

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	ACAF Academic Affairs
POLICY NUMBER	ACAF 1.05
POLICY TITLE	Tenure-progress Review of Faculty
SCOPE OF POLICY	USC System
DATE OF REVISION	October 12, 2022
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	Office of the Provost

PURPOSE

The tenure-progress review evaluates each pre-tenure faculty member to ensure that the faculty member and the academic unit are aware of the progress of that faculty member relative to the unit's criteria for awarding tenure.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Probationary period: length of time allowed for a tenure-eligible faculty member to earn tenure. The maximum probationary period is defined in the respective *Faculty Manual*.

Tenure-clock Extension: approved extension of the maximum tenure probationary period following policy [ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review](#).

POLICY STATEMENT

In most cases, tenure-track faculty members in their probationary period are formally reviewed during their third academic year at the University. A tenure-progress review of a pre-tenure faculty member ensures that the faculty member, the academic unit, and the college or school are aware of the faculty member's progress relative to the unit's criteria for awarding tenure. This review allows the faculty member to take corrective action before the tenure decision year and ensures that the faculty member gains familiarity with the process of applying for tenure. It also allows the dean to gauge more formally whether the faculty member is making satisfactory progress toward tenure.

A faculty member requesting a tenure-clock extension prior to the tenure-progress review may concurrently request an extension of the tenure-progress review.

PROCEDURES

A. USC Columbia

1. Review Process

- a. Candidates with January 1 and August 16 tenure start dates within the same calendar year will follow the same tenure-clock schedule during the candidates' third complete academic year. Local units determine the cycle for the tenure-progress review, which may therefore occur in the fall or spring semester; in some units, the cycle coincides with the unit's annual written performance review for faculty and may fulfill that

requirement.

- b. No later than August 16 of the review year, the dean/department chair must inform the faculty members that they must submit a tenure-progress file to the unit tenure and promotion committee. The faculty member must also be explicitly informed that the review process does not positively or negatively affect the institution's ultimate decision in connection with the faculty member's future application for tenure.
- c. The faculty member must follow the usual tenure and promotion file format and process for submission of the tenure progress file, with the following exceptions:
 - i. Neither the faculty member's unit nor the faculty member should solicit external reviewers' statements or letters of support;
 - ii. Individual ballots may be used during the unit committee's deliberations, but are not included in the file; and
 - iii. The file and supporting materials are not forwarded past the dean.
- d. The chair of the unit tenure and promotion committee must draft an evaluation letter of the faculty member's progress toward meeting the criteria for tenure. The letter must specifically address the candidate's progress in each of the unit's tenure criteria. In addition, the unit tenure and promotion committee may also choose to include written evaluations from individual committee members. The letter(s) should be addressed to the next level of file review (i.e., chair or dean) and copies should be placed in the file and sent to the faculty member.
- e. Each further review step, up to and including the dean, must review the faculty member's tenure progress file and write a detailed evaluation of the faculty member's progress in terms of the unit criteria for tenure. The written evaluation must be sent to the faculty member and a copy placed in the file.
- f. When the dean has completed the review of the faculty member, the dean should have a conference with the faculty member to discuss the results of the evaluation. The faculty member must receive a copy of the dean's written evaluation prior to the meeting. The tenure progress file must be returned to the faculty member after the conference with the dean, but a copy of all evaluation letters must be retained in the faculty member's personnel file in the dean's office.

2. Timing of Tenure-progress Review

If a faculty member's maximum probationary period is extended in accordance with policy [ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review](#) or the *Faculty Manual* at any time prior to submission of the tenure-progress file, the tenure-progress review timeline outlined in this policy can be

extended for the same period of time.

Alternatively, the department or unit chair and the dean can approve requests from the faculty member to be reviewed earlier in their probationary period, such as during the second year rather than the third year.

B. Comprehensive Universities and Palmetto Colleges

Each comprehensive university and regional Palmetto Colleges should develop individual campus-based procedures to implement this policy.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review](#)

[ACAF 1.60 Modified Duties Semester for Faculty](#)

[USC Columbia *Faculty Manual*, Section 2: Regulations and Policies, under heading Annual Performance Review, Third-Year Review, and Post-Tenure Review](#)

[USC Palmetto College Campuses *Faculty Manual*, under heading Tenure and Promotion Regulations and Policies, Annual Evaluation, Third Year Review, and Post-Tenure Review](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
February 5, 1995	New policy approval
December 1, 2014	This revision updates the procedure to accommodate the Family Friendly policies
May 2, 2019	Policy revised to update campus nomenclature and to clarify timeline for extension of tenure-progress review.
October 12, 2022	Policy revised to clarify timeline for notification and completion of tenure-progress review.