a minimum of ten years of total full-time teaching experience in an accredited college or university with a minimum of five years at the rank of Associate Professor at the time by which promotion to the rank of Professor would be granted.

4. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

4.1 An annual review process will be initiated by the department chair and submitted by the faculty member in a timely fashion. An annual review will not be conducted for a faculty member who has received a notice of non-renewal or non-reappointment.

4.2 The purpose of the annual review is to provide a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between the administration and faculty. Annual review provides valuable information to the dean about the faculty member's accomplishments and to the faculty member with regard to the department chair's assessment of progress in the discipline and in the context of academic college goals. Annual reviews will be conducted in an environment of openness and collegiality with an emphasis on constructive development of the individual faculty member and the institution.

- 4.3 The focus of the annual review process shall vary from rank to rank. For non-tenure-track faculty, the annual review process will serve primarily as an evaluation focusing on performance and potential for reappointment. For tenured or tenure-track faculty, the annual review must take into account the fact that progress in a scholarly career is a long-term venture; therefore, a three to five year horizon may be necessary for the accurate evaluation of scholarly progress. Furthermore, the annual review process shall be conducted differently depending upon the different stages of a faculty member's career. For tenure-track assistant professors, the annual review process must also indicate progress toward tenure and promotion. For tenured faculty, the process will be used to identify the faculty member's progress toward promotion.
- 4.4 The annual review will be part of the ongoing process of communication between the faculty member and the institution in which both institutional and individual goals and programmatic directions are clarified, the contributions of the faculty member toward meeting those goals are evaluated, and the development of the faculty member and the university is enhanced. In all cases, the annual review shall serve as the primary written documentation for evaluation of job performance in the areas of assigned responsibility and for merit salary increases. Failure to participate and/or cooperate in the annual performance evaluation process may subject the faculty member to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 4.5 The faculty member's report of previous activities must be focused on the previous academic or calendar year and should allow a faculty member to point out the status of long-term projects and set the context in which annual activities have occurred. The report must incorporate teaching, scholarship and scholarly or creative activity, and service.
- 4.6 The department chair shall summarize his/her evaluation and expectations of the faculty member's performance for the year on the university annual performance review document. The faculty member shall indicate receipt by signing the document and will have an opportunity to submit a written response to the evaluation. The annual report must also include goals for the next year in teaching, scholarship and scholarly or creative activity and service. This annual performance review and any related documents shall become a part of the faculty member's personnel file.
- 4.7 A meeting shall be held between the department chair and the faculty member to discuss the annual performance review and expectations for the coming year.
- 4.8 A narrative summarizing the faculty member's performance, accomplishments and overall contributions must be submitted by the department chair along with the annual performance review to the dean.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Administrative leave is outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 5.

6. FACULTY DISMISSAL FOR CAUSE

Faculty Dismissal for Cause is outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 6.

7. NON RENEWAL OF NON-TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK FACULTY AT END OF APPOINTMENT

Outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, section 7.

7.1 The president or designee will appoint a hearing committee selected from all tenured members of the University faculty. The hearing committee will be composed of 5 to 7 members one of whom will be designated as chair.

8. DISMISSAL FOR CAUSE HEARING

Outlined in System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, sec. 8.

8.1 The president or designee will appoint a hearing committee selected from all tenured members of the University faculty. The hearing committee will be composed of 5 to 7 members, one of whom will be designated as chair.

9. TENURE, FINANCIAL EXIGENCY, AND PHASING OUT OF PROGRAMS

9.1 If a faculty member is notified that s/he has been selected for termination on the basis of a bona fide financial exigency or program reduction/termination, the faculty member will have 10 business days to request a hearing before a committee appointed by the provost. The provost shall appoint a committee consisting of the two most senior faculty members from each academic college (based on time in rank at A&M-San Antonio) and who are not subject to the termination order being considered by the hearing committee.

Related Policies

[System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Tenure and Responsibility*](#)

[System Policy 12.02 *Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure*](#)

[System Policy 12.07 *Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty*](#)

Definitions

Full-time appointment: an appointment in an academic assignment equivalent to a twelve (12) hour teaching load per long semester (fall and spring semesters).

Tenured and tenure-track faculty: faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor employed in a tenure-track position.

Non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty: faculty whose letter of appointment does not specify that the position is tenure-track nor that tenure is awarded at the time of employment. If a faculty member who holds a non-tenure-track position is appointed to a tenure-track faculty position, time served in the non-tenure-track faculty position does not automatically count toward tenure, but may be negotiable as credit given toward tenure. Such appointments are subject to annual review.

Professional Track Faculty: professional track faculty members so designated when a program has an ongoing need for faculty other than those in the tenure-track process. Members of this rank may or may not have a terminal degree, but must have a master's degree or professional degree. Appointment is for up to five years and may be renewed based performance and need. Satisfactory performance by members of this rank, as determined by adequate supervision and evaluation, is required prior to consideration of reappointment. Faculty holding any of these titles shall be evaluated for teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs. System Policy [12.07 Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty](#) governs the employment of Professional Track faculty, and System Policy 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure* does not apply to such faculty members except to the extent provided in System Policy 12.07 *Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty*.

Visiting Faculty: members so designated when needed to fill temporary short-term appointments and when timing of a vacancy does not allow for an appropriate search to be conducted. The appointee must have the appropriate qualifications. If assigned to full-time responsibilities, the appointment shall not exceed a total of three academic years.

Lecturers: members so designated when a program has an ongoing need for faculty other than those in the tenure-track process. Members of this rank may or may not have a terminal degree, but must have a master's degree or professional degree. Appointment is year-by-year based on need. Satisfactory performance by members of this rank, as determined by adequate supervision and evaluation, is required prior to consideration of reappointment. Faculty holding any of these titles shall be evaluated for teaching effectiveness, professional growth and service, and non-teaching activities supportive of designated university programs.

Contact Office

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